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**PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF AMMA DARKO'S *BEYOND THE HORIZON***

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**Abstract**

This paper focuses on the analysis of pragmatic features of a literary work—Amma Darko's *Beyond the Horizon*. Assuming that the study of discourse in literature requires a linguistic theory, it mainly draws on Austin's (1975) theory of speech acts, which stresses the role of language in communicative social acts such as requesting, questioning, promising, etc. as well as the institutional verbal acts. The analysis is carried out on selected excerpts from the novel. The paper shows that understanding the speech act force of utterances involves the hearer in combining linguistic knowledge about grammatical marking with both background cultural knowledge and knowledge of the immediate local context.

**Key words:** Speech act, pragmatic features, context, utterances, illocutionary force.

**Résumé**

Le présent article porte sur l'analyse des caractéristiques pragmatiques de l'œuvre littéraire d'Amma Darko intitulée: *Beyond the Horizon*. En admettant que l'étude du discours dans la littérature nécessite une théorie linguistique, il s'appuie principalement sur la théorie d'Austin (1975) des actes de langage qui met l'accent sur le rôle joué par la langue dans les actes de communication sociale comme demander, questionner, promettre, etc. aussi bien que les actes verbaux institutionnels. L'analyse est effectuée sur des extraits choisis du roman. L'étude montre que la compréhension du principe de l'acte de langage des énoncés requiert, de la part de l'auditeur, la combinaison des connaissances linguistiques sur le trait grammatical, des connaissances culturelles de fond et de la connaissance du contexte local immédiat.

**Mots clés:** Acte de langage, fonctions pragmatiques, contexte, énoncés, force illocutoire

**Introduction**

*Beyond the Horizon* is the first novel written and published by Amma Darko. It mainly focuses on the story of a naïve village girl, Mara, who has been forced to marry a man she does not deserve because of his numerous bad habits. She is later convinced to follow him to Europe (Germany), where she is made to work

as a prostitute to satisfy her husband's selfish and material desires. Amma Darko's first novel is, thus, an attempt to disillusion African people who think that once they succeed in going to Europe, they will enjoy better living conditions than those they have left behind. Darko's making African people's welfare her concern is worthy of attention and support.

Indeed, various essays and critical works have been carried out on this novel and they include mainly works by literary critics. This article, far from being a repetition of what other scholars have done, is a linguistic inquiry into *Beyond the Horizon* for a deep understanding of the novel. It deals with a pragmatic study of some passages of the book, with reference to the major issue being discussed by the writer.

### 1. Theoretical framework and literature review

To carry out a practical analysis of the book under study, there is, for the sake of clarity, a brief explanation of some key features of pragmatics. Indeed, pragmatics is generally viewed as the study of utterances in context, how people manage to convey more than is literally encoded by the semantics of sentences (Griffiths, 2006; Finegan, 2007). So pragmatics is concerned with utterance meaning rather than sentence meaning. Saeed (2003) contends that it is the field which studies how hearers fill out the semantic structure with contextual information and make inferences which go beyond the meaning of what was said to them. The pragmatic analysis of language is, thus, the investigation into that aspect of meaning which is derived not from the formal properties of words and constructions, but from the way in which utterances are used and how they relate to the context in which they are used (Leech, 1981). As for Holmes (2008), she emphasizes the influence of context in the study of pragmatics; she says: "context is clearly crucial in interpreting what is meant, and pragmatics extends the analysis of meaning beyond grammar and words relationship between the participants and the background knowledge they bring to a situation. Pragmatics is concerned with the analysis of meaning in interaction." (p.357).

