Mood in Language: A Lexico-syntactic Analysis of Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) Covid-19 Sensitisation SMS

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Abstract—**Using data from widely circulated SMSes from the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), this paper provides a lexical-syntactic analysis of language use by a government agency during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. The framework used for the analysis is dyadic, encompassing tenets from semantic theory (which deals extensively with lexical choices as well as the determination of the meanings attached to them) and Systemic Functional Grammar. The analysis reveals that a writer's selection of lexical items in a particular text is a reflection of his mood. This plays a significant and important role in the writer's arrangement of the lexical items into peculiar sentence patterns in the text. Mood which is a system at the deep structure of Systemic Functional Grammar determines, to a very large extent, the language a writer employs in a text. Repetition in NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation messages is used to emphasize the importance of such words. It is meant to further convince the general public that only self-efforts or actions can prevent the spread of COVID-19 as majority of the repeated words are action stimulated words (verbs).**

Index Terms—**mood, language, lexico-syntactic, NCDC sensitisation SMS**

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a multi-dimensional entity. It is not only the product of a culture but also a unifying factor in the integration of individuals within a given society. Abubakre (2011) observes that "Language cannot exist without a society and neither can a society exist without a language" (P.1). That shows language can't exist in a vacuum. Language displays creativity, flexibility and adaptability to changes at the vocabulary, idiomatic and interpretational levels. These attributes differentiate it from other forms of communication.

Language is not mere abstraction of sound or graphic symbols. It is a system of differences and distinctions which characterize human communication. The realizations of these abstractions are codes used to codify human intent in interactional situations. So, language is an activity, a practical consciousness which concretizes the abstractions of human thoughts and expressions in practical contexts which perpetually mould their meaning as communicated. With a view that meanings are born by interaction which are in turn context constrained, the linguistic form of a discourse exists for the speaker only in the context of ideology surrounding the discourse in question.

That is why Tunde-Awe (2014) claims that language is undoubtedly an instrument which gives vivid and clear expression to human thoughts" (p.485). This means much of the information that we gather comes from either spoken or written language. Ahar, Nartondo and Ben (2018) argue that "language is a basic requirement and an indispensable tool in the human society". Copi Capellini (2005) cited by Wangu (2013) highlights five functions of language in the society such as expressive, phatic, informational, aesthetic and directive. The expressive function of language explains the writer or speaker's feelings and attitudes while phatic function is used to keep communication lines open as well as to maintain social relationship by fostering cohesion with social group. The directive function of language aims at directing or influencing the behaviours or attitudes of others.

This above view is also shared by Lehtonen (2000) as he writes;

> *"Meanings are necessarily contextual. They are*
> *bound to inter subjective social relationship.*
> *Therefore, the signs of language are also not*
> *internally restricted and immutable units, but*
> *active elements of speech, whose meaning*
> *changes depending on the social intonations,*
> *assessments and connotations they condense*
> *within themselves in each social situation."(* P. 38*)*

Lehtonen continues that since intonations, assessments and connotations mutate the heterogeneity and different interest in linguistic communities and discourse situations, a sign is not more than a neutral element of a given structure when it is dis-contextualized.

Therefore, if meanings are contents resulting from a communicative activity in a social situation, to study the structure of text independent of its content would ultimately end in undesirable subjectivity.

Instead of the above, necessary attention should be paid to the "connections of use" in which texts are posited and from where they obtain their meanings (Lehtonen, 2000). This will lead to an attempt at foregrounding the fact that language is a social event of interaction implemented in utterances. (Omotunde, 2014, P.14).

There is a symbiotic relationship between languages and mood because language is the outlet for the expression of mood. In other words, it is through language that mood can be observed and gauged. A writer employs language in his day to day interactions and what he writes at a particular time is an indicator of his mood.

Mood in grammar constitutes a system which applies mainly to independent clauses which describes the possible sequences of subject and predicator in a clause. It needs be stressed that the mood system is important to independent clauses because it describes the possible sequences of subject and predictor in a clause (Scot et al, 1976, P.190). Traditionally, mood as a concept in grammar subdivides into three – indicative, imperative and subjunctive.

Mood therefore, expresses writers' attitude to his message. The writers convey their attitude towards what they write to their readers through a modal apparatus. (See Ajiboye, 2006, P.46, Osisanwo, 2006, P.1 and Ojo, 2006, P.92).

Short Message Service (SMS) is a system for sending short text messages, as from one cell phone to another or from a computer to a cell phone. (Dictionary.com, 14-10-2020). SMS messaging was used for the first time in December 1992 when Neil Papworth, a 22year old test engineer for Sema group in the UK (now Airwide Solutions), used a personal computer to send the text message "Merry Christmas" via the **vodafone network** to the phone of Richard Jarvis, who was at a party in Newbury.

