
STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT BUHARI'S ADDRESSES OF NIGERIANS IN THE FACE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Dr. Esther Chikaodi Anyanwu

Department of English Language and Literature, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria

ABSTRACT: *The role of language in any speech event cannot be overemphasized. Language is the vehicle through which political speeches are carried out. This study investigated two speeches of President Muhammadu Buhari during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic to ascertain how he has employed language, the linguistic elements used and the stylistic and pragmatic imports. Using the theoretical framework of stylistics, the researcher found out that Buhari tactfully used words to address Nigerians on Covid-19 and stressed the measures to be taken to contain the spread of the virus. To achieve the pragmatic effect of his speeches, he used lexical devices such as transitional makers, repetition, alliteration, assonance, pronouns to project the theme/subject matter of the language discourse. It was found out that the speaker used coordination to denote relationship of grammatical units, show contrast and as a re-statement of what he said earlier. The speaker repeatedly used coordination in his speeches and this is commendable since in language, identical items may be conjoined in an indefinite number of times. The analysis revealed that president is committed in combating the coronavirus pandemic that is ravaging his nation.*

KEY WORDS: stylistics, covid-19, epidemiology, language, medical register, pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a pivotal role in human communication. It is a powerful tool used by political leaders in the discharge of their duties. The role of language in communication cannot be underestimated. The English Language is an indispensable tool for national unity, integration and global communication. In fact, Baldeh referred to it as “a window on the world” (7). It was Widdowson (2007) who opines that:

all communication, to a greater or lesser extent, is an exercise in control, an attempt to assert one's own position and to persuade the other to accept it. When somebody says, or writes something, it is with the intention of getting the addressee, the second person party to think or feel or act in a certain way (67).

Bloch and Trager (1942) define human language as—a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates. language is used in politics, administration, education, mass communication. It is used to perform the task of promising, appreciating, persuading etc and these go a long way to show the beauty inherent language of politics. Language therefore, plays an integral role in politics because its main function in different political situations is to enable

politicians to form structurally stable social relationships. This implies that regimes, whether totalitarian or democratic have to communicate so as to inform, persuade, advertise, issue rules and regulations, legislate, and so on (Gunta and Karapetjana 2009). Sharndama (2015) gave an insight into political speeches when he affirms that: political speech is associated with either struggle for power or maintenance/control of it. It is diverse because it encompasses the different forms of speeches that the politicians deliver at political forums. Chilton (1998) affirms that politics is “the art of governance and power” while language is “the universal capacity of humans in all societies to communicate”. Okoro C. N (2017) subscribes to this view when she asserts that politics is concerned with power to make decisions, control resources, and control other people’s behaviour and, at times to control their values. In this process, language plays a crucial role, for every political action is prepared, accompanied, influenced and played by language. Language, therefore, plays an important role in politics because its main function in different political situations is to enable politicians to form structurally stable social relationships (50).

The Nigerian president, Muhammadu Buhari employed language while exercising his authority during the coronavirus pandemic which is shortened as covid-19. At the time of writing this paper, it was observed that the Nigerian president had addressed his nation twice. Buhari addressed the Nigerian state when the world was facing the problem of the virus. His aim was to notify Nigerians of the virus and the measures the government and the general populace can take to curb its spread.

The present study focuses on a stylistic analysis of two speeches of president Muhammadu detect his communication styles and discover the rhetoric features that are inherent in the two speeches. The study therefore, examines the style embodied in Buhari’s speeches during the coronavirus pandemic. Although many scholars have written on political speeches, but the majority of them were centred on political inaugural speeches. The present research is motivated on mainstream/midstream (i.e. while in leadership) speeches of political leaders. The researcher collects data from the two speeches of Buhari during Covid-19 and embarks on stylistic analysis of such speeches to ascertain how intertextuality, lexical features, and referent of politically loaded pronouns strengthen such speeches. Analysis of such speeches is anchored on four levels of linguistic analysis namely: phonology, lexis, morphology and syntax. It is important to analyze the two speeches of President Buhari since they have special political significance as the speeches were delivered when Nigeria was faced with an epidemic-Covid-19. It became imperative for the president to address the nation so as inform, direct, or persuade them in the bid to fight the virus.

