

Vision for Sustained Prosperity in Nigeria: Implication of Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's speech on the perception of women in leadership

by

Kelvin Francis O. Obitube

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Kelvinfrancis.obitube@unn.edu.ng

&

Chinyere J. Anidobe

Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe

Abstract

This paper looks at the speech of one of the notable women in Nigerian, Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, who has played a key role in handling Nigeria's financial matters as a minister of finance in one of the efforts to solve the country's key financial challenges. It aims to appraise her political/economic effort in speech delivery, as a determinant of how well women can perform in key affairs that affect the country. Specifically, the paper appraises whether the speech meets the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner, which are the qualities of a good speech as stipulated by Grice. The paper observes that the speaker, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala succeeded in presenting a speech in the international setting which fulfilled the requirements of a good speech, fulfilling the maxims of quantity, relevance and mann; thus, producing a speech capable of making the right impact on the gathered audience. Obviously, the speaker did not fulfil the maxim of quality to the zenith. This is understandable, given that she has to defend and speak in favour of her government which she represents. In general, the speaker met the requirements for a good speech. The paper recommends that further roles be given to the women-folk in leadership, with regards to the growth, development and enhancement of proper perception of Nigeria by the outside world, as the potential of the country will not be hindered as widely feared; rather, will equally receive proper boost as expected by the general public.

Introduction

Background of the study

The world is fraught with lots of problems or challenges affecting human beings and the growth and development of their societies. These problems range from environmental, social, political, religious, cultural problems, etc. As human existence on earth stretches further, more problems are encountered which human beings have to find solutions to. The efforts to solve these problems or challenges in order to ensure and enhance comfort, therefore, lie in the hands of every human being capable of, or empowered to bring about the positive changes or adjustments required.

Over the preceding centuries of human history, solving these problems have largely been placed on the shoulders of the male members of the various societies all over the world. This does not imply that the female members of the society do not contribute to making life more comfortable for human societies; their roles, rather, were limited to solving or handling seemingly important but less insignificant problems or needs such as taking care of the homes, the husbands and the children. However, in recent times, solving several of these world problems have been taken upon by the female folks of various societies; Nigeria of course, a case in point.

There has been observed increase in the number of females in the politics or leadership of Nigeria. These females serve in various capacities as commissioners, permanent secretaries, heads of companies, departments and several other parastatals, deputy governors and ministers. Upon holding these positions, several of these women have played crucial roles in handling, solving and attempting to solve several problems affecting the country's law-enactment, crude-oil exploration and utilization, security of lives and property, state governance and financial activities.

In this paper, we will look at the speech of one of such women in Nigerian context who has played a key role in handling Nigeria's financial matters as a Minister of Finance with the attempt to solve the country's key financial challenges. By studying this speech, we will find out how reliable her ideas are and how effective her role as the then Nigeria's Minister of Finance influenced the country at the time.

Statement of the problem

Over the years, since the inception of the country- Nigeria, the role of women in Nigerian politics and leadership has rarely been given a chance to thrive, and in the same vein, has rarely been given proper recognition. Their ideas and the impact of the policies engineered by women, which are evidenced through their speeches and reports are, equally, rarely placed in the limelight where they can receive reviews from those of the male counterparts.

This paper, therefore, takes a look at the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, one of the most influential Nigerian women on an international stage in order to appraise the quality of the speech, in respect to creating the right impact on the audience for the benefit of the country- Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

Its aims to find out how reliable her ideas are, through her speech and how effective her role as the then Nigeria's minister of finance influenced the country at the time, and by extension, to appraise her political/economic effort as a determinant of how well women can perform in key affairs that affect the country. Based on this, the paper adopts the outlined objectives:

- i. To find out whether the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala meets the maxim of quality, which is one of the qualities of a good speech as stipulated by Grice.
- ii. To find out whether the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala meets the maxim of quantity

- iii. To find out whether the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is in line with the maxim of relevance
- iv. To find out whether the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala agrees with the maxim manner.

Research Questions

This paper adopts the following research questions:

- i. Does the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala meet the maxim of quality, which is one of the qualities of a good speech as stipulated by Grice?
- ii. Does the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala meet the maxim of quantity?
- iii. Does the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala stipulate the maxim of relevance?
- iv. Does the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala agree the maxim of manner?

