

## A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI'S SELECTED SPEECHES ON CLIMATE CHANGE

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### **Abstract**

Appropriate language deployment aids effective communication and enhances smooth social cohesion, national development and progress; the reverse occurs when linguistic resources are poorly managed. It is to interrogate the pragmatic implications of the linguistic resources used by the Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari, in his selected speeches on climate change that this study sets out. To achieve this, three speeches of the President were purposively sampled between May and August, 2020. These speeches were subjected to the theoretical affordances of Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory. It was found that the predominant pragmeme in the corpus was that of informing. This pragmeme was expressed by means of eight (8) allopracts: Reporting, advocating, appraising, reminding, directing, assuring, asserting and appreciating. These pragmatic nuances were anchored on pragmatic strategies as Shared Situation Knowledge (SSK), Inference (INF) and Reference (REL). The study concludes that the choice of linguistic resources in the corpus was appropriate to the end that the perceived information needs of the masses seemed to be factored into the diction, as evidenced by the pragmatic strategies utilized. On the strength of this claim, the speeches were basically informative as expected of speeches delivered under similar circumstances.

**Keywords:** Language Deployment, Pragmatic Strategies, Climate Change, Pragmemes, Linguistic Resources

### **Introduction**

A salient task to which language is put is that of text production (in written or spoken form). Text production is a complex cognitive series of activities which involve the coherent and cohesive codification of thoughts in a way that represents the ideas, ideals and sociocultural realities of the encoder, using the instrumentality of language. Language, man's most indispensable and prized possession, has consistently served several purposes in human societies. Its communicative value is appreciated in its maintenance of social order/cohesion and preservation of cultural identities, among others. Halliday (1989) posits that "a fundamental property of language is that it enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them" (p.67).

Consequently, human beings freely manipulate language for various ends, in diverse

fields of discourse activities. One of such areas where the potency of language can be scarcely overlooked is officialese, i.e. the use of language for official purposes. By exploiting the dynamism of language, government/ political actors are able to effectively package their ideologies and/or government policies and programmes via diverse media (conventional and neo) for the masses. The aim of which is to ensure that the masses are always kept abreast of government's efforts at providing the required leadership which translates into better life for the masses.

Inadvertently, the world woke to the gnawing reality of a virus which expressed potentials of unleashing unprecedented mayhem on the economic and healthcare capacities of nations of the world. In this contemporary global emergency situation, every sector of the world has been informally conscripted into an army of 'soldiers', to wage war against this unseen

assailant, in an uncharted course using known and emerging skill sets and facilities. Efforts and energies (mental, economic and physical) are being vigorously expended on an hourly basis in a dynamic attempt at understanding the unfolding dynamics of and surmounting this vicious enemy which has continued to unleash its unmitigated terror on nations variously.

As part of the Nigerian government's strategy to wage war against the raging reality of climate change, the government (represented by President Muhammadu Buhari) has consistently lent his voice during international fora on the issue of climate change. The success or otherwise of this strategy is tied to the ability (or otherwise) of the President to leverage his linguistic proficiencies to adequately communicate to the masses. It is against this basis that this study examines the pragmatic features of selected speeches of President Muhammadu Buhari on climate change in order to examine the pragmatic strategies deployed in the selected speeches.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

#### *Concept of Speech*

Speech is man's foremost language skill. Language acquisition studies show that speech is one of the manifestations and attributes of the normal development of a child (Otagburuagu, 2009). The child, through the complex matrix of sounds in the language of his environment, learns to manipulate these sounds and semantic patterns which constitute coherent speech for him. Man is a speaking animal because it is speech, among other things, that distinguishes him from most other creatures in the universe.