Most early GSM mobile phone handdsets did not support the ability to send text messages. The first SMS gateways for cellphone were network notification, usually to inform of voice mail messages.

Nokia was the first handset manufacturer whose total GSM phone line in 1993 supported use of sending SMS text messages. In 1997, it became the first manufacturer to produce a mobile phone with a full keyboard: the NOKIA 9000i communicator.

GSM became very popular because it offers improved speech quality, supports a wide range of services and through a uniform international standard, it enables subscribers to use one telephone number and a mobile unit anywhere in the world (Y'hello 2002) cited in Bankole and Ogunrinde (2017:80). GSM came into use in Nigeria in 2001 precisely; MTN was the first company to arrive in the country. People now have access to telephoning and sending messages on SMS. Most people usually try as much as possible to avoid exceeding a page, made up of one hundred and sixty (160) characters. This dictates the choice and the structures of words in NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation SMS.

The Novel **Coronavirus** originated from the Human seafood market at Wuhan, China where bats, snakes, raccoor dogs, palmcivets, and other animals are sold, and rapidly spread up to 109 countries. The zoonic source of SARS-COV-2 is not confirmed, however, sequence based analysis suggested bats as the key reservoir. Nigeria is one of the countries battling with COVID 19.

Nigeria Centre for Disease Control is Nigeria leading national public health institute. The NCDC is a Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health and is headquartered in Abuja, Nigeria.

The main goal of the agency is to protect public health and safety through the control and prevention of communicable diseases in Nigeria. The agency is also responsible for coordinating surveillance systems to collect, analysis and elucidate data gathered on diseases of importance to the Nigeria community. NCDC has been very active since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the country. Messages are sent to the general public via SMS and other social media platforms.

II. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this paper is to examine the various devices used by NCDC to sensitize the public about the outbreak of COVID-19 and the precautionary measures via SMS. The selected messages are predominantly written in English language. It is the objective of the study to identify the devices used by NCDC to sensitize the general public about the dangers of COVID 19 and urge them to take responsibility.

The specific objectives of the paper are to;
  i.   investigate the dominant structural and functional type of sentence in the NCDC sensitisation SMS and the reason behind the usage.
  ii. justify the persuasive strategies employed to convince the general public into action by NCDC COVID-19 through sensitisation SMS.
  iii. examine the importance of the linguistic and semantic devices employed in the codification of NCDC COVID 19 sensitisation SMS.
  iv. explain the role of context in the interpretation of NCDC COVID 19 sensitisation (SMS).
  v.   identify how mood of the writer, to a large extent influences NCDC COVID-19 messages.

III. An Overview of Systemic Functional Grammar

Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth SFL) was developed by Michael A.K. Halliday in the mid nineteen century. It was further developed by key figures in this field including Ruquiya Hasan, James, R. Martin, Christian, M.I. Matthiessen and David Butt.

Halliday's work is cited as the most important modern development of ideas within the 'London School' or Linguistics whose founding father was J.R. Firth (1890-1960). The exposition of the Halliday models of Systemic Linguistics, according to Butler (1985), spans the periods (a) early 1960's Scale and Category Grammar, (b) from 1964 to about 1971 - 'the semantically oriented Systemic Functional Grammar'. M.A.K. Halliday, the exponent of this grammatical model also owes same allegiance to his former teacher. J.R. Firth, a fact which has made some people to refer to the grammar as Neo-firthian Grammar. (See Halliday, 1966a).

Systemic Grammar in Halliday (1966a) cited in Osisanwo (2004, P.10) emphasizes five points which distinguish it from other grammars:
   a. Systemic grammar postulates four theoretical categories of unit, structure, class and system which are used to account for fundamental grammatical patterns of any human language.
   b. While unit and class apply to both surface and deep planes of grammar, structure operates only in surface grammar, while system operates only in deep grammar.
   c. It is a generative non-transformational grammar that operates at surface and deep planes. At the surface plane, the grammar deals with how any given system is ultimately realized in grammatical structures and their elements. At the deep plane, it accounts for how semantic features are organized into networks, with the entry conditions into any given network explicitly stated.
   d. Classes are defined by their role in structure. For instance, the class 'nominal group' is defined in its role as subject and complement of a clause.
   e. There are differences in delicacy of items of analysis. Some items of elements are more delicate than others.

The importance of the notion of delicacy lies in the fact that it draws attention of primary similarities first before directing attention to secondary differences. (See Osisanwo, 2004).

The study adopts the Halliday and Mathiessen's (2004) Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) which sees language as "a system of network of meaning potential". Basically, SFL interprets language as being made up of systems, each having a set of features. It demonstrates that language can be used to realize certain goals and basic function of language is to communicate a message that can be understood correctly.

