

No Gaming with Peace and Security: Modality in Prophet Muhammad's Farewell Message

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Abstract

In the age long security challenges bedeviling the world, language plays a pivotal role in committance with social injustice and ethnic/class strife which transform to insurgency and other violent crimes. In the light of Hallidayan interpersonal function of language, this study aims to carry out a modality analysis, an aspect of interpersonal meaning in systemic functional linguistics. The objectives of the study include to (i) investigate the import of modal verbs on the meaning of the farewell message; (ii) analyse the relationship between modality and speaker's attitude in Prophet Muhammad's farewell message and; explore the role of modality in the conveying degrees of certainty, possibility and obligation in the Prophet's farewell message. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted and applied to the analysis of Prophet Muhammad's Farewell speech; through the use of modal auxiliaries and modal adjunct. The findings reveal that there is an indictment to futurity in the message. While the modal auxiliary indicates latter happenings, the present forms of the verb indicate that the present will survive and metamorphose into reality in the future, no matter how long. The preacher speculates in the future and shows his optimism about the future of his followers. The analysis also revealed that the central focus of Prophet Muhammad is, apart from giving a serious caution against brutality and lawlessness stemming from different shades of corruption, providing a road map to future leadership as well as followership. Hence, the study recommends that both the leaders and the followers should, having grasped its meaning, hold firmly to and act on the teachings of the divine message in order to promote peaceful co-existence and by extension, the security of national citizenry.

Key words: Peace, Security, Sermon, Mood, Modalisation, Modulation, Metafunction, Discourse.

Introduction

Like many other parts of the world, Nigeria has been battling with the menace of insecurity; a major bane to national development. The recent trends of national upheavals engendering insecurity are the consequences of various social anomalies stemming from political cum ethno-religious sentiments/intolerance. These are known to be the by-products of insufficient or lack of moral-cum-religious education. In the speech that constitutes the data for this study, the speaker raised serious issues concerning his religious doctrines that are subservient to peaceful co-existence. The role of language as a means to encode and decode meaning cannot

be overstressed. It is on this assumption that this work sets out to exemplify the linguistic implication of modals as used in the farewell message of Prophet Muhammad.

The notion that language is a system is the purview of Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) *Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)*. Systemic Functional Grammar evolves as a theory that ties language to its functional capacity. Demonstrating the function of language in meaning making, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004 p. 29) relate linguistic meaning to "our ecological and social environment". Language cannot be considered in isolation of social life. For objective and valid interpretation of the functional values of language, textual analysis requires that language be located in its context of use. Hence, for deep understanding of a text, a language analyst needs not have exclusive focus on the language of a text but also on other socio-cultural factors as well as inter textual relations of the text (Van Dijk, 1993).

Ogunbe identifies context as a critical factor that dictates the style of writing as well as the form and function of language in a text. Different linguists have, in the past, identified varieties of contexts. These include; social and cosmological, psychological, situational and linguistic (Short, 1996, Ayodabo, 2012, Faleke and Bankole, 2015). Linguistic context is what Yule, (2002) calls co-text and which he sees as the relationship that exists within the words that constitute the expression of a message. Context of situation deals with the topic of discourse which includes participants and locations. Psychological context is concerned with the background of the mood, attitudes and personal beliefs of the language user. Sociological context explicate socio cultural and historical settings. Cosmological which is the broadest refers to the language users' world view as well as to certain universally established facts (Ayodabo, 2012). Social context which is the direct scope of this study is the interpersonal relations among/between interactants.

At this juncture, it is crucial to submit that both functions and contexts of language are subservient to meaning negotiation in texts. Since men communicate with their fellow men essentially through speech, and since language is the basic medium through which human messages, thoughts and feelings could be transmitted, it becomes imperative that speech is understandable in connection with social interaction (Giglioli, 1979).

In their own argument, Chimombo and Roseberry (1997) aver that the language users' attitude towards the message being conveyed usually appears in the language.

In this study, attempt is made to explore how modality, an aspect of the interpersonal meaning of Systemic Functional Linguistics is entrenched in the prophetic farewell message to unfold the language interface as it concerns the socio-political implication of the divine message.

