

## **Linguistic Devices and Meaning Significations in Covid -19 Safety Precaution Signs**

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### **Abstract**

Corona Virus Pandemic (Covid-19) is a scourge whose impact has been felt across the world since its emergence in the global space. Over the years, there have been extant studies relating to Corona Virus and these studies examined different perspectives which include Critical Discourse Analysis, pragma-semiotics and stylistics discourse. However, insufficient scholarly attention has been given to the linguistic analysis and meaning significations of Covid-19 safety precaution signs. This study, therefore, examined the linguistic devices and meaning significations of Covid-19 safety precaution signs.

The Covid-19 safety precaution sign photographs were subjected to a qualitative analysis using Roland Barthes (1998) which emphasized the meaning of linguistic elements. Ten Covid-19 Safety precaution sign photographs were purposively selected for their richness in communicating meaning and the most suitable research design employed for this study to attain the study objectives is descriptive.

Results of the analysis revealed that the verbal mode of signification in the safety precaution signs are words, phrases and sentences. Findings showed that the message is easy to read and understand because most of the sentences are short. The typographic features such as upper case, lower case, and bold type were used as instructional guidelines on how to curb and contain the spread of the virus (COVID-19). Verbal mode of signification meaning according to the findings revealed that the linguistic elements communicatively perform informative, cautionary and collaborative functions to persuade the people to support the fight against the spread of Covid-19.

Roland Barthes approach and how meaning is negotiated in the selected safety precaution signs has given room for social interaction between the producer of the health protocol and the readers. It is recommended that the Government needs to create adequate enlightenment, an easily accessible media and not only photographs, during the period of crisis as it will help speedily spread the message to the public to prepare them to fight and survive the crisis.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Safety Precaution Signs, Linguistic elements, Meaning Significations

## **Introduction**

The disease caused by Coronavirus was first identified in Wuhan, China and has been named Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). ‘CO’ stands for Corona; ‘VI’ for Virus and ‘D’ for Disease (UNICEF, 2020). The virus is primarily spread among people in close contact, most often via small droplets usually from coughing, sneezing and talking. Transmission may also occur through smaller droplets that can stay suspended in the air for longer periods. Less commonly, people may become infected by touching a contaminated surface and then touching their faces. The COVID-19 Virus may survive on surfaces for several hours, but disinfectants can kill it (UNICEF, 2020).

The World Health Organization declared COVID-19, a public outbreak at a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on 30th January 2020 and a pandemic on 11th March 2020 due to the rate at it spreads, and there appear to be no vaccines nor specific antiviral treatment for it. Since then, both government and non-government parties have worked together to disseminate accurate information about COVID-19 throughout the country by having various approaches to meet the people’s needs. Placing the safety precaution signs everywhere is one of the approaches that was used to disseminate information and educate people about COVID-19. These COVID-19 Safety precaution signs explain the dangers of the virus, ways of preventing the outbreak in society, and a reminder to people each time they come in contact with the signs (Rinartha et al., 2019). Mainly, these safety precaution signs explain the danger of the virus and ways of preventing the virus outbreak. This form of awareness enables people to learn and be aware of the pandemic situation. Besides this, media helped to reduce the fear of uncertainty and any other negative psychological effects felt by society especially the young people (Fisher, 2021). It cannot be denied that, since this pandemic covered the whole world, it has led to various issues such as misinformation, rumours, prevention, and the theory of conspiracy about the beginning of this pandemic among people in society (Radwan, 2020). The safety precaution signs and posters mounted everywhere will serve as a guide and prevent the spread of the virus.

To create awareness of this infectious disease, signs abound everywhere to educate people on how to adhere strictly to the safety precaution protocols, and failure to do so means contracting the deadly virus. ‘Sign’ refers to an observable substance, the mental image of which is associated in

our minds with another image or concept (Yin, 2021). It is a form that is marked by an intention to communicate something meaningful to the people during the pandemic period.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Over the years, there have been different researches on different aspects of interests on COVID-19, ranging from its impacts/effects, causes, prevention, people's attitude towards vaccination, and treatment among others.