As a matter of fact, this study focuses on two issues of pragmatics which are: speech acts and conversational implicature. Speech act is one important feature of pragmatics which relates utterance meaning to context. The development of this theory goes back to Austin (1975) and it is later developed largely by a lot of scholars, with some of the most important works being those of Searle (1975, 1976). According to Austin (1975), "when we say something we are generally doing a number of things, including uttering an intelligible sentence which conveys a particular intention and affects a particular response." (p.108). Searle (1975) elaborates on this statement by observing that when people utter sentences, they also perform acts of various kinds, such as declaring, asking,

requesting, commanding, promising and so on. Austin suggests that a speech act consists of three elements which are: locutionary act, that is the act of saying something that makes sense in a language; perlocutionary act, which is the intended effect inherent in an utterance and the third element, illocutionary act, is the action intended by the speaker. Finegan (2007) argues that in discussions of speech acts, it is common for the illocutionary act itself to be called the speech act. Searle (1975), then, categorises the types of speech act possible in language as the following:

- Representatives or assertives, which commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition (i.e. asserting, claiming, reporting)
- Directives are intended to get the addressee to carry out an action: command, request, challenges, etc.
- Commissive, which commit the speaker to some future course of action (i.e. promising, threatening, offering)
- Declarations bring about the state of affairs they name: blessing, hiring, firing, baptisms, etc.
- Expressives, which express a psychological state (i.e. greeting, apologizing, welcoming, congratulating, etc.)

Moreover, for a speech to achieve its intended purpose, i.e., its illocutionary force, certain conditions must be satisfied; these are called felicity conditions. Pratt (1977) quoted by Botha (2007) says that felicity conditions “represent rules which users of language assume to be in force in their verbal dealings with each other; they form part of the knowledge which speakers of a language share and on which they rely in order to use the language correctly and effectively, both in producing and understanding utterances” (p.81).

The second aspect of pragmatics is conversational implicature. The concept of ‘implicature’ is proposed by Grice (1975). Grice contends that whenever people converse with one another they acknowledge a kind of tacit agreement to cooperate conversationally towards mutual ends. He calls this agreement cooperative principle. McGregor (2009) observes that:

Speakers and hearers generally communicate successfully: the utterance meaning intended by the speaker on any particular occasion usually corresponds well with the utterance meaning inferred by the hearer. Of course mismatches do occur; a hearer may take offense when none was intended, or fail to take offense when it was intended. But things normally work relatively smoothly. For this to happen, the speakers and hearer must share some procedures of interpretation, of drawing the appropriate inferences from what is actually encoded. (p.145)

As a matter of fact, Grice (1975) formulates this principle as four maxims of cooperative talk which can be summarized as follows:

- Maxim of Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as required, but no more (or less) informative than required.
- Maxim of quality: Try to make your contribution true, do not say that which you believe false or for which you lack adequate evidence.
- Maxim of Relevance: be relevant.
- Maxim of Manner: be clear, unambiguous, brief, and orderly.

These maxims are principles governing the inferences conversational partners draw; they are not rules that one has to follow to produce interactively or socially acceptable or correct utterances. (McGregor, 2009). As observed by Saeed (2007), these maxims are basic assumptions, not rules, and they can be broken. In that respect, Grice (1975) makes the difference between the speaker secretly breaking them, which he terms violating the maxims, and overtly breaking them for some linguistic effect, which he calls flouting.

It is important to admit that a lot of works have been done so far as the application of pragmatics to texts is concerned. For example, Botha (2007) undertakes a speech act analysis of the biblical text. He accounts for the theory of speech act and focuses on how it has been used for the past two decades. His practical applications are based on two approaches; the first one deals with each speech act in detail and the second one focuses on the overall perlocutionary effects of a text. He, then, concludes that speech act can be applied to biblical texts in various ways as they can facilitate the understanding of these texts.

Agbedo (2008) carries out a pragmatic analysis of the political discourse in the Nigerian print media, basing his analyses on the statements of two journalists. After the examination of the illocutionary force of the speech acts, he finds out that the illocutionary acts derived from their individual speech acts fail to meet Austin's felicity conditions, thus rendering their individual speech acts infelicitous. As a result, these infelicitous speech acts fail to match with Grice's cooperative principle, which any given communicative event are expected to stick to.

Yaramahdi and Olfati (2011) have used speech act theory to inquire into Anthon Checkors's *The Seagull*. They analyse the characters' conversational art of the play through Searle's five taxonomies of speech act theory. This helps them to show how Anton Chekhov depicts the characters, expresses the feelings and catches the theme. Through the application of this theory, they have explained how the implied meanings facilitate the understanding of the masterpiece. Other important works are those of Altikriti (2011), Odebunmi (2005), Osisanwo (2003).

