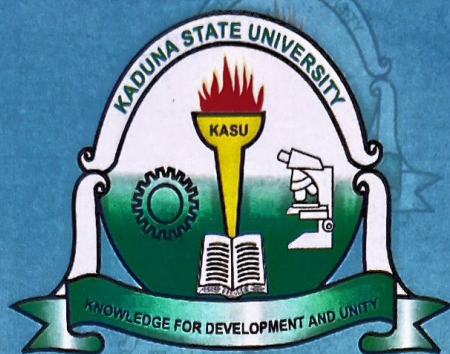




VOICES:

A JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

**A PUBLICATION OF:
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & DRAMA,
KADUNA STATE UNIVERSITY.**

■ **VOLUME 3** ■ **NUMBER 1** ■ **APRIL, 2024**

ISSN: 2408-7475

VOICES:
Journal of English Studies.

**Department of English and Drama,
Faculty of Arts,
Kaduna State University.**

Vol. 3 No. 1 April, 2024

© Department of English and Drama,
Kaduna State University.

VOICES:
A Journal of English Studies
Vol. 3 No. 1 April, 2024

Published by:
Department of English and Drama,
Faculty of Arts, Kaduna State University.
voicesjournal@gmail.com

All Rights Reserved

No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission. No paragraph of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save without written permission from the Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

ISSN: 2408-7475

Printed by:
Izymac Fonts Ventures
08033846421, 08090517494
izymac@gmail.com

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief

Onah, Patrick Elkanemi, Ph.D - The Head, Department of English and
Associate Professor Drama

Editorial Assistants

Rita Bossan, Ph.D

Hannatu Kwasau, Ph.D

Editorial Consultants

- Prof. Ayodabo Olatunde Joel - Department of English, Ajayi Crowther
University, Oyo
- Prof. Abubakar Aliyu Liman - Department of English and Literary
Studies, ABU, Zaria
- Prof. Mabel Ewrierhoma - Department of Theatre and Media Arts,
University of Abuja, Abuja
- Prof. Victor Samson Dugga - Department of English, Federal
University, Lafiya
- Prof. Gbenga Ibileye - Department of English and Literary
Studies, Federal University, Lokoja
- Prof. Alexander Kure - Department of English and Drama,
Kaduna State University, Kaduna
- Prof. Ahmed Kofa Babajo - Department of English and Drama,
Kaduna State University, Kaduna
- Prof. Methuselah Jeremiah - Department of English and Drama,
Kaduna State University, Kaduna
- Prof. Audee T. Giwa - Department of English and Drama,
Kaduna State University, Kaduna
- Prof. Butari Nahum Upah - Department of English and Drama,
Kaduna State University, Kaduna

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS

VOICES is a biannual peer reviewed journal of the Humanities and specifically it straddles the areas of English Language, Drama and Literature. Also, the Journal accepts papers from other world languages (e.g. Arabic and French) specifically, in this wise, well researched articles and critical reviews are solicited from scholars and the academic community on the aforementioned areas for possible publication. The Journal is published online and in print.

All articles must be intellectually stimulating hence, must address issues that are germane within contemporary academic discourse. However, in order to encourage the spirit of creative writing, the Journal also accepts well written short stories/playlets/poems for publication.

In preparing manuscripts for publication in this Journal, authors should adhere strictly to the following guidelines.

1. All papers must be double spaced and should not exceed 15 pages including all preliminaries and works cited/references. This will translate to roughly 5000 words thereabouts.
2. All papers must be word processed using the Times New Roman, front size 12.
3. Main titles must be written in upper case while all sub-titles must in low case.
4. Quotations must be indented; not in italics or bold and must maintain the same typeface and front size of the main paper.
5. All book titles must be written in italics while titles of articles, poems, plays or short stories should be captured in double quotation marks.
6. The MLA 8th edition and APA 7 edition styles sheets should be used. MLA should be used for literature papers while APA for language papers.

Submission of papers

E-copies of papers should be sent as MS word attachment to dronahpat@yahoo.com or voicesjournal@gmail.com with an assessment fee of 5,000. A scanned copy of the proof of payment (POP) should be sent to the editor

via the email address above. Contributors should note that failure to pay the assessment fee may result in non-assessment of his or her papers(s).