According to Onyemachi and Fakuade (2014), Systemic Functional Linguistics and cohesion are assumed to be suitable for this type of work. Halliday (1990) equally states that SFL is suitable for this type of investigation. They can be used to analyse any passage and relate it to its context in the discourse. SFL analysis involves any analysis of the grammatical choices made in the text and the functions these choices are meant to serve. SFL looks at texts as expressing three metafunctions which are ideational function which deals with how language is used to represent the world. The interpersonal function is concerned with how language reflects the attitude of the writer, while textual function on the other hand deals with how words and sentences are organized to make the text.

Our preoccupation in this study is the interpersonal and textual functions which involve communication between the participants and how they express their attitudes towards one another and the way they relate to other people as they interact. The textual function is concerned with the actual organisation of the text, and the channel one selects in communication. This is our main preoccupation in this research.

IV. Methodology

NCDC COVID 19 sensitisation SMSes belong to the scripted text. It is the use of language in written discourse. The data collection therefore involved the collection of twenty SMSes sent to MTN subscribers between April and August, 2020. NCDC used MTN network to send twenty-seven SMSes during the period of coverage. Twenty messages have been carefully selected because they deal with COVID 19 protocols while other SMS were just warning against falling victim to fraudsters via NCDC false recruitment and COVID 19 palliatives. Several similarities were found to exist among the 27 SMS to make them qualify for classification as belonging to the same register. Under the grammatical analysis, we shall consider the grammatical structures via sentence types, adverbial group types and tense system bringing out the dominant structures and their usage.

Also, under lexical analysis, we shall consider repetition, vocabulary and compounding, and content words classification. Firth believes that "effective action and good manners require appropriateness of language in situational contexts" (Osisanwo, 2003, P.70).

V. Data Analysis and Discussion

A. Mood Types Analysis

Traditionally, mood as a concept in grammar subdivides into three: indicative, imperative and subjunctive. All these types are present in COVID-19 sensitisation SMS of NCDC.

a. **Indicative Mood** (The indicative mood refers to the statement of fact). Some examples are cited below:

           S   P   A
- Self-Medication /can be/ very dangerous.

           S   P   A
- COVID-19/ is/ real.

           S   P   A   P   A
- Wearing a mask /helps protests /from the droplets that /carry /the COVID-19 Virus.

           S   P   A
- Treatment for COVID-19 /should be /under strict medical supervision

b. **Imperative Mood** (The imperative mood expresses a command)
Some examples are cited below:

      P   S
- Take/ Responsibility

      P   S
- Do not travel/ out of your state at this time.

        S   P   P   P   C
- Wear a face mask, wash your hand with soup and water.

c. **Subjunctive Mood** (The subjunctive mood expresses a condition)
Examples are cited below:

    A   S   P   C   C   P   P   A   P   CE
- If you have cough and fever please stay at home and call you state hotline.

    A   S   P   CE   CE   P C C P   S
- Until scientists find the certified drug for COVID-19, let us all Take Responsibility.

      S   P   C   A   P   CE
- A face mask can spread disease if not handled properly.

      S   P   CE   P   S
- As you go about work or business, wear a face mask.

It should be stressed that emphasis in this paper shall be on the first two types (i.e. indicative and imperative) because our theoretical framework does not emphasise the third (i.e. the subjunctive).

The reason is not far fetched –the subjunctive mood relates only to independent clauses rather than independent clauses, which we are more concerned with here. (see Thompson,1996, P.41).

The above division ordinarily represents mood at the verbal level. Muir (1979) cited in Ojo (2006, P.95) believes that features of mood are related at clause rank; not at verb or sentence rank.

To him:

> *the mood features are realized at clause rank, not at verb or sentence rank: the mood features are realized in fact, by particular arrangements of (some of) the elements of clause structure; and features of mood are not in a one-to-one relation with contextual clauses of sentence.* (P.93)

He recognizes the first choice in the mood system as indicative and imperative. Clauses which contain a subject /s/ element are more indicative e.g.

- COVID-19 /is/ real

     S   P
    S   CE P   CE
- Self-medication/can be /very dangerous.

The clauses which do not contain a subject element are called imperative e.g.

     P   CE
- Wear/ a face mask.

     P   CE
- Wash/ your hands.

From the functional perspective, the mood component of the clause has two essential constituents which are <u>subject</u> and <u>finite.</u> The component plays a vital role in carrying out the interpersonal function of the clause as exchange in English. The subject is a familiar term in traditional grammar, although it should be remembered that here it is being interpreted in functional elements of the verbal group. Eggins (1994, P.156) citing Halliday, (1985a, P.6) submits that the definition of the subject is that it realizes the thing by reference to which the proposition can be affirmed or denied. It provides the person or thing in whom is vested the successor failure of the proposition what is "held responsible". (See Ojo, 2006, PP.92-107).

B. Syntactic Analysis

The fact that we have selected a written text gives us the ample opportunity to examine the text thoroughly for its grammatical features. There are various ways by which the grammatical analysis of the text can be carried out but we would prefer to go by the Systemic Linguistic Approach because of its suitability to text analysis.