Background of the Messenger

Born into a family known as (Quraysh) in the city of Makkah in the year 570 A.D., a man named Muhammad was said to be an orphan at birth. At the age of six, his mother's death left him to the mercy of his grandfather and later, to that of his paternal uncle. He led a transparently pious life which earned him the name Al-Amin (The Trustworthy) and which inspired his more elderly employer to propose marriage to him when he was twenty-five years old in spite of the fifteen years age difference between them. A glimpse at his family life portrays him as an admirable husband, father and even grandfather. Very glowing tributes are paid to him for his integrity and achievement (see Imam Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhab, 2009).

His prophetic mission, even though he was unlettered, started at the age of forty when Jibril, an angel, commanded him to 'recite' at the Mount of Hira where he went for meditation. Having been spiritually transformed, Muhammad began preaching and became a great transmitter of the words of God being revealed to him in instalments.

But, like other messengers before him, the great Prophet of Arabia did not start his mission (which was mainly to spread the unity of Allah) with much endorsement. It was greeted with sharp animosity as his idol worshipping kinsmen and, in fact, the whole Makkans stood in dismay. He was confronted with all kinds of insults, social boycott and even physical assaults. In the Islamic history, Prophet Muhammad, the man who founded Islam was not presented as a wealthy man. Rather, he was said to have been a poor but great philosopher with an excellent character. He was known to be peace-loving and highly cultured. This explains why, at a point during his days of persecution, he was given divine instruction to migrate to Madinah (his mother's home town).

In the year 632 A.D, (the twelfth month of the Lunar Year), having led his followers for twenty-three years as a selfless, equitable leader and teacher, the Prophet undertook his first pilgrimage to Makkah and resolved to insure and solidify his religious accomplishments by getting it more rooted in the hearts of his followers. It is for this reason that he delivered what later turned out to be his last sermon and which was eventually tagged the farewell message.

Theoretical Framework

In an attempt to find answers to their own question: What are the basic functions of language in relation to our ecological and social environment, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 29) propose two answers; i.e. "...making sense of our experience and acting out our social relationship." Language, to them, construes human experience and, in fact, no facet of human experience defies representation by meaning. Language is employed to understand, organise and convey human perception and consciousness of the world. When language provides this function, it is identified as the ideational function. The speaker realises this function through his conveyance of the external world of his consciousness. Ideational function is sub-divided into experiential and logical functions: while the experiential relates to the ideas contained in language, the logical has to do with the relationship between/among them. Besides, when language is being used, something else is going on. "While construing, language is always also enacting", i.e. language also represents and verbalizes our personal and social relationship with other people around us. Halliday and Matthiessen posit that the various participants and circumstances that constitute that clause of the grammar is not only a figure but a proposition, or a proposal through which language users inform, give an order or make an offer and evince their appraisal of and attitude towards their co-interlocutor as well as the object of their talk. This is what is called the interpersonal meta-function which enables communicators to participate in communicative acts with other people and which demonstrates that Language provides language users with the platform to ask questions, instruct, command, etc. in order to create and sustain social relationship with others as well as influence their actions, behaviour and beliefs.

These two modes of meaning i.e. the ideational and interpersonal, according to Halliday and Matthiessen depend greatly and to a large extent on textual metafunction which is concerned with how language is structured in the production of texts. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) aver that textual metafunction assists in the area of message arrangement, i.e., both within and in-between clauses. So, at the clause level, metafunctions concentrate on meaning realisation based on the components of the clause. In SFL, the use of language appears under three classifications; Ideational, Interpersonal and Textual. The trio are popularly recognized and referred to as metafunctions. Halliday and Matthiessen coded them as; clause as representation, clause as exchange and clause as message respectively. Since the functions of language include both the use that language serves (i.e. the how and why of language use and the linguistic functions (i.e. the grammatical and semantic roles assigned to parts of language), they are of the opinion that

clauses could be examined from diverse angles: above, below around and beyond the clause. Groups and phrases are the constituents dwelling below the clause. They function and create meaning on account of existing clause. Above the clause is concerned with the clause complex and group and phrase complexes. The relationship between clauses is expressed in terms of two taxis namely: parataxis and hypotaxis while around the clause reflects cohesion and discourse. The main concern of this study is beyond the clause which is premised on lexicogrammar and semantic, interpersonal and ideational metaphors and modality. Specifically, the farewell speech of Prophet Muhammad will be placed on the scale of modality, an aspect of SFL.