All payments are to be sent to:

Account Name: Patrick Onah

Account Number: 1000627202

Bank Name: Keystone Bank

Correspondence

All correspondence should be directed to:

Email: dronahpat@yahoo.com

Phone No.: +2348031587421

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

1. **MU'AZU MAIWADA**, Department of English and Literary Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
2. **BALA ALHAJI ALFA**, Department of Languages, Federal Polytechnic Bida, Niger State.
3. **OLORUNMADE, JOHNSON E. F.**, Department of English, Federal College of Education, Zaria.
4. **DIBIE GODFREY ATUNU, (Ph.D)**, Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State.
5. **MONSURAT ARAMIDE NURUDEEN**, Department of English, University of Ilorin.
6. **SUNDAY AONDOAVER GBANDE**, Department of Languages, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna.
7. **CLETUS IGBA IHOM, PhD**, Department of Languages and Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, Benue State University, Makurdi.
8. **JAMES, ANDOKARI ZAKU**, Department of English, Federal College of Education, Zaria.
9. **NMADUELU, OBI**, Department of English, Federal College of Education, Zaria.
10. **SA'ADATU AMINA ABDULKARIM**, Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Kaduna State University.
11. **H. D. OMENOGOR, PhD**, Senior Lecturer in English, Department of Languages, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State.

12. **F. E. OGHIA TOR, PhD**, Senior Lecturer in English, Department of Languages, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Nature of Nature in Niyi Osundare's the Eye of the Earth and Moonsongs Mu'azu Maiwada - - - - -	1
Analysis of Oral Legacy in Nupe Films Bala Alhaji Alfa - - - - -	25
An X-Bar Analysis of Hausa and English Word Structures and Its Pedagogical Implications Olorunmade, Johnson E. F. - - - - -	45
La Femme Et Sa Virginite En Afrique Dans Tu T'appelleras Tanga Asseze L'africaine Et Seul Le Diable Le Savait De Calixthe Beyala Dibie Godfrey Atunu, PhD - - - - -	65
Maxims of First Presidential Speech of President Muhammadu Buhari on Covid-19 Pandemic Monsurat Aramide Nurudeen - - - - -	72
Le Devoir Et L'engagement Sociopolitiques Dans <i>Terre Des Hommes, Pilote De Guerre Et Le</i> <i>Petit Prince</i> D'antoine De Saint-Exupéry Sunday Aondoaver Gbande & Cletus Igba Ihom, PhD - - -	91
A Pragmatic Study of Diverse Inscriptions on Commercial Buses in Kaduna Metropolis, Nigeria James, Andokari Zaku & Nmaduelu, Obi - - -	105
Broken Sa'adatu Amina Abdulkarim - - - - -	124
The Language of Elechi Amadi's <i>The Concubine</i> : A Syntactic Analysis H. D. Omenogor, PhD, & F. E. Oghiator, PhD, - - -	129

MAXIMS OF FIRST PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH OF PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC

By

Monsurat Aramide Nurudeen
Department of English,
University of Ilorin
monsurat.a@unilorin.edu.ng

Abstract

Political speeches are significant in the growth-phase and governance of any nation. With the outbreak and spread of the dreaded COVID-19 virus across the globe, political speeches have served as major device for political leaders to curtail the pandemic. How the utterances in the speeches are fashioned in polite language to suit the needs of the citizens/audience and effectively achieve the president's/speaker's intentional goals necessitated the study. Anchored on Leech's (1983) politeness maxims, the study examined the politeness strategies in the first presidential speech of President Muhammadu Buhari on Covid-19 pandemic. Content analysis method subsuming qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis and presentation was adopted to the analysis of sixty-five (65) expressions in the full text of the first presidential speech of President Muhammadu Buhari on Covid-19 pandemic. Findings revealed a preponderant employment of tact and generosity maxims. The two maxims account for 38% and 38% respectively of the total utterance population and are employed to portray acute sensitivity and confidence to the needs of the Nigerian citizens especially at the peak of the pandemic. The inclusive pronoun 'we' was also frequently employed in the context to exhibit sincerity, a sense of collective view, feelings, and shared responsibility. The study concluded that politeness strategies are crucial for political leaders in achieving effective communication and attaining their set objectives particularly in the midst of unrest.

