

Nigerians Reactions towards COVID-19 Pandemic Health Precautions: A Pragma-Semiotic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

After Federal Government of Nigeria declared a total lockdown and COVID-19 pandemic health precautions, many Nigerians have gone to their various Facebook walls to show their reactions towards those precautions. Their reactions were deployed via texts (captions) and graphics (photos). Previous studies on COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria have adopted critical discourse analysis (CDA) and stylistics approaches with little attention paid to pragmatic and multimodal reactions of Nigerians towards COVID-19. This paper therefore, undertaken a pragma-semiotic analysis of Nigerians' reactions towards COVID-19 pandemic health precautions with a view to examine how the text and images portray their intentions towards COVID-19 and to discover the meaning potentially exhibited by the images and captions, and the pragmatic acts of linguistic and nonlinguistic posts. Sixteen Facebook posts were purposively selected from various Nigerians' Facebook posts using insights from Mey's (2001) pragmatic act and Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal discourse analysis. The posts which were classified under four semantic fields namely business innovation and profit oriented, law abiding, poverty striking and satirical Posts, have various visual-pragmatic strategies such as creativity, obedience, complacency, begging and ridicule.

Keywords: COVID 19, pandemic, health, pragmatics, multimodal