Scope of the study

The scope of study for this paper is pragmatics. Thus, the paper focuses on the speech delivered by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala to analyse and determine the effectiveness of her leadership, exemplified through the speech, to determine the effectiveness of women, generally, in the developmental aspiration of Nigeria.

Significance of the study

The significance of this study is drawn from the fact that there has been a lot of debate regarding the suitability and effectiveness of the womenfolk in the leadership of the country, Nigeria, as it strives for growth and development. It is, equally, a proven fact that one of the key attributes of a good leader is the ability to deliver proper speeches which convince, motivate or inspire the audience who constitute the members of a group.

By studying the speech of Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, which she delivered upon her invitation to speak about the country by the 'The Atlantic Council' on the 8th of October, 2014, as the then Coordinating Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance of the country, using the framework set by Grice for assessing a good speech, the paper will be able to appraise her impact as a woman-leader, and this can be a basis for determining the effectiveness of women-leadership in the country.

Literature review

Theoretical studies

Several writers and researchers have expressed various views about the perception of women in leadership and their use of language. In this section of the research, we will look at some of these views as they relate to the study.

According to Lakoff (1973:45),

Our use of language embodies attitudes as well as referential meanings. 'Women's language' has as foundation the attitude that women are marginal to the

serious concerns of life, which are pre-empted by men. The marginality and powerlessness of women are reflected in both the ways women are expected to speak, and the ways in which women are spoken of. In appropriate women's speech, strong expression of feeling is avoided, expression of uncertainty is favoured, and means of expression in regard to subject-matter deemed 'trivial' to the 'real' world are elaborated.

These words by Lakoff provide a generally perceived natural view about women as it concerns their use of language. Women are perceived to be more reserved and unimpulsive when it comes to expressing reactions to issues, especially more sensitive ones. This is because, in expressing themselves, they are very mindful of how the male folks, especially, will perceive them. Thus, there is a general stigma to the appropriateness and inappropriateness of behaviour attached to the female-folks by the male-folks and this determines the acceptability or unacceptability of women as worthy of gaining the interests of the male-folks for association/marriage.

Furthermore, Lakoff (1975) unequivocally states that a "women's register," serves to maintain women's (inferior) role in society. She further argues that women tend to use linguistic forms that reflect and reinforce a subordinate role. She outlines these linguistic forms to include tag questions, question intonation, and "weak" directives, among others.

According to *Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2006)*, descriptions of women's speech as deficient can be dated as far back as Otto Jespersen's "The Woman," which is a chapter in his 1922 book entitled *Language: Its Nature and Development*. They note that Jespersen's idea that women's speech is deficient relative to a male norm went largely unchallenged until Lakoff's work appeared fifty years later. These ideas, though being challenged politically as incorrect from a modern perspective, Jespersen's contributions remain relevant. It's relevance manifest through the information on the prospect of language change based on social and gendered opportunity, lexical and phonological differences, and the idea of genderlects and the influence of gender roles on language.

Discourse analysis

In his series of papers published in 1952, Zellig Harris traces the development of discourse analysis to the emergence of semiotics and the French structuralist approach to the study of narrative. McCarthy (2011) notes that in the 1960s, Hymes drew a sociological perspective with the study of speech in its social setting (e.g. Hymes 1964) and thus, defines discourse analysis as a study which is fundamentally concerned with the relationship between language and the contexts of its use.

Discourse analysis also examines how language is used to sustain social institutions and manipulate opinion; how it is used in the expression of ideology and the exercise of power. Discourse analysis can also be used to develop awareness of linguistic features in the interpretation of literary texts.

The above named writer summarises by stating that discourse analysis examines spoken communication (talk/speech/spoken texts/spoken messages) between speaker(s) and

listener(s) and written communication (texts/messages) between reader(s) and writer(s). He stresses the need to see language as a dynamic, social interactive phenomenon. He further states that meaning is conveyed not by single sentences but by more complex exchanges, in which the participants' beliefs and expectations, the knowledge they share about each other and about the world, and the situation in which they interact, play a crucial part.

Critical discourse analysis

CDA was first developed by the Lancaster school of linguists of which [Norman Fairclough](#) was the most prominent figure. [Ruth Wodak](#) has also made a remarkable contribution to this field of study. The approach draws from several disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, such as critical linguistics. Fairclough developed a three-dimensional framework for studying discourse, where the aim is to map three separate forms of analysis onto one another: analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production, distribution and consumption) and analysis of discursive events as instances of sociocultural practice. Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 271-80) summarize the main tenets of CDA thus:

- CDA addresses social problems
- Power relations are discursive
- Discourse constitutes society and culture
- Discourse does ideological work
- Discourse is historical
- The link between text and society is mediated
- Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
- Discourse is a form of social action.