Key terms: COVID-19; politeness maxims; Muhammadu Buhari; political speech

Introduction

In functioning with language in our daily social interaction, politeness is all-encompassing because of the intricacies of our diversities in terms of certain

social factors, such as age, status, rank, and so on (Babatunde & Adedimeji, 2008, p. 94). Every community regardless of its custom seeks to maintain a certain level of cordiality among members of its speech community. Most societies frown and disregard discourteous manner which makes the concept of politeness very significant in human relation as peace thrives when politeness is maintained and when it is flouted, there is uproar. This suggests that utterances have positive and negative effects in every communicative acts, speech situations, and interpersonal relationships.

The need for effective communication in any given speech event has encouraged the study of language use in different contexts and situations. The role of polite communication in governance cannot be undermined especially in political discourses where polite forms of expressions are utilised by political powers, particularly, in speech deliveries to persuade and reassure the populace that their needs will be met and their voices would be heard.

Consequently, the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in the world and its alarming spread, has necessitated the need for effective devices for the management of the virus. A major means by which the spread of the dreaded virus is nibbled in the bud in nations across the world, especially in the Nigerian terrain is through political speeches. These presidential addresses to citizens have potentials of affecting the governance of the country about matters affecting the Nigerian citizens where health-related issues are not an exception. Therefore, the political presidential speeches act as necessary steps towards keeping the populace abreast on information about the virus, how it can be curtailed as well as, putting efforts in place to allay the fears of the citizens.

How these polite expressions are employed by the Nigerian political powers in their speeches to achieve their set objectives needs to be investigated. Therefore, the study examines the politeness strategies employed by President Muhammadu Buhari in his first presidential speech on COVID-19 pandemic. The study explicates how the politeness strategies employed, convey the president's / speaker's intention and subsequently affect the minds of the audience / Nigerian citizens.

Conceptual Thrust

Pragmatics

Pragmatics studies the factors that govern the choices of language in social interaction and the effect of our choices on others. According to Wales (1989, p.365) "Pragmatics is concerned with language use which is concerned with the meaning of utterances rather than a grammatical sentence or proposition." She comments further that the meaning of an utterance comes from contextual and interpersonal communication situations, which involves the speaker and listener. The scope of Pragmatics is expanded by Blakemore (1992) that Pragmatics goes beyond the semantic sense by considering the intention of the speaker; the context of the speech, the reaction of the hearer, which determines possible interpretation of the proposition. Thomas (1995, p.22) joins the enterprise by stating that Pragmatics is 'meaning in interaction'. In other words, "meaning is not inherent in words alone nor is it produced by the speaker or hearer alone, but it is a dynamic process that involves the negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of utterance and the potential meaning of an utterance."

These definitions of Pragmatics make context the crux of communication because understanding the context of discourse enables deciphering non literal-meanings and speakers' intentions. Thus, without context, meanings may not be generated. Pragmatics therefore bridges the gap between what is said and what is intended, ultimately enhancing successful interaction.

Theoretical and Analytical Framework

The Concept of Politeness

Politeness is the ability of participants in a social interaction to exchange in a situation of relative harmony. Hence, to be polite means behaving in a manner that is socially correct and showing awareness of and caring for other person's feeling. This serves as a bedrock to politeness phenomena; a manifestation of the wider concept of etiquette or behaviour (Grundy 2008).

Thomas (1995, p. 149) traces the historical antecedent of politeness within the field of Pragmatics to fifty- five years back. Thomas (p. 149) goes further to state that, "there has been a great deal of interest in politeness to such an extent that politeness theory could almost be seen as a sub discipline of Pragmatics." Different theories and approaches of politeness have propounded by different scholars which has provided a rich literature to draw from, to include: Lakoff

(1973), Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), Fraser (1978), Leech (1983) Blum-kulka (1987/1990), Locher and Watts (2005).

Politeness has been defined differently by various scholars. According to Lakoff (1975, p.53), to be polite is saying the socially correct thing. Politeness is a form of behaviour that establishes and maintains comity (Leech, 1983). In tandem, Yule (1996, p.60) argues that "Politeness could be treated as a fixed concept, polite social behaviour or etiquette within a culture." Similarly, Holmes (2009, p. 711) states that "Politeness is a strategic interaction aimed at achieving goals such as avoiding conflicts and maintaining harmonious relationship with others." This view echoes Adegbija (1989, p.58) position that "Politeness is associated with situations in which one speaks or behaves in a way that is socially acceptable and pleasant to the hearer." Therefore, there is a common theme of politeness as a socially appropriate behaviour which runs through these definitions.