Systemic Functional Grammar, is described by Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, &Yallop, (2000, p. 66) as a means of accounting for lexical and grammatical choices from the systems of wording in such a way that we become aware of how language is being used to make meaning. Also relating function to meaning, Butt et. al. contend that language has interpersonal function just as it has meanings since human use language to encode their interaction. They postulate that interpersonal meanings cover two main areas namely: the type of interaction which is taking place (i.e. the kind of commodity being exchanged) and the way speakers take a position in their messages.

At the semantic level of language, demanding and giving information produces meanings. These are most often realised at the lexicogrammatical level whereby questions or statements are asked or made. Again, Butt et al submit that certain contexts motivate meanings in texts. They gave the example of lecture or classroom or court situations where they claim most of the clauses will be expected to either demand or give information. On the other hand, demanding goods and services are meanings they see at the semantic level and which are often realised at the lexicogrammatical level by giving orders or instructions. They assert that certain contexts where power or knowledge is unevenly distributed motivate the giving of orders and instructions, citing ‘procedural texts’ as commonly containing a number of orders.

At the clause level and talking about subject-finite relationship, features that carry the main burden of interpersonal meanings are the subject and the finite which Butt,et.al. say combine to make the mood of the clause. The order of subject and finite is a grammatical sign which indicates the type of exchange that actually takes place in a clause (Butt et al 2000, p. 66). The finite is seen as having two major interpersonal roles in the verbal group. It is either a sign of time in relation to the speaker or a modal sign of the speaker’s opinion. If a clause is to be argued

about, whether the event contained in it has happened, is currently happening or is yet to happen is very crucial. But, finites which encode speaker's opinion (rather than tense is known as Modal Finites).

The mood or Mood block equates the subject, the finite and the polarity in the clause. One of the ways to test the Mood block of a message is to add a Mood tag to the message so as to know whether the finite is in the present or in the past.

The order of subject and finite in the Mood block shows whether information is giving or demanded. Speakers and writers giving information most often normally make statements (Butt, et al, 1995, p. 71). In information-giving clauses, the subjects usually precede the finites. This configuration of the Mood block is called 'declarative Mood'. In this case, the finite is always present and is usually mapped on the same word as the event of the clause' whereas, speakers demanding information normally ask questions. This configuration of the Mood block is called 'interrogative Mood'.

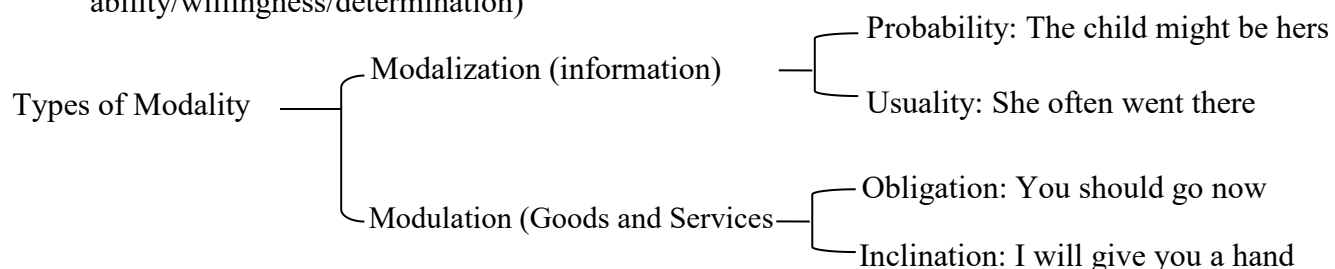
Speakers demanding goods and services may give orders or commands. Here, subjects and finites are always not made obvious but where emphases are to be made, the speaker may add a subject or a finite. This configuration of the Mood block is called 'imperative Mood'. Speakers who are offering goods and services do not have any recourse to any special subject-finite configuration. Rather, this type of message is identified through context.

Looking at finites from the angle of the speaker's stance, Butt, et. al. believe that modality encapsulates all signs of speaker's opinion. Where the opinion has to do with probability or usuality modality is known as modalisation but known as modulation where the opinion expresses obligation. Apart from the modal finite, also available to the English speakers to describe interpersonal meanings are the adverbial group and prepositional phrases. These are known as adjuncts and part of residue. According to Butt, et al, they encode speaker's opinion in terms of the probability, obligation, usuality, presumption, inclination, degree, and intensity and even the nowness or pastness of the Event in the clause.