To the exponents of Systemic Grammar, the description of grammar operates at surface and deep planes. There are also four categories for grammatical description which are UNIT, CLASS, STRUCTURE and SYSTEM (see Wale Osisanwo, 2003) with the category of unit goes the notions of rank and hierarchy. Under unit, we have sentence, clause, group, word and morpheme in a descending order of magnitude. These terms and concepts will be used in the analysis and discussion.

C. Grammatical Structure (Surface Plane)

The question here is what grammatical structures are found in the text to be peculiar to NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation (SMS)? In order to answer this question, we should examine the following features of surface grammar: Sentence types and adverbial group types.
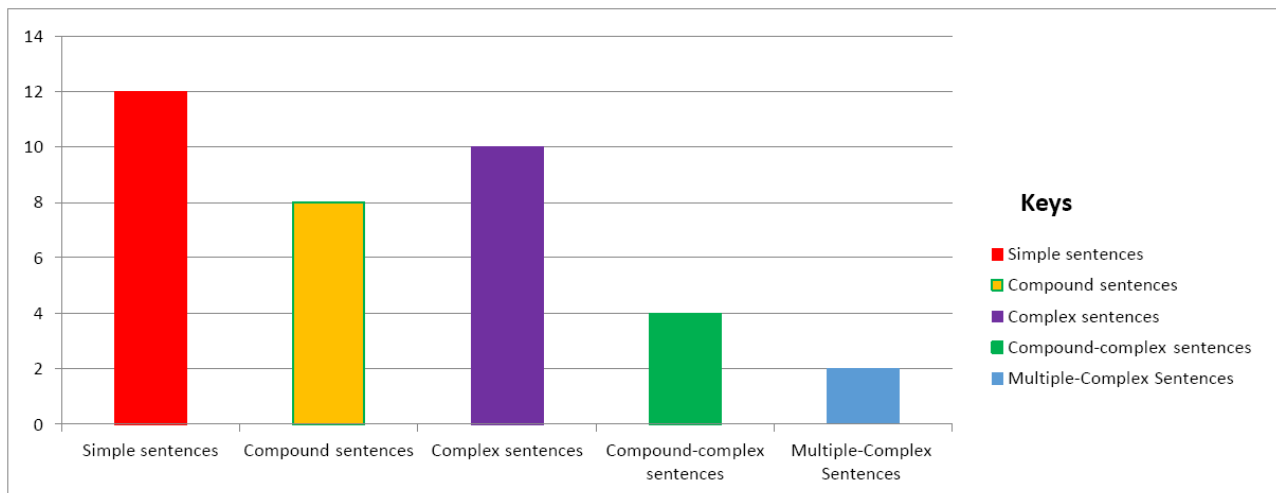
1. SENTENCE TYPES

The following structural sentence types exist in the English language; simple sentence; compound sentence, complex sentence, compound-complex sentence and multiple-complex sentence. They are exemplified and illustrated below:

a.   *Simple Sentences (one independent clause)*
-   ///Treatment for COVID 19 should be under strict medical supervision///
-   ///Do not travel out of your state at this time///
-   ///Please take responsibility for your health and for your loved ones///

b.   *Compound Sentences(Two independent clauses)*
-   ///Self-medication can be very dangerous /&/ may cause death///
-   ///Please take care /&/ protect your loved ones///
-   ///COVID 19 and malaria may have similar symptoms /but/ are caused by different agents///

c.   *Complex Sentences (one independent clause plus one dependent clause)*
-   ///Wearing a mask helps protects us from the droplets //**that carry the COVID-19 virus**///
-   ///Don't wait to be a victim //**before taking action**///
-   ///A face mask can spread disease //**if not handled properly**///
-   ///**Until scientists find a certified drug for COVID-19,//** let us all take responsibility by avoiding large gatherings //**to reduce the risk of becoming infected**///

d.   *Compound-Complex Sentences (one independent clause, plus at least two dependent clauses)*
-   ///**If you have cough and fever**,// please stay at home //and// call your state hotline///

e.   Multiple-Complex Sentences (More than independent clauses at least one dependent clause).
-   ///Wash your hands before and after wearing///, Do NOT share and ALWAYS wash before reusing///
-   //**As you go about work or business,**//wear a face mask,// wash your hands with soup & water// stay at least 2 metres away from another person///

TABLE 1
BELOW SHOWS THE SUMMARY OF OUR FINDING WITH THE ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT WITH REGARD TO SENTENCE TYPES

| Text Selections	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total	%
Simple sentences	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	1	1	-	-	2	1	-		12	33
Compound sentences	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-		8	23
Complex sentences	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	10	28
Compound-complex sentences	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11
Multiple-Complex Sentences	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	06
Total	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	36	100

Bar Chart 1: A Bar Chart illustrating Statistics of Structural Sentence Types

Our findings show that a diminishing preponderance of simple sentences followed by compound sentences. As should be unexpected, NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation SMSes give room for long winding sentences which could be complex or compound. This negates the structure of other types of advertisements that use more simple sentences than other types.