Esteban et al (2020) researched the impact of Covid-19 on student experiences and expectations. The study surveyed approximately 1,500 students at one of the largest public institutions in the United States using a designed questionnaire to gather data on the causal impact of the pandemic on students' current and expected outcomes. Results show large negative effects across many dimensions. The result revealed that 13% of students have delayed graduation, 40% lost a job, internship or job offer, and 29% are expected to earn less at age 35. The study finally shows that the economic and health-related shocks induced by COVID-19 have great effects on the students.

Ekwutosi, Jude and Valentine (2020) conducted a study on the response to the pandemic. The objective of the study was to examine how Nigerian media depict the Coronavirus pandemic and how the depictions shape people's perceptions and responses to the pandemic. The study employed a qualitative design (newspaper content analysis and questionnaire). The content analysis examines the nature of media coverage of the Coronavirus in Nigeria using four major national newspapers. The study found that continuous reportage of COVID-19 has proven to be effective in creating awareness about safety and preventive measures, the framing pattern adopted by the newspapers helped Nigerians to take precautionary measures.

A lexical-syntactic analysis of the language used by a government agency in Nigeria during the COVID-19 epidemic was looked into by Ogunrinde and Ajenifari in 2021. The framework for the study is dyadic and incorporates ideas from Systemic Functional Grammar and semantic theory, which deals extensively with lexical choices and the determination of the meanings associated with them. According to the research, the linguistic choices a writer makes in a specific piece are a reflection of his mood. This has a big and vital part to play in how the author arranges the lexical components in the text into strange sentence structures. In NCDC COVID-19 sensitization

messaging, repetition is used to highlight the significance of such words. Given that, the majority of the repeated words are action-stimulating words, it is intended to persuade the general public that only personal efforts or actions can stop the spread of COVID-19.

Lestari, Simarmata, Sitorus and Sidabutar (2021) worked on Code and message interpretation of COVID-19 street banners in Ghana. The study used qualitative research design methods with visual study design. The objective of the study is to teach human beings how to interpret the signs and symbols around us and how each of these signs and symbols negotiates their meaning. This study revealed that human being is the determinant of the meaning given to signs.

Onipede (2022) conducted a study to evaluate Nigerians' attitudes and views toward receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. It is a cross-sectional study that had 334 respondents from the southeastern part of Nigeria who were 18 years of age or older. The data was gathered using a validated questionnaire through an online Google form. Utilizing SPSS version 25, data analysis was carried out. Chi-square tests and Fisher exact tests were used to analyze the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics, attitudes and perceptions. A value of 0.05 was declared statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

All these researches have examined diverse aspects by examining the syntactic analysis of language, the use of media and the attitude of people. Little scholarly attention has been given to studies on the linguistic and meaning significations of COVID-19 safety precaution signs. This research, therefore, is designed to examine Covid-19 precaution signs from semiotic perspectives.

### **Aim and Objectives**

This study aims to explore the linguistic devices and meaning significations of COVID-19 safety precaution signs and the specific objectives of this aim include:

- i. To identify and analyze the linguistic elements in the language of COVID-19 safety precaution photographs; and
- ii. to discuss how meanings are generated through the identified verbal signs.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The study is anchored on the theory of semiotics by Barthes (1998) to analyse the COVID-19 safety precaution sign photographs. Semiotics, according to Barthes is a process used to interpret a sign in which language has a certain message from the society. This means that semiotics seeks to study how humanity makes sense of things. Barthes's theory of signs offers a framework for understanding how meaning is created and conveyed through codes and systems. Barthes built upon the ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure, another key figure in semiotics, but took them in a more expansive direction, particularly by examining how signs function in society. A sign, as defined by Ferdinand de Saussure, consists of two components: the signifier and the signified. The signifier refers to the form of the sign, such as a word, image, or sound, while the signified is the mental concept or meaning associated with the signifier. Barthes expanded this basic understanding to explore how signs function in the context of culture, ideology, media and the arbitrariness between the signified and the signifier. This arbitrariness, according to Barthes is central to understanding how signs operate in a broader cultural context. That is, they are products of shared conventions that are socially constructed. In Barthes' view, signs are not just simple units of meaning; they are deeply embedded within social and cultural contexts, carrying layers of meanings that go beyond their immediate use. This theory also uses the denotative and connotative levels of meaning to analyse the signs and has contributed significantly to perfecting Saussure's semiology theory which stops at the denotative level. Barthes opines that denotation signifies anything literal to indicate something real occasionally and involves using language in a way that is significant to what is said or known. On the connotation level, there is usually a relationship between a sign and the user's feelings and values. This means that connotation is an element of someone's opinion about a sign. Barthes' semiotic theory further emphasized the importance of intertextuality, the idea that texts do not exist in isolation but are interconnected with other texts. Barthes opines that text is composed of a complex network of references, codes, and signs that interact with each other to produce meaning. By exploring the relationships between these different elements, Barthes argued that meaning is not fixed or intrinsic to the text but is generated through its relationship with other texts, both literary and cultural.