## 2. Data analysis

In order to focus on the pragmatic analysis of *Beyond the Horizon*, we have selected two excerpts through a purposive sampling method. The data includes, mainly, features of conversations that occur in these selected texts.

### 2.1. Speech acts analysis in text1

#### 2.1.1 Speech act identification

Here, we have adopted Searle (1975)'s taxonomies of illocutionary speech acts. The identification of speech acts is carried out under the following keys:

#### Keys:

**R**=Representative; **D**= Directive; **C**= Commissive; **Dec**=Declaration; **E**= Expressive.

#### Excerpt one

1-'It must be much easier for you, Mara, if you don't love Akobi,'(R) she resumed. 2- 'Or do you love him?'(D) 3-'I don't know'(R), I replied 4-'I don't know what it is to love a man (R). 5-I never learnt it because I wasn't taught (R). 6-I never experience it because I never got the chance to love before this marriage was arranged with Akobi (R). 7-I only know that a girl grows up, is given to a man by her parents and she has to please the man, serve him and obey him and bear him plenty children (R). 8-Is that love?'(D) 9- 'No'(R), she replied, laughing, 'love is something that you feel. (R) 10-You feel it. (R) 11-Do you feel anything for him?'(D) 12-'Like what?' (D) I asked. 13-Like . . .like, say. . . attachment. (R) 14-Like, say, desire to sleep with him and touch him and be by him all the time. (R) 15-Do you feel that?'(D) 16-'I don't know'(R) I replied. 17-'Attachment?'(D) 18-I think I feel a bit of it for him, yes. (R) 19-Sleep with him?(D) 20-Hm. 21-I don't know(R). 22-After this that he did to me in the bathroom? (R) 23-Hm. 24-When he married me, I thought that all the time that he slept with me that he was doing it so that I would bear him a son.(C) 25-But when I got pregnant he wasn't happy about it at all.(R) 26-So I don't know why he slept with me'(R). 27-'He is a man, Mara,(R) 28-and when he has a risen penis he will sleep with anything that has a vagina and leave the regret for later'(C), said Osey's wife. 29-'But here in the bathroom, he didn't sleep with you to let you bear him a son.(R) 30-Otherwise he wouldn't have called for the condom.(R) 31-So he slept with you for the same reason that he used to sleep with you at home'(R). 32-'Duty', I said thoughtfully, 'that was why he did it.(R) 33-But I don't understand why, if it was duty, he got excited at all in the first place and his penis rose at all.(R) 34-Both at home and here. (R) 35-Why did he do it with me if he didn't want to?(D) 36-Because Osey said he must?(D) 37-'Maybe, maybe not. (R) 38-How did he make it with you?(D) 39-'How did he make it with me?'(D) I asked, my face hot with shame. 40-'Yes,' (R) she

replied, 41-‘don’t feel ashamed’, (E) Mara. 42-Tell me (D). 43-We are alone here’(R). 44-‘Well’, I stammered, ‘he made it with me like . . . well . . . like it is made.(R) 45-How else?(D) 46-‘Yes, Mara, of course, he made it with you like it is made. (R) 47-But I want to see if he did it with you because Osey suggested it, or if he did it because in spite of feeling that it is a duty he has to fulfil, he also wanted to do it with you.(D) 48-So be honest with me.(D) 49-How did he get his thing hard?(D) 50-Did you do it for him?(D) 51- I was, to say the least, flabbergasted. (R) 52- ‘Did what?’(D) 53- I exclaimed at the top of my voice. ‘Make his thing hard for him!(D) 54-Did you make it hard for him before he actually did it with you?(D) 55-‘ I never make his thing hard for him!,(R) I retorted. 56-‘Akobi always makes his thing hard for himself!’(R) 57-‘You’ve never touched him before?(D) 58-You mean he’s never made you touch his thing before?(D) 59-‘No!’(R) I howled. 60-‘No! No! No!(R) 61- And I don’t want to talk with you about it again, please!(E) 62-Please!(E)

### 2.2.2 Speech act analysis

Basing on the previous speech act identification, we have decided to reconsider the different speech acts both quantitatively and qualitatively (Osuala, 2007; Creswell, 2003). Indeed, the quantitative analysis enables us to count the occurrence of speech acts and provide the related percentage of these pragmatic features. The results are displayed in the table below.