The Concept of Stylistics

Style has to do with a particular manner, way or procedure by which something is done. Many scholars have defined stylistics. Qian (2006) stated that stylistics studies the use of language in specific context and attempts to account for the characteristics that mark the language use of individuals and social group (1). Simpson (2004) affirms that stylistics is concerned with the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of texts of all categories, whether literary or non-literary, constructed with the verbal apparatus of language, from the perspective of linguistics. Stylistics therefore is a branch of Linguistics which applies the theory and methodology of modern linguistics to the study of style.

Covid-19 Pandemic

The name “coronavirus” comes from the crown-like projections on their surfaces. “Corona” in Latin means “halo” or “crown.” Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is defined as illness caused by a novel coronavirus now called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. It was initially reported to the WHO on December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global health emergency. On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, its first such designation since declaring H1N1 influenza a pandemic in 2009.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The researcher adopted a combination of stylistics and Michael Halliday’s Systemic Functional linguistics as approaches to examine the speeches of president Muhammadu Buhari during the coronavirus pandemic so as to uncover the specific stylistic choices that characterize the speeches and their pragmatic import. The researcher concluded by stating that circumstances can warrant people to acquire and use certain linguistic items of professions they do not belong to; this is indeed a boost to linguistic knowledge.

Empirical Studies

Ademilokun (2015) carried out a linguistic appraisal analysis of aspects of attitudinal change in the 2015 inaugural speech. His analytical was the Appraisal Theory of Martin and White (2005) and he observed that Buhari used affective meaning, judgment, and appreciation to convey attitudinal meaning with which he established interpersonal relationship with the people, as well as seek their cooperation. Nnamdi-Eruchalu, G. I. (2017) carried out a Critical Discourse Analysis of Muhammadu Buhari’s Inaugural Speeches with a Focus on Pronouns. Using critical discourse analysis, she argued that Muhammadu Buhari in both his maiden speech as a Military Head of State in 1984, and inaugural speech as a President with executive powers in 2015 tactfully deployed personal pronouns to present different identities and project different ideologies, and that the backgrounds from which he spoke impacted on his pronominal choices. The study, provided an insight into the influences of the ideological stances from which the speaker spoke on his choice of language.

Abuya Eromosele examined linguistic acts that manifest in the Inaugural Speech of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan as the democratically elected president in May 2011 General Elections in Nigeria through the pragma-stylistic approach. Leonard Koussouhon, did a Systemic Functional Linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis of President Buhari’s Inaugural Speech using critical discourse analysis. The analysis was focused on mood, epistemic and deontic modality choices, as well as recoverable references through personal pronouns used throughout the political discourse under consideration. The study has demonstrated how political leaders' discourses unearth a sort of harmony with ideologies that tally and commensurate the domestic, sub-regional and international realities.

Okoro, C. N (2017) in her ‘Speech Act Analysis of the Formal Declaration of Interest for Presidency and Inaugural Speeches of President Muhammadu Buhari’ investigated the speech acts of two political speeches of President Muhammadu Buhari. The speech acts of locution, illocution and perlocution were analyzed using the Speech Acts Theory of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) using the illocutionary acts of directive, expressive, declarative, verdictive, commissive and assertive. Her analysis revealed that the President employed more assertives and commissives so as to indicate the sincerity of his intentions, to assure the masses and to make promises. The study concluded on the note that the President should match his words with the necessary actions as the people still believe and hope in his change mantra.

Ononye, C. F. (2017). examined ‘Language, Contexts and Power Relations in Nigerian Newspaper Headlines on President Muhammadu Buhari’s Inaugural Address’. He examined the context elements constraining the linguistic structures used in newspaper headlines to reflect the power relations surrounding President Muhammadu Buhari’s (PMB) inauguration discourse. Data collected were analyzed with insights from van Dijk’s theory of Critical Discourse Analysis and context.

