

Language and Tenor of President Muhammadu Buhari’s Speech on Covid-19 Pandemic

MODUPE GRACE AROGE

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State Nigeria

IREWOLE M. OLAYINKA

Federal University Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

Abstract. The study examined the language and tenor of President Muhammadu Buhari’s Speech on covid-19 pandemic to the general populace. It explored the metadiscourse features and tenor of three President Muhammadu Buhari’s covid-19 pandemic speeches given around 29th of March – 27th April, 2020. This was in view to describe the nationwide broadcast given by the president during the pandemic to sensitize the general public and reveal the government’s plan, measure to be adopted to stop the spread of the pandemic, and concern of the government for the masses during lockdown period of covid-19 pandemic. The data were drawn from the President Muhammadu Buhari’s Speeches on covid-19 pandemic from the internet. The three speeches on covid-19 pandemic were read to bring out the interactive and interactional metadiscourse features and the tenor of the speaker. The analysis of the data was guided using Hyland (2006) Theory on metadiscourse with Eggins’ (1994) sub-classification of tenor continuum in interactions. The study revealed that the language of the speeches was formal. It was showed that while all the interactive and interactional metadiscourse elements such as hedges, boosters, self-inclusion, attitude markers and range of other writer-oriented markers of engagement in the speech were used in the speeches for the listeners’ understanding. The tenor of the speaker and the listeners indicated that of unequal power; the social distance showed that the speaker and listeners have a kind of frequent contacts with one another during the pandemic through the broadcast. There was a numerical preponderance of interactive devices where transitional markers were most frequently subcategory used to show the importance of cohesion and coherence in formal speech. It was also

discovered that the President used declarative sentences as a way of giving information to the audience and also for creating a natural conversational phenomenon between the president and the listeners so that the general populace could understand the intended message(s). The study concluded that examining nationwide broadcast given during this pandemic through the language use, metadiscourse elements, and tenor of discourse aid comprehension of the intended message being passed across to the audience.

Keywords: President’s speech, Covid-19 pandemic, tenor of discourse, metadiscourse elements,

1. Introduction and Background to the Study

Language is not simply content that reflects and organizes our experiences of reality through the system of transitivity and theme; it is also used to encode interaction with other modes used in a text. The interpersonal metafunction is basically concerned with enacting social relationships between the speaker, writer, and the hearer and reader in a specific context of communication and deals with the clause as an exchange of information and as an exchange of goods and services (Halliday 2004).

According to Sapir (1970) cited by Aderibigbe (2004), language is a “purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols... it is the tool of significant experience”. Language is an all-human affair, which is as important as the air we breathe. Language helps

us to express our innermost feelings and contributes to the good of the society.

Language and communication are interlocked. Language is referred to as a means through which we communicate our feelings. We cannot communicate without language as it is the vehicle through which we convey our messages. Language and communication are inextricable. People learn language to express ideas or thoughts. The essence of language is communication. All human communities, no matter where they live, primitive or civilized have their language. It must be noted that communication is a dual process in the transferring of an idea, thought or information from one person to the other so that it is understood and acted upon. Thus in communication, language is needed for the acquisition of necessary information, organization and planning of other details that will make communication achieve desired results. An idea or a message is disseminated from the source to the recipient(s) or the receiver through a channel in order to achieve a particular goal. Fairclough (2003, p.2) stresses that language is an irreducible part of social life, dialectally interconnected with other elements of social life.

Hyland (2005), states that metadiscourse is a relatively new approach that refers to the ways writers or speakers project themselves in their texts to interact with the receivers. It is a concept which is based on a view of writing or speaking as a social engagement. Hyland (2005, p. 17) defines metadiscourse as “writer’s awareness of the reader and his or her need for elaboration, clarification, guidance and interaction”. The elements of metadiscourse can be referred to as the linguistic options which are employed by writers or readers to direct the readers through the text and to show his stance. Metadiscourse is a way in which writers and speakers interact through their use of language with readers and listeners. It deals with understanding the relationship between language and its contexts of use. That is, metadiscourse examines how individuals use language to orient and interpret particular text and how they draw on their understanding of these to make their intended meanings clear to their listeners Hyland (2017, p. 20). It is the commentary on the text made by the producers in the cause of speaking (oral) or writing and the term is used in discourse analysis and language teaching Hyland (2017, 9. 1). Metadiscourse markers such as boosters, hedges self-mentioning etc. help speakers to step into the discourse and establish a suitable relationship with the arguments and their target audience. Speakers do take into consideration the needs and expectation of

the hearers in order to present an argument and convince others about the validity of their point(s). Hyland (2006, p. 48) proposes his own classification of metadiscourse continuum into two dimensions of interaction – interactive and interactional. The interactive aspect and its linguistic signals cover much of what other scholars call textual and cohesion devices while interactional dimension includes hedges, boosters, attitude markers and range of other writer-oriented markers of engagement. Metadiscourse analysis focused on specialized varieties of language, rather than general conversational competencies. It looks at participants’ role relationships, the persuasiveness of the text content(s) and the contribution of cohesive features to writer-reader (speaker-listeners) understanding. In addition, metadiscourse refers to how writers/speakers use language in consideration for how their readers/listeners are able to process and comprehend what is written or said in any text.