## **Literature Review**

According to Barthes (1998), words in a text, carry meaning through a series of signs and symbols that can be interpreted in various ways depending on cultural, historical, and social contexts. These meanings are shaped through the use of linguistic devices through the structure or context in which it is used (Glasscoff, 2014). To reveal a text's meaning, Barthes (1998) recommends four codes of seeing meaning in a text:

1. Language/speech (and concludes that language is always socialised)
2. Signifier/Signified - Barthes deviates from Saussure's idea that the relation between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary and argues that, the connection between the two is a process that gets naturalized over some time
3. System - that parallels with Saussure's syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes—operation of language as the interaction between two axes, where the syntagmatic axis is the combination of signs, while the systemic axis is equivalent to Saussure's langue.
4. Denotation/Connotation – These refer to the first and second order of signification respectively, and are closely associated with Barthes' concept of myth.

Linguistic and meaning significations in verbal signs are central to understanding how language functions in communication (Liu, 2013). Yin (2022) also added that verbal signs, which is a unit in meaning, primarily refer to words and their combinations in spoken or written forms, and how individuals make sense of the world around them.

Ferdinand de Saussure, a foundational figure in modern linguistics, proposed a model of language based on the dyadic structure of the "sign." According to Saussure (1983), a linguistic sign consists of two components: the "signifier" (the sound or form of a word) and the "signified" (the concept or meaning associated with the word). Saussure's theory established the idea that meaning is not inherent in words themselves but arises from the relationships between signs within a system. For Saussure (1983), meaning is relational and contingent upon the differences between signs, a view that laid the groundwork for structuralist approaches to language. According to Short (2004), Sanders Peirce developed a triadic model of the sign, which includes the "signifier," the "object" (the thing or concept the sign represents), and the "interpretant" (the meaning or understanding

generated by the sign). Short further stated that Peirce's model underscores the dynamic nature of meaning creation, as the interpretant can vary depending on the individual's interpretation and cultural background. This view expands the scope of signification beyond simple verbal signs to encompass a wider array of symbolic forms and the processes through which meaning is generated.

## **Methodology**

This study adopts the descriptive qualitative approach and is anchored on the Semiotic theory of Roland Barthes (1998). This study is a descriptive survey aimed at investigating the meaning of the safety precaution signs used during the COVID-19 pandemic. A purposive sampling technique was used for this study and in selecting the sample size, ten images of COVID-19 Safety Precaution signs were carefully obtained online. Though we are no longer at the peak period of the pandemic, the precautionary safety signs are still available on the internet. The secondary data are acquired in the form of relevant books and journals.

## **Analysis and Presentation**

### **1. The Analysis of the Verbal Modes in the Language of Covid-19 Safety Precaution Photographs**

#### **Photograph 1**



**Table 1**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Verbal Texts</b>	<b>Linguistic Arrangements</b>	<b>Font Sizes</b>
1.	Protect yourself from Coronavirus	Imperative, Order, Clause	Small letters, bold print
2.	Frequently wash hands with soap under running water or rub with alcohol hand rub	Imperative, Advise	Small letters with bold print
3.	Good Life	Group Imperative	Upper case, bold print
4.	Avoid close contact with people coughing and sneezing	Imperative Clause	Small letters
5.	Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth	Imperative, Clause	Small letters
6.	When coughing and sneezing, cover mouth and nose with tissue, or bent elbow (dispose of all tissue immediately and wash hands with soap under running water)	Imperative	Small letters
7.	If you choose to wear a face mask, be sure to cover your mouth and nose (avoid touching the mask once it is on)	Imperative	Small letters