Our findings reveal that NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation text messages capture more compound and complex sentences than simple sentences because of the rules of sending SMS by the service providers. The service providers charge SMS per page. Most users of Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) usually try to avoid exceeding a page, made up of one hundred and sixty (160) characters per chargeable page of a message. NCDC accurately composed a page message to sensitize the general public with the aid of conjunctions. That is why statements such as "Be supportive & stop spread of fake news", "wash your hands before & after wearing", "do not share & always wash before reusing", "please take care & protect your loved ones" etc, are common in the data. This finding agrees with (Dada and Ogunrinde, 2020, P.169) where they claimed that NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation advertisements on social media use simple sentence dominantly to make the messages easier to understand. Social Media messages are not charged per page. Users of social media are free to compose their messages as they like. They can even use pictures voluntarily as identified by (Dada and Ogunrinde, 2020, P.166). SMS can't be really categorized as one of the social media platforms because it is unique and individualistic in nature.

2. ADVERBIAL GROUP TYPES

In English, there are two main adverbial group types: adverb-headed adverbial group and preposition plus a rank shifted nominal group type. The adverb-headed adverbial group can be conjunction such as "and", "but", "or" clause binders/subordinators such as "because", "if", "unless", "although", "while" and so on. Then, there are others such as fast, quickly, now and so on. We can represent this grouping of adverbials diagrammatically.
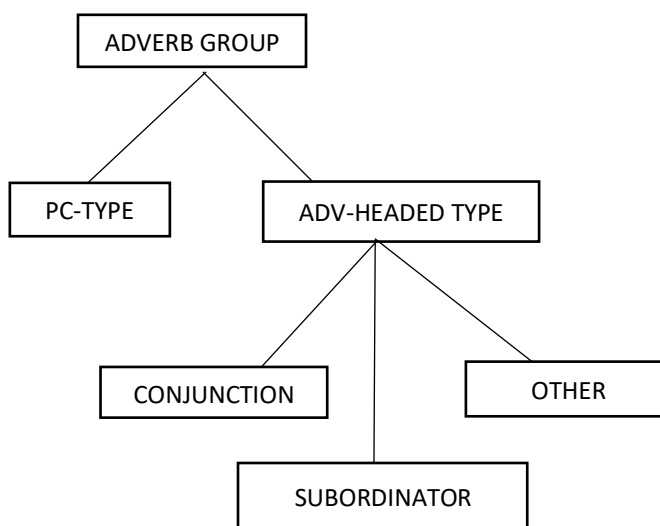
Here are typical sentences with some of these adverbials for us to identify and analyse.

///COVID-19 and malaria may have similar symptoms but are caused by different agents. Stay 2 metres away from the next person and use a mask, wash your hand frequently with soap, take responsibility today. COVID 19 can spread from person to person///.

1) but = adv .- headed (conjunction)
2) from the next person = P-C type (prepend plus completion)
3) and = adv-headed (conjunction)
4) frequently = adv-headed (others)
5) today = adv-headed (others)
6) to person = P-C type (prepend plus completion).

The table below (table 2) shows our findings with regard to the adverbial group types in the text.

TABLE 2
A STATISTICAL CHART REPRESENTING THE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ADVERBIAL GROUP TYPES

Data Section	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total	%
P-C TYPE	1	4	3	3	2	4	3	1	4	3	1	3	2	5	4	3	1	3	3	2	55	56
CONJUNCTIONS	1	1	4	2	-	-	-	2	1	1	2	1	1	-	1	2	1	1	1	1	23	24
SUBORDINATORS	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	12	12
OTHERS	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	8	8
TOTALS	2	5	7	6	3	5	5	6	6	5	4	5	4	6	7	7	3	5	4	3	98	100
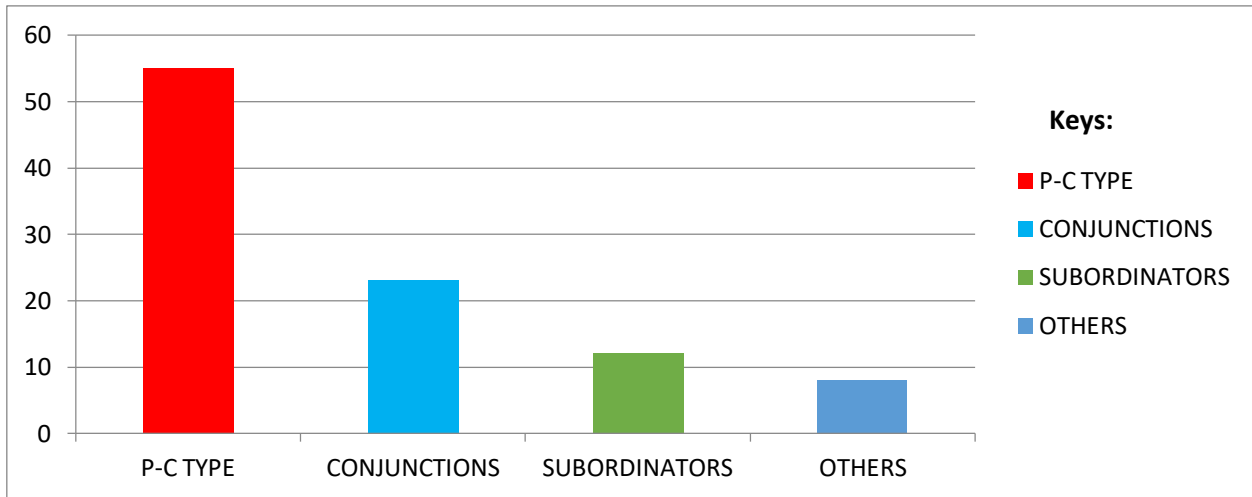
Bar Chart 2: A Bar Chart illustrating the Statistics of Adverbial Group Types