In terms of its methodology, it is generally agreed upon that any explicit method in discourse studies, the humanities and social sciences may be used in CDA research, as long as it is able to adequately and relevantly produce insights into the way discourse reproduces (or resists) social and political inequality, power abuse or domination. Consequently, the strength of CDA lies in the fact that it does not limit its analysis to specific structures of text or talk, but systematically relates these to structures of the [sociopolitical](#) context based on its ability to adopt any method it deems relevant for a given study.

Empirical studies

Several empirical works relating to speech studies have been conducted and these will be respectively reviewed. According to Sunderland (2006), empirical studies on talk between men and women in the 70s and 80s found women producing more well-timed 'minimal responses' such as 'oh' and 'mm' and asking more questions', that is, doing more legwork in conversations. Thorne (1997) in his observation, establishes that men were thought to use slang and swearing more frequently but recent studies suggest that this trend is changing. He also notes that the speech of women is characterised by the frequency of politeness markers like 'please' and 'thanks'. This work relates to the current effort in their respective attempts to study the speech of the womenfolk. However, their differences stem from focus. While Thorne focuses on the morphological and syntactic composition of

speeches by womenfolk, the current research focuses on the impact made by speeches from the womenfolk.

Newman, Groom, Handelman and Pennebaker (2008) in their research, examined gender differences in language use by using standardised categories to analyse a database of over 14,000 text files from 70 separate studies. They observed that women used more words related to psychological and social processes while men referred more to object properties and impersonal topics. This is similar to the findings of another research conducted by Mulac, Weimann, Widenmann and Gibson (1988) as they observed that questions are more common in women's contributions to dyadic interactions (e.g., "Does anyone want to get some food?"), whereas directives that tell the audience to do something (e.g., "Let's go get some food") are more likely to be found in men's conversational contributions.

According to Newman et al (2008), a growing body of research suggests that people can learn a great deal about people's underlying thoughts, emotions, and motives by counting and categorising the words they use to communicate (Pennebaker & King, 1999; Pennebaker, Mehl, & Niederhoffer, 2003; cf. Shapiro, 1989). They note that this approach has proved particularly fruitful with respect to "function words," which include pronouns, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, and auxiliary verbs. They equally maintain that these words are distinct from content words (nouns, verbs, and adjectives), and are used to "glue" other words together, asserting that in the English language, there are fewer than 200 commonly used function words, yet they account for over one half of the words people use.

In the example they put forward, they state that using "you and I" instead of "we" reflects a different perspective on the relationship between the speaker and the referent and that using more pronouns in general (rather than nouns) refers to a shared reality, in that both parties have to understand who "he" is. They point out that, empirically, the use of the first-person singular has been associated with age; depression; illness; and, more broadly, self-focus (Pennebaker et al., 2003) while the first-person plural can variously be a marker of group identity and, on occasion, a sign of emotional distancing (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Pennebaker & Lay, 2002). They also point out that 'function words' can also reflect psychological state independent of content, giving an example that people telling the truth use more first-person singular and more qualifying conjunctions (e.g., but) than those instructed to lie—although they are discussing the same topics (Newman, Pennebaker, Berry, & Richards, 2003). This approach to language will be adopted in studying the implications of Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's speech and how it tells on the perception of women in leadership.

Observation from the works reviewed, so far, shows that the concern of so many researches have always hinged on identifying and pointing out the components of statements and speeches when they are isolated and differentiated along gender lines. Such components are drawn from both morphological and syntactic compositions of the language(s) analysed. Thus words, sentences and other vocal non-lexical sounds are peculiar to respective genders. On the other hand, the current research focuses on conducting an enquiry into the level of success which the speech of the womenfolk can record in the effort to project a positive image of the country, exemplified by the speech of Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, as the Coordinating Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance of the country.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this research is the theoretical framework of ‘Conversational Implicature’ by Grice (1975). Grice (1975) has it that the ‘calculation’ of conversational implicatures is grounded on common knowledge of what a given speaker says, the linguistic and extra linguistic context of the utterance, general background information, and the consideration of what he calls the ‘Cooperative principle’. Thus, he emphasises that cooperative principle is implemented in the plans of speakers and understanding of hearers, highlighting the following maxims:

- Quantity: This maxim states that one should speak as informative as required based on the topic at hand and should not be more informative than required.
- Quality: This maxim states that a speaker should try to make sure that his information provided is true and should not say what is believed to be false or what one lacks adequate evidence
- Relation: This maxim states that one should be relevant in one’s speech, and
- Manner: This maxim states that a speaker should express his speech clearly, as well as make it transparent and easy to understand. Thus, this maxim emphasizes that one should avoid obscurity of statement, avoid ambiguity, be brief and be orderly as well. We will adopt this theoretical framework for analysing our data adequately.