There are also the comment adjuncts which, they claim, allow speakers to show their attitude towards the experience being expressed by the clause. They are not part of the original proposition in the clause and, therefore, do not form part of the Mood or Residue.

In order to understand how modality works, Thompson (2004 p.67) identified two basic types of modality: modalisation and modulation. He recognises the most fundamental purpose in

any exchange as “giving and taking” or “demanding and being given” (a commodity of some kind). If the commodity being exchanged is information, “the modality relates to how valid the information is being presented in terms of probability (how likely it is to be true) or usuality (how frequently it is true)”. On the other hand, if the commodity being exchanged is goods-and-services, the modality relates to how confident the speaker can appear to be in the eventual success of the exchange. In giving commands, modality is concerned with the degree of obligation to be carried out by the other person. In this case, the scale for the demanded goods-and-services include: permissible/advisable/obligatory. In offers, it concerns the degree of willingness or inclination of the speaker to fulfill the offer (the speaker may signal ability/willingness/determination)



Types of modality: Thompson (2004 p. 67)

From his own perspective, Thompson (2004) submits that in a verbal exchange, making a statement means giving information while asking a question means demanding it. The exchange is successful if the listener understands and does what is required (with or without using language). in the latter case, the exchange is successful if a non-verbal action is carried out i.e. if the listener obeys the command.

This brings speech roles to four: giving information, demanding information, giving goods-and-services and demanding goods and-services. These functions are labelled by Thompson (2004, p. 47) as “statement; question: offer; and command.”

It is noteworthy that three of these four functions are associated with particular grammatical structures: statements are expressed by declarative clauses, questions by interrogative clause and commands by imperative clauses. This is because the mood system of the clause has three main choices. Though, part of modality, offer is not associated with a particular mood choice. This, according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, 110) is because here, “language is functioning simply as a means towards achieving what are essentially non-linguistic ends”. These interactive functions can be investigated by focusing on a particular element of the

clause called the Mood (Thompson, 2004). According to Thompson, there are numbers of ways in which modality in mood could be expressed. Modality is signaled in mood by modal verb operators through which finite relates either to the here and now of the speech event (i.e. tense) or to the speaker's attitude (modality). Apart from a modal verbal operator, modality may also be signaled in Mood by a Mood Adjunct which Thompson believes is the most normal way of expressing usuality. He gave the examples:

Was that a hostel perhaps? – Probability

People usually enquire after my sisters – Usuality

Thompson argues that modality neutralizes tenses but focuses on speaker's attitudes and opinions. Hence, modality is crucial in the analysis of a speech.

In their own contribution, Berman, Ragnarsdottir, & Stromquist. (2002, p. 34) maintain that modality of a text is an aggregate of various meaning relating to permission, ability, obligation, necessity, volition and prediction. They identify nine modal verbs as “can, could, may, might, shall, should will, would, must”. Like others, they assert that the contribution of modality to textual meaning is to reflect the producer's opinion about what they say. They, however, identify two types of modality which they name: (a) Epistemic modality and (b) Deontic modality. Epistemic has three indicators namely: modal verbs like will, which indicates certainty and ‘may’ which indicates possibility, modal adjectives with, high and low modality as in the use of words “definite” and “possible” respectively and modal adverbs with such indicators as in “definitely” (strong) and “possibly” (weak). Deontic modality, on the other hand, entails the attitude of the speaker/writer as regards judgmental, evaluative or prescriptive vantage point. They name the indicators of deontic modality as including “have to” “must” and “had better” which they state indicate strong obligation while “ought to” “should” indicate obligation, “need to” reflects necessity and “be supposed to” reflects weaker obligation.

As none of these linguists departs from the others in terms of theoretical view point, this work intends to adopt their views.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The text being presented for this study is more or less single-authored. There is no turn-taking. Meaning that, it is a one-man show with no response from the congregation even though they were there listening. The speech contained thirty clauses which were alphabetically labelled having been split into five for the sake of easy reference. The sermonic speech was carved up

into five based on the number of times the speaker summoned the audience. The choice of data is purposive as the content of the message is indicative of peace and security.