Crucial to the theory of politeness is the variable of 'Power'. Power commands respect and formality. According to Palmer (1981, pp. 62-63), "power involves the asymmetric relations of being older than, parent of, employer of, richer than, the other." Also, Salifu (2008, p. 279) states that "power reflects relative superior status, social distance, unfamiliarity, and deference."

Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle and Maxims

The most widely applauded and accepted theories of politeness in pragmatics are those of Geoffrey Leech's principle and maxims, and Brown and Levinson's model of politeness face theory and strategies. Leech (1983), states that politeness is located within the domain of interpersonal rhetoric. That is, the focus is on the speaker's goal rather than his or her illocutionary goal. In other words, it deals with how interlocutors make use of language to communicate with others, express feelings and attitude. Leech (p.131) defines "politeness as a phenomenon concerning a relationship between two participants (which he labels 'self' / the speaker and 'other' / the hearer)." Leech introduces the politeness principle which states:

"Minimise (other things being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs; maximise (other things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs." (p. 81).

The polite and impolite beliefs are understood beliefs, which are 'favourable' and 'unfavourable' respectively, to the hearer of a third party.

Leech (p.132) identifies six sub maxims which show how politeness operates in a conversational exchange. According to Leech, "the maxims stands in the same relationship as Grice's maxims, and they are linked to the illocutionary acts that they mostly occur in." They are: maxims of tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, sympathy and agreement towards others, and are thus discussed below:

The Tact Maxim (in directives [impositives] and commissives) minimize cost to other (maximize benefit to other). In other words, minimizing imposition and attending to the hearer's interests wants and needs.

Generosity maxim (in directives and commissives): minimize benefits to self: (maximize cost of self). That is, making a sacrifice as a means of pleasing the other.

Approbation Maxim in expressives and representatives (assertive): minimize dispraise of other: [maximize praise of other]. This has to do with expression of feelings and emotion.

Modesty Maxim (in expressive and representative): minimize praise of self: [maximize dispraise of self]. In other words, expressing the weakness of self thus, praising oneself is considered impolite.

Agreement Maxim (in representative) minimize disagreement between self and other [maximize agreement between self and other] this suggests, that one has to be in agreement with people to enhance the channel of communication.

Sympathy Maxim (in representatives) minimize antipathy between self and other, [maximize sympathy between self and other] that is, showing concern for the plight of others.

The observance of these maxims varies within cultures (Leech, 1983, Thomas, 1995) and they conflict, at times. When these maxims conflict, the importance or values attached to each maxim in respective cultures determine which one will supersede. Leech (1983) also establishes three scales, which are used for determining how the maxims should be used and balanced.

- i. The cost benefit Scale: weighs the costs and benefits that an act will have on the speaker and audience.
- ii. Optionality scale: weighs how much choice the goals of the speaker allow the audience.
- iii. Indirectness scale: weighs how hard the audience must work to understand the speaker.

Methodology

Content analysis method subsuming qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis and presentation is adopted to the analysis of sixty-five utterances in the full text of the first presidential speech of President Muhammadu Buhari on Covid-19 pandemic. Ten of the sixty-five expressions of his speech are qualitatively analysed to serve as samples for the discussion, while the sixty-five expressions are quantitatively analysed and represented in tables. The data is analysed using Leech's politeness maxims and other relevant pragmatic tools namely: mutual contextual beliefs, inferences, and intention. The amalgamation of these analytical frameworks in the data analysis is to critically examine how the politeness maxims cooperate to achieve the president's aim of persuasion.

While mutual contextual belief (MCBs) is based on Bach and Harnish's (1979) intention and inference theory that examines how speaker and hearer make out some inferences in a speech event: both of them that is, the speaker and hearer will base their roles on certain facts shared by them. Such facts are well known to both interlocutors are vital to the encoding of the messages.

Inference on the other hand, deals with how hearers deduce meaning from what is said and what is not said in an utterance. "It is also said to mean the deductive process through which the addressee or hearer progresses from the literal meaning of an utterance to what the speaker actually intends to express" (Osisanwo 2003, p. 90). The factors that serve as input into the inference procedure includes and are not limited to world knowledge, MCBs, implicature and context.