Methodology

The methodology employed in this work is discussed below:

Research design: A survey research design is adopted. Thus, a systematic plan was adopted in order to conduct this research as it will help to reflect the most important details required, given the limited time and spatial content for the work. Thus, the paper starts with an introduction of what the work is all about by recognising the problem aimed to be solved, its relevance and limitations too. Relevant works of literature which help to shed more light on the nature of the research work are then discussed. The laid-down systematic plan for the work is presented, followed by the presentation and analysis of data. The work then ends with the summary of the findings or observations made from the study.

Area of study: The area of study for this work is sociolinguistics which studies language based on its relationship with the various social factors that influence its usage within a given society. In this study, the socio-political circumstances existing in Nigeria are put into context while studying the use of language in the speech of Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Method of data collection: The work takes to the internet to obtain available transcribed copies of Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala as the then Coordinating Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance of the country, on the 8th of October, 2014; particularly published in 247Ureports online page.

Method of data analysis: The data obtained for this research work will be analysed based on the tenets of theoretical postulations of conversational implicature by Grice (1975), as the various statements contained in the speech made by Hon. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala on the efforts of the government of Nigeria, to create a better country for its people, are analysed.

The analysis will ensure that her statements which endeavour to paint or create a favourable image of the Nigerian state are critically analysed with respect to the success and failure of such attempt.

Data analysis

On the 8th of October, 2014, the then Coordinating minister for the economy and the minister of finance of the country, Nigeria, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala presented a speech titled “Vision for Sustained Prosperity in Nigeria” upon her invitation to speak about the country by the ‘The Atlantic Council’. The speech will be analysed using Grice’s conversational implicature in order to find out what impact the speaker, who is regarded as one of the top women in leadership makes through her speech.

Maxim of quantity:

As earlier noted, this conversational maxim looks at the appropriateness of speech of a given speaker with regards to being as informative as required based on the topic at hand and it also states that a given speaker should not be more informative than required. Let us look at the expression below:

- Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I bring you greetings from Nigeria and particularly from our President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, who was quite delighted when I informed him of my invitation by the Atlantic Council to speak on Nigeria.... I’ve been invited here today to speak on the Vision for Sustained Prosperity in this great country of mine called Nigeria.... In the decades of the 1980s and the 90s, we saw an Africa that was heavily indebted with an average debt-to-GDP ratio of 75 percent.... Fast-forward two decades and the story is remarkably different. We see now, an Africa whose economy is growing faster than most economies in the World with better than 5 percent annual growth in GDP.... Yes, these are certainly challenges.... Now, Nigeria is a classic example of this Africa Rising phenomenon, and perhaps one of its most successful stories.... A number of steps are currently being taken to tackle these challenges....

These excerpts from the speech point to the fact that the speaker fulfilled the maxim of quantity by being as informative as is required. In the speech, the speaker, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala first expressed her appreciation and delight for being invited to speak at the gathering. Then, she talked about the challenges facing African continent as a whole and Nigeria in particular, as well as the efforts made and the ones being made to handle or solve them. All these discussions were aimed at informing the audience, comprising of leaders of various countries across various continents of the world, about the state of Nigeria’s affairs; especially about the fact that Nigeria is a country on the rise and a country everyone should learnt to love, appreciated and associate with. Summarily, she tried to change the opinion or views of the members of the various countries of the world about Nigeria into a favourable one. The way she presented her points for this purpose are observed to have produced the needed or necessary information, as well as avoided the production or expression of unnecessary or unrequired information or statements. Once again, therefore, this maxim is fulfilled by the speaker.