Datum1

“O People

- a. Lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again.*
- b. Therefore, listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and TAKE THESE WORDS TO THOSE WHO COULD NOT BE PRESENT HERE TODAY.*

Datum2

O People

- a. Just as you regard this month, this day, this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust.*
- b. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners.*
- c. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you.*
- d. Remember that you will indeed meet your LORD, and that HE will indeed reckon your deeds.*
- e. ALLAH has forbidden you to take usury (interest); therefore all interest obligations shall henceforth be waived.*
- f. Your capital, however, is yours to keep.*
- g. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity.*
- h. Allah has judged that there shall be no interest and that all the interest due to Abbas Ibn Abdul Muttalib (Prophet’s uncle) shall henceforth be waived...*
- i. Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion.*
- j. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.*

Datum3

O People

- a. It is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you.*
- b. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah’s trust and with His permission.*
- c. If they abide by your right then, to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness.*

- d. *Do treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers.*
- e. *And it is your right that they do not make friends with any one of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.*

Datum4

O People

- a. *Listen to me in earnest, worship ALLAH, say your five daily prayers (Salah), fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat.*
- b. *Perform Hajj if you can afford to.*
- c. *All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor does a black have any superiority over white except by piety (taqwa) and good action.*
- d. *Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brother hood.*
- e. *Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly.*
- f. *Do not, therefore, do injustice to yourselves.*
- g. *Remember, one day you will appear before ALLAH and answer your deeds.*
- h. *So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.*

Datum 5

O People

- a. *NO PROPHET OR APOSTLE WILL COME AFTER ME AND NO NEW FAITH WILL BE BORN.*
- b. *Reason well, therefore, O People, and understand words which I convey to you.*
- c. *I leave behind me two things: the QUR'AN and my example, the SUNNAH and if you follow these, you will never go astray.*
- d. *All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly.*
- e. *Be my witness, O ALLAH, that I have conveyed your message to your people”.*

Datum	Shall	Will	May	Can/	Percentage
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number				be able	
Datum 1 (2 clauses)	1	-	-	-	5.7
Datum 2 (10 clauses)	3	4	1	1	50
Datum 3 (5 clauses)	-	-	-	-	-
Datum 4 (8 clauses)	1	1	-	1	16.6
Datum 5 (5 clauses)	1	3	1	-	27.7
Percentage	33.3	44.4	11.1	11.1	100

The percentage of the modal verbs in the data

The table above summed up the speaker's belief system. In the statistical distribution, "will" had the highest frequency of 44.4%. This implied that the events being talked about were certain. Next to 'will' in frequency was 'shall' which has 33.3% frequency. These (i.e. will & shall) were two of the samples Wales (2001, p.256) brought forward as indicators of different kinds of modality which he said expressed volition and prediction. 'Can/may' had the same frequency of 11.1% each while 'can' expressed ability and potentiality, and 'may' conveyed possibility and wish.

Horizontally viewed, however, Datum 2 had the highest collection of modal verbs of 50%, followed by Datum 5 with 27.7% and then, Datum 4 with 16.6%. While Datum 1 had the lowest percentage of 5.7, Datum 3 had nil. This is occasioned by the nature of the message contained in that part of the speech. Datum 3 is all about reminder, sensitising the listeners on their spiritual responsibilities and limitations.

Closely connected to the foregoing is the use of modal adjuncts and adjectives. The adverbs used convey the attitude of the speaker as his message unfolds to reveal the moral obligations expected of his (present and future) followers. The mood of the speaker was vividly captured through the modal adjuncts which were used to present the real situation of the religious events being projected. The speaker's "judgements of the relevance or truth value" (Thompson, 2004, p.157) of his opinion were relayed by the following adjuncts and adjectives.

Datum	Adjuncts	Adjectives
1 a b.	2 (ever, again) 1 (carefully)	1 (attentive)
2 a. b. d.	I (just) I (indeed)	1 (sacred) 1 (rightful)
3 a. b. c. d.	- Only 1(in kindness)	1 (certain) - - 1 (committed)
4 a. e. g	1 (in earnest) 2 (freely, willingly) -	1 (fellow) 1 (one)
5 a D	- 2 (again, directly)	1 (new) -
	58%	42%

Adjuncts constitute 58% of the total adjectives + adjuncts used. This signifies emphasis on description of actions. It also showcases the speaker's intention to magnify what actions should or should not be taken. However, modal adjectives are speaker's comment which Berman et. al. believe allow speakers to air their view on the substance of their talk. The adjectives are used attributively to modify some nouns (Muslim, faith, day, trust, owners, rights etc.) which are expressions of Islamic faith and which are basically essential to the understanding of the intended message.