Tenor is the component of interpersonal metafunction of a text. The tenor of a text tells us three things about the text: what kind of person the speaker is, or how the speaker presents himself/herself to the listeners; it reveals the kind of persons the listeners are expected to be; and the kind of relationship that exists between the interlocutors (Michel 2015, p. 4). Eggins (1994, P. 64) sub-classifies tenor into four main dimension which are power, contact, affective involvement and orientation to affiliation. The dimension of power continuum talks about equal and unequal power and contact continuum relates to frequent and infrequent. Affective involvement continuum shows the participants are emotionally involved or committed in a situation which can either be high or low, while orientation of affiliation continuum reflects formal and informal situation. The implication of power continuum by Eggins (1994, P. 64) shows, for instance, that the roles of equal power can be between friend-friend and student-students; unequal power can be between boss-employee and teacher-student. Contact between husbands and wives can indicate frequent communication while contact between distant interactants may be infrequent. Also, the contact between teachers and their students indicates frequent contact and not an occasional one. The affection involvement between lovers, friends, teachers-students is high while co-workers in the place of work may be low. In contrast, while Eggins specifies affective involvement as elements that indicate speakers’ intimacy, Butt *et al* (1996, P. 64) specifies the roles of the speakers in terms of agentive of social roles because when people are talking, they interact with language and use it to express interpersonal relationship. Butt’s *et al*’s

(1996) submission shows that the interactants interpersonal relationships reflect through talk which show their social identities such as ‘friends’, ‘buyer and seller’, ‘husband and wife’, ‘boss and employee’ and ‘teacher and students’. Olaniyan (2012, p, 145) opines that tenor of discourse encompasses who is taking part in the interaction, the nature of the participants involved in the interactions, their status and role relationship which holds between the interactants (users of language) in a particular discourse.

2. Review of Related Literature

Studies on language use, metadiscourse and tenor of discourse are on ground by various scholars. So, we may not claim that we are breaking a new ground in this particular paper, but the different is that while earlier scholars focused on interpersonal meanings and uses of metadiscourse in academic writing, and political texts, the present study examines the effects of language use, metadiscourse features and tenor in understanding of the message being passed across to the general populace from the three speeches made by president Muahammudu Buhari’s during covid-19 pandemic. Osoba (2012, p. worked on (mis)use of language in conflict management in Nigeria’ Niger-Delta crisis. The study revealed how (mis)use of language has been one of the important factors for deepening Niger-Delta crisis. It employed stylistic/discourse analysis theories to investigate some selected statements from Nigeria Government and Niger-Delta region. The study concluded that language is a powerful tool for promotion of peace or propagation of war. Language can be used to manage all kinds of crisis. Olaniyan (2012, p, 145) observed tenor of the discourse in General Ibrahim Babangida’ Independence Day broadcasts. The study revealed the participants in the discourse and their status. The study concluded that reading Independence Day broadcasts through the lens of the contextual variable of tenor is capable of enhancing better understanding of the text. Taiwo, (2012, p. 1) examined language and cultural identity in Nigeria Online Diaspora community. He used Nigeria village square as a case study and employed CMDA-Computer Mediated Discourse Analysis as theory for the study. The study concluded that Nigerians in Diaspora have unique ways of constructing their identities in the context of online discourse. Adel & Mauranen (2010), explained that there are diverse conceptualisation and classification of metadiscourse. There is a narrow and a broad approach to conceptualizing metadiscourse. The narrow approach delimits metadiscourse as comprising only linguistic elements that help to achieve textual functions while the broad approach

defines metadiscourse as covering both linguistic elements and those used to deployed authorial attitudes Adel (2006, p. 180). Metadiscourse was originally introduced by the structural linguist Zelig Harris in 1959. Proposes, according to, categorises, emphasises, defines, , explains, describes, identifies