Maxim of Quality

This conversational maxim states that a speaker should try to make sure that any information provided is true and should not say what is believed to be false or what one lacks adequate evidence of. With regards to the speech made by the then Minister of Finance of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, it is observed that to a large extent, she failed to fulfil this maxim, even though there are several truthful facts provided in the speech. Let us take a look at the excerpt below:

Fast-forward two decades and the story is remarkably different. We see now, an Africa whose economy is growing faster than most economies in the World with better than 5 percent annual growth in GDP. We see an Africa with low debt, averaging about 32 percent of GDP (which is certainly much lower than those of developed countries including the US and several countries in Europe), low inflation at single digit on average, and a middle class that has nearly tripled in size – from about 126 million people (or 27 percent of total population) in 1980 to nearly 350 million people (or 34 percent of population) by 2010, according to the African Development Bank.

Africa being a continent whose economy is growing faster than most economies in the World with better than 5 percent annual growth in GDP is very much debatable. The variables necessary for promoting the growth of an economy of any nation which include, human and capital resources are evidently lacking in most countries of Africa. Particularly, security, proper long-lasting policies, electricity, and other basic infrastructure which motivate settlement and investment in a given location are absent. There is a high frequency of the occurrence of terrorism acts and wars in several African countries; and safety is key to habitation and investment. The popular belief is that information is best assessed from the angle of the neutrals. Thus, it is wrong for the then Minister to draw her claims from the statement credited to the African Development Bank about a continent it is established to serve since making biased statements will definitely be inevitable on the part of ‘the Bank’.

Further in the speech, one can notice the speaker discussing these recognised challenges facing the country and the fact that these challenges greatly affect the growth and development of the country’s economy and the country in general. Thus, one wonders how honest the then Minister has been in her speech prior to this point. Take a look at the excerpt below:

- ... like in most of Africa, Nigeria faces a large infrastructure deficit. The inadequate infrastructure is holding back economic growth by at least 2 percent per annum, according to a recent World Bank study, and we need about US\$ 14.2 billion per year to bridge the infrastructure gap.... Absence of adequate infrastructure in Nigeria, particularly poor electricity supply adds a massive 16 percent to business costs in Nigeria.... For a country of our size, we are underinvested in transportation infrastructure... and we currently face a housing deficit of about 17 million units. Without a doubt, the dearth of infrastructure is further exacerbated by the lack of access to long-term finance, which makes investment in long-term projects almost impossible.... we face the challenge of economic inclusion and high youth unemployment.... Our maternal and infant mortality rates are high, and we have large

numbers of children out of school. The absence of social safety nets leaves the unemployed highly vulnerable to poverty. In many countries in Africa, the information required to better target the poor and the unemployed is not available. We lack sound identification data and biometrics that can support safety nets. We lack effective tax systems that can help redistribute income in favour of those at the bottom end.... corruption continues to be a challenge, and happens to be one of the most talked about problems of the country.... We are losing up to 100,000 barrels of oil per day to theft from onshore and swamp operations alone. This amounts to several billions of dollars, if you do the math.... Fifth is the security challenge we presently face, particularly the Boko Haram insurgency, which reached a crescendo when over 200 schools girls of the Government Secondary School in Chibok, were abducted from their dormitories last April. This terrorist sect's key objective is to destroy formal or western education in Nigeria. This year alone, we know that Boko Haram has murdered over 170 teachers in Borno State, and an estimated 300 educational facilities have been destroyed in the three most affected states of Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe, including 80 primary schools in Borno State alone.

Again, the statement made by the speaker that Africa is obviously enjoying a peace dividend and better governance with democracy now entrenched in most countries is highly contentious. On the contrary, insecurity and acts of terrorism are frequent trends observable in many African countries as earlier noted; and poor leadership within the democratic setting is equally evident.

Therefore, by these statements, the speaker lacks authenticity as she contradicts herself in her earlier statements and her revelation in her succeeding ones. One can as well, accuse the then Minister of speaking from the two side of her mouth. On this ground, the speaker failed to fulfil the maxim of quality.

Maxim of Relevance

This maxim stipulates that one should be relevant in one's speech. By explanation, this maxim requires a speaker to make statements which are relevant to the topic at hand or to the context. That is, one's discussion of the topic at hand should address the said topic and not deviate with points which do not, in any way, contribute to the topic of discourse.

Being that it is a speech delivered by the Coordinating Minister for the Economy & Honourable Minister of Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria at The Atlantic Council on October 8, 2014 upon an invitation by the Atlantic Council to speak on Nigeria(an occasion which is the first of a series of talks on "New Africa", in partnership with Thomson-Reuters), the speaker is expected to make statements relevant for the occasion or context in which she finds herself. Based on these, we will look at excerpts from her speech to find out if the speaker fulfilled this maxim.