Also 'intention' refers to the goal purpose to be achieved, resident in the mind of a speaker or a hearer. Intention may therefore be an attempt to inform, request, order, persuade, encourage, describe, etc. It is very important in understanding utterances because in interactional exchanges, people can have different

intentions. Adegbija (1999) opines that intentions can change as interaction progresses and can be modified in the course of interpersonal interaction.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the Politeness Maxims of the Corpus Selection

Tact Maxim

The tact maxim states that one minimizes cost to other and maximize benefit to other. In other words, minimizing imposition and attending to the hearer's interests wants and needs. The tact maxim can be observed in the following expression:

As individuals, we remain the greatest weapon to fight the pandemic. By washing our hands regularly with clean water and soap, disinfecting frequently used surfaces and areas, coughing into a tissue or elbow and strictly adhering to infection prevention control measures in health facilities, we can contain this virus (Expression 10).

This utterance maximizes the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to others. The president tactfully requests Nigerians to maintain good hygiene in order to prevent the spread of the disease. adhering to these proactive measures is beneficial to their wellbeing. The tact maxim is also revealed in the following expression:

However, we must all see this as our national and patriotic duty to control and contain the spread of the virus. I will therefore ask all of us affected by this order to put aside our personal comfort to safeguard ourselves and fellow human beings. The common enemy can only be controlled if we all come together and obey scientific and medical advice (Expression 47)

In the utterance above, the president maximizes the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to others because the president admits that his administration urgently needs to control the spread of the virus. Hence, Nigerian citizens are geared to be actively involved towards the demanding exercise. The last sentence in the utterance above, which states "this common enemy can only be controlled if we come together and obey scientific and medical advice", explains the need for this request. adhering to this important call by the president is to achieve the overall aim of combating the spread of the virus.

The following expression also exhibit the tact maxim:

My fellow Nigerians, as a government, we will avail all necessary resources to support the response and recovery. We remain committed to do whatever it takes to confront COVID-19 in our country. (expression 58)

The president maximizes the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to others because he dwells on the fact that his government is of outmost benefit to Nigerians, palliatives and organizations such as pidgin camps, etc. have been put in place to that effect. Also, the benefits to be derived is clearly stated in the utterance. That is, efforts put in place to prevent the spread of the virus by infected persons.

Similarly, the following expression depicts the maxim of tact:

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

This utterance minimises the imposition through attaining to the wants and needs of Nigerians in their gravest moment. The speaker requests the cooperation and commitment of the citizens and their collective efforts in adhering to the COVID-19 guidelines, as well as giving full support and believing in the administration. What is requested is not much from the citizenry as the benefit outweighs the risk.

Generosity Maxim

The generosity maxim stipulates that one minimizes benefits to self and maximizes cost of self. That is, making a sacrifice as a means of pleasing the other. This maxim can be observed in the president's speech. For instance, the following expression exhibits the generosity maxim:

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 (expressions 1 and 2).

The utterance shows the administration's plan in providing preventive, containment, and curative measure from the disease is an arduous task that

involves handwork and financial expenditure. Hence, it implies cost to self and benefit to others.

Also, the generosity maxim is manifested in the following expression:

Since his return, the NCDC has been implementing numerous strategies and programs in Nigeria to ensure that the adverse impact of this virus on our country is minimized. We ask all Nigerians to support the work of the Federal Ministry of Health and NCDC are doing, led by the Presidential Task Force. Although we have adopted strategies used globally, our implementation programs have been tailored to reflect our local realities (expressions 13 and 14).

This expression minimizes the expression of benefit to self as the speaker narrates the extent and advantage that the administration has put in place towards curtailing the virus. This has been achieved through the governmental body of the NCDC in the country. The utterance also maximizes the expression of cost to self, in the presidents' willingness to curb the virus and ensure healthy life of the citizenry.

The generosity maxim can also be observed where the president states:

In Nigeria, we are taking a two-step approach.

First, to protect the lives of our fellow Nigerians and residents living here and second, to preserve the livelihoods of workers and business owners to ensure their families get through this very difficult times in dignity and with hope and peace of mind (expressions 15 and 16).

The utterance implies cost to self as it is geared towards working for the benefit of others (the Nigerian citizens). In other words, the utterance maximizes the expression of beliefs which imply benefits to the citizens because the president dwells on the fact that his administration is interested in the sound health, state of mind, and general well-being of Nigerians amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Similarly, the generosity maxim can be observed in this expression:

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 (expression 54)

The expression minimizes the expression of benefit to self as the president shows his commitment in curbing the virus, by showing support to the citizens who have been gravely affected by the pandemic. The utterance also maximizes the expression of cost to self as providing this kind of financial support for several months, involves huge financial cost to the administration. In other words, the utterance accentuates the administration's effort towards the pandemic.

