

Linguistics Modes as a Viable Tool of Protests to Demand and Effect Social Change in the Visual Representations of the Newspaper Reportage of the End Sars Protests in Southwest, Nigeria in 2020

Osamaye, Seun Bosede¹ Tanimu, Yusuf. PhD²

Abstract

This work is an analysis of linguistic modes in the visual representations of the selected newspaper reportage of the end sars protests in Southwest, Nigeria in 2020 as a viable tool of protests in demanding and effecting social changes. The aim of the paper is to investigate the interpersonal category of the meta functions of language, how has the protesters deploy functional sentences to drive to communicate their demands. How has the protesters use imperatives in protests and campaign to command actions against injustice and police brutality? How was declarative used to express their beliefs and aspirations? How was interrogatives used to spark debates, Exclamations as mood amplifiers to reiterate their assertiveness and resoluteness and processes as expressions of End SARS protests' crusade. These linguistic modes will be subjected to categorization and analysis, the communicative import and to what extent meanings intended are achieved will be studied. Some of the scholars that have examined the coverage of end sars protests have emphasised the non linguistic fields with focus on the influence of social media on the protests neglecting the analysis of the linguistic modes of the reportage in terms of the functional sentences used and why? This paper intends to fill this gap. This paper (Seminar) is an application of the Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis approach based on Halliday's and O'Halloran's theory. This is a semiotic approach that allows us to examine our data through the Meta functional principles which provides a basis for examining the functionalities of Semiotic resources and for analysing the ways in which semiotic choices interact in Multimodal discourses to fulfil particular objectives. (e. g, to construct knowledge in school

textbooks, to persuade a consumer to purchase a product, to stir the public to violence in the name of religion, e. t. c. Hence for the purpose of the paper, we examined how the data conveyed and reiterated the end sars protests demands and aspirations by investigating how these Meta functional principles were utilized. This paper adopted an analytical and descriptive research design. It is so because the data consists of texts written on visual elements. The data consists of eighty purposively selected visual representations in the newspaper reportage of the end sars protests. The approach is eclectic and multi-systemic. These linguistic modes were identified, categorized and analyzed. The paper investigates these modes by structuring the elements into quotes, protests and campaigns. Findings from the paper revealed that linguist modes (textual constructions) in the visual representations of the Newspaper reportage of the end sars protests are viable tools of protests to demand and effect social change. The use of interpersonal, ideational and textual meta functions were all geared towards overhauling the social political arrangement where the police unit called SARS that was meant to protect the citizens failed in their duties and thus were proscribed due to public outcry of the End SARS protests. The vehicles of this end sars crusade in the interpersonal category are protests and campaigns, imperatives were used to command actions against police brutality in all forms, declaratives also served as expressions to correct erroneous beliefs (Endsars protesters are not terrorists but patriotic citizens), achieving a purpose (a better Nigeria) while constructing their sense of self. Interrogatives were used to spark debates to call for actions, and exclamations were expressions of resoluteness to force governments to yield to their demands and effect social changes. This invariably contributes immensely to meaning making and enhances the communicative import of language as not just mere words but powerful tool for social change.

Introduction

Humans are naturally adjudged to be communal beings whose continued existence and relevance is dependent on communication. This is to say that communication is vital to human existence. Communication is integral to the fabric of our day to day activities. The diverse means in which people communicate in recent time place a great demand on language expert to investigate how these modes of communication are employed for effective communication. O'Guin, Allen and Semenik in Olateju and Oyebo(21) asserts that communication is fundamental to life itself. Human beings belonging to diverse socio-cultural, religious and political groups have devised various means of communicating intentions, beliefs, world-views, messages, agitations and demands through different modes. A mode is a means of communicating. According to Kristin;22, in the new London group said there are five modes of communication: visual, linguistic, spatial, aural and gestural. A mode is different from a medium which is the substance through which communication is conveyed. When a given text uses more than one mode, the text can thus be categorized as multimodal. Most texts are multimodal, we make sense out of their messages through decoding the different modes of communication they employed, For instance, in the multimodal analysis of the visual representations of the newspaper reportage of the end sars protests in Southwest Nigeria in 2020 being researched by this writer, it was observed that the visual and linguistics modes were combined by the newspaper mediums in their editorials to perhaps reiterate theirs and the messages of the protesters across to their audience, governments and perhaps the society at large.

For the purpose of this paper however, our focus will be only on the linguistic modes as tools employed by the

protesters to drive home their demands to effect social change as reported in the different newspapers reportage of the end sars protests purposively selected. The linguistic mode refers to written or spoken words (Kristin;2). This mode includes word choice, the delivery of written or spoken text, the organization of words into paragraphs, and the developments and coherence of words and ideas. The linguistic mode is probably widely used mode because it can both be read and heard on both paper and audio. The linguistic mode is the best way to express details. Before delving into these linguistic modes, first let us provide a brief background on the end sars protest that occurred across the country, Nigeria in the year 2020 but was predominantly pronounced in the southwest Nigeria.