3. Covid-19: The Origin

Generally, epidemics are perfectly natural events, and even science cannot fully prevent their outbreaks. Covid-19 according to Guo *et al* (2020) is an acute respiratory disease, caused by a novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2, which is previously known as 2019-nCoV). The disease was discovered in November 2019 when a cluster of pneumonia cases, caused by a newly identified coronavirus occurred in Wuhan, China. It was initially named 2019-novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) but in January 2020 World Health Organisation (WHO) officially named it as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Human-to-Human transmission of Covid-19 occurs mainly between family members, including relatives and friends who intimately have contact with patients or incubation carriers. There is also transmission between healthcare workers who treated the patients with this disease. There is also what is called nosocomial transmission and direct contact with intermediate host animals or consumption of wild animals is suspected to be the main route of transmission. Bats are reservoir of a wide variety of bird with coronavirus and individuals who are more susceptible to this disease are elderly people between age 65 and above with people who have underlying diseases. The underlying conditions that increase susceptibility are; Hypertension, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Diabetes, and Cardiovascular disease. There is also sever complications which result in: Respiratory distress syndrome, Septic shock, Metabolic acidosis hard to correct, Coagulation dysfunction and Multiple organs failure. Current treatments mainly focus on symptomatic and respiratory support according to the Diagnosis and Treatment of Pneumonia Caused by COVID-19 issued by National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China while WHO recommended extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) to patients with convalescent plasma and immunoglobulin G for critical cases (WHO, 2020 & NHCPRC 2020,Chen L, Xiong J, Bao L, Shi Y 2020). This pandemic is not the first to occur in human history. The Spanish flu killed an estimated 50 million people worldwide. It is not possible to have the scale of such death on covid-19 because of advancement in technology and modern medicine. As at the time of reporting this study, there is 90 percent

recovery rate worldwide. So, we can conclude that covid-19 is not a death sentence for people to panic about if we can listen and take to instructions given by trained experts and not to put forward non-challant attitude in any case.

4. General Information on Health

Health is a very complicated topic. It does not only include all the organs of the body, but emotion, relationship with others, and lifestyle (or the choice that is made). It is the level of functional and (or) metabolic efficiency of a living being. In humans, it is the general condition of a person in mind, body, and spirit. It also means to be free from illness, injury, and pain. World Health Organization (WHO) defines health in its broader sense in 1946 as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”.

The maintenance and promotion of health is achieved through different combinations of physical, mental, and social well-being together, sometimes referred to as the ‘health triangle’ (WHO, 1986). Also, health is not just a state, but also, “a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living, health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capabilities”. Systematic activities to prevent or cure health problems and promote good health in humans are delivered by health care providers.

5. Theoretical Framework

To arrive at an accurate and meaningful analysis of the data, insight is drawn from Hyland’s (2006) Theory on metadiscourse with Eggins’ (1994) sub-classification of tenor continuum in interactions. The framework is appropriate for the analysis of both oral and written discourse. The theories examine language, metadiscourse and tenor construe in the discourse which involves orienting language as a form social process.

5.1 Hyland’s Metadiscourse Theory

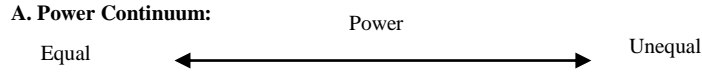
According to Hyland (2006, p. 268), there are two levels of metadiscourse: interactive and interactional metadiscourse. Interactive metadiscourse elements help to guide readers/listeners understanding of the discourse in accordance to the writers’/speakers’ anticipation. Interactive metadiscourse elements include: code glosses (e.g. such as, in order words), transitional markers, (e.g. in addition, and, thus, and but), frame markers (e.g. finally, to conclude, my

purpose), endophoric markers (e.g. noted about, in section 1, see the figure above) and evident markers (e.g. according to X, John states). The interactional metadiscourse elements help to create textual cohesion by signaling logical links such as additive, causative, contrastive, consequential between proposition by use of a range of devices such as conjunctions Halliday and Hasan (1976). Transitional markers involve readers’/listeners’ collaborated effort in commenting on the text and evaluating the content through modality and assigning roles to the interlocutors. The interactional metadiscourse elements are: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers and self-mention. The elements of transitional makers involve the readers/listeners in the argument and consist a linguistic recourse such as: importantly, in our opinion, and undoubtedly.

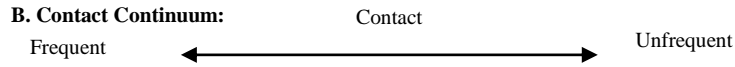
5.2 Eggins’ Tenor Continuum’ Theory

Eggins (1994, P. 64) sub-classifies tenor into four main dimension which are power, contact, affective involvement and orientation to affiliation. The dimension of power continuum talks about equal and unequal power and contact continuum relates to frequent and infrequent. Affective involvement continuum shows the participants are emotionally involved or committed in a situation which can either be high or low, while orientation of affiliation continuum reflects formal and informal situation. The implication of power continuum by Eggins (1994, P. 64) shows, for instance, that the roles of equal power can be between friend-friend and student-students; unequal power can be between boss-employee and teacher-student. Contact between husbands and wives can indicate frequent communication while contact between distant interactants may be infrequent. The affection involvement between lovers, friends, teachers and students is high while co-workers in the place of work may be high or low. In contrast, while Eggins specifies affective involvement as elements that indicate speakers’ intimacy, Butt *et al* (1996, P. 64) specifies the roles of the speakers in terms of agentive of social roles because when people are talking, they interact with language and use it to express interpersonal relationship. Butt’s *et al*’s (1996) submission shows that the interactants interpersonal relationships reflect through talk which show their social identities such as ‘friends’, ‘buyer and seller’, ‘husband and wife’, ‘boss and employee’ and ‘teacher and students’.