Agung Suhadi and Kiagus Baluqiah (2017) examined Donald Trump and Barack Obama’s Inaugural addresses. The study showed that Obama’s inaugural speech style is more communicative, evocative and its message conveyed orderly. While, Trump’s style is more conversational, but it was able to awaken audiences through huge topics. Oha (1994) using stylistics, investigated the war speeches of Yakubu Gowon and Emeka Ojukwu –the two leaders of the warring sides in the Nigerian/Biafran Civil War (1967-70). The study, which focuses on the nature and the relationship of style to meaning, applies the Systemic Functional Theory (SFT) to investigate the actual circumstances of language use. The study observes that meanings are determined by contexts and stylistic choices, and that the conflict between the two sides is demonstrated in their use of language.

From the previous studies reviewed, the researcher observed that no study has been carried out on president Buhari’s speeches on coronavirus pandemic. This is indeed, the gap in knowledge which the present study has come to fill.

METHODOLOGY

The speeches under analysis are two speeches titled: ‘Buhari Addresses the Nation on Covid-19 Pandemic’ delivered on March 29, 2020, and ‘The Extension of Covid-19 Pandemic Lockdown’ delivered on Monday, 13th April, 2020. The researcher adopts qualitative analysis method of inquiry that deals with linguistic units. Again, the approach of stylistics is used in the analysis the data.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The data analysis below covers the significant linguistic and stylistic features in the two speeches of president Muhammadu Buhari which he presented on 29th March, 2020 and 13th April 2020.

The writer randomly selected excerpts of the speech event and analyzes them using the theoretical framework of stylistics.

Lexical Analysis

A close examination of the lexical pattern of the speeches reveals the speaker's intentions which include showing appreciation and exhortation, making promises, stating his commitment, setting of goals and how to achieve them. These are evident in the attitude of the speaker towards his audience (tone). The speaker deliberately selects words to effectively communicate his message. The lexical choices in the speeches reveal the intentions of the speaker such as directing/instructing, appreciating, extolling, promising/pledging, assuring, testifying etc as shown in the examples below.

- i. I am personally very proud of Dr Ihekweazu for doing this on behalf of all Nigerians. (extolling)
- ii. The whole instruments of government are now mobilized (testifying)
- iii. ...Our Government has been monitoring the situation closely and studying the various responses adopted by other countries. (testifying)
- iv. We will use this containment period to identify, trace and isolate all individuals...(promising)
- v. We will ensure the treatment of confirmed cases... (assuring)
- vi. Our Government has been monitoring the situation closely (testifying)
- vii. We have introduced healthcare measures, border security, fiscal and monetary policies in our response (testifying).
- viii. We shall continue to do so as the situation unfolds (assuring).
- ix. I wish to thank you all most sincerely for the great sacrifice (appreciating)
- x. I also acknowledge the support and contributions received from public spirited individuals...(appreciating)
- xi. I must also thank the media houses, celebrities and other public figures (appreciating)
- xii. We will also build similar centers near our airports and land borders (promising).
- xiii. We also trained over 7,000 Healthcare workers on infection prevention and control (testifying)
- xiv. We will ensure the treatment of confirmed cases (promising)