Likewise, the following expression indicates that the president implies cost to self as it is geared towards working for the benefit of the Nigerian citizens: My fellow Nigerians, as a government, we will avail all necessary resources to support the response and recovery. We remain committed to do whatever it takes to confront COVID-19 in our country (expression 58).

Approbation Maxim

The approbation maxim states that on minimize dispraise of other and maximize praise of others. This maxim has to do with expression of feelings and emotion and is employed by the president in his speech as exemplified thus:

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. (expressions 1 and 2)

The speaker/the president minimises the expression of beliefs which expresses the dispraise of others as the president accord respect to "fellow Nigerians" who have employed his services. The greeting is also employed to open the speech as well as to lure the attention of the Nigerian citizens.

The use of the approbation maxim can also be identified in expression 64 below:
I will take the opportunity to thank all our public health work force, health care workers, port health authorities and other health essential staff at the frontline of the response for their dedication and commitment. You are true heroes.

Here, the president maximizes praise of others. He shows immense appreciation to the health workers and all lead individuals for their valid contributions which

have proved significant in managing the deadly disease. He displays solidarity and praises them as 'true heroes' for the services they have generously rendered.

Modesty Maxim

The modesty maxim emphasises that one minimizes praise of self and maximize dispraise of self. In other words, expressing the weakness of self as praising oneself is considered impolite. This maxim is exemplified in the following expression:

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 (expressions 1 and 2).

The speaker / president minimizes the expression of praise of self as he does not see himself as one who is above the Nigerian citizens, irrespective of the high power differential. His utterance evokes communal spirit and solidarity with the citizen he governs.

The modesty maxim can also be observed in the following:

Since his return, the NCDC has been implementing numerous strategies and programs in Nigeria to ensure that the adverse impact of this virus on our country is minimized. We ask all Nigerians to support the work of the Federal Ministry of Health and NCDC are doing, led by the Presidential Task Force. Although we have adopted strategies used globally, our implementation programs have been tailored to reflect our local realities (expressions 13 and 14).

The expression maximizes the expression of dispraise of self in the president's use of the pronoun 'we' to refer to his administration. This he does to make Nigerians have a sense of belonging in his administration and to show that collective efforts are put in place towards the management of the virus.

Another instance of this maxim is depicted in the following:

As individuals, we remain the greatest weapon to fight the pandemic. By washing our hands regularly with clean water and soap, disinfecting

frequently used surfaces and areas, coughing into a tissue or elbow and strictly adhering to infection prevention control measures in health facilities, we can contain this virus. (expression 10).

The utterance minimizes the expression of praise of self. The president decided to use the pronoun, 'we' to refer to himself, his administration, and the citizens. He co-opts everyone and reassures Nigerians that restricting the spread of the virus is a collective effort. Everyone has equal right to stand against the virus.

Also, in expression 47 below, the modesty maxim can be discerned:

However, we must all see this as our national and patriotic duty to control and contain the spread of the virus. I will therefore ask all of us affected by this order to put aside our personal comfort to safeguard ourselves and fellow human beings. The common enemy can only be controlled if we all come together and obey scientific and medical advice.

The utterance minimizes the expressions of praise of self because the president acknowledges that he is not the only individual involved in the progressive work. Therefore, there is mutual benefit rather than self-benefit from this admirable preventive and control measures put in place.

Another modesty maxim is observed in:

My fellow Nigerians, as a government, we will avail all necessary resources to support the response and recovery. We remain committed to do whatever it takes to confront COVID-19 in our country (expression 58).

The expression minimizes the expression of praise of self. The use of the phrase 'my fellow Nigerians and the prenominal 'we' is a clear indication that the president's administration involves all and sundry as such he does not engage in the collective work single-handedly.

Agreement Maxim

The agreement maxim states that one minimizes disagreement between self and other and maximizes agreement between self and other, this suggests that, one has to be in agreement with people to enhance the channel of communication. This maxim is discerned in the following:

As individuals, we remain the greatest weapon to fight the pandemic. By washing our hands regularly with clean water and soap, disinfecting frequently used surfaces and areas, coughing into a tissue or elbow and strictly adhering to infection prevention control measures in health facilities, we can contain this virus (expression 10).