The verbal signs identified in the above photograph are seven in number. The first verbal sign that stands as the caption is positioned on the left side of the poster and is positioned in a way that catches the immediate attention of every reader. The imperative sentence is written with an amber

colour in a green background in a trapezium-like shape placed horizontally. It is thematic and an admonishment or caution to every reader and audience to make sure they are well protected from the virus. The second part is the information ‘good life’ presented at the right top indicates that this information is not yet known to the reader and hence, deserves readers' special attention. The words are written in block letters with a white colour and the response to the slogan ‘GOOD LIFE’ is written in small letters on a green background in a trapezium-like shape with an amber colour placed around the borders of the shape vertically. Artistically, ‘GOOD’ is written horizontally which sits on the back of the capital ‘L’ of ‘LIFE’ written vertically. The response ‘live it well’ is also written artistically beneath the capital ‘E’. This indicates that if readers protect themselves from the coronavirus, then, good life is assured.

*Frequently wash hands with soap under running water or rub with alcohol hand rub, Avoid close contact with people coughing and sneezing, Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth, When coughing and sneezing, cover mouth and nose with tissue, or bent elbow (dispose of all tissue immediately and wash hands with soap under running water), If you choose to wear a face mask, be sure to cover mouth and nose (avoid touching mask once it is on)* are affirmative messages cautioning and admonishing readers on precautions to follow to protect themselves from coronavirus.

## **Photograph 2**



**Table 2**

S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangements	Font Sizes
1.	COVID-19 is still a threat in 2021	Declarative, Clause	Capital and small letters, bold print
2.	We still need to wash our hands or use hand gel	Clause	Capital and small letters, bold print
3.	World Health Organization	Phrase	Small letters, bold print
4.	Coronavirus	Word	Small letters

From the above photograph, four verbal signs are identified. The first is a declarative sentence “COVID-19 is still a threat in 2021”. This sentence is written boldly in white to catch the attention of readers and a stern warning indicating that COVID is still active in our society. The second verbal sign indicates a preventive measure that must still be active to avoid contracting the virus. The third sign is the world organization which ensured the circulation and distribution of the photographs in public places and hospitals.

**Photograph 3**



**Table 3**

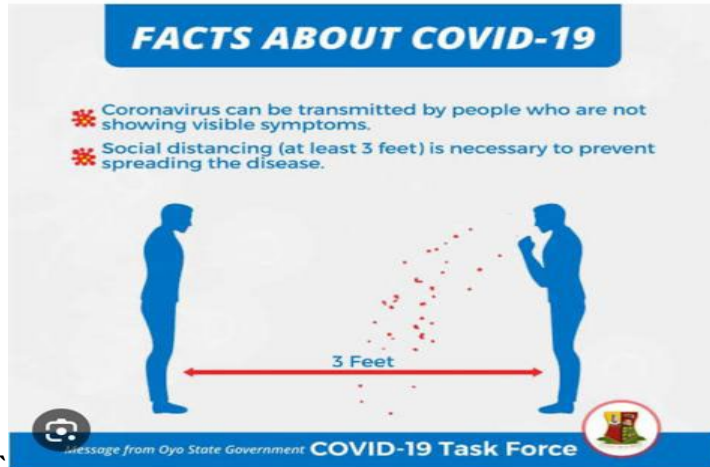
S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangements	Font Sizes
1.	Take all COVID-19 vaccine doses recommended to you by your health authority, including a booster dose	Imperative	Capital and small letters, bold print
2.	Being fully vaccinated will help your body develop and maintain protection against serious illness and death. It will also help reduce the likelihood of new variants emerging	Declarative	Small letters
3.	COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Series	Phrase	Capital and small letters

Based on the photograph above, three verbal signs are identified. The first declarative sentence is thematic and positioned at the upper part of the poster. It can be seen with the way it is presented that it is the whole essence of the poster. It is boldly written in white and this means that the sign will definitely catch the attention of every reader.