Protests are not new in Nigerian or world history. Yet the year 2020 witnessed huge protests despite the pandemic and restrictions that came with the public health challenge, a viral threat that led to a repressive environment. The pandemic in fact created new protests as it triggered public health measures that were repressive; such measures drew political contestation, whether anger over lockdowns, government mismanagement of the public health crisis and funds, economic displacements, job loss, etc. However, a few weeks after lockdowns, protests began to re-emerge. Data from Carnegie's Global Protests Tracker show that already in April, the number of new anti-government protests rose to a high level. According to Usman & Oghuvubu(2021s) in Iprojectpg 5), Many of these protests centred around the core issues that have driven the global protests wave in recent times, such familiar grievances as corruption, police brutality, electoral manipulation, and social welfares. Corruption remained a powerful phenomenon and mobilizer in both democratic and authoritarian countries. In Venezuela, systemic and state-driven

corruption under President Nicolás Maduro sparked demonstrations. Corrupt practices in Bulgaria sparked months of protest against Prime Minister Boyko Borisov. Another protest theme of 2020 was citizens' anger over police brutality. These include the 'Black Lives Matter' protests in the United States following the killing of George Floyd, the EndSARS protests in Nigeria and the protests in France over a police security bill.

Despite the fact that Nigeria is now a de-facto democracy with an elected President, the country still suffers from the underlying corruption that plagued it during the early post-independence years. SARS is merely one side of pervasive public-sector corruption in Nigeria. The #Endsars protests originated first in 2017. Nigerian activists, youth, and celebrities took to the streets in a peaceful demonstration across the country to raise awareness about SARS' brutality and extortion and urge that it be disbanded. The #EndSARS hashtag was used to organize the protests on social media. The EndSars protests introduced new hashtags such as #EndPoliceBrutality, #NassSalaryCut, #EndSWAT, #EndBadGovernanceInNigeriaNow and many more.

What is SARS?

"The Special Anti-Robbery Squad" (SARS) was a Nigerian police force unit that was part of the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID). It was established in 1992 as one of 14 divisions of the Force Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, which was created to detain, investigate, and prosecute people who were involved in crimes such as armed robbery, kidnapping, and other violent crimes". The squad was formed as a masked police force to carry out undercover operations against violent crimes such as armed robbery, car snatching, kidnapping,

livestock rustling, and illegal gun possession and use. The period was marked by incessant robbery in cities like Lagos. The unit was established under the then Superintendent of Police, Simeon Danladi Midenda. By 1998, after the death of the military dictator General Sanni Abacha, SARS grew in power. The early success in the years of formation might have contributed to this extensive power. ‘The secret behind the successes of the original SARS was its facelessness and its mode of operation,’ Milenda told the Vanguard, a Lagos based newspaper, in 2017. SARS’s extortion and detention of civilians, and torturing them into confession, soon became rampant. Such an instance was the killing of two university students, Bola Afilaka and Ayodele Adejuyibe.

The Print Media and Protests

The roles of the print media in any society are one that cannot be overemphasized. they include providing information, education, and entertainment so the society can progress, no wonder Thomas Jefferson(the third president of the United States Of America) said “were it left for me to choose whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without government, I shall not hesitate a moment to choose the latter”. This simply means society can hardly progress meaningfully without a vibrant print media.(<https://iproject.com.ng>) The print media determine dominant values, perceptions and attitudes of the society by its impacts on it. According to NwagbasoinIproject(3), the print media is the bridge between the people and its societal activities. In today’s society, for an activity to get noticed, it must be reported by the media. The section 22 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic Of Nigeria as amended entrusted the media with the power to monitor governance and uphold the fundamental objectives and directive principles of

state policy as enshrined in chapter 2 of the constitution. (Nwagbaso inIproject(5). Also, Pulitzer in Iproject (2) stated, “there is not a crime, there is not a dodge, there is not a trick, there is not a swindle, and there is not a vice which does not live by secrecy. Get all these out in the hope, describe them, attack them, ridicule them in the press, and sooner or later, public opinion will sweep them away”.

End Sars Protests in Nigeria

End Sars is a decentralised social movement, and a series of mass protests against police brutality in Nigeria. The slogan calls for the disbanding of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), an alleged notorious unit of the Nigerian Police with a long record of abuse on Nigerian citizens. The protest takes its name from the slogan which started in 2017 as a Twitter campaign using the hash tag #EndSARS to demand the disbanding of the unit by the Nigerian government. After experiencing a revitalisation in October 2020 following more revelations of the abuses of the unit, mass demonstrations occurred throughout the major cities of Nigeria, accompanied by vociferous outrage on social media platforms. About 28 million tweets bearing the hash tags have been accumulated on Twitter alone. Solidarity protests and demonstrations by Nigerians in Diaspora and sympathizers occurred in many major cities of the world. The protests are notable for its patronage by a demographic that is made of entirely young Nigerians. The movement has since expanded to include demands for good and accountable governance, considering the unprecedented hardship in the country. Usman &Oghuvubu(10).

SARS officers have been alleged to profile young Nigerians, mostly males, based on fashion choices, tattoos and hairstyles. They were also known to mount illegal road blocks,

conduct unwarranted checks and searches, arrest and detain without warrant or trial, rape women, and extort young male Nigerians for driving exotic vehicles and using laptops and phones. Nigerians have shared both stories and video evidence of how officers of SARS engaged in kidnapping, murder, theft, rape, torture, unlawful arrests, humiliation, unlawful detention, extrajudicial killings and extortion of Nigerian citizens. A large section of the victims of the abuses of SARS have been young male Nigeria. (Endsars Archived 10 December 2020 at the Wayback Machine www.endsars.com), (*"Nigeria's SARS: A brief history of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad"*)