The utterance maximizes the expression of agreement between self and other. Here, the president states that the citizens, including him, are the greatest weapon to fight the pandemic. Fighting the pandemic can only be made feasible if only everyone strictly adheres to proper hygiene as well as prevention and control measures put in place.

Sympathy Maxim

The sympathy maxim stipulates that one minimizes antipathy between self and other, and maximize sympathy between self and other, that is, showing concern for the plight of others. The observance of this maxim is apparent in the following expression:

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

The president expresses condolence to the family of the deceased who died trying to curtail the virus while caring for infected patients. He also commiserates with the infected victims undergoing treatment. Hence, he maximizes sympathy between self and other.

Another instance of the sympathy maxim is identified in this expression:

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 displace persons will also receive two months of food rations ion the coming weeks (expression 54).

The utterance indicates that the president is compassionate about the citizens wellbeing. Most importantly, the less privileged. This kind act towards the citizens is to mitigate the effects of the lockdown.

Analysis of Intention, Inference, and MCBs of the Corpus Selection

1. 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 (1 and 2)

The expression is expected to stir up great hope amongst Nigerians and to have confidence in the administration and its willingness to assisting them against the looming danger about to ravage the nation.

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

The president displays remorse as he ultimately attends to the wants and needs of the Nigerian citizens he governs, especially those gravely affected by the pandemic.

3. Since his return, the NCDC has been implementing numerous strategies and programs in Nigeria to ensure that the adverse impact of this virus on our country is minimized. We ask all Nigerians to support the work of the Federal Ministry of Health and NCDC are doing, led by the Presidential Task Force. Although we have adopted strategies used globally, our implementation programs have been tailored to reflect our local realities (13 and 14).

The president's use of 'we' is a direct address strategy to create an all-inclusive speech, that is, every patriotic Nigerian is made to be part of the experience conversed in the utterance. It also creates a sense of equality with the president despite the high power differential.

4. As individuals, we remain the greatest weapon to fight the pandemic. By washing our hands regularly with clean water and soap, disinfecting frequently used surfaces and areas, coughing into a tissue or elbow and strictly adhering to infection prevention control measures in health facilities, we can contain this virus (10).

The utterance is a direct address strategy to create involvement. That is, every patriotic Nigerian is made to adhere to the health measures which is aimed to ensure that the citizens are mobilized for natural development.

5. In Nigeria, we are taking a two-step approach. First, to protect the lives of our fellow Nigerians and residents living here and second, to preserve the livelihoods of workers and business owners to ensure their families get through this very difficult times in dignity and with hope and peace of mind (15 and 16).

The utterance informs Nigerians that that they can find succor in the administration. They need to be rest assured on the current governance as it is up to the task of confronting the virus. The promise to protect the lives and ensure of every Nigerian in and abroad is a potent weapon to strengthen their confidence and allay their fears.

6. However, we must all see this as our national and patriotic duty to control and contain the spread of the virus. I will therefore ask all of us affected by this order to put aside our personal comfort to safeguard ourselves and fellow human beings. The common enemy can only be controlled if we all come together and obey scientific and medical advice (47).

The aim of the expression is to appeal to Nigerians to protect themselves from the virus even at the detriment of their personal comfort. Hence, the utterance is an urgent call for all and sundry to obey all the stringent rules provided by the administration as regards to the pandemic.

7. 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 displace persons will also receive two months of food rations ion the coming weeks (54).

The aim of the utterance is to show empathy towards Nigerians who have been gravely affected by the virus. The utterance is also expected to boost the confidence of Nigerians that the administration is beyond capable to attend to their needs.

8. My fellow Nigerians, as a government, we will avail all necessary resources to support the response and recovery. We remain committed to do whatever it takes to confront COVID-19 in our country (58).

The utterance is expected to create a common ground on the situation at hand and also to demonstrate to the audience, the honest intent of the speaker.

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

The utterance could, make Nigerians appreciate the doggedness of the speaker in his government for showing concern in their well-being. The utterance would also perceive the administration as one aimed at taking an audacious step in ensuring that success is attained.

10. I will take the opportunity to thank all our public health work force, health care workers, port health authorities and other health essential staff at the frontline of the response for their dedication and commitment. You are true heroes (64).