Speech acts	Interactants		Total and percentage
	Osey’s wife	Mara	
Representatives	13	20	33 (55%)
Directives	14	08	22 (36.67%)
Commissives	01	01	02 (3.33%)
Expressives	01	02	03 (5%)
Declarations	00	00	00 (00%)
Total	29	31	60 (100%)

**Table 1: Statistics of speech acts based on speech acts identification**

The above text is a conversation between Mara, the narrator of the book, and Osey’s wife. From the table above, we can notice that out of a total of sixty (60) speech acts, there are thirty-three (33) representatives, which stands for 55% of

the total. In addition, over the thirty-three representatives, Mara has uttered twenty (20) and Osey's wife, thirteen (13). The predominance of these representatives means that the two characters are committed to the truth of their expected propositions. They also express their belief through assertions, reports, claims and conclusions.

Likewise, directive speech acts come second as they are twenty-two (22) out of the sixty (60) utterances. They represent 36.67% of the total number of utterances in the excerpt. However, Osey's wife has used more directives than Mara. The important number of directives suggests that the two characters, Mara and Osey's wife, are concerned with getting each other to do something. These are expressed in forms of advice, commands, orders, questions and requests (Huang, 2007). Declarations are non-existent in the text whereas commissives and expressives are in very few proportions, which means that interactants are less concerned with expressing a psychological attitude or state, on the one hand, let alone with bringing about the state of affairs they name, on the other.

In sum, the above table presents a picture of speech acts in the dialogic part of the novel. We now focus on the qualitative aspects of the analysis. This consists in dealing with a few instances of speech acts in excerpt1:

3-'I don't know'(R), I replied 4-'I don't know what it is to love a man (R). 5-I never learnt it because I wasn't taught (R). 6-I never experience it because I never got the chance to love before this marriage was arranged with Akobi (R). 7-I only know that a girl grows up, is given to a man by her parents and she has to please the man, serve him and obey him and bear him plenty children (R)

The above passage is Mara's answer to Osey's wife's question: "3-Or do you love him?", a directive speech act which is intended to get Mara to provide Osey's wife with information related to her relationships with her husband, Akobi. Mara's utterances show that she is committed to saying what she considers to be the truth. She asserts, reports and she concludes. Then, she is also bound to respond to Osey's wife in order for the speech acts to express their conditions of success as suggested by Leech (1981: 293), who says that "a command or a question is successful if it elicits an appropriate response". As the statistics table shows it, Osey's wife uttered mostly directive speech acts. The following examples are very illustrative:

47- But I want to see if he did it with you because Osey suggested it, or if he did it because in spite of feeling that it is a duty he has to fulfil, he also wanted to do it with

you.(D) 48-So be honest with me.(D) 49-How did he get his thing hard?(D) 50-Did you do it for him?(D)

These sequences of directive speech acts show that the main concern of Osey's wife is to get Mara to account for her sexual experience with Akobi. The naïve behaviour of Mara is illustrated by her hesitation to answer these questions straightaway, or through other directives acts initiated by the latter (example: 8-Is that love?(D), 12-'Like what?' (D) I asked). She, through the use of representative acts, comes up to Osey's wife's expectations but is quickly uncomfortable with such interrogations. This is why she utters expressive speech acts (61- And I don't want to talk with you about it again, please!(E) 62-Please!(E)) to express her bitterness and sorrow as well as her dislike for the issue being discussed.

Moreover, the few commissive acts used in the texts include the following:

24-When he married me, I thought that all the time that he slept with me that he was doing it so that I would bear him a son.(C)

28-and when he has a risen penis he will sleep with anything that has a vagina and leave the regret for later'(C), said Osey's wife

The first utterance is produced by Mara, who has shown Akobi's false intention to impregnate her, whereas the second one is used by Osey's wife to show what brings a man to have sex with a woman. The two utterances, which convey commissive speech acts, are meant to show how some men are used to making light of sex.