From the findings, one can see the preponderance of the P-C type adjunct followed by conjunctions. In the first place, the frequent description of the COVID-19 pandemic and necessary actions, to be taken individually followed by the struggle across the whole world which necessitated the constant use of such adjuncts. Hence, we have such adjuncts as:
- by cleaning all surfaces frequently
- from person to person
- to protect yourself and others.
- for 14 days,
- from the droplets
- to reduce the risk
- to protect the rest
- by health authorities.

If we recall our findings under sentence types where compound sentences and compound complex sentences equally followed simple sentences with (56%) all together, we should not be surprised at the large number of conjunctions 24% found in the text. It is an evidence of anticipation and daily continuity of action. Hence, NCDC goes on joining the short simple sentences together through the use of "and" "&" "but" "while", "or". While there are other adverbs describing the various actions to take such as frequently, daily, properly, quickly, easily, and so on. Subordinators are hardly used. The few available ones were used to form simple complex sentences just to economize the space.

D. Grammatical Systems (Deep Plane)

There are many systems at the clause and group levels of English. Only one of them has been selected for use in this analysis.

TENSE SYSTEM

The tense system in English operates within the verbal group. Just as we have simple tense system as in /COVID-19 is real/, /treatment for COVID-19 should be under strict medical supervision/, so also do we have complex system such as /If you have cough and fever please stay at home and call your state hotline/.

There is no doubt that simple tenses are more than complex tense systems in NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation (SMS). Our choice has therefore been restricted to the next work thus;
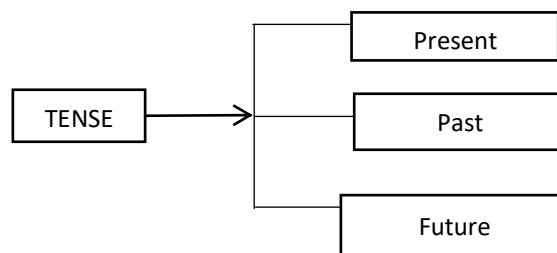
Here are typical examples of tense for simple analysis:
- Wash your hands before and after wearing
- Find state number at https://covid-19.ncdc.gov.ng/contact/
- Do not travel out of your state at this time
- Please take responsibility for your health and your loved ones

- COVID-19 and malaria are caused by different agents
- PCR test effectively detects COVID-19 in patients.

I. Wash   =   Present
II. Find   =   Present
III.   Do not travel =   Present
IV.   Take   =   Present
V. Are caused   =   Past
VI.   Detects   =   Present

The summary of our findings under tense selection is shown in table 3 below:

TABLE 3
A STATISTICAL CHART REPRESENTING THE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF TENSE SYSTEM

Text	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total	%
VGS in Present	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	61	92
VGS in Past	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	8
VGS in Future	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Total	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	66	100
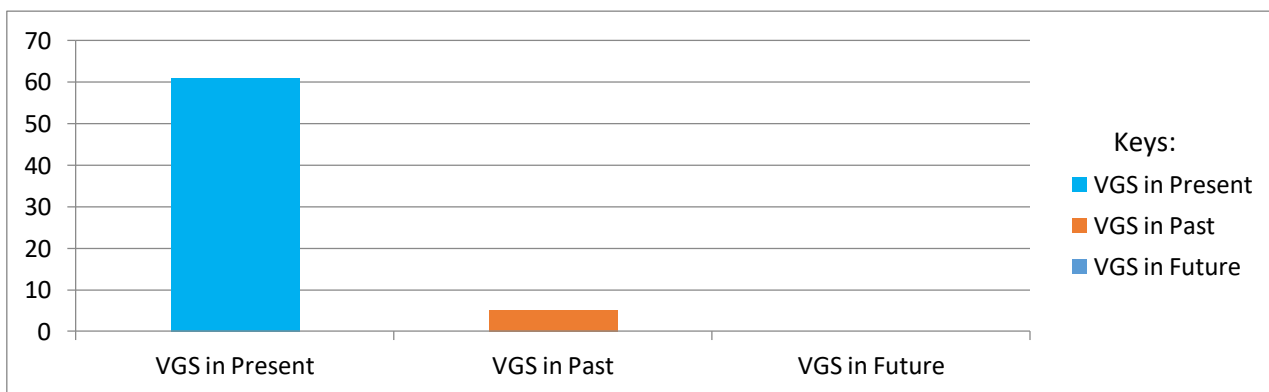
Bar Chart 3: A Bar Chart illustrating the Statistics of Tense System

The findings show that verbal groups which selected the present tense amounted to 61 out of 66, that is 92%, while 6 verbal groupings that is 8% selected the past tense. This is interesting, because one would have expected to find more verbal groups in the future which eventually does not feature at all. The reason behind this finding is that COVID-19 pandemic prevention has to do with daily life activities. This is the reason why words like "today", "always", "immediately", etc are used. Furthermore, the anticipatory nature of the pandemic being reported daily demands the use of an "anticipatory tense" which the present tense is. The action being reported and the action to be taken somehow continuing and is capable of changing from time to time. But the use of the present tense makes it easier to describe or report an action. It also brings a sense of immediacy to the events being reported.

Present tense form of the verb is not unconnected with liveliness and currentness of the disease.

E. Lexical Analysis

There are several ways by which one can carry out the lexical analysis of a text of this nature. The lexical density can be calculated. According to Ure (1971), lexical density is the proportional occurrence of lexical items to the total number of words used in a given text. This is one of the linguistically accepted ways by which registers can be differentiated. It is also possible to calculate the rate of collocation of the lexical items in a given text. Using either of these methods would lead us to the expected and obvious result of the overwhelming tilt towards the field of discourse. We shall limit our analysis to only content words.

1. THE WORD

Dada (2000, P.6) observes that the definition of a word remains one of the most controversial issues in the study of language. This is because the spoken word is different from the written word, and these two are different from grammatical words. Taking these three modes into cognizance, Hockett (1922) cited in Dada (2018, P.6) defines the word as "any segment of a sentence bounded by successive point at which pausing is possible". It is composed of one or more morphemes.

Two classes of words namely content words and grammatical words are presented here.

2. THE CONTENT WORDS

Examples of content words are:

  a) Nouns

Responsibility, mask, coronavirus, droplets, COVID-19, death, health, symptoms, victim, risk, hotline, metres, drug, disease, agents, gathering, spread.

b) Verbs

May cause, should be, are, becoming, take, take care, protect, stay, call, can, detects, wash, have, reduce, stop, do, etc.

c) Adjectives

Medical, certified drug, loved ones, very dangerous, strict, chronic, health, different, large, supportive, quickly, who, confirmed coronavirus case,

d) Adverbs

Before, after, always, today, properly, effectively, frequently, easily, immediately, under running water, etc.

TABLE 4
A STATISTICAL CHART REPRESENTING THE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF CONTENT WORD TYPES

Text	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total	%
Nouns	5	8	7	8	6	6	6	4	5	8	7	0	6	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	140	44
Adjectives	3	1	3	2	1	3	2	2	4	4	3	1	-	2	1	1	3	2	1	2	39	12
Adverbs	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	2	-	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	-	1	21	08
Verbs	6	5	5	8	8	5	8	10	6	6	7	5	5	7	5	6	3	4	3	4	114	36
Total																					314	100
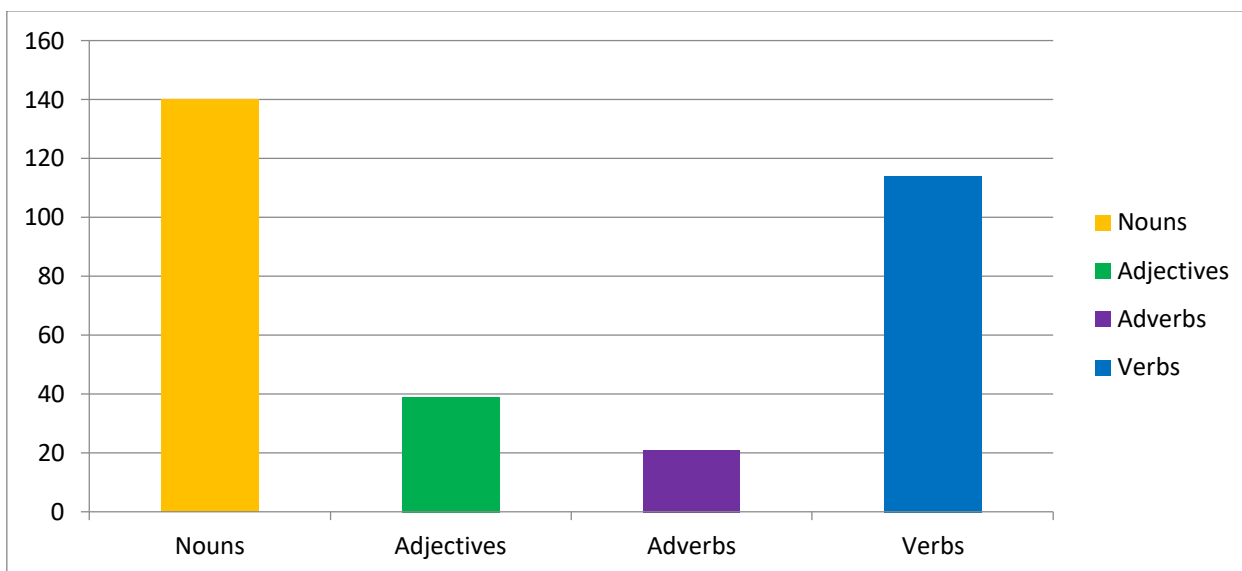
Bar Chart 4: A Bar Chart illustrating the statistics of Content Word Types