Discussion of findings

In this study, modality has been analysed. Effort is made in this section to explain how the events contained in the data are modalised. Each of the data began with an appeal to the sense

of hearing, i.e. summoning, “O people”. This is an attention-calling gimmick by the speaker to set the motion and prepare ground for his message. It also heralds the seriousness of what is coming after. This signifies the intention of the speaker as regards his mission concerning the message. “Will” which Berman et al. grouped under epistemic modality and which they say indicates certainty and futurity is mostly used. This is an indication that 44.4% of the events in the 30 clauses were certain. For instance, the speaker was certain when he cautioned his hearers “remember that you **will** indeed... you **will** neither inflict nor suffer...you **will** appear before ALLAH...No prophet...**will** come... no new faith **will** be born...” The speaker gave certainty on the notion of life after death and is therefore making a clarion call to sensitise the hearers that “one day, you **will** ... reckon your deeds. The fact that every person will be taken into account for their deed is being projected. Hence, the warnings “beware” (in Data 2i, 2j and 4h).

“Shall” which constituted 33.3% of the total modal verbs is also used to imply definiteness. Through the use of modal auxiliaries, the speaker speculated into both futurity and certainty. The modal auxiliaries signaled that the present would survive and metamorphose into reality in the future as you have it in Datum 3c. In Datum 1a, the preacher “knows not” the certainty of “ever be amongst” the speaker admonished against the illegality of obtaining another man’s property against his will. The modals “will” and “Shall” are binoculars through which the speaker fortified the future. And which, if adapted, would make the world a better place.

“May” which signified possibility and ‘can’ which indicated ability had the lowest percentage. The low appearance of probability and ableness further strengthened the existing modals which tended to be strong. The implication is that the issue did not rest on whether the events being discussed ‘may’/ ‘can’ take place, it rested on the reality that they ‘will’/ ‘shall’.

Datum 1 which contained only one modal verb was the introductory section which ushered in the rest four. This explained the repeated use of the admonitory verbs “lend” (me attentive ear and ‘listen’ (to what I want to say) in the datum.

Datum two had the highest (50%) of the auxiliaries contained in the data perhaps because the speaker addressed many issues and so had the highest number of clauses. This Datum happened to be the richest in terms of thematic concern. He talked about sacredness of a Muslim’s life and property, illegal obtainment, the prohibition of hurting a fellow being, of being involved in usury, being cognisance of the devil and his tricks and above all being conscious of the day of reckoning. The speaker cautioned against following satanic caprices which have the

tendency to destroy holiness in the individual. If religiously followed, the advice “remember... you will indeed meet your Lord,... He will indeed reckon your deeds” is capable of safeguarding the society from moral degeneration as it induces God-consciousness into the religion adherents of the preacher.

Datum three contained no modal. It is however bombarded with cautionary lexical verbs. It was majorly on precaution on the treatment of women “in kindness” It highlighted the position of chaste women whom he described as “committed helpers” and who should “be **fed** and **clothed**”. The sermonizer reminded men to not forget that women also have rights even though “you **have** certain rights” Thus, the preacher digs into the basis of the family which cumulates into a nation and whose health transforms into societal health. Datum four contained only “shall” and “will” because it is made up of caveats. The preacher cautioned the audience against cheating, against apartheid and advanced the encouragement that Muslims should “worship Allah” the way they should. He asked them to pray, fast and pay zakat.

Datum five, the concluding part of the preachment had second to the highest number of modal verbs. Made up of five clauses, it contained five (expressions) of parting clauses marked by assurance. For instance, “No prophet... will come after me... no new faith will be born...” Is characterized by certainty and signifies the seal of prophethood. Hence, the speaker went further to urge his listeners to follow “the Qur’an and my example, the sunnah.” Thus, referring them to the two religious scriptures, he meant to guide human ideology and behavioural tendencies. He latter summoned them to propagate his message by expressing his wish “may the last ones understand my words better than those who listened to me directly.” The invocation, “Be my witness, O Allah...” entailed his sanctitude and revealed the message being passed as a genuine corrective device of social ills. To the religion adherents, understanding the speech encapsulates religious commitment; when an average citizen enjoys justice, fairness and equity, he has a sense of belonging, shuns lawlessness and sees himself as a stakeholder. When made to understand his religion (through language), a believer has the tendency to act in accordance to the dictates of his religion and the nation will be rid of envious minds with evil intents.