## **2.2 Speech acts analysis in text2**

As done in text1, we begin this analysis with speech act identification. The advantage of this method is that it makes it easy to know the distribution of speech acts in the excerpt.

### **2.2.1 Speech act identification.**

The different keys used in the previous sub-section have been used here again '1-I have disappeared, Mara,'(R) she said. 2- 'I beg your pardon?'(D) 3-'I've gone.'(R) 4-'Where? What do you mean?''(D) 5-'From Osey, Mara.(R) 6-Far, far gone!(R) 7-Direction America!(R) 8-Land of Yankees and steaks, here I come.(R) 9-Take me whole, Lady Liberty. (D)10-I love the sons of your womb!'(E) She laughed loudly. 11-'Vivian, are you feeling all right?''(D) I asked genuinely concerned. 12-'Do I feel all right?(D) 13-Of course!(R) 14-

What do you think?(D) 15- I am okay, Mara.(R) 16-And that is why I butted Osey deep in the arse!(R) 17-Do you know that he beat me up with the pressing iron?(D) 18-‘Why, Vivian, why did he do that?’(D) 19-Because I went shagging with a GI.(R) 20-Soldier my love. . . soldier my love . . . take me in your arms . . .’(R) she started singing tunelessly, then stopped abruptly and said, 21-Mara do you know something?’(D) 22-‘ what?’(D) I asked. 23-‘I’m in love, Mara,’ she said, with a GI.’(R) 24-‘Who is GI?’(D) I asked. 25-Marvin,’(R) she replied. 26-‘He is a GI.’(R) 27-‘What is GI?’(D) I asked. 28-Government Issue, capital letters.(R) 29-American Soldier based in Wiesbaden.(R) 30- Soldier love.(R) 31-Ah, Mara, I love him.(R) 32-I love him so much that I bought him a gold chain.(R) 33-And then kicked Osey in the arse.’(R) 34-‘With Marvin’s soldier boots’.(R) We both laughed. 35-‘But why did you want to talk to me, Mara?’(D) Vivian suddenly asked. I remained silent. 36-‘Mara, are you there?’(D) 37-I decided to be straightforward. ‘I want you to tell me what you know about Comfort, Vivian.’(D) 38-There was a silence. Then she said, ‘Oh my God, Mara, so you’ve found out!’(E) 39-‘I have’(R) 40-‘Oh my God!’(E) She muttered again. 41-‘Did you know all along? From the time I came?’(D) I asked her. 42-‘I did’(R) She admitted. 43-‘And you put all that show?’(D) 44-‘Convincing me to be tolerant and do what you were all telling me?’(D). 45-‘You were green then, Mara.(R) 46- Totally green.(R) 47-And I was also in love with Osey then.(R) 48-And I did what Osey ordered me to do.(R) 49-I was his property then, Mara.(R) 50- I loved him, Mara.(R) 51-I really did.’(R) Her voice trailed off. 52-‘What’s wrong, Vivian?’(D) I shouted. 53-‘I’m not blaming you!’(E) 54-I just need information’.(R) 55- ‘It is not you, Mara,’(R) she sniffed. 56-Another silence; then suddenly, ‘You know what, Mara? Ingrid is pregnant’(R). 57-‘Who is Ingrid?’(D) I asked. 58-‘Osey’s wife.(R) 59-His German wife.(R) 60-Can you understand that, Mara?(D) 61-I am his first wife.(R) 62-He didn’t make a child with me, but went and made a baby with Ingrid.(R) 63- Can you understand that?(D) 64- I was always telling him, we must make a child, Osey, we must make a child and send it home.(R) 65-And what did he tell me?’(D) 66-Wait!(D) 67-Always, wait, wait, wait.(D) 68- And before I knew what was happening, Ingrid was pregnant.’(R) 69-It was my turn to be shocked. ‘I thought he said he married her for convenience?’(E) I said. 70-‘Which doesn’t mean they don’t sleep together,’(R) she answered. 71-And you know what is even worse?’(D) 72- Ingrid asked if I could come and live with them when her baby arrived and helped her take care of it.(C) 73- I said, “Ah, Ingrid, but you don’t have a big enough apartment,”(R) and she said, 74-“Not to worry, Vivian, Osey said we are taking on a new apartment, a bigger one. Four rooms.”(C) 75- And said, “But that is expensive, Ingrid.” (R)76- And she said, “But Osey says he can afford the payments.”(R) 77- And why do you think he can afford the rent, Mara?(D) 78- Because I was there, Mara.(R) 79- I was there to work for him’.(R) 80-‘So what did you tell Ingrid?’(D) I asked. 81-‘I told her I was sorry, but that by then may be I would be carrying my own baby too, somewhere in Chicago.’(C) 82-‘Is Marvin in Chicago?’(D) I asked. 83-‘Marvin