Walter (1988) is of the view that, "speech is a talk given to an audience i.e. a group of listeners". A speech is a connected discourse which is goal – oriented and purposeful, it is satisfying to the audience and can command or arrest their attention. The structure of a speech, according to Walter (1988), is:

- i. Heavily dependent on context – sensitive word;
- ii. Deeply embedded in other physical non-verbal aspects;
- iii. Full of suspended mixture or reduced grammatical structure, often with an emphasis; and

- iv. Persuasively organized by variations in stress and in intonation often resulting to word being drawn out or clipped (p.19).

Aboh & Agbedo (2020) aptly opine the essence of public speaking when they said:

*In classical Greece and Rome, public speaking played a central role in education and civic life. It was studied extensively. Aristotle's Rhetoric, composed during the third century B.C.E., is still considered the most important work on its subject, and many of its principles are followed by speakers (and writers) today (p.6).*

They further buttressed that:

*Throughout history, people have used public speaking as a vital means of communication. ...one who forms a judgement on any point but cannot explain it clearly might as well never have thought at all on the subject (p.4).*

Public speaking is the act of delivering a speech to listeners and it dates back to ancient Greece 2,000 years ago. This kind of speech is deliberately consisted of three general purposes: to inform, to persuade and to entertain. Public speaking is generally concerned as formal, face-to-face speaking of an addresser to a numerous of listeners (Amaechi and Mark, 2020). Public speaking, therefore, is a vital means of civic engagement. It is a way to express one's ideas and to have an impact on issues that matter in a democratic society. Considering the role of language in speech delivery, the present study examines how the Nigerian President (Muhammadu Buhari) has employed pragmatic techniques to deliver his speeches on climate change, aimed at examining how the speech makers used language in their bid to participate in an ongoing international discourse on climate change and the need to stem its devastating consequences.

#### *Types of Speech*

Walter (1988) identifies three (3) types of speech: Informative, persuasive and special occasion speeches, thus:

- a) *Informative speech*: An informative speech is a fact based speech intended to teach its audience about a specific topic.

Informative speech defines, explains, describes, clarifies, discusses, etc. of someone, place or a process (Otagburuagu 2009). There are different types of informative speech as enumerated by Verderber & Verderber (2008). These include, process speech and expository speeches. Process speeches are speeches which are to demonstrate how something is done or made or how it works. An example of a process speech is teaching the audience how to bake bread. The speaker uses a Comprehensive base for preparing the presentation, chooses an organization pattern that helps the audience understand the material that is discussed and uses a variety of the informative methods. Informative speech offers you an opportunity to practice your speaking skills. You will learn how to discover and present information clearly. The purpose of informative speech is to provide interesting, useful and unique information to your audience. An informative speech should rely less on pathos, which is an appeal to the emotions of the audience and an important component of persuasive speeches. Instead, an informative speech might rely on visual aids, in order to give the audience a visual representation of important information contained in the speech.

- b) *Persuasive speech*: This kind of speech has to do with the attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviours of audience members. Arguments are involved in this type of speech which are convincing (Otagburuagu, 2009). A persuasive speech allows the speakers to attempt to influence people to think or behave in a particular way. This art of convincing others is not unconnected to reasoned arguments, which might consist of facts, statistics, etc. are employed to motivate audiences to think or behave differently than before they heard the speech. Although the goal of persuasive speech is to convince the audience to accept a perspective, not all

audiences can be convinced by a single speech and not all perspectives can persuade the audience. The success of a persuasive speech is often measured by the audience's willingness to consider the speakers' argument.

The introductory aspect of a persuasive speech plays a greater role in drawing the attention of the audience. You can make your audience laugh so that they will be attentive and willing to accept a new view, the body language of the speaker, and the environment in which the speech is given all can affect the success of a persuasive speech.