- xv. we will be ready for all eventualities (promising).
- xvi. Most of our efforts will continue to focus in these two locations (assuring).
- xvii. 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 (testifying)
- xviii. I want to assure you that the Federal Government (assuring)
- xix. All citizens in these areas are to stay in their homes. (requesting)
- xx. we shall get over this pandemic and emerge stronger in the end (assuring)
- xxi. This means we will support an additional one million homes with our social investment programs (promising).
- xxii. The response of our State Governors has been particularly impressive... (appreciating)
- xxiii. I want to thank the members of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 for all their hard work so far. (appreciating)
- xxiv. I have directed our development financial institutions to engage these development partners (directing)
- xxv. I must also thank the Legislative arm of Government for all its support and donations in this very difficult period (appreciating).
- xxvi. However, I remain concerned about the increase in number of confirmed cases (assuring)
- xxvii. I am therefore once again asking you all to work with Government in this fight. (requesting)
- xxviii. Our agencies are currently working hard to identify cases and people these patients have been in contact with. (assuring)
- xxix. I am directing the cessation of all movements in Lagos and the FCT (directing)
- xxx. Fellow Nigerians, follow the instructions on social distancing. (instructing)
- xxxi. We ask all Nigerians to support the work the Federal Ministry of Health and NCDC are doing (requesting).

The president has chosen the above mentioned lexical items to show his intentions, assurances, commitment, appreciation of the populace; individuals and groups who have contributed in one way or the other to tackle the problems associated with Covid-19. He equally used some verbal elements to achieve the purposes of the speeches.

Use of Transitional markers

Transitional markers helped the president a lot to make an impact on his listeners especially the Nigerian nation.

Finally, I want to thank the members of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19

As a result of this pandemic

First, to protect the lives of our fellow Nigerians

Second to preserve the livelihoods of workers

In addition, I have signed the Quarantine Order...

However, I remain concerned about the increase in number of confirmed cases

Accordingly, as a Government, we will continue to rely on guidance

Indeed, the Director General of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)

Nigeria, **unfortunately**, confirmed its first case on 27th February 2020.

The words in bold type are connectives that link the subordinate clauses to the main clauses.

To highlight stringent measures taken to curb the spread of Covid-19, the president carefully and skillfully selects words that rightly collocate. The following lexemes are aptly combined. Auxiliaries and lexical verbs were utilized to achieve the objectives of the two speeches as is evident in the excerpts below:

Remain (verb) operational (adverb)

Must (modal auxiliary) recognize (verb)

Have (aux) adopted (verb) strategies (noun)

Difficult (adjective) time (noun)

overwhelming (adjective) support (noun)

Incredible (adjective) work (noun)

healthcare (adjective) workers (noun)

confirmed (adjective) cases (noun)

most (adjective) vulnerable (noun)

The choice of the lexical items portrays vividly the situation in which the country was at the time of speech delivery. The circumstances surrounding the nation were made manifest through the lexical items chosen. Infinitives were also extensively used to show the attitude and commitment of the speaker:

to provide	to support
to assure	to preserve
to do	to rely
to prevent	to recognize
to develop	to confront
to respond	to thank
to achieve	to see
to sustain	to ease
to control	to put

One remarkable thing about the choice of the infinitives above is that they are tilted towards revealing the intentions of the speaker such as appreciating, commanding, extolling, promising, assuring, testifying and requesting. Again, grammatical categories like pronouns are used to achieve stylistic and pragmatic effects in the speeches. Personal pronouns such as: I, we, our, you, they, and us are predominantly used in the two speeches.

- (a) **Our** objective was, and still remains (**collectivity in attainment of set objectives/goals**)
- (b) **I** will take this opportunity (**first person pronoun, showing responsibility and commitment**)
- (c) ... needed to limit the spread of Covid-19 in **our** country (**sense of collectivity**)
- (d) **We** implemented comprehensive public health measures (**collectivity in leadership**)
- (e) As a nation, **we** are on the right track (**collectivity in pursuance of set goals**)
- (f) **You** are true heroes (**referent signaling exhortation**)
- (g) May God continue to bless and protect **us** all. (**sense of collectivity enshrined in an optative sentence**)
- (h) **I** will therefore implore **you** again to strictly comply with the guidelines (**commitment in leadership tilted towards request on the addressee**)
- (i) **They** were necessary to save lives. (**third person plural, signaling commitment/obligation**)
- (j) In the same period, **we** have seen the health system of even the most developed nations (**collectivity**).