Statement of Problem

Media reports in recent years have widely covered protests across the world. They played a major role in reporting the actions and inactions of different groups. The END SARS protests were no exception having been covered, visually and verbally, by different media outlets. Extant studies on protests in Nigeria have gained attention from scholars from other non-linguistic fields. However, sufficient attention has not been paid to the linguistic modes' aspects by linguists. Some of the linguistic studies that have examined the coverage of these END SARS protests' actions and inactions and have emphasized the influence of social media on the protests, emphasizing the use of new media jargons e.t.c, neglecting the analysis of the linguistic modes of the reports in terms of the type of functional sentences used and why?. A close study of the newspaper reportage of the end sars protests revealed that the linguistic modes dominant are imperative, declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences. When a speaker(in this case, the protesters,) and the writer (in this case, the newspaper editor as reported the news of the protest) uses the imperative for instance, they select for themselves, the roles of

the controller and their listener or reader becomes the controlled, because they expect a form of action or reaction (Eniola:72) (not limited to verbal) from their recipients. In most cases, the context makes it clear who the requests is directed at. The essence of this article is to investigate in the interpersonal category of the meta-functions, how has the protesters used imperatives in protests and campaigns to command actions against injustice and police brutality? How was declarative used to express their beliefs and aspirations? How was interrogatives used to spark debates? And exclamations used to reiterate their assertiveness and resoluteness. This paper intends to fill this gap.

Conceptual Review

This study revolves around certain concepts. The understanding of these concepts will make readers comprehend this study well. These concepts are reviewed below

Linguistics

AndrianAkmajian et al (5) expatiates extensively on what linguistics is. According to them, “The field of linguistics, the scientific study of human natural language, is a growing and exciting area of study, with an important impact on fields as diverse as education, anthropology, sociology, language teaching, cognitive psychology, philosophy, computer science, neuroscience, and artificial intelligence, among others”.

Fundamentally, we can thus admit that the field of linguistics is concerned with the nature of language and (linguistic) communication. It is apparent that people have been fascinated with language and communication for thousands of years, yet in many ways we are only beginning to understand the complex nature of this aspect of life. Linguistic

is the scientific study of language and its focus is the systematic investigation of properties of particular languages as well as characteristics of language in general. (www.arts-science.buffalo.edu). Applied linguistics seeks to utilise the scientific findings of the study of language for practical purposes, such as developing methods of improving language education and literacy.

Empirical Review

Some scholars have ventured into some of the territories mentioned above. The works of O'Toole, Pang, and Alias stand out because they applied the metafunctions of language to those fields (architecture, historical painting, and landscape) that are somewhat "alien" to linguistic inquiry. In a review of O'Halloran's *Multimodal Discourse Analysis: Systemic Functional Perspectives*, Pun (2004) notes that "A key emphasis in the field of multimodality is the equal importance which both linguistic and non- linguistic semiotic resources (such as visual images, sounds, and others) contribute to communicative purposes".

Pun (2004) in her review, notes that O'Toole (2004) focuses on a metafunctional investigation of the Sydney Opera House in search of a grammar of architecture (just as Kress & van Leeuwen [2007] attempt to describe a grammar of colour somewhere else) which will help academia better understand architectural practices as they are located socially. He attempts to illustrate various semiotic choices that allow the building to realise its practical or pragmatic function and the social relations between the building and its users. Pun (2004) claims that in exploring the text (the sunset Opera House) from a metafunctional perspective, O' Toole's investigation: Seeks to demonstrate the potential of systemic-functional theory in extending the idea of 'functionalism' as understood and defined

within the field of architecture. That is, the quality of architectural buildings can be conceived in relation to their experiential (i.e. practical or pragmatic), interpersonal (i.e. aesthetic) and textual (i.e. compositional) functions. This serves to portray architectural landmarks as not just limited to their design but they also make socio-cultural statements as well as convey certain messages. In other words, architects construct meaning(s) through their designs.

Eniola Mercy Oluwaseun (2016) in her work, *A Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Selected Feminist Multimedia images on FANPOP.COM* discovered from the categorisation of the data into comics and memes, protests and campaigns, quotes, and statistics that protests and activism is one pivotal tool feminists use in their struggles for gender equality because out of the sixty (60) images analysed, thirty-two (32) were categorised as protests and campaigns. These categories further delineate such feminist ideologies as equality, change, opposition to religious idiocy, and the rebuttal of gender bias and prejudice and also, feminist's use of interpersonal, ideational and textual metafunctions are all geared towards overhauling socio-political, religious, economic, and cultural orders that are hostile to women in order to bring about revolutionary constructions of gender.

Chukwudi Usman and Ejiroghene Augustine Oghuvbu (2020) in the department of History and International Studies, Faculty of Arts, Delta State University carried out a research on *The Impact Of The Media On The #Endsars Protests In Nigeria*. The study was an attempt to critically examine the impacts of social media on the protest. The study deployed the analytic method of historical reconstruction. It discovered that while social media cannot be dismissed to have been utilized at some point in mobilizing the protesters and creating

international awareness as to the state of the nation, the (social media platforms) created more panic in the society and tended to be more divisive and destructive due to fake, unverified and amateur presentation of information and over exaggeration of situations.

In conclusion, several of these studies were carried on different areas of visual representations on brands and communication. Others worked on newspaper reportage of insecurities in Nigeria. Few scholars who worked on mass protests in Nigeria concentrated on the influence of social media on the broadcast. The End Sars protests have also gained attention from scholars from other non-linguistic fields. However, sufficient attention has not been paid to the linguistic modes employed in the newspaper reportage of the end sars protests by linguists. This present study, therefore, will enable us analyse the linguistic characteristics in the selected newspapers in reporting the END SARS protests and how they communicate messages intended and how it has effectively reiterates the demands for social change by the protesters.