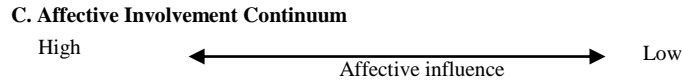
The drawings in below give the interpretation of Eggins’ (1994, pp. 64-67) subclassification of tenor continuum in interactions:



The Power Continuum Source: Eggins 1994, P. 64



The Contact Continuum Source: Eggins 1994, 64



The Affective Continuum Source: Eggins 1994, 64

The implication of this is that the power demonstrated by the interactants can either be equal or unequal, they can have frequent and infrequent contact with one another and their affective involvement which talks about how they are emotionally involved or committed to matters that affect one another may be high or low. These depend on the kind of interpersonal relationships that exists between them during interaction.

6. Data Presentation

The data for the study consisted of three purposively selected President Mahammadu Buhari's nationwide broadcast given between the periods of March, 2020 to April, 2020.

6.1 Analysis and Discussion

As earlier said, the analysis in the study is looked into by drawing insights from Hyland (2006) Theory on metadiscourse with Eggins (1994) sub-classification of tenor continuum in interactions. The analysis was premised on qualitative and emphasis based on the grammatical elements used in the speeches, the interactive and interactional metadiscourse elements such as code glosses, transitional markers, frame markers, endophoric markers, evident markers, hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers and self-mention. Tenor of the speeches was looked into by examining the power continuum, contact continuum and affective involvement.

Morpho-syntactic Elements in the Speeches

In this section we identified the different kinds of morpho-syntactic resources in purposively selected President Muhammadu Buhari's speech on covid-19 that aid the understanding of listeners/readers. Morpho-syntactic resources such as the group

typologies and types of sentence in the broadcast were considered in the analysis.

Sentences Types

According to Sneddon (1996), a sentence expresses a statement, command, question, or exclamation. Sentence consists of one or more clauses, and usually has at least one subject and verb. English language recognizes two types of sentences: simple and complex. However, since the degree of complexity varies, grammarians have broken down the two into six, namely: simple, simple-complex, compound, compound-complex, multiple and multiple-complex. The president made use of some of these declarative sentences to pass his message(s) across to the general populace.

Declarative Sentence Structure in the Data

The dominant sentence structure in the selected data for this study is the declarative sentence structure. It is sometimes called as indicative mood. Declarative sentences are employed in discourse for pragmatic reasons. They are used as informative strategy in texts and as a forceful affirmation given about the pandemic. They are used to convey information or to make or form statements. They also show instances of inference, dialogue, and monologue in texts. All these are discourse features and concepts. Declarative sentences are used when we give information, express an opinion and so on. They state facts about the subject of discourse and consist of the subject and a predicate. There are declarative texts in the data gathered for this study. Some of these texts are complete sentences that do not need addition of other lexical items. Examples of declarative sentence structures can be found in the analysis below:

Text 1 paragraphs 2, 4, 6, 7, and 12 etc.

2. From the first signs that Coronavirus, or COVID-19 was turning into an epidemic and was officially declared a world-wide emergency, the Federal Government started planning preventive, containment and curative measures in the event the disease hits Nigeria.

4. Nigeria, unfortunately, confirmed its first case on 27th February 2020. Since then, we have seen the number of confirmed cases rise slowly.

6. Regrettably, we also had our first fatality, a former employee of PPMC, who died on 23rd March 2020. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family in this very difficult time. We also pray for quick recovery for those infected and undergoing treatment.

7. As of today, COVID-19 has no cure. Scientists around the world are working very hard to develop a vaccine.

12. Indeed, the Director General of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) was one of ten global health leaders invited by the World Health Organisation to visit China and understand their response approach. I am personally very proud of Dr Ihekweazu for doing this on behalf of all Nigerians.

Text 2 paragraphs 2, 7, 8, and 13, 27-28, and 50 etc.

2. In my address on Sunday, 29th March, 2020, I asked the residents of Lagos and Ogun States as well as the Federal Capital Territory to stay at home for an initial period of fourteen days starting from Monday, 30th March 2020.

7. The level of compliance to the COVID-19 guidelines issued has been generally good across the country. I wish to thank you all most sincerely for the great sacrifice you are making for each other at this critical time.

8. I will take this opportunity to recognise the massive support from our traditional rulers, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) during this pandemic.

13. To date, we have identified 92% of all identified contacts while doubling the number of testing laboratories in the country and raising our testing capacity to 1,500 tests per day.

27. Here in Nigeria, we had 131 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in 12 States on 30th March 2020. We had two fatalities then.

28. This morning, Nigeria had 323 confirmed cases in twenty States. Unfortunately we now have ten fatalities. Lagos State remains the center and accounts for 54% of the confirmed cases in Nigeria. When combined with the FCT, the two locations represent over 71% of the confirmed cases in Nigeria.

50. Fellow Nigerians, follow the instructions on social distancing. The irresponsibility of the few can lead to the death of the many. Your freedom ends where other people's rights begin.