- c) *Special occasion speech*: This type of speech, in Otagburuagu's (2009) view, is "...prepared or given on special occasion for praising or honouring someone either dead or living" (p.32). It is also given on areas concerning the individual and his/her accomplishments. Clearly, this speech will be very different from a toast given at a wedding, which is also an example of a special occasion speech of a more celebratory tone. Special occasion speeches are usually short time framed. They could last mostly ten minutes, which show their difference in relation to other speeches presented during political rally or conference. The purpose of special occasion speech is mostly to tease or praise. Verderber & Verderber (2008) identify the following kinds of special occasion speeches:

- i. *Speech of Introduction*: This is the type of speech where the speaker is asked to introduce the 'main' event at the function. The speech should answer the following questions for the audience. Who is the speaker? Talk about the speaker's credentials and expertise and why they were chosen to speak. What will the speaker be discussing? It is always important to state the

speaker's name and speech topic at the introduction level.

- ii. Welcoming speech: Welcoming speech bind people together. It is delivered about a new employee in an institution or company. The essence is to introduce new comers to the others. The names of the new comers were introduced, where they came from and their mission.
- iii. Award presentation speech: This type of speech is a gift oriented speech. During this speech. The award itself is discussed, who sponsors it, who it is named after, the history of the award, and the requirements to earn the award? On the other hand, the winners of the award and what they have done to earn the award will be discuss.

Based on the foregoing explication, the speeches for investigation in this study fall within the purview of informative speeches. They are so classified because they aimed at filling the information dearth about climate change.

### **Theoretical Framework: Pragmatic Acts Theory**

This study deploys Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory on selected speeches of the Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari, on climate change. The Pragmatic Acts Theory is a theory of Pragmatics which was developed by Jacob Mey as an amendment to J. L. Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory (SAT). According to Mey (2001), Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* is merely a theory of reference.

Mey (2001) agrees with Austin that in uttering a speech, the speaker does something with his or her words. He, however, disagrees with him on the nomenclature "speech act" and the idea of speech act verbs. To him, there exists asymmetry in the relationship between speech act verbs (henceforth SAVs) and speech acts (henceforth SAs) proper. He argues that not all SAs are represented by a specific SAV. Despite Austin's claim that the SAT caters for context, Mey contends that context is more than just reference.

Context is action; it is about understanding what things are for; it is also what gives our utterances their true pragmatic meaning and allows them to be counted as true pragmatic acts (Mey, 2001).

Mey (2001, p. 43) argues further that "the context determines what one can say and what one cannot say". Consequent upon the limitation of SAT, Mey proposes the Pragmatic Acts Theory as not just a theory of reference but a theory of action which situates speech acts in the appropriate socio-cultural contexts. Mey posits that in order for speech acts to be effective they have to be situated: "they both rely on, and actively create the situation in which they are realized ... there are no speech acts, but only situated speech acts, or instantiated pragmatic acts" (Mey, 2001, p. 218).

Consequently, the emphasis is not on conditions and rules for an individual speech act, but on characterizing a general situational prototype (pragmeme) that can be executed in the situation. Thus, a particular pragmeme can be substantiated and realized through individual pragmatic acts. In other words, a pragmatic act is an instance of adapting oneself to a context, as well as adapting the context to oneself. Mey also objects to speech act theory on the ground that it is not only canonical but that it also centres more on the speaker's intention, over and above the social realities or social contexts which provide limitation and affordance regarding the speaker's choice and use of words as a member of a speech community. His words:

*Human activity (including language use) is not prerogative of the individual, setting goals and devising strategies...rather, the individual is situated in a social context, which means that she or he is empowered as well as limited by conditions of her or his life (Mey 2001: 214).*

That is, pragmatic act theory emphasizes the priority of socio-cultural and societal factors in meaning construction and comprehension. Mey maintains that our acting is determined by what the scene can afford and by what we can afford on the scene. That is, while the scene determines our acting, our acting equally determines and reaffirm the existing scene (Mey 2001: 218). He suggests that the indirect speech act paradox can be

dissolved by moving its focus of attention from the words being said to the things being done with those words. He also questions the compatibility of speech and act (speech act), as speech, by itself, does not act; strictly speaking, there are no speech acts since ultimately speech acting depends on the situation in which an action takes place. This is the reason he divides his pragmatic act schema into activities and texts parts. As a result of the above shortcomings of speech act theory, Mey (2001) came up with the idea of pragmatic act theory which, he opines subsumes speech act. In pragmatic acting, it is impossible to pinpoint a particular, predetermined use of any canonical speech act (Mey 2001). In other words, pragmatic act analyst does not necessarily include a specific act of speech in his analysis.