Theoretical Framework

Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Systemic functional multimodal discourse analysis (SFMDA) can be viewed as a strain of and an approach to MDA which deals with the theory and practise of analysing meaning arising from the use of multiple semiotic resources in discourses which range from written, printed and electronic texts to material lived in reality, (O' Halloran, 2009). It also explores the semantic expansion arising from the use of language and visual imagery in printed texts. As O' Halloran (2009) notes, its major thrust is Halliday's (1978, 2004) metafunctional principle which provides an integrating

platform for theorizing how semiotic resources interact to create meaning”.

SFMDA incorporates Halliday’s metafunctions (ideational, Interpersonal and textual) into multimodal discourse analysis which according to O’ Halloran (2009) involves the:

Investigation of linguistic and visual [forms of semiosis, and formulation of cross- functional systems such as colour... and inter-semiotic mechanism and systems (content and expression strata) are developed to capture the expansion of meaning which occurs when linguistic and visual forms combine.

What is arguably paramount here is the possibility for expansion and explosion of semantics as various semiotic resources (both linguistic and non-linguistic) come together in cosmic mixes while paying attention to the relationship between or among these resources and how they relate to the functions language perform in actual social communicative contexts. O’Halloran (2009) succinctly puts this by stating that Halliday’s metafunctions as used in MDA is "the principle that semiotic resources simultaneously provide the tools for constructing ideational meaning (i.e. experiential meaning and logical relations) and for enacting social relations (i.e. interpersonal meaning). He further states that the metafunctions "are enabled through the organisation of the discourse, which is the textual metafunction of semiosis". In justifying the appropriateness of the application of Halliday’s metafunctions to MDA, O’Halloran (2011) claims that:

The metafunctional principle provides a basis for examining the functionalities of semiotic resources and for analysing the ways in which semiotic choices interact in multimodal discourses to fulfil

particular objectives. (e.g.to construct knowledge in school textbooks; to persuade a consumer to purchase a product; to stir the public to violence in the name of a religious cause).

Hence, for the purpose study, we will be examining how the data convey and reiterate the end sars protesters' demands and aspiration by investigating how these metafunctional principles were utilized.

Methodology

The research is qualitative. The study is analytical and descriptive. The method of data collection is a secondary source of data collection. The data were directly sourced from the internet. Most of the data were readily available on the web page of the newspapers purposively selected. This made easy collection possible. The data collected were carefully categorized and classified according to the messages portrayed in them. Some of these representation depicted are categorized to indicate which of the dailies are sympathetic towards the protests or anti and how are the participants pictorially represented on the front pages of the newspapers. The size of the data for this study consists of 80(eighty) purposively selected visual representations in the newspaper reportage of the End Sars Protests. This affords a broad range of samples reflecting perspectives on newspaper reportage of the End Sars protest. The linguistics modes are analysed and classified into their different functional types. Following the classification of the data into their mini-genre, critical analysis were done. The Print Media (Newspaper reportage) was chosen for this study because they are "the bridge" between the people and its societal activities.

Data Analysis

Having interacted with the data, the linguistic modes articulated in the newspaper reportage of the end sars protests were categorised and analysed as follows:

Imperatives as Tool of End Sars Protest and Activism

Imperatives are simply commands or order. It is the grammatical mood that expresses the will to influence the behaviour of another. This could be realized through a verb form and structurally, their predicator elements are usually fronted, realising the unmarked theme. When a speaker or writer uses the imperative, they select for themselves the role of the *controller* and their listener or reader that of the controlled because they expect a form of action or reaction (not limited to verbal) from their recipient. In most imperatives, the context makes clear who the request is directed at. Furthermore, imperatives may be inclusive or exclusive. While inclusive imperatives incorporate the speaker in the expected action, exclusive imperatives do not require the speaker to participate in the expected action. The following are the imperatives from the data with the predicators italicised:

Endsars, Endswat, End sars now, Buhari warns EndSARS protesters *to stay off* streets

“We *can’t be* foreigners in our land, “*Sorosoke* Werey”, “*End* Police Brutality, “***Stop*** police brutality”

Text 1



“Buhari warns EndSARS protesters to stay off streets.”

Text 2



“Brutal Endsars protest imminent as exercise crocodile smile begins”

In this news reportage, ENDSARS protest imminent as exercise crocodile smile begins. A picture also shows how creative the protesters are, they formed the word ENDSARS.

The Guardian is a Nigerian independent daily newspaper established in 1983. During the administration of General MuhammedBuhari, reporters Tunde Thompson and NdukaIrabor were both sent to jail in 1984 under decree No.4 of 1984, which suppressed journalistic freedom. Stanley mokaogwu(19). On 26, august, 1989,The Guardian published a long letter by dr.BekolariRansome –KUTI , a human-rights activist, entitled “open letter to President Babangida”. In which he criticized what he saw as increasing government suppression of free expression. The guardian is owned by a member of an ethic minority and has a national outlook in terms of reach and content. It claims to be independent of any ethnic group, religious community, political party or other interests group. The paperis read by the most educated section of the elite. The image of the reportage of the end SARS protest is a group of so many people who sat down on the follow to write the END SARS BOLDLY. This image of over a hundred people from different tribes and tongues is to show the resolve of the protesters to end what they have started. The sitting on the floor is their determination to ensure government is forced to disband sars.

Text 3



“Nigeria: youth Power”

In the reportage, images of youths protesting are seen. It was captioned that a major point had been made.

Text 4



“We cant be foreigners in our land.