Text 3 paragraphs 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 12, and 23 etc.

3. As at yesterday, 26th April 2020, some three million confirmed cases of COVID nineteen have been recorded globally with about nine hundred thousand recoveries. Unfortunately, some two hundred thousand people have also died passed away as a result of this pandemic.

4. The health systems and economies of many nations continue to struggle as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

6. Exactly two weeks ago, there were three hundred and twenty three confirmed cases in 20 States and the Federal Capital Territory.

7. As at this morning, Nigeria has recorded one thousand two hundred and seventy-three cases across 32 States and the FCT. Unfortunately, these cases this includes 40 deaths fatalities.

8. I will seam using this opportunity to express our deepest condolences to the families of all Nigerians that have lost their lives loved ones as a result of the COVID nineteen Pandemic. This is our collective loss and we share in your grief.

12. Today, the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has accredited 15 laboratories across the country with an aggregate capacity to undertake 2,500 tests per day across the country.

23. In Kano, and indeed many of other States that are recording new cases, preliminary findings show that such cases are mostly from interstate travel and emerging community transmission.

Examining all the declarative sentences above, we discovered that the president's speeches were full of statement of facts about the pandemic in the nation and the measures that had been put in place even before the first index case was discovered who happened to be former employee of PPMC, who contacted the virus from outside the country and died on 23rd March 2020. We could hereby conclude that in the discourse; the president used declarative sentences as a way of giving information to the audience and also for creating a natural conversational phenomenon between the president and the listeners so that the general populace could understand the intended message(s) in the texts. In addition, facts about number of death recorded during the pandemic, causes of further spread of the virus, facilities that had been put in place and other preventive measures were revealed to the general populace in the broadcast.

Group Typologies and Structure in the Speech

A group consists of one or more than one word and under group typologies we have the following: Nominal group, Verbal group and Adverbial group. From the data gathered for this study, adverbial group indicating time of actions was considered for analysis and examples can be found in the three texts.

Adverbial Group in the Speech

Adverbs according to Pichler (2016) are English words that modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. Adverbial group is a linguistic term for structures operating to express adverbial meaning. From the data gathered for this study, the most occurring and prominent group typology used in the president's broadcast to pass his intended message(s) across to the audience is adverbial group. The samples of adverbial group indicating time of actions in the data can be found below:

Text 1, Paragraphs 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 60

5. By the morning of March 29th, 2020, the total confirmed cases within Nigeria had risen to ninety-seven.

7. As of today, COVID-19 has no cure. Scientists around the world are working very hard to develop a vaccine.

11. Since the outbreak was reported in China, our Government has been monitoring the situation closely and studying the various responses adopted by other countries.

60. At this point, I will ask that all contributions and donations be coordinated and centralized to ensure efficient and impactful spending. The Presidential Task Force remains the central coordinating body on the COVID-19 response.

Text 2, Paragraphs 19, 23, 25, 26 and 47

19. At this point, I must recognise the incredible work being done by our healthcare workers and volunteers across the country especially in frontline areas of Lagos and Ogun States as well as the Federal Capital Territory.

23. On 30th March 2020, when we started our lockdown in conforming with medical and scientific advice, the total number of confirmed cases across the world was over 780,000.

25. In the last fourteen days alone, over 70,000 people have died due to this disease.

26. In the same period, we have seen the health system of even the most developed nations being overwhelmed by this virus.

47. In the past two weeks, we announced palliative measures such as food distribution, cash transfers and loans repayment waivers to ease the pains of our

restrictive policies during this difficult time. These palliatives will be sustained.

Text 3, Paragraphs 3, 6, and 27

3. As at yesterday, 26th April 2020, some three million confirmed cases of COVID nineteen have been recorded globally with about nine hundred thousand recoveries. Unfortunately, some two hundred thousand people have also died passed away as a result of this pandemic.

6. Exactly two weeks ago, there were three hundred and twenty three confirmed cases in 20 States and the Federal Capital Territory.

27. In my last address, I mentioned the Federal Government will develop strategies and policies that will protect lives while preserving livelihoods.

The samples above are samples of specific time in which one story related to covid-19 pandemic happened in the nation. These attest to the facts that the pandemic really occurred and it affected the citizens in one way or the other. People lost their lives, their loved ones, and there was lockdown whereby citizens were restricted from moving about, so, coronavirus will not continue to spread.

Interactive Metadiscourse Elements in the Speech

This section revealed the interactive metadiscourse elements in President Muhammadu Buhari's three speeches. Interactive metadiscourse elements help to guide readers/listeners understanding of the discourse in accordance to the writers'/speakers' anticipation. Interactive metadiscourse elements are related to what Halliday called the textual metafunction, which is the interpersonal metafunction. Interactive metadiscourse elements deal with expression of opinions of the writers/speakers, their relationship and interaction with their readers/listeners. The interactive metadiscourse elements in the data are analysed below:

Code Glosses

Code glosses are concern with clarification of the writers'/speakers' communicative purpose Hyland (2007, p. 268). They are used to explain, elaborate, or re-work propositional meanings and they help readers/listeners grasp propositional information and ideational materials. Examples of code glosses in the speeches can be found in Text 1 paragraph 39-40 below:

Text 1, Paragraph 39-40

Furthermore, commercial establishments such as:
a. food processing, distribution and retail companies;

- b. petroleum distribution and retail entities,
- c. power generation, transmission and distribution companies; and...