The basic idea about pragmatic act as distinct from speech act is the fact that the former does not depend solely on the actual words being used but rather on the circumstances that lead to and accompany those words. In Mey's (2001) words:

*The theory of pragmatic act does not try to explain language use from inside out that is from words having their origin in a sovereign speaker and going out to an equally sovereign hearer (who then may become another sovereign speaker and so on and so forth). Rather, its explanatory movement is from the outside in: the focus is on the environment in which both the speaker and the hearer find their affordances, such that the entire situation is brought to bear on what can be said in the situation as well as what is actually being said (p.221).*

In Mey's (2001:215) view, pragmatic analysis can be approached from two perspectives of 'agents' and 'act'. As far as agent is concerned, his or her class, gender, age, status/position, education, experience/previous life history and so on influence and affect his or her communication behaviour. In other words, from the angle of 'agent', the emphasis of pragmatic analyst is on the user's intention and attitude to language as occasioned by the above social factors, which spell out his/her (language user's) limitations and

affordances (i.e. the degree of freedom he enjoys) as a participant in a speech event or as a member of a speech community. From the point of view of "act", the concern of a pragmatic analyst is on language, gestures and visual images etc., used in performing a pragmatic act. Mey (2001) concludes that pragmatic acting can be considered as adapting oneself linguistically and otherwise, to one's world.

As we have observed from the foregoing, pragmatic act also takes care of extra-linguistic aspects of communication such as gestures and visual images (i.e. pictures). These, in addition to linguistic aspects of communication are captured in what Mey termed *pragmeme*, the prototype or generalised pragmatic act. He termed the instantiation of *pragmeme* in a particular situation 'pract' or 'ipras' (p.221).

### **Methodology**

The study was descriptive and based on speeches delivered by the Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari. The selected speeches purposively reflect the President's views on climate change as presented at different fora. The speeches aim at providing information which is trailblazing and intended to orchestrate (galvanize) efforts towards ameliorating the impacts of climate change on Nigerians, and indeed all inhabitants of planet earth. The following corpora were sourced from the official website of the State House (<https://statehouse.gov.ng/>):

- Text 1: President Buhari's Address at the International Climate Change Summit in Paris (December 13, 2017);
- Text 2: Buhari unfolds plans to reverse effects of climate change in Nigeria ([September 23, 2019](#)); and
- Text 3: Statement of President Buhari at the Virtual Leaders' Summit on Climate (April 23, 2021).

The data were collected online from the official website of the State House for the speeches needed for linguistic analysis. The data was filtered and highlighted for pragmatic analysis, relying on theoretical insights from the theoretical framework adopted. The corpus will be analyzed based on the context in which the speeches were made.

## Data Presentation

### Pragmemes, Allopracts/Practs and Pragmatic Strategies in the Corpus

The study found that the pragmeme of informing was preponderantly explored in the corpus and was realized in eight (8) allopracts: Reporting, advocating, appraising, reminding, directing, assuring, asserting and appreciating. These pragmatic acts were communicated by means of pragmatic strategies as: Inference (INF), Reference (REF), Relevance (REL), and Shared Situational Knowledge (SSK). In the subsequent section, each of the identified allopracts will be instantiated from the corpus along with the corresponding pragmatic strategies used to actualize it, thus:

#### Reporting

The pragmatic act of reporting was extensively used in the corpus. In adopting the posture of reporting as a pragmatic activity in the corpus, President Muhammadu Buhari was able to adequately inform the Nigerian masses about strategies and attempts made by the government in joining the fight against climate change. A justification for this may be occasioned by a number of factors as the genre/ medium of communication (speech presentation on climate change), and role of the Nigerian government in the global fight against climate change. Consequently, the speech writer is usually not expected to report what has occurred; an effective way to do this is to perform pragmatic acts as narrating to present information in a way that the reader, who was likely not at the scene of such event, can also be aware of what transpired from which to form his/her opinions and be informed about the narration. The following excerpts are instances of the allopract of narrating/reporting as used in the corpus:

#### Text 1

**The adverse impacts of climate change such as temperature rise; erratic rainfall, sand storms, desertification, low agricultural yields, drying up of water bodies like Lake Chad, gully erosions and constant flooding are a daily reality in Nigeria** (*Reporting: SSK, REL, INF*).

**This reality is most felt by the highly vulnerable communities who lack the capacity to cope** (*Reporting: SSK, REL, INF*).

#### Text 2

It is now imperative that we must step-up our collective climate actions in line with the request of the Secretary-General (*Reporting: SSK, REL, INF*).

It is in this regard that I wish to reiterate Nigeria's commitment to its obligation under the Paris Agreement, the aspirations enshrined in our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and ensure a resilient future that mainstreams climate risks in our decision making (*Reporting: SSK, REL, INF*).

I want to announce that the Government of Nigeria will develop a more robust sectorial action plan, and expand the scope of our Sovereign Green Bonds in line with our intended upward review of Nigeria's NDC's towards the inclusion of the water and waste sectors by 2020 (*Reporting: SSK, REL, INF*).

The excerpts demonstrate that the pragmatic function of reporting is performed by providing information to the readers or listeners about diverse efforts and engagements made by the government to contain the implications of climate change in Nigeria. These efforts involve Nigeria's commitment to its obligation under the Paris Agreement, the aspirations enshrined in our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and ensure a resilient future that mainstreams climate risks in our decision making (**Text 2**); informing that "the Government of Nigeria will develop a more robust sectorial action plan, and expand the scope of our Sovereign Green Bonds" (**Text 2**).

Therefore, to achieve the pragmatic function of reporting, with the intention of informing the reader about the various efforts expended by the Nigerian government, the speeches were seen to use pragmatic strategies as Inference (INF), Shared Situation Knowledge (SSK), and Relevance (REL) to provide the reader adequate information about the stance of government in tackling climate change. This information is organized to answer possible questions which may be running through the readers' mind; questions that bother on what is the Nigerian government doing? How is it doing it? How do the actions of the Nigerian government impact on the life of the average Nigerian? Who

are the stakeholders involved in the fight against climate change in Nigeria? Why is the need for synergy important in the onslaught against the global malaise?

The excerpts show that the speeches use SSK to properly situate the discourse by providing details about the activities which may have informed the decisions of the Nigerian government. In Text 1, for example, Nigeria is seen to suffer “**The adverse impacts of climate change such as temperature rise; erratic rainfall, sand storms, desertification, low agricultural yields, drying up of water bodies like Lake Chad, gully erosions and constant flooding are a daily reality in Nigeria**”. This statement is based on the hind knowledge that the experience in Nigeria is of a global nature.

Similarly, REL and REF are used in the speeches, as has been shown in the corpus, to report only aspects of the event that are relevant to the readers; making reference to some background information which may have culminated into the present situation being reported. In Text 1, for instance, “**This reality is most felt by the highly vulnerable communities who lack the capacity to cope**”. In the highlighted portions of the excerpt, reference is made to “vulnerable communities” who were reportedly helpless and suffering from the impacts of climate change on their communities.