This image captures different groups of people ranging from the protesters to the security operatives in uniform to media personnel. Their write up was in different colours to portray significance of their agitations

Text 5



“Sorosoke Werey”

This image captures a guy seriously injured beside the picture was a gathering of crowd in the protest with various cards. The placard that is obvious is boldly written SORO- SOKE WEREY meaning Speaking Louder. This is a call to action for young Nigerians to speak out and speak louder.

Text 6



“End Police Brutality”

This image was taken in a popular location with electronic sign board; the image carries a crowd gathered on a course that was shown boldly on the media outage ENDPOLICEBRUTALITY. This is a shows and sign of solidarity carnival to support the then ongoing agitation as the sign board displayed “ENDPOLICEBRUTALITY”. It also shows that is an agitation that is been done by both male and female young Nigerians as we can see this young female Nigerian sitting on the roof of a car in support of the agitation. Obviously, a guy was seen raising his hands with a mean face. Observation also shown that this protest happens in a popular strategic place in Lagos Nigeria which has to obstruct movement of vehicle to give the on going agitation a wide spread across the nation and beyond. These imperatives are exclusive imperatives and may serve to reiterate the claim that End sars protesters are strongly

opposed to police brutality (which is deeply entrenched in societies) and as such are calling on the people who do not share their cause to end, *make, stop, tell, warn, take, join, shout, speak out*, and *write* as a way of commanding actions against this social menace. This goes a long way in showing the suitability of imperative language in the context of a protest discourse. Activism (in diverse domains) characterises protests in such a way that it has been a major tool in advocacy struggles against any perceived injustice done by any arm of government. As such, the use of these verbal elements in the imperatives above commands the agents involved especially the president and the entire government in this case to become actively involved in scrapping the unit. The use of END NOW, STOP NOW, SORO SOKE which means speak out are all geared towards driving home their demands. Furthermore, the choices of the predicator elements in the imperatives are transitive in nature. The objectified nominal elements imply that there are entities to be acted upon. The actions to be carried out on these entities (especially the human) symbolise how they should be treated differently from what is the case (being treated as foreigners). These actions will also positively impact the human entities; the direct object complements (*our youths, we can't*) who are at the receiving end of these actions. E.g we can't be foreigners in our own land. The context of the sentence makes some of the subjects clear. However, the other imperatives appear not to be addressing anyone in particular but everybody who is concerned or affected in one way or the other. This means that the struggles should be seen as a struggle for all Nigerian youths because it is believed that the youths cannot attain their full potential if they are constantly abused and brutalized by men that were to protect them. Although, some people do not share this sentiment because to them, the end sars protest is

viewed as revolutionary and that if the entire sars team is disbanded, who will curb the crime, they specially trained for.

Also, the predicators in these imperatives serve to indicate that end sars protests thrives on actions and as such passivity is far-fetched or less-desired. Moreover, these actions can be summed up as protests (in varying degrees). Merriam-Webster dictionary defines protest as complaint, objection, or display of unwillingness usually to an idea or a course of action". Assuch it can be deduced the protesters' resistance and attendant expression of command is borne out of frustration and exhaustion and this drives her to demand that the police be disbanded, ended or stopped. These actions are calls to a change in the status quo which will bring about a reinvention or revolutionary constructions of social change.in such à manner that there will be an upturn of the existing order, see the table below:

Present State	Imperatives	Revolutionary Constructions
Incessant police brutality and social injustice	End police brutality	End swat now
Thriving police brutality	Stop police brutality	An end to police brutality
A call to disband sars unit	End sars	A proactive measure on the part of the government to end the special anti-robbery squad

Youths are being treated by policemen like foreigners	We cant be foreigners in ourland	Demand for equity for all
The lackadaisical attitude of many	<i>Sorosokewerey(speak out)</i>	A call for action by all and sundry

Declaratives as Expressions of End Sars Protester's Ideas and Aspirations

Declaratives are propositions that “express our appraisal of and attitude towards” situations and individuals respectively, (Halliday, 2004). One important point to note in declaratives is the dichotomy between the *Given* and the *New* Information. Bloor and Bloor (2004) opine that in order to communicate effectively, the speaker must bring to the hearer's attention some element of shared or “mutual” knowledge. This can be translated to mean that for a piece of information to be communicatively dynamic, there must be some level of shared knowledge (from diverse contexts) between interlocutors and something new (opinion, idea, fact, appraisal etc.) the “informant” wants to convey.

However, while the *Given* can be ellipted, the *New* (being the nucleus of the information) is obligatory. Although pronouns and proper nouns are known as common markers of the *Given* Information, for the purpose of this study, the *Given* will be regarded as the common and known prejudices and biases against youths from various socio-cultural contexts while the *New* will be the feminist responses to these prejudices. The following are declaratives retrieved from the data:

“*SAY NO TO OPPRESSION*”, “*Govt is silent... They want us all DEAD*”

“We’ll not allow hooligans overrun Nigeria ... Buhari talks tough”

“Campaigners adamant, Buhari talk tough, deploys soldiers, cops

The police is robbing us, We have no leaders, police are stealing from the youths

Youths are not the enemy of the state.