The code glosses in the paragraph above is ‘such as’, it is used to exemplify the set of workers that the stay at home did not affect during the covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Also, the president used it to elaborate more on the stay at home order given by the Federal government. It also helped to give better understanding of the discourse major points to the general populace.

Transitional Markers

Transitional markers are used to express semantic relation between clauses, examples are: “and, thus, and but”. In Text 1 and 3, the two transition markers that occurred there are: (and, but). They are used to express semantic relation between clauses. For example in the first paragraph, the transition marker ‘and’ is used to elaborate the point being raised in the first clause about covid-19 that the pandemic has been declared a world-wide issue and it needs to be given urgent attention since Nigeria as a nation has confirmed her first index case as at the time when the president was delivering this speech. While in paragraph 62, the transition marker ‘but’ is used to reveal the collective responsibilities of the citizen on how to reduce the spread of the pandemic. Also, in this Text 1, ‘and’ occurred about 22 times while ‘but’ is used just once. In Text 2 (speech 2), the president used ‘and’ 43 times and ‘but’ once while in Text 3 (speech 3), he used ‘and’ 50 times and no use of but at all. The implication of this is that, the transition marker ‘and’ is prominent in the three speeches because it helps to explain the intended message of the president to the general populace and it also aids the target audience to read propositional meaning to the texts. The two transition markers were used in the text to link ideas being raised by the president.

Text 1, Paragraph 2

2. From the first signs that Coronavirus or COVID-19 was turning into an epidemic and was officially declared a world-wide emergency, the Federal Government started planning preventive, containment and curative measures in the event the disease hits Nigeria.

Text 3, Paragraph 2

2. I will start by commending you all for the resilience and patriotism that you have shown in our collective fight against the biggest health challenge of our generation.

Frame Makers

Frame Markers are interactive metadiscourse and they are used to refer to discourse acts, sequence or

text stages. Examples are: “finally, to conclude, and my purpose is”. Examples of frame marker in the three texts are ‘finally’ and it occurred in Text 2 and 3 below:

Text 2, Paragraph 58

Finally, I want to thank the members of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 for all their hard work so far. Indeed, the patriotism shown in your work is exemplary and highly commendable.

Text 3, Paragraph 44

And finally, I will thank all Nigerians again for your patience and cooperation during this difficult and challenging period. I assure you that government shall continue to take all necessary measures to protect the lives and livelihoods our citizens and residents.

In the examples above, the president used it to round off his points by appreciating Nigerians for their cooperation, patience, and the patriotism of the Presidential Task Force on covid-19 for their hardworking spirit and effort over the pandemic. The frame marker ‘finally’ also shows that the president is at the concluding part of his speech that is the text final stage of his message to the whole citizens.

Interactional Metadiscourse Elements in the Speeches

The interactional metadiscourse elements help to create textual cohesion by signaling logical links such as additive, causative, contrastive, consequential between proposition by use of a range of devices such as conjunctions Halliday and Hasan (1976). These involve the listeners and readers in the argument and consist a linguistic resource so that they can pass comment or evaluate the text Hyland (2005a). The interactional metadiscourse elements in the data are analysed below:

Use of Hedges

Hedges are used to show the degree of certainty of the points raised by the speaker. From the data gathered for this study, the hedges are used to mitigate certainty or commitment made at the period of covid-19 pandemic in order to stop the spread of the virus, to take care of the citizens, and those who had contacted the virus. e.g might, possible, suggest

Use of Boosters

They are interactional metadiscourse elements used to increase certainty or commitment. Examples are: “will, show, must, and demonstrate”. From the three texts, we have the sample of ‘will’. The president

used this booster to show the commitment of the whole nation NCDC, governors, health workers and others to combat the pandemic. For example in Text 2, paragraphs 4, 8, 16, 17, 18, and 20 below:

4. As your democratically elected leaders, we made this very difficult decision knowing fully well it will severely disrupt your livelihoods and bring undue hardship to you, your loved ones and your communities.

8. I will take this opportunity to recognise the massive support from our traditional rulers, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) during this pandemic.

16. Many State Governments have also made provisions for isolation wards and treatment centres. We will also build similar centers near our airports and land borders.

17. Using our resources and those provided through donations, we will adequately equip and man these centres in the coming weeks. Already, health care workers across all the treatment centers have been provided with the personal protective equipment that they need to safely carry out the care they provide.