*Being fully vaccinated will help your body to develop and maintain protection against serious illness and death* is also an important sign on the poster. It is the second message to be read after the bold one. It is written in white which depicts purity and hale. The readers will immediately understand the message that the vaccine helps reduce the likelihood of new variants emerging. *World Health Organization* is the organization responsible for providing leadership on health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards as regards health-related issues and so on. Readers seeing the emblem of the World Health Organization will give a kind of rest to the mind as it portrays that the organization is involved and gives its utmost support in curbing and preventing the spread of this virus.

*COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Series* is written in blue coloured ink at the top, and it gives the readers an understanding of what the poster represents. The message is clear that the COVID-19 vaccines do not cause or create variants of the virus that cause COVID-19. Instead, it helps to protect the body and to prevent new variants from emerging.

**Photograph 4**



**Table 4**

S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangements	Font sizes
1.	Facts About COVID-19	Declarative, Phrase	Capital and small letters, bold prints
2.	Coronavirus can be transmitted by people who are not showing visible symptoms	Declarative	Small letters
3.	Social distancing (at least 3 feet) is necessary to prevent the spreading of the disease	Declarative	Small letters
4.	COVID-19 Task Force	Phrase	Capital and Small letters

The verbal sign *Facts about Covid-19* is positioned at the top of the photograph. It is boldly written and well displayed. Every reader knows what to expect immediately after that bold caption is read. There are three other verbal signs found. The imperative texts are the first two glaring signs on the photograph. The first text “*coronavirus can be transmitted by people who are not showing visible symptoms*” is written in blue ink passing awareness to the readers on a fact that needs to be known. The second text “*social distancing is necessary to prevent spreading the disease*” is a representation of the visual sign. It is a safety measure to prevent readers from contracting the virus if a foot distance is kept.

### **Photograph 5**



**Table 5**

S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangements	Font sizes
1.	If you have any of the COVID-19 symptoms	Subordinate Clause	Capital and small letters
2.	Fever	Word	Capital letters
3.	Cough	Word	Capital letters
4.	Short of breath	Phrase	Capital letters
5.	Tiredness	Word	Capital letters

There are six verbal signs in the photograph above. The first is the sentence “*If You Have Any of the COVID-19 Symptoms*” which is boldly written and also appears to be the theme of the photograph. It is written in white and it indicates that it will catch the attention of readers. This is followed by a list of what to look out for in ensuring that good health is still intact or in a case of occurrence. This photograph informs every reader to be responsible for their safety. The symptoms such as *fever, cough, shortness of breath, and tiredness* are signs to carefully look out for and be careful of.

**Photograph 6**



**Table 6**

S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangements	Font Sizes
1.	COVID-19 Prevention	Phrase	Capital and small letters, bold print
2.	Persons with COVID-19 may not show any symptoms	Declarative	Small letters
3.	Practice social distancing	Imperative	Small letters
4.	Wear a face mask	Imperative	Small letters
5.	Carry a hand sanitiser	Imperative	Small letters

The first verbal sign that stands as the theme of the photograph is “COVID-19 PREVENTION” and is boldly written at the centre of the photograph. It can be said that this is the essence of the image as it carries the most attention on the image. The next is the imperative sentence “*Persons with COVID-19 may not show any symptoms*” which is written in lower cases. These sentences direct readers to the list of what is expected in the photograph. It is not as bold as the first because it is not the theme of the photograph. The photograph carries three verbal signs which are the symptoms of COVID-19 that the producer is trying to pass across to every reader and passerby.