The findings show that Nouns which capture 44% are the 'commonest' words in our text. This is vivid as the symptoms and steps to take must be mentioned clearly to stop the spread of COVID-19. This is why we have statements such as;

"Take responsibility" "Prevent coronavirus by cleaning all surfaces frequently", "High contact surfaces include door handles, stair rails and tables."

"returning travelers to Nigeria who experience coronavirus symptoms: fever, cough & difficulty breathing should please call NCDC immediately at 080097000010 & take responsibility."

The use of noun in NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation messages is for naming and specificity.

We also discovered that verbs which take 36% of the content words in the text are used for defining actions, explicitness and clarity.

Adjectives and adverbs are occasionally used. Adjectives are used to qualify the nouns such as "fake news", "certified drug", "confirmed Corona virus", etc. Adverbs are also used to describe the state of the action, for examples "frequently, always, properly, easily, immediately, etc".

This research negates (Fashina, 1996, P.240) who affirms that "Adverbs and Adjectives are the key words of lexical choices used in advertisements". He went further to describe them as "TRIGGER WORDS". Our finding has revealed that Nouns and Verbs dominate other content words in health advertisements.

This happens because clarity of the message is very essential. The general publics have a lot of actions to take to prevent the spread of the disease. That is why the trade mark is tagged "Take Responsibility." The outbreak of

COVID-19 does not need any further qualification or description because it was vivid to everyone the damaging effects. Actions are just needed to prevent the spread.

F. Repetition

Repetition is used to emphasize the importance of such words in the advertisements.
Examples:
- "Take responsibility" appears 13 times.
- "COVID-19 appears 15 times.
- "CORONA VIRUS" appears 6 times.
- "please" is repeated 7 times.
- "wash" is repeated 6 times.

Other words that are repeated frequently are treatment, disease, symptoms, fever, coughs, wash, spread, prevent, protect, avoid, person to person, stay, loved ones, etc. Majority of these repeated words are nouns and verbs. This justifies that the above finding that nouns and verbs are the dominantly used words in health advertisements.

Repetition in NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation messages is used to emphasize the importance of such words. It is meant to further convince the general public that only self-effort or action can prevent the spread of COVID-19 as majority of the repeated words are action stimulated words (verbs).

VI. Discussion and Conclusion

From the analysis, there is no doubt that a variety of language distinguished according to use, has been identified based on a subtle combination of linguistic levels and categories of variety differentiation. This variety of language that is NCDC COVID-19 sensitisation text messages had been distinguished at the level of syntax through sentence types and tense system. We have discovered that these text messages have a preponderance of simple sentences followed by compound and complex sentences. The high frequency of compound and complex sentences is further confirmed by the relatively high incidence of conjunctions which were used to communicate meaningfully in short words in order to economise space and reduce cost. Just as grammatical analysis was done at surface level, deep grammar was not left out. The tense system with dominant use of the present tense was also discovered.

At the lexical level, nominal and verbal group elements which are closely connected with COVID-19 sensitisation messages, have also been identified to show the tilt of the lexical density of the language variety. The frequent use of repetitive words was also discovered by further persuading the general public for self-actions.

The greatest benefit of the study is the pedagogical values of the analysis in classroom situations. In a situation where English is learnt as a second language, the various features identified could be used in real classroom teaching. They can be used as real life materials for presenting situational use of language. On the final note, there seems to be no end to what a resourceful teacher of language can make of the findings from this type of lexical-syntactic analysis.

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