18. Our hope and prayers are that we do not have to use all these centres. But we will be ready for all eventualities.

19. At this point, I must recognise the incredible work being done by our healthcare workers and volunteers across the country especially in frontline areas of Lagos and Ogun States as well as the Federal Capital Territory.

20. You are our heroes and as a nation, we will forever remain grateful for your sacrifice during this very difficult time. More measures to motivate our health care workers are being introduced which we will announce in the coming weeks.

The modal auxiliary verb ‘will’ is used to reveal various measures to be used in all over the nation to stop the spread of covid-19. Also, ‘will’ is used to increase certainty of what will happen in the nearest future if the pandemic is not given urgent solution to stop the spread. We also have the example of modal verb ‘must’ in paragraph 19. They are used to show the certainty or the points being raised in the president’s speech.

Attitude Markers

Attitude markers according to Hyland (2004, p. 6) are used to express the writer’s/speaker’s appraisal of the propositional information, the obligation and to convey important information to the readers/listeners. They are used to persuade readers/listeners by foregrounding shade attitude and values. They are

used to express affective attitude and necessary action(s) to be taken on the issue at hand, examples are: “should, have to, desirable, unfortunate, interestingly, surprisingly, what is important, and it is necessary”. They fall into categories of deontic modals, attitudinal adjectives, affective adverbs, and other expressions that convey stance or evaluation. Example can be found in Text 1 paragraph 35 below:

Text 1 paragraph 35

35. All citizens in these areas are to stay in their homes. Travel to or from other states should be postponed. All businesses and offices within these locations should be fully closed during this period. The use of ‘should’ in the paragraph above shows what must be the disposition of these set of citizens towards the submission of the president on lockdown rules in order to curb the spread of the pandemic in the Nation.

Self mention

Self mention is another interactional metadiscourse element in the three Texts and they are used to mark authorial presence in the data. Examples are: “I, we, me, us, my and our”. The president made use of “we, I, us, and our” self mention interactional metadiscourse element in the three texts and they revealed authorial presence of the president and the collective responsibilities of the whole nation in fighting against the further spread of covid-19 in the nation at large. From the data gathered for the study, examples can be found from Text 1 paragraphs 60-65 below:

60. At this point, I will ask that all contributions and donations be coordinated and centralized to ensure efficient and impactful spending. The Presidential Task Force remains the central coordinating body on the COVID-19 response.

61. I want to assure you all that Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies with a role to play in the outbreak response are working hard to bring this virus under control.

62. Every nation in the world is challenged at this time. But we have seen countries where citizens have come together to reduce the spread of the virus.

63. I will therefore implore you again to strictly comply with the guidelines issued and also do your bit to support Government and the most vulnerable in your communities.

64. I will take this opportunity to thank all our public health workforce, health care workers, port health authorities and other essential staff on the frontlines of the response for their dedication and commitment. You are true heroes.

65. I thank you all for listening. May God continue to bless and protect us all.

The underlined pronouns refer to self mentioned in the data. They indicate authorial presence of the president in the speeches, how he gave orders and instructions to various bodies on the pandemic.

Discussion of Tenor in the Speeches

Tenor showed the kind of roles and relationships that exist between the speaker and the listeners and this relate to interpersonal meanings in interactions. Eggins (1994, pp. 64-66) sub-classified tenor into: power, contact, affective involvement and orientation of affiliation. The data revealed instances of the relative and social status between the president and the general populace. the analysis of tenor from the data gathered showed that there was unequal relation between president and the citizens, the president have a kind of frequent contact with the people through the speeches he delivered from time to time on the pandemic, and the affective involvement showed that the president have high emotional concern for the citizens. It also revealed that the president was passionate and there was deliberate attempt to make the people feel his concern about their well being during covid-19 pandemic. The analysis of samples of power, contact and affective involvement is given below:

Power Continuum

The power continuum tenor pattern showed that the president and the general populace were not equal in status. The choice of words and the kind of orders given to various categories of people also emphasised this fact. The implication was that the president was in control at this period. Though the listeners couldn't make response immediately but the order and instructions given by the president must be obeyed and carried out with immediate effect. Eggins and Slade (1997, p. 88) support the claim and the finding here that 'you can only direct somebody to do something if you assume the dominant position'. Examples of power continuum instances can be found in the three texts.

Text 1, Paragraphs 34, 35, 51, 52, 54, and 57

34. Based on the advice of the Federal Ministry of Health and the NCDC, I am directing the cessation of all movements in Lagos and the FCT for an initial period of 14 days with effect from 11pm on Monday, 30th March 2020. This restriction will also apply to Ogun State due to its close proximity to Lagos and the high traffic between the two States.

35. All citizens in these areas are to stay in their homes. Travel to or from other states should be postponed. All businesses and offices within these locations should be fully closed during this period.

51. Furthermore, I have directed that a three month repayment moratorium for all Trader Money, Market Money and Farmer Money loans be implemented with immediate effect.