is here.(R) 84-When he leaves here at the end of his service he goes to Chicago.’(C)

### 2.2.2 Speech act analysis

The framework used in the previous sub-section is also followed here. Data are viewed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Speech acts	Interactants		Total and percentage
	Vivian	Mara	
Representatives	42	4	46 (54.76%)
Directives	14	15	29 (34.53%)
Commissives	04	00	04 (4.76%)
Expressives	03	02	05 (5.95%)
Declarations	00	00	00 (00.00%)
Total	64	20	84 (100%)

**Table 2: Statistics of speech acts based on speech acts identification**

Following the above table, we can notice the predominance of representative speech acts: 46 (54.76%) of the total number of the speech acts. A striking remark is that over these total numbers of representatives, (42) are uttered by Vivian whereas Mara utters only (4). This suggests that Vivian is more committed to the truth of the expressed propositions than Mara. Directives rank second, 29 (34.53%), with 14 uttered by Vivian and 15 uttered by Mara. This means that both of them are preoccupied with getting each other to do something by advising, commanding, ordering, questioning, and requesting.

Like the previous text, this text displays very few features of commissives and expressives. However, the commissives are uttered by Vivian only, showing that she has expressed her intention to do things such as offers and promises. As for expressives, they are uttered by both Vivian and Mara to point out that they have, to some extent, expressed their psychological state. Finally and here again, there is no issue of declarations, where the interactants bring about changes in the world, that is, they effect a correspondence between the propositional content and the world (Huang, 2007).

Moreover, a qualitative analysis makes it easy to generalize the occurrence of these linguistic features. Indeed, this excerpt is part of a conversation between

Viviane, Osey's ex and Mara. Vivian utters representatives to express state of affairs. An example is in the following passage:

24-'Who is GI?'(D) I asked. 25-Marvin,'(R) she replied. 26-'He is a GI.'(R) 27-'What is GI?'(D) I asked. 28-Government Issue, capital letters.(R) 29-American Soldier based in Wiesbaden.(R) 30- Soldier love.(R) 31-Ah, Mara, I love him.(R) 32-I love him so much that I bought him a gold chain.(R) 33-And then kicked Osey in the arse.'(R) 34-'With Marvin's soldier boots'.(R)

The above passage stands as an appropriate response to Mara's directive speech acts used in form of questions ('who is GI?', 'what is GI?'). Here, the illocutionary point of Vivian's representative speech act is to transmit information related to her love relationship with GI. She is convinced about her love affairs with GI and it is a good way of forgetting about all that she has gone through with Osey.

But more important in this excerpt is that directive speech acts are followed by representatives, which are meant to provide clarifications and answers to requests and questions. This is noticed in the passage above:

56-Another silence; then suddenly, 'You know what, Mara? Ingrid is pregnant'(R). 57-'Who is Ingrid?'(D) I asked. 58-'Osey's wife.(R) 59-His German wife.(R) 60-Can you understand that, Mara?(D) 61-I am his first wife.(R) 62-He didn't make a child with me, but went and made a baby with Ingrid.(R) 63- Can you understand that?(D) 64- I was always telling him, we must make a child, Osey, we must make a child and send it home.(R) 65-And what did he tell me?(D) 66- Wait!(D)

In the utterances bearing the illocutionary point of directives, Mara is trying to get Vivian to provide her with clarifications regarding the way she has changed after giving up her relations with her former husband, Osey, on the one hand, as well as Osey's new wife and how she has been deceived by Osey when she is telling him about her desire to make a child with him, on the other. In addition, through directives, Vivian is questioning herself and then provides answers by uttering representative speech acts. This is meant to provide Mara with more explanations about the issue being discussed.