**Photograph 7**

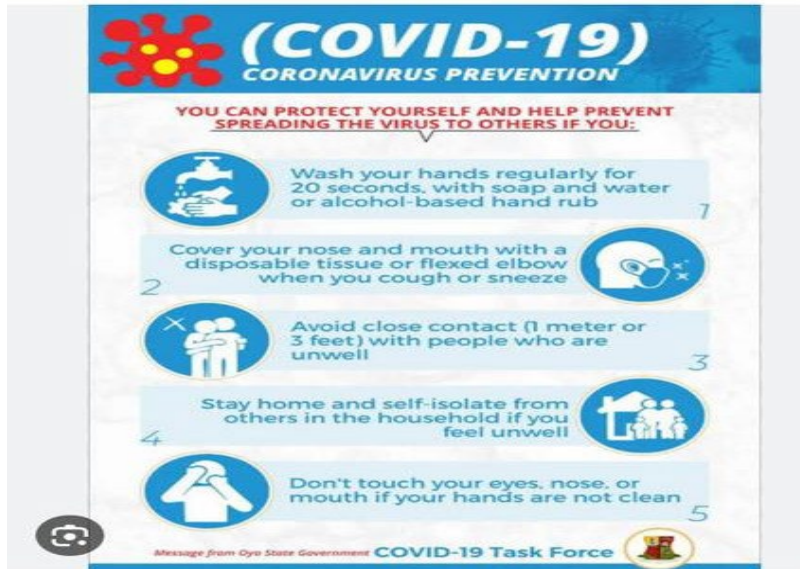


**Table 7**

S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangements	Font sizes
1.	Symptoms of coronavirus disease	Phrase	Capital letters, bold print
2.	Cough	Word	Capital letters
3.	Fever	Word	Capital letters
4.	Running nose	Phrase	Capital letters
5.	Sore throat	Phrase	Capital letters
6.	Breathing difficulty	Phrase	Capital letters
7.	Helplines in case of emergency	Phrase	Capital letters, bold print

The first verbal sign on the photograph is the phrase “*Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease*”. This sign illustrates what will be experienced if COVID-19 is been contacted. The phrase is written in white colour and boldly for readers to grasp the next important message. Symptoms such as *cough*, *fever*, *running nose*, *sore throat* and *breathing difficulty* are listed boldly on the photograph as possible signs of COVID-19. This is to make sure that everyone can protect themselves and in any case of emergency, the last verbal sign proffers a solution to the problem of what to do next- which is to call either of the emergency lines. The sentence is written in upper cases and boldly for easy sighting.

**Photograph 8**



**Table 8**

S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangements	Font Sizes
1.	COVID-19 Coronavirus Prevention	Phrase	Capital and small letters, bold print
2.	You can protect yourself and help prevent spreading the virus to others if you:	Declarative	Capital letters, bold print
3.	Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub	Imperative	Small letters
4.	Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue or flexed elbow when you cough or sneeze	Imperative	Small letters

5.	Stay home and self-isolate from others in the household if you feel unwell	Imperative	Small letters
6.	Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth if your hands are not clean	Imperative	Small letters

**Photograph 9**



**Table 9**

S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangements	Font sizes
1.	Stop	Imperative	Capital letters, bold print
2.	Do not self-medicate	Imperative	Capital letters, bold print
3.	If you have symptoms of coronavirus	Subordinate Clause	Capital letters, bold print
4.	Fever	Word	Capital letters
5.	Cough	Word	Capital letters
6.	Shortness of breath	Phrase	Capital letters
7.	Tiredness	Word	Capital letters

“Stop” is the first imperative boldly written sign on the photograph above. It is a warning to all readers that there is an act that must not be done or cease. The next sign is “*Do not self medicate*” which is an indication of what must not be done. With the way this sentence is presented, it indicates that it is an act no one should indulge in. The next linguistic text is a phrase pointing at a list of likely signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The symptoms are *fever, cough, shortness of breath, and tiredness*.