Text 7



“We’ll not allow hooligans overrun Nigeria ... Buhari talks tough”

The daily Sun is a Nigerian daily print newspaper founded in Lagos. The sun had a daily print run of 130,000 copies and 135,000 for weekend titles, with an average of 80% sales. This made the sun the highest selling newspaper in Nigeria. www.wikipedia.org/sun. The only image of the report on the end SARS protests is that of the president, whose bold face and unsmiling eyes is an indication of a determined president ready to deal with protesters. The newspaper's choice of hooligans to refer to the end SARS protesters and that they were trying to overrun Nigeria is a serious allegation and offence within the law. It must be noted that the chairman of the publishing house

is NeyaKalu who in May 2022 succeeded her father, dr Orji UzorKalu, the former governor Of AbiaState,and the former chief whip of the house of senate, Federal republic of Nigeria. This clearly shows the paper is owned by someone in government and since the police brutality is an indictment on government, this paper is doing an hatchet job by downplaying the protests. This was why government is being portrayed as the victim.

Text 8



This image shows how frustrated Nigerian youths are; a guy was seen seated looking dejected and a lady was seen standing beside him looking hopeless. Others are seen holding pla-card with various inscriptions, one of which was “YOUTHS ARE NOT THE ENEMY OF THE STATE”. This was written to reflect on the reactions of the government to the ongoing protest. According to our findings as at that time, Government perceived the agitation to be disturbing to the peace of the Nation and in reply to that, the inscription was done under the popular word of the moment “ENDSARS”. On the placard was Nigerian flag as well. This shows patriotism to the collective harmony of the Nation.

Text 9



This image shows protesters gathered in numbers with different placards with boldly written inscription, no more audio ban. This means that , in times past, government has promised to ban sars yet they were still operative. Hence the ‘we have no leaders’ and ‘no more audio ban’ mantra. The image portrays the protesters which consists of mostly young male Nigerians pose ready for confrontation..

Text 10



“ENDSARS’ (BRUTALITY//I KILLING // ROBBERY)”

This image shows another group of youths in support the agitation as the sign board displayed ‘ENDSARS’ (BRUTALITY // KILLING // ROBBERY)’. It was seen that someone was holding his mobile to record and send the update on the internet. This further explains how weird the agitation spreads on all different social media handles and platforms and this was also proven to be true with our findings.

Text 11



“SAY NO TO OPPRESSION”

This image shows another guy holding a flag with the inscription of SAY NO TO OPPRESSION, with a solidarity sign of hand. The guy was seen to have peeped out of the Car. This shows that every class / status are involved in the struggle.

The Given Information	The New Information
End sars	Say no to oppression
President deploys soldiers	We will not allow hooligans over run Nigeria
Government is silent..	They refused to end sars ,

	deployed soldiers to protests' ground because they want us all dead.
Campaigners adamant	We say no to oppression
End swat	The police is robbing us
End police brutality now	We have no leaders
Police is your friend	Police are stealing from the youths
The youths hate government	Youths are not the enemies of the state

When an interlocutor assumes the role of "informant", such individual takes for granted that their recipient is in need of such information (an idea, opinion, appraisal, argument, evaluation, a judgement, proposal etc) in order for them to have a better understanding of the circumstances that birth such information. Hence, it appears *these* end sars protesters are saying that government is deaf to their agitations and are ignorant of some actions of these policemen and as are subjected to and as such deem it necessary to inform them. However, they do not leave off at just informing the society of the status quo, they go further to also enlighten the society of their demands and aspirations (hence, the new information). For instance, we say no to oppression, we have no leaders, the police is robbing us. However, the new information is an attempt at revolutionalising this notion by unequivocally stating why it is important for the sars to be disbanded. This revolution would explain the set of declaratives used.

Another dimension in our exploration of the use of declaratives in the data is how sense of urgency is used in these declaratives. Sense of agency, according to Jeannerod (23), is the subjective awareness that one is initiating, executing, and controlling one's own volition and actions in the world" Here,

we examine how the end sars protesters negotiate their sense of self and group awareness, demands, aspirations and the recognition of their exploitations, and opportunities. The use of we, makes it all encompassing. To this end, Riger (22) is of the opinion that "to assume that advocates have no voice...is to deny them agency and, simultaneously, to repudiate the possibility of social change". As such, we can point to a number of instances where, in the declaratives above, the protesters who acts like advocates in this case construct and construe their sense of self, group awareness, visions, ideologies and the recognition of their exploitations, and opportunities thereby negotiating social change. This is made possible through the use of various types of subject. See the table below:

Types of Subject	Sentences	Constuctions
Fist and third person singular pronouns	We have no leaders	Selves awareness
	Government is silent, They want us all dead.	Group awareness
Singular and Plural nouns	They want us all dead	Group awareness
	End sars now	Group vision
	The police is robbing us	Exploitation
Demonstrative	We say no to oppression	Group Ideology
Informative	Police are stealing from youths	Exploitation
	Youths are not the enemy of the state	Group awareness

The Use of Interrogatives to Demand and Negotiate Change

According to an online research on the reason why people ask questions, it was gathered

that "Questions can lead a person to understand why they do what they do, questions can unlock understandings about the way things work, questions can lead a person to contemplate the meaning of life, questions can help a person revisit notions taken to be true and show how there is more to understand about them." The latter part of this finding, i.e. how questions can help persons or even groups revisit notions that were once taken as the standard or socially acceptable and show how these should be further probed holds true for all the interrogatives retrieved from the data:

“How ENDSARS protest shape outcome of 2023 polls”, “WE NEVER FORGET:20. 10. 20?”

Text 12



“How ENDSARS protest shape outcome of 2023 polls”

This reportage carries how ENDSARS protest may influence Nigerian decisions in the news reportage, Ologondiyen explained how Nigerians are waiting to pay APC back and

consequentially shape the outcome of 2023 polls. Keyamo claimed that there is no more anger in the land, because Buhari had addressed the issue.

Another highlight of the news was about the implementation of the outcome of the panel report.