The speaker used first person pronouns (I, we) to buttress his commitment, collectivity and responsibility to his nation, the second and third person pronouns (both singular and plural) have been employed during request, command and obligation on the part of the Nigerian populace. Thus, while the president has his role to play as one who holds the mantle of leadership, the masses also have integral roles to play as those who are led. All these efforts were geared towards containing and curbing the spread of the coronavirus disease. The speaker stresses that by working together and carefully following the rules collectively, the pandemic would be a thing of the past as the nation would emerge stronger in the end. The relevance of pronouns in speeches are encapsulated in the words of LIN Haoming (2019):

... the speaker needs to express his own perspective and solution actively, and that's why most speakers use first person words such as I(me) and we(us) of a high frequency. By the using of first-person plural pronoun "we", speakers can bridge the gap between their listeners and themselves by the way of closing their distance and merging in the mainstream of public opinion. And when they are in a same standpoint, numerous of politics will naturally be accepted by the thousands of ordinary people, without saying more than is needed and that is the art of language. Also, in the using of second person pronoun "you", the speaker can immediately receive the reaction from his sincere listeners and his style of talking resembles a friend discussion. That kind of language processing not only do they

considering the interpersonal psychology deeply but also displaying their knowledge of pragmatics (77).

Use of Epidemiological and Medical Register

Register is a compendium of words of different professions/disciplines. The two speeches of president Buhari contain words and lexical items that are associated with epidemiology and medicine. The use of such lexical items buttresses the fact that people can use linguistic terms of professions they do not belong to; this is indeed a boost to linguistic knowledge. Words that were dormant over the years became activated. This is because of the pandemic that has ushered in new words into vocabulary stock and at the same time activated those words that have been dormant over the years. Those that appeared in Buhari's speeches are:

coronavirus, Covid-19, tracing and testing, hygienic practices, social distancing, virus, lockdown, medical representative, healthcare workers, prevention and control, personal protective equipment, infection, patients, confirmed cases, The National Centre for Disease Control, contain the spread, response and recovery, sanitary practices, containment period, fatalities, health system, medical care, outbreak, medical establishments, isolation centers and makeshift hospitals. The lexical items above point to the presence of an epidemic. The use of such words helped to drive home the subject matter or theme of the speeches and the rationale behind such speeches. By using the linguistic items, Buhari consciously created in the mind of the populace:

- i. Awareness of existence of a virus
- ii. The damaging effect (ailment/death) of the virus
- iii. Already existing steps taken by the government
- iv. Ways of avoidance of the virus
- v. Containment of the virus
- vi. Palliative measures taken by the government, individuals and societies

The president's choice of the words was dependent on the prevailing context, theme and purpose of his speeches. It was Firth (1935) who opines that the complete meaning of a word is always contextual and no study of meaning apart from a complete context can be taken (37). Requejo went further to identify two types of context; linguistic and situational. According to him, context could be linguistic and situational and is often considered as a *posteriori factor* in linguistic analysis. Linguistic context would encompass the phonetic, morphological, syntactic or textual material surrounding the word whereas situational context entails anything to do with the immediate situation and the socio-cultural background in which the language event takes place (170). Thus, it was the situation at hand (Covid-19) that necessitated the Buhari's speech presentations.

Syntactic/Clausal Analysis

A group of clauses may function in the same way as single clauses within the sentence. Such groups of clauses can have a similar internal structure and relationships. The speaker uses subordinating and independent clauses in his speeches. Such clauses perform syntactic functions in the two speeches. His intentions, authority and exercise of duty were made known through the way he linked dependent and independent clauses. Examples are:

[α]. Although these establishments are exempted, [β] access will be restricted and monitored.

The underlined clause is an adverbial clause of concession, modifying the verb phrase 'will be restricted'. While clause [α] is subordinate to clause [β], clause [β] is independent.