**Photograph 10**



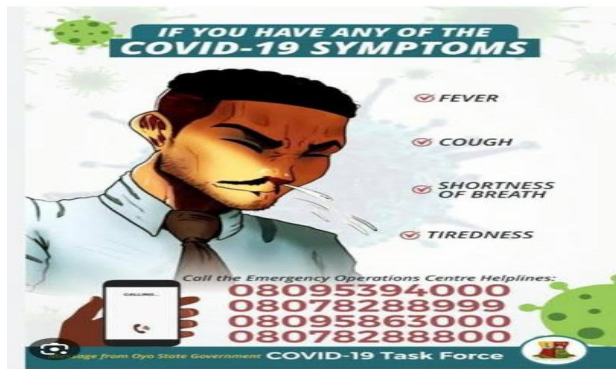
**Table 10**

S/N	Verbal Texts	Linguistic Arrangement	Font Size
1.	Stop Coronavirus!	Imperative	Capital letters, bold print
2.	Wash Your Hands	Imperative	Capital letters, bold print
3.	Apply the soap on your hands	Imperative	Small letters
4.	Rub hands together	Imperative	Small letters
5.	Wash with water	Imperative	Small letters

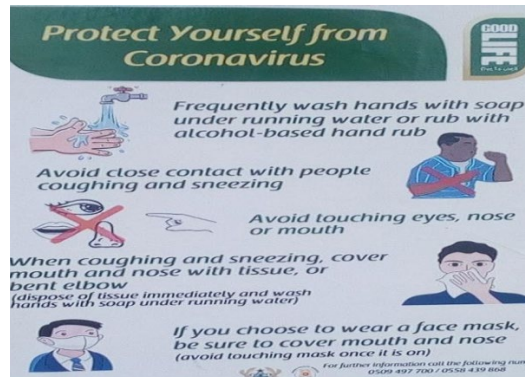
From the photograph, the first bold text indicates that everyone has a responsibility and a part to play in curbing the spread of the virus. This means that the responsibility of stopping the spread of coronavirus is not the responsibility of the government alone but also that of everyone. The word “stop” is boldly embedded in a glaring red colour that indicates danger if not adhered to. It shows that all readers must be ready to protect themselves at all costs from contracting or spreading this virus. It can be seen from the photograph that washing hands is one of the precautionary measures. This text is written boldly for readers to have a better understanding of how to wash and what to have while washing hands. The three steps listed are: *Apply the soap on your hands, Rub hands together* and *wash with water*.

## 2. Meanings Generated through the Identified Verbal Signs

Photograph 1



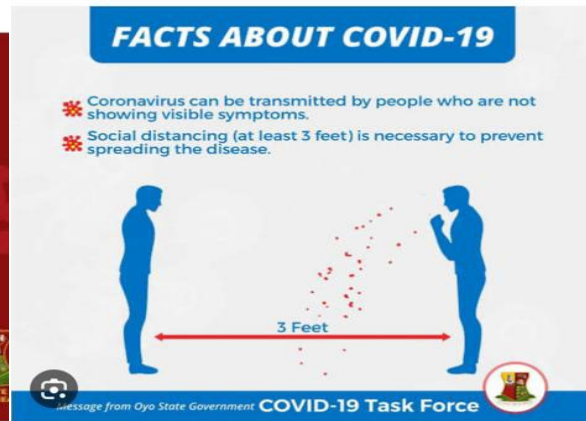
Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4



Photograph 5



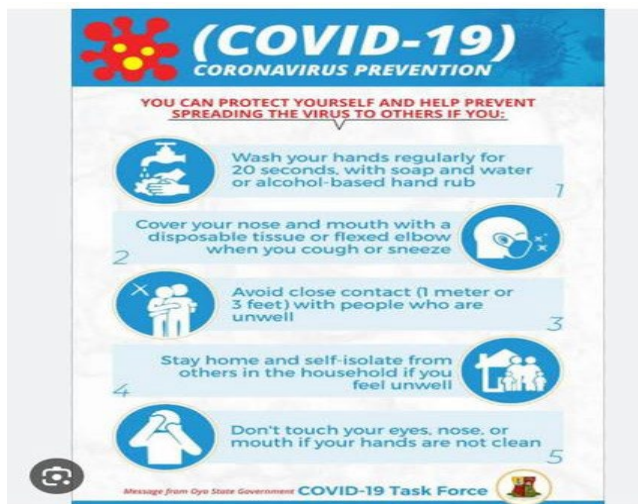
Photograph 6



The above photographs can be classified as awareness posters. Photograph 1 shows “*If you have any of the COVID-19 symptoms*” as its theme, photograph 2 expresses “*Protect yourself from Coronavirus*” as the main message, photograph 3 displays “*Symptoms of coronavirus disease*” as its major theme, photograph 4 shows “*Facts about COVID-19*”, photograph 5 shows “*COVID-19 Prevention*” and on photograph 6, “*COVID-19 is still a threat in 2021*” is written as the themes. All these photographs portray messages of information and awareness to the general public. The photographs preach alertness and consciousness of the virus through the general hospital in Oyo town. These photographs give facts and messages on precautions and protective steps to take to ensure safety. These photographs also enlightened readers, about the functions each sign serves in