Text 13



“We Never Forget 20-10-20 Endsars Memorial Buhari”

This image shows young Nigerians staging a procession in remembrance of what has happened in 20-10-20, calling the attention of the then President (President Muhammadu Buhari) for a revolution. Some raised flags in support of their agitation ENDSARS with different writeups. According to our report, SARS is one department in Nigeria Police Force running after young Nigerians to extort and causing untimely death instead of Protecting them as a citizen. This image show the remembrance of a masses protest against SARS in 20-10-20 which leads to the death of many young Nigeria protesters across the country, mainly the unknown armed men of the Nigeria Army that opened fire against the protesters at Lekki toll-gate in Lagos.

Text 14



“EndSARS: Lagos plans burial for 103 bodies”

This news carries head line reads that Lagos plans mass burial for 103 bodies. Meanwhile, Government claimed that the dead bodies are not from Lekki toll gate. It was seen that they hold a big banner with the inscription of how they will never forget the striking incidence that occurred on a date that was written boldly and in a provocative colour. The date was written in red to signal massive blood shed of protesters on the said date. This was done to show solidarity to a previous sad event that happened on the 20-10-2020 as shown in the banner they are holding. They were dressed in Black colour (indicating mourning and sorrow) which means their gathering is a procession for the people that were killed on the same date as the colour of date 20-10-20 means there was a blood shed on that day. Their procession and the text on the banner show a reflection/memory of the unforgettable incident tagged ‘END SARS’ that happens on the 20-10-2020.

In examining the forms of these questions, they are all rhetoric questions. These rhetoric questions are more of question to spark debates that will provoke changes, and not questioning for information. These questions rather inform

than seek information because they are infused with statement of facts backed up by statistics. These questions are like instruments to cause a change in the status quo. These rhetoric questions are constructed to raise debates on police brutality such issues as extortions, injustice, crime and police brutality. These questions also serve to introduce or reintroduce (as the case may be) these issues. For instance, the 20/10/20 was a day that was adjudged by end sars protesters that Nigerian armed forces shot at unarmed protesters at the Lekki toll gate in Lagos, Nigeria. Though, The Lagos state government subsequently said there were laser cameras and not CCTV cameras as earlier publicised on social media. (*"laser cameras, not CCTV removed at Lekki tollgate"*-Sanwoolu; *vanguard*, 22 October 2020). Also, the electricity supplying lights to the toll gate was cut and the advertisement billboards, which are owned and maintained by Loatsad Media, were turned off. *"Nigerian Forces Killed None 9 Of the Peaceful Protesters, Amnesty Says"*. AP. 21 October 2020. Archived from the original on 10 February 2021. Retrieved 23 October 2020. Loatsad Media stated, "On Tuesday [20 October] when the curfew was announced we heeded the governor's warnings and didn't want our staff in any danger, hence by 3 pm, our staff had been ordered to leave the site and the board was switched off based on the governor's curfew request." Augoye, Jayne (21 October 2020). *"Lekki Shooting: Firm owned by Tinubu's son gives reasons the ad board light was turned off"*. Premium Times. Archived from the original on 10 February 2021. Retrieved 23 October 2020 MTN and Airtel experienced outages during the protests. MTN Nigeria apologized later that night for the loss of coverage at the time of the shooting.

Following a message spread on social media that protesters would be safe if they sang the national anthem and

waved the Nigerian flag. Protesters sat down with locked arms singing the Nigerian anthem and waving the Nigerian flag in respite. Twenty armed military personnel approached and from video of the event shows them raising their voices in song as they are shot at by the armed soldiers. *"Nigeria Sars protests: Horror over shootings in Lagos". BBC. 21 October 2020. Archived from the original on 10 February 2021. Retrieved 22 October 2020.* A popular Nigerian DJ, DJ Switch, live-streamed the event on Instagram during and in the aftermath of the shooting. In the video, they attempted to remove a bullet from the leg of a man who was shot, tying a Nigerian flag around his leg. (*"#EndSARS: DJ Switch, others help protesters shot at Lekki Toll Gate". Punch. 20 October 2020. Archived from the original on 10 February 2021. Retrieved 22 October 2020*) (*"End SARS protest in Lekki toll gate: Who be DJ Switch, di Disc Jockey wey film shooting on protesters?". BBC. 21 October 2020. Archived from the original on 10 February 2021. Retrieved 22 October 2020*) .Though many other eyewitness videos and footages surfaced in the aftermath of the shooting, the livestream would prove to be decisive evidence of the shooting. In a video made on October 23, she clarified that she witnessed the shooting of seven people at the time she was live-streaming on Instagram. She said that armed soldiers and police officers shot at her and other peaceful #EndSARS protesters at the Lekki toll gate on the night of 20 October and that among them were officers of the disbanded SARS unit. She also said that the number of the dead increased to fifteen, but that she did not get a chance to record further, as her phone battery had died. She further said at least 15 people were killed in the shootings and that she and other survivors took the victims' bodies to the soldiers who took them away. She has since left the country for Canada following threats to her life."*#EndSARS: DJ Switch Will Be Exposed In Due*

Course, Says Lai Mohammed". Channels Television. *Archived from the original on 10 February 2021. Retrieved 19 November 2020*] "DJ Switch, a front for divisive forces – FG". *Latest Nigeria News, Nigerian Newspapers, Politics*. 19 November 2020. *Archived from the original on 10 February 2021. Retrieved 19 November 2020*

The 2023 general election was a presidential, national assembly and mostly states gubernatorial elections. The widespread of the end sars protests in the year 2020 was a pass of no confidence on the president MuhammedBuhari led government. That wether how the endsars protests was going to influence the 2023 election was not to elicit an answer but to spark debates on why the president and the ruling party does not deserve the votes of Nigerian youths having failed them as a unit that was expected to protect was responsible for killing them.