The utterance portrays the president as a thoughtful and compassionate leader who appreciates the worth of the citizens and their valid contributions to critical matters such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Politeness Maxims in the Expressions

Politeness Maxim	Frequencies	Percentage(%)
Tact	30	38%
Generosity	30	38%
Approbation	7	8%
Modesty	4	5%
Agreement	6	7%
Sympathy	2	2%
Total	79	100%

The table above shows the statistical representation of the analysis. The tact maxim covers 38% of the statistical analysis. This indicates the president's manner of showing acute sensitivity to the needs and wants of the citizens. He tries to portray his administration as one that would be beneficial to the general populace especially in the midst of the pandemic, while tactfully requesting that the citizens comply with safety health measures. Likewise, the generosity maxim displays 38% of the statistical analysis. This implies that the speaker employs the generosity maxim to make the audience aware that they are his basic priority. This is to create a good impression of himself in the minds of the audience.

The approbation maxim constitutes 8% of the analysis to show that the speaker approves others in order to get full support of the audience to curb the rate of transmission and reproduction of the virus. While the modesty maxim constitutes 5% of the analysis. The modesty maxim is employed by the president to create a feeling of oneness with his audience, for attention focusing, and to create emphasis on the issue at hand. The use of the modesty maxim also shows that the president keeps due measures and exhibit simplicity as he portrays an all-involving idea of his administration. The agreement maxim constitutes 7% of the statistical analysis while the sympathy maxim constitutes 2% as explicated in the table.

Findings and Conclusion

The study revealed that all utterances in the speech involves the use of politeness strategies which clearly indicate that the president employs these strategies to drive home his aim of persuasion as well as to largely convince and assure Nigerians of good governance, especially the need for their joint effort to fight the lethal virus. It was also observed that the inclusive pronoun 'we' was frequently employed in the context to exhibit sincerity, a sense of collective view, feelings, and shared responsibility. It also serves as a weapon to gain the confidence of Nigerians amidst the deadly pandemic.

The study has shown that the employment of politeness strategies is crucial for political leaders in achieving effective communication. The application of politeness strategies is vital for any political front-runner who intends to achieve any goal. The president or any political figure, particularly in a democratic dispensation needs to, from time to time praise, admonish, encourage or dissuade his audience to either take certain actions or refrain from it.

References

- Address by H.E. Muhammadu Buhari, president of the federal republic of Nigeria on the covid-19 pandemic Sunday 29th march, 2020. Retrieved from <https://nairametrics.com/2020/03/29/president-muhammadu-buharis-full-speech-on-covid-19-pandemic/> on 15/5/2022.
- Adegbija, E. (1989). A comparative study of politeness phenomenon in Nigerian English, Yoruba and Ogori. *Multilingua*, 8 (1), 57-80.
- Adegbija, E. (1999). Titbits on discourse analysis and pragmatics. In Adegbija (Ed.), *The English language and literature in English: An introductory handbook*. (pp.186-205). Ilorin: Department of Modern and European Languages.
- Babatunde, S.T. & Adedimeji, M.A. (2002). The theory and practice of politeness phenomena in a Nigerian university. In S.G. Obeng (Ed.), *Issues in intercultural communication*2, (1), pp. 77-95. Nova Science Publishers.
- Bach, K. & Harnish, R. (1979). *Linguistic communication and speech acts*. Cambridge, Mass and London: MIT Press.
- Blum-Kulka, S. (1987). Indirectness and politeness: same or different? *Journal of Pragmatics*2, 131 – 146.
- Blakemore, D (2002). *Relevance and linguistic meaning: the semantics and pragmatics of discourse markers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blum-Kulka, S. (1990). You don't touch lettuce with your fingers: parental politeness in family discourse. *Journal of pragmatics*, 14(2), 259-287.
- Fraser, B. (1978). Acquiring social competence in a second language. *RELJ* Journal, 9(2), 1-21.
- Grundy, P. (2008). *Doing pragmatics*. (3rd ed.). London: Hodder Education.
- Lakoff, R. (1973). The logic of politeness, or minding your p's and q's. Papers from the ninth regional meeting of the Chicago linguistic society. Chicago: Chicago Linguistic society. 292-305.
- Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Locher, M. A. & Watts R. J. (2005). Politeness theory and relational Work. *Journal of politeness research*. 1 (1), 9 -33.
- Palmer, F. R. (1981). *Semantics*. (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Salifu, N. A. (2010). Signalling politeness, power and solidarity through terms of address in Dagbanli. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 19 (14), 274-292.
- Thomas, J. (1995). *Meaning in interaction: an introduction to pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.