#### *Advocating*

A major responsibility of the government to her citizens is the provision of security of lives and property by deploring all resources available. One of such is to advocate for a change in attitude towards that which holds better promise for a more prosperous society. In the corpus, it was seen that the speech writers contained elements of advocacy from the government beckoning on the global community to adopt, as the war against climate change raged. Few instances from the corpus, at this point, will suffice to support the use of this allopract, thus:

#### **Text 3**

This Summit would, indeed, **prove instrumental in galvanizing high-level political support for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and its Katowice Rulebook as well as inviting more countries and stakeholders to take more**

**climate-oriented responsibilities** (*Advocating: SSK, REL, INF*).

As one of the most vulnerable nations, **Nigeria is undertaking major environmentally sound and climate-friendly programmes and treading the path of sustainability** (*Advocating: SSK, REL, INF*).

In the samples above, it can be observed that the President deployed the pragmeme of advocating to solicit the cooperation of the Summit in the fight against climate change. This advocacy became necessary owing to the impact of climate change on the world. On this note, the President advocated for a “**high-level political support for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and its Katowice Rulebook as well as inviting more countries and stakeholders to take more climate-oriented responsibilities**”. In the advocacy, world leaders were informed that “**Nigeria is undertaking major environmentally sound and climate-friendly programmes and treading the path of sustainability**”.

In order to understand the import of the advocacy, the President leveraged SSK with the audience to get them act responsibly in ways that were recommended to combat the scourge of climate change. Imbedded in the information were instances of Relevance and Inference. Relevance in that the President used only bits of information that could properly situate his discourse and message. The audience, on their part, needed to make inferences to correctly interpret the messages perceived from the President.

#### *Appraising*

An important gauge for progress is to constantly evaluate or appraise previous activities with a view at strengthening such actions for better results. The advocacy for a cleaner world has attained an international scale where (inter) national leaders have joined to combat climate change. While the advocacy is on, it is expedient to intermittently appraise efforts invested. An implication of this sort of appraisal is to ascertain the level of traction gained, or otherwise. Instances of Appraising, as a pragmatic resource, were identified in the corpus as exemplified below:

#### **Text 1**

**Actualising these plans over the next 15 years, Nigeria on its own will achieve 20% emissions**

**reduction below Business As Usual. With international support, we can achieve 45% emission reduction by 2030** (Appraising: SSK, REL, REF).

#### **Text 2**

**As you are aware, the Lake Chad Basin, which used to be a region of productivity, food security and wealth for an estimated 40 million citizens living around the Chad Basin, has shrunk significantly from its original size due to Climate Change** (Appraising: SSK, REL, REF).

An important strategy to keep track of activities is to constantly engage in appraising activities as events unfolded. It is in appraising that the President evaluates to gauge the level of impact climate change has on the global environment. It is against this backdrop that appraising was observed as an allopract in the corpus, as demonstrated above. In Text 1, appraising enabled the President to assert that **“Nigeria on its own will achieve 20% emissions reduction below Business As Usual. With international support, we can achieve 45% emission reduction by 2030”**. In the last excerpt, the President is seen to appraise the Lake Chad Basin **“which used to be a region of productivity, food security and wealth for an estimated 40 million citizens”**.

It will be daunting for the audience to appreciate the level of work put in by the Nigerian government in the combat against climate change without recourse to background information on its implications on Nigeria’s socioeconomic fortunes. It is for this purpose that the audience will require to tap into their previous knowledge about the environmental scourge to appreciate the level of appraisals enjoyed by the President. Similarly, the speeches contained the elements of appraising as found in the corpus as relevant bits of information to assist the audience come to grips with the message being communicated.

#### *Reminding*

Climate change gradually hits the world in an unprecedented manner. This left governments around the world with the onerous challenge of devising means of safely navigating the governed through the storm being unleashed. In order to do this without abusing the sensibilities of the masses, it was appropriate to occasionally remind the masses about the history of pandemics and the

peculiarity of the present one. A reason for this communicative strategy was likely to make the masses appreciate the implications of the times they were in as well as the background to decisions taken. In the corpus, there were instances of reminding; few are shown below:

#### **Text 3**

**The Nigerian government, in 2017, launched the green bond programme as part of its commitments contained in the Paris Climate Agreement signed on September 21, 2016** (Reminding: SSK, REL, INF).