Moreover, expressives, although they are very few in number, have played particular roles in the organization of the conversation. Here are the examples:

10-I love the sons of your womb!'(E)  
40-'Oh my God!'(E) She muttered again  
53-'I'm not blaming you!(E)

The first two examples are uttered by Vivian. In the first one, she is expressing the joy of having the opportunity to go to America. In the second one, her psychological attitude is about her friend's discovery about Comfort. In the third example, Mara has uttered the expressive speech act to ensure Vivian to apologize. Actually, as Yule (1996) quoted by Huang (2007) argues : "in performing the act of an expressive, the speaker makes known what he or she feels, thus rendering the words to fit the world of feeling" (p.107). Finally, Vivian has reported some future actions which indicate the use of commissive speech acts. These are:

72- Ingrid asked if I could come and live with them when her baby arrived and helped her take care of it.(C)

74-"Not to worry, Vivian, Osey said we are taking on a new apartment, a bigger one. Four rooms."(C)

81-'I told her I was sorry, but that by then may be I would be carrying my own baby too, somewhere in Chicago.'(C)

84-When he leaves here at the end of his service he goes to Chicago.'(C)

The above utterances are promises and pledges made by Ingrid to Vivian, on the one hand, as well as those made by Vivian, on the other. In addition to speech acts, it is important to note that an underlying assumption in most conversational exchanges is that the participants are co-operating with each other. This principle is studied in the following section under the heading entitled conversational implicature.

### **3. Analysis of conversational implicature**

As said earlier, conversational implicature functions on the principle that participants co-operate with each other in a conversation, and relies on the four maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. According to Botha (2007), these maxims represent the rules parties to a conversation or speech exchange normally assume to be in place and this makes a coherent, directed interchange possible.

In this paper we are concerned with a brief study of the co-operative principle in order to find out how the interactants have abided by these maxims and how some of them have been broken. Indeed, examples and analyses are based on the two selected excerpts.

### 3.1 In excerpt one

We now consider the following passage:

. . . Do you feel anything for him?’  
‘Like what?’ I asked.  
‘Like . . .like, say. . . attachment. Like, say, desire to sleep  
with him and  
‘I don’t know,’ I replied. ‘Attachment?’ I think I feel a bit of it  
for him, yes.  
Sleep with him? Hm. I don’t know. After this that he did to me  
in the bathroom? Hm. When he married me, I thought that all  
the time that he slept with me that he was doing it so that I  
would bear him a son. But when  
I got pregnant he wasn’t happy about it at all. So I don’t know  
why he slept  
with me’

In the above passage, it is noticed that Osey’s wife’s question is perfectly straightforward but she has flouted the maxim of manner as her question tends to be ambiguous and unclear. Mara is then obliged to put a clarification question to understand what Osey’s wife is trying to say. Mara answers by providing a brief answer, which matches with the maxim of quality and flouts the maxim of manner as she is expected to answer by true or false. But to the following question which consists in finding out whether Mara feels attachment to her husband, she flouts the maxim of quantity because her contribution is more informative than is required. In addition, her answer corresponds to the maxim of relation due to the relevance of her utterance.

Likewise, in order to further our investigation into the co-operative principle, we consider the sequence below:

. . .Did you make it hard for him before he actually did it with  
you?’  
‘I never make his thing hard for him! I retorted. ‘Akobi always  
makes his  
hing hard for himself!’  
‘You’ve never touched him before? You mean he’s never  
made you touch  
his thing before?’  
‘No!’ I howled. ‘No! No! No! And I don’t want to talk with  
you about it again, please! Please!’