- I've been invited here today to speak on the Vision for Sustained Prosperity in this great country of mine called Nigeria.... In the decades of the 1980s and the 90s, we saw an Africa that was heavily indebted with an average debt-to-GDP ratio of 75 percent; an Africa plagued with slow economic growth...and rampant poverty; an Africa troubled by civil wars and political strife, and an Africa in desperate need of donor aid and assistance. Fast-forward two decades and the story is remarkably

different. We see now, an Africa whose economy is growing faster...., an Africa that is obviously enjoying a peace dividend and better governance with democracy now entrenched in most countries.... Yes, these are certainly challenges.... Now, Nigeria is a classic example of this Africa Rising phenomenon, and perhaps one of its most successful stories. Nigeria is underrated with its sore points magnified beyond belief particularly in the Western media. My country receives little or no praise even when things are done right, but is left battling with the prejudice of a country where nothing works. Take as an example the recent fight to contain the deadly Ebola virus. The efforts of Nigerian medical personnel that prevented the early spread of this deadly disease to the United States are rarely acknowledged.... like in most of Africa, Nigeria faces a large infrastructure deficit. The inadequate infrastructure is holding back economic growth.... A number of steps are currently being taken to tackle these challenges in line with President Goodluck Jonathan's Transformation Agenda.... Thank you Ladies and gentlemen for listening.

From the excerpt above, one can understand that since the purpose of the speech is to tell the gathered audience about the state of Nigeria with regard to the 'Africa Rising' theme, the speaker showed relevance in speech by guiding the audience through the state of affairs in the African continent and Nigeria in particular few decades ago, and the state of their affairs contemporarily. In doing this, she highlighted the challenges facing the country, the efforts to tackle them, both those that have been successful and those still in progress, as well as future expectation.

Of course, it is the wish and target of every country to be projected on a bright light and to have the world possess a favourable perception about them. Achieving this attracts positive interests from people and governments of other countries with regards to obtaining aids and attracting investments that will better the lots of the country. Nigeria is no exception. Thus, in presenting her speech, the speaker also made tangible effort to project the positives of the country in a bid to change the world view held by most western countries regarding the Nigeria. Consequently, it is right to unequivocally state that Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, in her speech, fulfilled the maxim of relevance.

Maxim of Manner:

This maxim stipulates that a speaker should express his speech clearly, make it transparent, and easy to understand. It emphasizes that one should avoid obscurity of statement, avoid ambiguity, be brief and be orderly as well. By this, we will look at the speech delivered by Dr. Okonjo-Iweala in order to assess whether it was clear, transparent, unambiguous, unobscured, brief and orderly.

With regards to being clear and easy to understand, the ex-Minister ensured clarity in the deliverance of her speech. This, she ensured by using simple expressions which are easy to be understood by all gathered. Though the speaker employed some terminologies and statistical data which may elude the full-grasp of a less literate person, the overall idea expressed gives any hearer who understands even the basic English language good understanding or correct interpretation. In terms of being transparent, the speaker endeavoured to be transparent to a large extent. Thus, most of the points made were accompanied by explanations and the challenges facing the country, ranging from

corruption, poor infrastructure, poor making and execution of policies, to poor economic, social, environmental and health challenges. All these points lend credence to the transparency of her speech.

The speech is unambiguous. This stems from the observable fact that the speaker's language is clear and does not contain words, phrases or sentences which give rise to ambiguity. The speaker also avoided obscurity by ensuring that only the topics and points of which address contemporary issues in the given context are discussed. However, the speech is orderly. Observation shows that the speaker, expected to discuss the challenges facing the Nigeria and the efforts already made which have been successful and those being made, which are still in progress, as well as future expectations from the country and the bright future the country envisages was ordered to address its points articulately.

A look at the data shows that sections 3 to 12 of the speech (identifiable in the appendix) highlight some endeavours and achievements of Africa and Nigeria in particular. Sections 14 to 23 discuss the challenges facing the country, while sections 24 to 44 discuss the efforts and policies being put in place in order to tackle the challenges. On this note, one gets an idea that the speaker is presenting to the audience, a picture of a country which has made some achievements and is still making policies and concerted efforts to tackle the recurring and seemingly perennial problems in a genuine and well-planned manner. The organisation of the speech, therefore, shows proper orderliness of in its presentation by the speaker. Finally, being that the speech does not record undue repetition of points, the speaker is adjudged to have been brief in her speech.