**The overall outcome of the highlighted actions have translated into food supply sufficiency, improved nutrition, less hunger, increased employment, new jobs opportunities, better livelihoods, reduced poverty, decreased vulnerability to health challenges and higher quality of life** (Reminding: SSK, REL, INF).

#### **Text 1**

**Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement, we have been strengthening our national efforts towards the implementation of the Agreement and the Marrakech Call for Action. We have already ratified the Paris Agreement in May 2017 and, thus, we have pledged, under the Nationally Determined Contribution to reduce our emission by 20% by 2020 and 40% by 2030** (Reminding: SSK, REL, INF).

**In our efforts to deliver on these pledges, we are tightening the existing governance structure in Nigeria for more effective implementation of climate change activities, including the additional responsibilities that are consequent on the adoption of the all-encompassing climate change treaty** (Reminding: SSK, REL, INF).

Climate change attacked the world like a thief at night. Its unannounced visit arm twisted world economies into taking and enforcing stringent measures which could be easily misinterpreted to imply that world leaders were being dictatorial/autocratic. Therefore, to make the citizens understand the background which informed the government’s stance on climate change, the President was seen in the corpus to consistently remind other world leaders that **“Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement, we have been strengthening our national efforts towards the implementation of the Agreement**



**and the Marrakech Call for Action**". Also, the President reiterated that **"we have already ratified the Paris Agreement in May 2017 and, thus, we have pledged, under the Nationally Determined Contribution to reduce our emission by 20% by 2020 and 40% by 2030"**. The strategies utilized to accentuate the allopract of reminding, as in the afore-identified allopracts, were SSK, REL, and INF. These pragmatic strategies were seen to be instructive in expressing the message of war which was metaphorized in the speeches of the President.

### **Discussion**

An examination of the corpus, which comprised speeches delivered by the President on climate change on different occasions, found that the dominant pragmeme was that of providing information. Indeed, part of the responsibility of the President was to liberally supply information to the masses which could help assuage their fears and enable them admit any changes to their lifestyles as brought by the climate change. Consequently, the speeches were seen to be thoroughly lined with diverse strands of information on several issues that bothered government's efforts as well as her expectations from all stakeholders. In order to be properly expressive, the speeches under investigation were observed to deploy allopracts as reporting, advocating, appraising, and reminding. These allopracts were communicated using pragmatic strategies as Shared Situation Knowledge (SSK), Relevance (REL) and Reference (REF).

It is instructive to note that the most patronized allopract was that of reporting. This was followed by those of advocating, appraising, and reminding. The choice of linguistic resources to push home the message of climate change to the target may have been informed by a number of

factors: First, the environmental scourge had features which were unknown. Consequently, the environmental scientists were still understudying it to come up with measures to mitigate it. Therefore, there was no need to hoard any bit of information gathered about it, as observed in the corpus. Second, there were lots of misinformation (misgivings) about climate change. To this end, it was expedient for the government to provide the needed leadership in terms of providing reliable information to the masses. Third, the misinformation about the scourge gave rise to palpable fear amongst Nigerians about the virus. This fear blew the potency out of proportion, expectedly; diverse groups held different opinions about the virus and its extent of mortality. It was to assuage these fears that the President may have adopted the communicative strategy it adopted, as observed in the pragmeme, allopracts and pragmatic strategies used in their speeches to the Nigerian masses who relied on them for reliable information and leadership through the uncharted path out of the global malaise.

### **Conclusion**

Language and its appropriate deployment are resources which man can manipulate for diverse results. The study found that the President used the pragmeme of informing alongside allied allopracts to lead the Nigerian masses in the uncharted war against the climate change experience. The choice of linguistic resources in the corpus was appropriate to the end that the perceived information needs of the masses seemed to be factored into the diction, and presentation / delivery of the speeches. On the strength of this claim, it was found that the speeches were basically informative as expected of speeches delivered under similar circumstances.

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