52. I have also directed that a similar moratorium be given to all Federal Government funded loans issued by the Bank of Industry, Bank of Agriculture and the Nigeria Export Import Bank.

54. For the most vulnerable in our society, I have directed that the conditional cash transfers for the next two months be paid immediately. Our Internally displaced persons will also receive two months of food rations in the coming weeks.

57. This is why I directed that all Federal Government Stadia, Pilgrims camps and other facilities be converted to isolation centers and makeshift hospitals.

Text 2, Paragraph 48, 55, and 57

48. I have also directed that the current social register be expanded from 2.6 million households to 3.6 million households in the next two weeks. This means we will support an additional one million homes with our social investment programs. A technical committee is working on this and will submit a report to me by the end of this week.

55. To ensure our economy adapts to this new reality, I am directing the Ministers of Industry, Trade and Investment, Communication and Digital Economy, Science and Technology, Transportation, Aviation, Interior, Health, Works and Housing, Labour and Employment and Education to jointly develop a comprehensive policy for a "Nigerian economy functioning with COVID-19".

57. I am also directing the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, the National Security Adviser, the Vice Chairman, National Food Security Council and the Chairman, Presidential Fertiliser Initiative to work with the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 to ensure the impact of this pandemic on our 2020 farming season is minimized.

Text 3, Paragraphs 19

19. I have directed the Central Bank of Nigeria and other financial institutions to make further plans and provisions for financial stimulus packages for small and medium scale enterprises. We recognise the critical role that they play in Nigeria's economy.

Contact Continuum

The contact continuum tenor pattern reveals that there is frequent contact between the president and

the citizens to give orders and evaluate what has been done either to take care of the people that are infected with the virus, by given palliatives to the citizens or instructions on how to stop the spread of coronavirus in the nation at large. The sample of contact continuum can be evaluated through

Affective Involvement Tenor Continuum

The president demonstrates a kind of emotional feelings of affection towards the citizens. He shows his compassion and high affective involvement to those who have lost their loved ones during the pandemic. Examples can be found in the data below:

Text 1, Paragraphs 4-6

4. Nigeria, unfortunately, confirmed its first case on 27th February 2020. Since then, we have seen the number of confirmed cases rise slowly.

5. By the morning of March 29th, 2020, the total confirmed cases within Nigeria had risen to ninety-seven.

6. Regrettably, we also had our first fatality, a former employee of PPMC, who died on 23rd March 2020. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family in this very difficult time. We also pray for quick recovery for those infected and undergoing treatment.

Text 2, Paragraph 22

22. However, I remain concerned about the increase in number of confirmed cases and deaths being reported across the world and in Nigeria specifically.

Text 3, Paragraph 3, 7, 8

3. As at yesterday, 26th April 2020, three million confirmed cases of COVID nineteen have been recorded globally with about nine hundred thousand recoveries. Unfortunately, some two hundred thousand people have also died and passed away as a result of this pandemic.

7. As at this morning, Nigeria has recorded one thousand two hundred and seventy-three cases across 32 States and the FCT. Unfortunately, these cases include 40 deaths fatalities.

8. I will be using this opportunity to express our deepest condolences to the families of all Nigerians that have lost their lives loved ones as a result of the COVID nineteen Pandemic. This is our collective loss and we share in your grief.

23. In Kano, and indeed many of other States that are recording new cases, preliminary findings show that such cases are mostly from interstate travel and emerging community transmission.

Observing the data above, in Text 1, paragraph 6, the president mentioned the first fatality case of the former employee of PPMC who died as a result of covid-19. In Text 2, paragraph 22, the president expresses his concern and feelings about the number

of people who have lost their lives across the globe and especially in Nigeria because of the pandemic. In Text 3, paragraph 8, the president used the opportunity to express his deepest condolences to the families of all Nigerians that have lost their lives loved ones as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic. He emphasised the fact that the loss of these loved ones, a collective loss because in one way or the other the whole nation shared in their grief. All these examples reflect high affective involvement of the president to his subjects.

7. Summary and Conclusion

From the study we have examined the language, metadiscourse elements, and tenor of discourse of President Muhammadu Buhari’s speech during covid-19 pandemic. The findings revealed that the president made use of declarative sentence to state facts about the pandemic in the nation. The metadiscourse revealed the use of both interactive and interactional metadiscourse elements. The metadiscourse elements make the intended meanings clear to the listeners and they are used to performed interpersonal functions in the speeches. The tenor of discourse continuum reveals a kind of unequal power relation because the various order given by the president were obeyed and the contact continuum is frequent since the president was able to give nationwide broadcast consecutively to evaluate what is going on at various levels. The affective involvement continuum is very high, that is, the president has high emotional concern for the citizens most especially those who have lost their loved ones, those who have contacted the virus and are under intensive care and others who are affected by the lockdown while orientation of affiliation continuum reveal formal situation. The study concludes that examining nationwide broadcast given during this pandemic through the language use, metadiscourse elements, and tenor of discourse aid comprehension of the intended message being passed across to the audience.

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