Summary of findings and conclusion

From the study, we have been able to observe that the speaker, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Honourable Minister of Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria, succeeded in presenting a speech in the international setting which fulfilled the requirements of a good speech. With regards to the maxims of quantity, relevance and manner, the speaker fulfilled them; thus, producing a speech capable of making the right impact on the gathered audience. Obviously, the speaker did not fulfil the maxim of quality to the zenith. This is understandable, given that she has to defend and speak in favour of the government which she represents. In general, the speaker to a great extent, met 80% of the requirements for a good speech.

These findings reveal that the role of women in leadership, as epitomised by the former Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Honourable Minister of Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria- Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, is one that has been beneficial to Nigeria as a country. Thus, with further roles given to the women-folks to play, with regards to the growth, development and enhancement of proper perception of Nigeria by the outside world, the potential of the country will not be hindered as widely feared; rather, will equally receive proper boost as expected by the general public.

References

- Brewer, M. B. & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this “we”? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 71, 83–93.
- Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and Power*. Longman.
- Fairclough, N. L. and Wodak, R. (1997). ‘Critical discourse analysis’ In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.) *Discourse Studies. A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, Vol. 2. *Discourse as Social Interaction* (pp. 258-84). London: Sage.
- [Grice](#), P. H. (1975). ‘Logic and conversation.’ In H. P. Grice (Ed.). *The way of words* (pp. 22–40). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hymes, D. (December 1964). "Introduction: Toward ethnographies of communication". *American anthropologist*, 6, (pp. 1–34).
- Lakoff, R. (1973). Language and woman's place. *Language in Society*, 2,1, 45-80. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Lakoff, R. (2004). *Language and woman's place: text and commentaries*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- McCarthy, M. (2011). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mulac, A., Wiemann, J. M., Widenmann, S. J., & Gibson, T. W. (1988). Male/female language differences and effects in same-sex and mixed-sex dyads: The gender-linked language effect. *Communication Monographs*, 55, 315–335.
- Newman, M. L., Groom, C. J., Handelman, L. D. & Pennebaker, J. W. (2008). Gender Differences in Language Use: An Analysis of 14,000 Text Samples. *Discourse processes: A multidisciplinary journal*, 45,3, 211-236.
- Newman, M. L., Pennebaker, J.W., Berry, D. S., & Richards, J. M. (2003). Lying words: Predicting deception from linguistic styles. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29, 665–675.
- Pennebaker, J. W., & King, L. A. (1999). Linguistic styles: Language use as an individual difference. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 6, 1296–1312.
- Pennebaker, J.W., & Lay, T. C. (2002). Language use and personality during crises: Analyses of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani’s press conferences. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 36(3), 271–282.
- Pennebaker, J.W., Mehl, M. R., & Niederhoffer, K. (2003). Psychological aspects of natural language use: Our words, our selves. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 54, 547–577.

- Pennebaker, J.W., & Stone, L. D. (2003). Words of wisdom: Language use over the lifespan. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 85, 291–301.
- Shapiro, D. (1989). *Psychotherapy of neurotic character*. New York: Basic Books.
- Sunderland, J. (2006). The results. In *The Guardian*, 27th November, 2006.
- Thorne, S. (1997:105). *Mastering Advanced English Language*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Publishers.
- Wolfram, W. & Schilling-Estes, N. (2006). *American English: Dialects and Variation*. Wiley- Blackwell.

Web sources

- <http://www.putlearningfirst.com/language/23sexism/genderlect.html>. Retrieved on 10/6/2016
- http://changingminds.org/explanations/gender/womens_language.htm. Retrieved on 11/6/2016
- <http://semantics.uchicago.edu/kennedy/classes/sum07/myths/myths4-gender.pdf>. Retrieved on 11/6/2016
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_and_gender. Retrieved on 12/6/2016
- http://web.stanford.edu/class/linguist156/Lakoff_1973.pdf. Retrieved on 12/6/2016
- http://web.stanford.edu/class/linguist156/Lakoff_1973.pdf. Retrieved on 12/6/2016
- https://www.kuwi.europa-uni.de/de/lehrstuhl/sw/sw1/lehre/Archiv/materialien_SS07/Jb-Sprache_Geschlechter/LANGGENDER.pdf. Retrieved on 12/6/2016