[α]. While I note some appreciable progress, [β] we can achieve a lot more. (adverbial clause of time modifying 'can achieve')

[α]... in respect of the control measures for the COVID-19 pandemic, [β] which will be released soon. (adjectival clause, post modifying 'control measures')

[1]. Some of these measures will surely cause major inconveniences to many citizens. [2]. But these are sacrifices we should all be willing and ready to make for the greater good of our country. Clauses [1] and [2] are independent.

[α]. When combined with the FCT, [β] the two locations represent over 71% of the confirmed cases in Nigeria (adverbial clause of time). There is omission of the subject and auxiliary verb in clause

[α]. As a result of the overwhelming support and cooperation received, [β] we were able to achieve a lot during these 14 days of initial lockdown (the underlined is an adverbial clause of result modifying the independent clause). Clause [β] is independent.

[α]. Although we have adopted strategies used globally, [β] our implementation programs have been tailored to reflect our local realities. (The underlined is an adverbial clause of concession, modifying the verb phrase 'have been tailored').

Short and long sentences are used in speeches to avoid redundancy and monotony. The president captures his speeches in well-articulated short and long sentences to bring about variety; variety is the spice of life. Compound and complex sentences have been used to achieve this artistic effect. Assertive or declarative sentences also abound in the speaker's speeches. Other structures that occur in his speeches were: imperative, exclamations and optative sentences. These are exemplified with the excerpts below:

All citizens in these areas are to stay in their homes. (**declarative**)

May God continue to bless and protect us all. (**optative**)

Every nation in the world is challenged at this time. (**declarative**)

We must not lose the gains achieved thus far. (**imperative for advising**).

This figure is more than double in two weeks! (**exclamatory**)

We also pray for quick recovery for those infected and undergoing treatment. (**optative**).

The sentences were used to signal commitment, responsibility, obligation, etc. They also point out the mood and attitude of the speaker. The mood of the president in his first speech somewhat differs from that of his second speech. This could be deciphered right from his initial statement: *Fellow Nigerians, 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.* The introductory aspect of his second speech begins with an allusion when he stressed: *Fellow Nigerians, 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.*

Use of Literary Devices

Alliterations and Assonance

Alliterations and assonance encapsulated in parallel structures have artistic effects on the two speeches. According to Fabb (1999), alliteration is a phonetic literary device identified by the repetition of a coherent sequence of segments which begins with an onset.

Examples are:

reflect our local realities (the sound 'r' alliterates)

realities and restrictions (the sound 'r' alliterates)

contain and control ('k' alliterates)

tracing and testing ('t' alliterates)

response and recovery ('r' alliterates)

greater good of our country (Apart from the alliterating sound 'g', there is also the use of assonance 'o' in 'good', 'of', 'our' and 'country').

As we are all aware (repetition of 'a')

The use of such literary devices provides a rhythmic pattern to the speeches. It must be stressed that rhythm is one of the distinct characteristics of speech which makes the listeners enjoy the sense of music. For instance, in his statement: *'The level of compliance to the Covid-19 guidelines issued has been generally good across the country'* the /k/ sound in the words 'compliance' and 'Covid-19' provide a rhythmic pattern, the repetitions of 'g' in the words: *guidelines, generally and good* perform similar roles. There's also a rhythmic pattern provided through the use of the expression: *...sensitizing our citizens on hygienic practices, social distancing and issues associated with social gatherings*. The 's' in *sensitizing, citizens, practices, social, issues, associated and social gatherings* irrespective of where it occurs in such words, has some grammatical and pragmatic impacts. The effect of repetitions, assonance and alliterations can be felt in his speeches. In the words of LIN Haoming (2019), alliteration is commonly used in modern music and numerous medias. Implementing alliteration can perfectly merge the sense of music and the beauty of poetry. It can also lead listeners think carefully about the content of the speech and the expressing emotion (76). Buhari's use of the lexical devices above is quite commendable.