The data contain only two types of clause moods: Declarative and imperative. Sixteen of the clauses, i.e. 53% of the total clauses (2e, f, g, h, j, 3a, c, e, 4c, e, 5a, c, d, and e) are imperatives while the rest fourteen i.e. 47% are declaratives. This justifies the fact that the whole message is more of intention to influence listeners’ behavior to perform some essential actions as

a matter of urgency since the speaker opines, in his opening statement “I know not whether... I shall ever be amongst you again.”

The presence of modal adjuncts has great impact on the discourse at hand. Through the use of adjuncts, the speaker warns against different shades of corruptions: killing, taking usury, and other demonic acts that suggest opposition to holy acts like paying zakat which, of course, translates to even distribution of wealth. The preacher is able to drive home his points through these adjuncts. For instance, he is able to paint the essence of treating a woman in kindness. The use of “freely and willingly” (4e) strengthens the speaker’s opinion about peaceful- co-existence where nobody is forced to part with their belongings. He reiterates shunning violence to induce violence (which can threaten the peace and security of the country when giving the advice “Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you”. He later admonished those who listen to him directly and even extend the admonition to “those who could not be present”. The modal adjuncts were more/less comments and echoes of the preacher’s feelings.

Certain modal adjectives were also used in the sermon to suggest the speaker’s intention to represent the real objective of his mission. This explains the use of warning-related verbs such as “listen” “remember”: “beware” “learn” “reason” “understand” and a number of “do nots” which are also cautionary and serve as wake up call to those who were present and those “who could not be present” at the moment of the talk.

Of the four speech roles identified by Thompson, only two manifested in our data. i.e. giving information (declaratives) and demanding goods-and-services (imperatives). A reasonable number of the clauses were found to be imperative i.e. giving warning/ instruction and requesting the hearers to carry out some religious obligations, “regard the life and property... return the goods entrusted to you Remember that you will Reckon your deeds. Beware of Satan.. Do treat your women well.... Perform hajj... learn that every Muslims....Do not do injustice to yourselves ... do not stray from the path of righteousness.” The absence of subjects in these clauses brought forth the speaker’s stand as he expresses his face-to-face instructions to the generality of his followers. Apart from encouraging people to imbibe the spirit of brotherhood and unity since no nation or person is above the other “except in piety”, the speaker emphasized equality amongst people of the nation. He preached against racial segregation and harboring the feeling of superiority over others. The other Mood, declaratives, were indications of deliverance of instructions: “Allah has forbidden you...your capital is yours...you will neither inflict...Allah

has judged that there shall be no interest...it is true that you have certain rights...all mankind is from Adam...nothing shall be legitimate...no prophet will come after me...I leave behind me two things...all those who listen to me shall pass on my words...etc.”

In conclusion, the authenticity of the prophethood of the Messenger is fortified in the declaration: “Be my witness, O ALLAH, that I have conveyed your message to your people”. Overall the analysis revealed that modality is a potent yardstick with which the strength of a speaker’s opinion could be measured.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The most paramount concern of most governments is the dimension of insecurity of life and property. Hence, insecurity is a global challenge. In the Nigerian instance, insecurity manifests in different dimensions ranging from civil insurrections, ethnic militia, terrorist attacks to genocide and ethno-religion crises. It goes without saying that the quality of a nation is epitomised in the quality of its citizenry. Therefore, if a nation is to achieve optimal security, its citizenship must be at its peak in moral standard.

The speech examined in this work underscores the highest possible standard of morality; the standard by which a particular mode of conduct is judged and classified as either good or bad. Apart from laying vehemence on deportment, the preachment put premium on the freedom and safety of citizenry from all round dangers: be it psychological, economic, political, cultural or physical. “Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you” and “Do not therefore do injustice to yourselves” are self-explanatory instructions pointing at the fact that if understood and acted upon, the farewell message could serve as panacea to the lingering social challenge in Nigeria.

The study therefore recommended that starting from the individual, the behavioural inclination of the citizenry should be motivated, modified and shaped through religious inculcation which is only achievable through language – a significant weapon of advancement of a nation as exemplified in the farewell message of Prophet Muhammad which encompasses the general wellbeing of citizenry thereby paving way to unhindered leadership as well as followership.

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