Exclamatory Sentences as Mood Amplifiers

Exclamatory sentences are used to express certain emotions, which could range from awe to disgust. Typical exclamatory sentences have the initial placement of wh-elements (what and how), which are called X-elements. Exclamatory sentences habitually have the exclamation at the final position of the sentences. However, the exclamation mark as used in the sentences above is attached to sentences without x- element. What this shows is that these protesters as reported are forcefully making a case for the notions expressed in each sentence. The use of force is further reiterated by the fact that these statements are assertive. This assertiveness symbolises a resolute disposition of defiance and resistance that end sars protesters are ready to give to end police brutality. For example, End sars!!!, End swat!!!, End police brutality!!!

The above exclamation marks shows the gravity of how urgent Nigerian government to yield to their demands by disbanding the notorious units for so many incidents of extortions, killings, and daylight robbery of NIGERIAN youths. The reason for the swat is because according to investigations, sars was later rebranded into swat by government. Yet no visible difference in their modus operandi hence the call for total scrapping of the units.

Processes in the Expression of end sars protests Struggles

Processes are that part of the clause that is realised by the verbal group, but it can also be regarded as what “goings-on” are represented in the whole clause. Here, the focus is on the types of actions (verbal and otherwise) that are encoded in the clause structure. The major types of processes that may be represented in a clause are *material*, *mental*, and *relational* while the minor ones are *verbal*, *existential*, and *behavioural* processes. However, there are different types of *participants* (actor, goal, and beneficiary) as well as *circumstances* that these *processes* co-exist with. While the *participants* represent the different *actors*, *goals*, and *beneficiaries* (human or inanimate) and are realised by nominal entities, *circumstances*, on the other hand, represent “settings, temporal and Physical, the manner in which the process is implemented, and the people or other entities accompanying the process rather than directly engaged in it” and are usually realised by adverbials and prepositional phrases.

Material Process as a Crusade

The material process encodes the prototypical action-type verbal element. The following are retrieved from the data: I want Buhari's head , we want a better Nigeria , I am a Nigerian What is important to note here is, first, the choice of

the verbal element of the first example: we *want Buhari's head* which symbolise destructive action (. Hence, the actor in this quoted instances) are up against and set to destroy *the unit of government called sars even if it means removing the president if he fails to yield to their demands.*(the goal of these destructive actions).Also, the verbal element in the second excerpt is symptomatic of an intention to change the fixated. A better Nigeria. Since the unit has been known to kill instead of protect, to extort instead of save, to brutalize instead of help, disbanding them will stop killings of youths and ensure a better Nigeria where our youths who are the future can live successfully.

Mental Process as Expression of Consciousness and self awareness in the end sars protests.

Unlike the material process, mental processes do not involve "material action but phenomena best describes as state of mind or psychological events". This type of process describes the feelings or the activities going on in the mind of the speaker (the senser). Also, this type of process allows listeners/ readers access to the thoughts and intentions of the senser. The mental processes used in the sentences are below:

I am a Nigerian. ,*Youths are not the enemy of the states*, We want a better Nigeria (text 57)



Text 15



“I am a Nigerian”

While the instance of the use of the mental process in the first example serves to uphold the patriotism of the protesters to Nigeria. It also evokes their sense of duties to the countries and

should not be treated as terrorists. The bold and definite assertion in the third sentence sums up the agenda of the protests as reported. These further reiterates that words are not just mere words but communicates deep messages that can advocate for social change.

Findings and Conclusion

A close study of the newspaper reportage of the end sars protests revealed that the linguistic modes were extensively deployed to communicate the agenda, aspiration and demands of the end sars protests. From the categorization into quotes, protests and campaigns and its analysis, it was discovered that the linguistic modes are pivotal tools employed by the end sars protests to demand for social change and delineate criminality even by those that were supposed to uphold the law. Police criminal acts such as brutality, extortions, killings, robbery and injustice were brought to fore, exposed and condemned.

Also, the use of interpersonal, ideational and textual metafunctions are all geared towards overhauling the socio-political arrangements where the police unit called sars was meant to protect the citizens but since they have failed in their duties, the public outcry led to their disbandment. The protest was revolutionary and it effected the needed change though not without a cost.

The vehicles of this end sars crusade in the interpersonal category are protests and Campaigns. In these protests and campaigns, imperatives are used to command actions against police brutality in all their forms. The use of declaratives also serves as an expression of beliefs (end sars are not terrorists but patriotic citizens), and aspiration (the achieving a better Nigeria) while constructing their sense of self, their exploitations, and their opportunities. The protesters

also employ Interrogatives to spark debates and incite revolution to influence electoral polls.. Also, exclamations are used as expressions of assertiveness and resoluteness. For months, the end sars resonates across the country and government was forced to listen to the outcry of its citizens and make changes.

In the ideational category, the use of destructive verbal elements reiterates the resolution of the protesters to destroy and upturn all existing order that endanger the youths. I want Buhari head is an extremist choice of word that does not mean it literally but calling for his removal as president.

The study concludes that newspaper reportage of the end sars protests adequately captured linguistic modes inherent as a viable tool employed by the end sars protests to air their demands, aspirations, agendas, beliefs and also evoke government to retract their existing policies and decisions thereby effecting social changes.

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