Repetitions

Repetitions abound in the two speeches analyzed. The essence is not to create monotony or redundancy but to lay emphasis. Some of the linguistic units were repeatedly used. For instance, the word Covid-19 appeared 16 times. It appeared more than any other word and this could be attributed to the issue at hand-coronavirus pandemic. Excerpts are presented below:

As a nation, we are on the right track to win the fight against **Covid-19**.

Yesterday, the number of confirmed **Covid-19** cases globally was over one million

However, such sacrifices are needed to limit the spread of **Covid-19** in our country.

The level of compliance to the **Covid-19** guidelines issued has been generally good across the country.

In Nigeria's fight against **Covid-19**....

...the first signs that Coronavirus, or **Covid-19** was turning into an epidemic.

There was also the repetition of several other words: confirmed cases (14 times), social/physical distancing (5), measures (11).

The Use Testimonies

Testimony is a pragmatic strategy which a speaker uses to win the support of the listeners. President Buhari used testimonies to inform the Nigerian populace some of the achievements he has so far made to contain the spread of Covid-19. He equally used that to assure the people that together, they can handle the problem of covid-19. Such testimonies have semantic and pragmatic imports. They are:

... we have introduced healthcare measures, border security, fiscal and monetary policies....

... I have signed the Quarantine Order in this regard....

... our Government has been monitoring the situation closely.

The whole instruments of government are now mobilized....

We are in touch with these institutions....

... we have adopted strategies used globally....

Apart from the speaker's testimonies, there were some encomiums registered on some individuals, corporate bodies and Nigeria as a whole. The statements reveal some accolades to the concerned persons:

i. The Security Agencies have risen to the challenges posed by this unprecedented situation with gallantry and I commend them. I urge them to continue to maintain utmost vigilance, firmness as well as restraint in enforcing the restriction orders while not neglecting statutory security responsibilities.

ii. The response of our State Governors has been particularly impressive, especially in aligning their policies and actions to those of the Federal Government.

iii. I must also thank the media houses, celebrities and other public figures for the great work they are doing in sensitizing our citizens on hygienic practices, social distancing and issues associated with social gatherings.

Use of Coordination

According to Wardhaugh (1977), a structure of coordination contains a marker or coordinator and two or more independent units. These independent units can be words, phrases or even whole sentences. The units coordinated are termed conjoins. Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) identified four types of coordinators: pure coordinators, correlatives, quasi-coordinators and conjuncts. President Buhari made effective use of coordinators in his two speeches analyzed. This helped to bring about unity of structures in his sentences. The use of coordinators in his speeches therefore, has semantic implications. Examples:

...number of confirmed cases **and** deaths being reported....

infection prevention **and** control

...celebrities **and** other public figures....

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

The use of the conjunctions 'and' and 'but' shows a relationship between the content of his speeches and the clauses inherent in those speeches. His uses of the conjunctions equally denote contrast, for instance, '*Our hope and prayers are that we do not have to use all these centres. But we will be ready for all eventualities*'. Here, though the speaker prayed they don't use all the centres but the country is still ready to handle any eventualities. His uses of coordination are remarkable as he used them to denote relationship of grammatical units, show contrast where the

conjoined unit could be unexpected in view of what was said earlier, or it could be a re-statement of what he said earlier. The speaker repeatedly used coordination in his speeches and this is commendable since in language, identical items may be conjoined an indefinite number of times.

CONCLUSION

A public speech is a socio-cultural phenomenon which embodies both oral and written forms. The speaker in the two speeches utilized language properly to convey his messages of commitment, directing, appreciation, instructing, promising and in so doing, he employed linguistic elements such as coordination, repetition, assonance and pronominal to achieve pragmatic and stylistic effects. The analysis also revealed that certain words of a particular register can be used by persons who do not belong to that profession.