In the passage above, Mara’s answer to Osey’s wife’s question matches with the maxim of quantity and that of quality. Actually, she is asked to tell her friend if she makes his thing hard for him, i.e. if she causes Akobi to have an erection.

She answers the question by saying no and by providing the required information. However, her friend seems not to believe her. She puts different questions to which Mara provides answer, thus observing the maxim of quality but breaking that of relevance, as she wants to avoid that conversation by expressing her anger. The implicature made in the last part is that Osey needs to know that Mara is not comfortable with the different questions that have been put to her.

### 3.2 In excerpt two

As has been done in the first text, we have also focused on some passages of the excerpt. We, then, consider this passage:

...Mara do you know something?’

‘what?’ I asked.

‘I’m in love, Mara,’ she said, with a GI.’

‘Who is GI?’ I asked.

Marvin,’ she replied. ‘He is a GI.’

‘What is GI?’ I asked.

Government Issue, capital letters. American Soldier based in Wiesbaden. Soldier love. Ah, Mara, I love him. I love him so much

that I bought him a gold chain. And then kicked Osey in the arse.’

‘With Marvin’s soldier boots’. We both laughed.

We notice that Vivian’s question does not require a straightforward answer as she has broken the maxim of quantity. She fails to be informative. Normally, she is supposed to answer questions like “Do you know that I am in love?”, but she fails to do so. So Mara is compelled to ask her a clarification question, which leads Vivian to answer her request through the use of maxims of quantity and quality. The last question, in this quoted passage, is followed by an answer in which Vivian flouts the maxims of quality and manner. When Mara asks ‘what is GI?’, Vivian goes beyond the expected answer, thus violating the maxims of quantity as well as that of the relevance.

‘Who is Ingrid?’ I asked.

‘Osey’s wife. His German wife. Can you understand that, Mara? I am his first wife. He didn’t make a child with me, but went and made a baby with Ingrid. Can you understand that? I was always telling him, we must make a child, Osey, we must make a child and send it home. And what did he tell me? Wait!

In the above passage, Ingrid’s first answers match with the maxim of quantity, but she finally breaks this maxim as she gives more information than is needed.

She is asked to give Mara information related to Ingrid's identity and let Mara answer her about her marriage experience with Osey; instead she puts questions to herself and responds out of frustration, thereby violating the maxims of manner and relevance. The implicature made in this passage is that African men treat their European partners better than their African ones. In addition, Darko takes aim at the notion of culturally accepted modes of male dominance

### **Conclusion**

This study has dealt with an aspect of meaning in context in *Beyond the Horizon* by Amma Darko. It has focused on what speakers intend to do with their utterances and how the hearer infers the different intentions and also looks at the general principles that guide the different inferences that are drawn upon. It must be admitted that context plays an important role in the interpretation of utterances. As reported by Saeed (2007), communicating functions also relies on both general knowledge of social conventions and specific knowledge of the local context of utterance. In that respect, hearers have to coordinate linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge to interpret a speaker's intended meaning.

In this work, we have attempted to study some features of speech acts in two selected excerpts of the novel. Searle's (1975) classification of speech acts has been drawn upon and it is important to recall that in the two excerpts, the representatives and directives, which are predominant, are used by interactants (Mara/ Osey's wife and Mara/ Ingrid) to get their words to match their world, on the one hand, and to change the world so that it matches their words, on the other. However, it seems important to say that felicity conditions, i.e., the conditions under which words can be used properly to perform actions (Huang, 2007), are fulfilled. It is thus easy to say that such conditions are met in these texts because speakers are, in most cases, aware of the different issues that they are dealing with, which are part of their life experience abroad.

Moreover, this paper shows that conversation is also facilitated by the cooperative principle which relies on four important maxims, rules which parties to a conversation or speech exchange normally assume to be in place and this makes a coherent, directed interchange possible. Therefore, understanding speech acts principles of conversational exchanges and being aware of the immediate local context of the book under study helps in one way or the other, to grasp the main issue raised in the novel: the writer's attempts to question the truth behind the life of the people, especially African women, who have gone to the western countries in search of better living conditions

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