References

- Abuya, Eromosele John. "A Pragma-Stylistic Analysis of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's Inaugural Speech". *English Language Teaching*, vol.5, no. 11, 2012, pp. 8-15.
- Ademilokun M. (2015). Aspects of Attitudinal Meaning in Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari's Inauguration Speech: An Appraisal Analysis. *The African Symposium*. 15 (2): 1-10.
- Agung Suhadi and Kiagus Baluqiah (2017), *Donald Trump and Barrack Obama's Inaugural Address: Stylistic Analysis*. Proceedings of the Fifth International Seminar on English Language and Teaching (ISELT-5).
- Akinwotu, Samuel Alaba. (2013). "A Speech Act Analysis of the Acceptance of Nomination Speeches of Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief M.K.O Abiola". *English Linguistics Research* 2.1:43-51
- Akinwotu, Samuel Alaba (2018). Language and Style n Political Inaugurals: A Study of Inaugural Speeches of Govenor Olusegun Mimiko of Ondo State, Nigeria. *British Journal of English Linguistics* Vol. 6 no. 5. Pp. 1-15
- Ayeomoni, M.O. (2004) A Linguistic-Stylistic Investigation of the Language of the Nigerian Political elite. *Language and Discourse in Society*. L. Oyeleye. Ed. Ibadan: Hope Publications
- Baldeh, F. *English Language Learning and Teaching*. Nsukka: Fulladu PublishingCo.1990Bloch and Trager (1942)
- Chilton, Paul Anthony. (1998). "Politics and Language". *Concise Encyclopaedia of Pragmatics*. London: Elsevier. 688-694. Crystal, D & Davy, D. *Investigating English style*. Longman Group Ltd, 1969.
- Cynthia Nkechinyere Okoro, (2017) *Speech Act Analysis of the Formal Declaration of Interest for Presidency and Inaugural Speeches of President Muhammadu Buhari* Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 17:10
- Emmanuel C. Sharndama (2015). Political Discourse: A Critical Discourse Analysis of President Muhammadu Buhari's Inaugural Speech. *European Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research* Vol.3, No.3, pp.12-24.
- Ezeifeke 2018. *English Grammatical Structures and Models of Analysis*. Awka: SCOA Heritage Publication

- Fabb, N. (1999). Verse Constituency and The Locality of Alliteration. *Lingua*, 108(4), 223-245.
- Fang Liu, Genre Analysis of American Presidential Inaugural Speech. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 11, pp. 2407-2411, November 2012. Finland: Academy Publisher
- Firth J. R. (1935). The Technique of Semantics. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 36-72(Reprinted in Firth (1957) papers in Linguistics. London: Oxford University Press
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1994) *Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- LIN Haoming (2019), A Stylistic Analysis of Donald Trump's Inaugural Address, *Studies in Literature and Language* Vol. 19, No. 3, 2019, pp. 75-80
- Nnamdi-Eruchalu G.I (2017). A Critical Discourse Analysis of Muhammadu Buhari's Inaugural Speeches with a Focus on Pronouns. *International Journal of Literature, Language and Linguistics*, 4(2): 156-164.
- Oha, O. (1994) "Language in War Situation: A Stylistic Study of the War Speeches of Yakubu Gowon and Emeka Ojukwu". Ph.D Thesis. Department of English, University of Ibadan.
- Ononye, C. F. (2017). Language, contexts and power relations in Nigerian newspaper headlines on President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural address. In *Journal of English and Literature (UUJEL)*, XI: 1—17.
- Qian, Y. (2006). *Stylistics: A Course book for Chinese EFL Students*. Foreign language teaching and research Press.
- Quirk, Randolph and Sidney Greenbaum (2000). *A University Grammar of English*. Edinburgh: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Schaffner, C. (1996). Editorial: Political Speeches and Discourse Analysis", *Current Issues In Language & Society*,
- Searle, John R. (1969). *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- Sharndana, Emmanuel C. and Judith A. Mgbemena. (2015). "The Language of Political Discourse: A Study of Two Presidential Aspirants in Nigeria". *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL): A Peer Reviewed International Journal* 3.2: 19-37.
- Simpson (2004) Simpson, P. *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students*. Routledge.
- Widdowson HG (2007). *Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.