keeping them out of danger, and save even health workers from the danger of being infected with the virus for lack of proper orientation of the symptoms. All the six verbal signs on the above photographs are boldly written for readers. Most of these signs are capitalized for emphasis purposes and the graphics are made clear for clear for attention of the readers. These photographs in general preach to the audience to be knowledgeably conscious, cognizant and alert. They further put readers in the state to perceive, feel, be aware and be conscious of the deadly virus. They give necessary information as it is directly available to bear in the direction of a wide range of behavioural actions.

### **Photograph 7**



The photograph above enlightened readers that, everyone must participate in ensuring safety and not just the obligations of the health workers alone. This photograph can be classified as a cooperation/collaboration photograph. Photograph 7 is themed “(COVID-19) CORONAVIRUS PREVENTION”

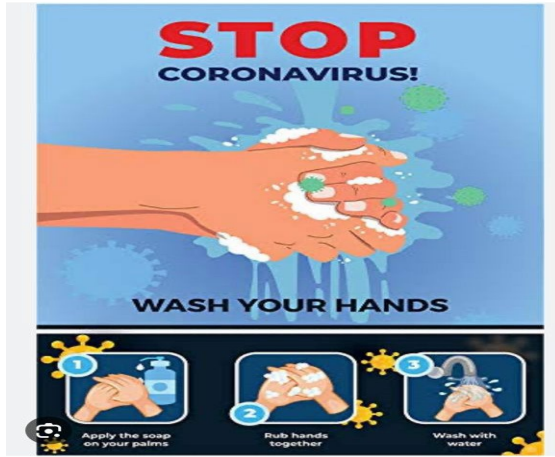
Proper education and instructions must be given to everyone to guarantee safety during the period of the pandemic and individuals must take responsibility for their own lives and not rely on others. Everyone must keep to the rules, and regulations and keep to all directives in reducing the risk of the COVID-19 virus.

This photograph educated readers on the fact that information can be shared between them and health workers. Both the people and health workers must work together harmoniously to defeat

the spread of COVID-19. This photograph not only gives information on adjustments of activities but also makes stern warnings to all readers that the goal is to stay safe and this can only be achieved by adhering strictly to the rules slated by the health workers.

Photograph 9

Photograph 8



Photograph 10



The photographs above carry cautionary messages. Photograph 8 has “*Stop Coronavirus*” as its theme, photograph 9 has “*do not self-medicate, if you have symptoms of coronavirus*” as its cautionary message, photograph 10 has “*Take all COVID-19 vaccine doses recommended to you by your health authority, including a booster dose*” as the main message. These photographs give proper information of what is expected of everyone, what must not be done and what must be done. These photographs give directions and sorts of warning to everyone that reads them. With these, all readers who can adhere strictly to all given instructions can live in safety despite the spread of the virus. These photographs in general produce what each sign stands for and the

consequences that might follow if not strictly obeyed. These pictures made readers understand what to do and the need to be cautious and protect their health. It encourages readers not to stop doing what is right- which is following all guidelines and precautions. All information in these photographs is well interpreted with caution to reduce anxiety and emphasize the need to keep safe.

## **Conclusion**

This study revealed different linguistic meanings which featured words, phrases, clauses and sentences (declarative and imperative). Findings from the linguistic meanings also revealed incomplete sentences (phrases) in some of the COVID-19 precaution photographs. The verbal texts identified in the selected photographs are imperative and declarative. The findings further revealed that the verbal texts on the selected photographs are explanatory and not ambiguous.

There is also the structure of prints and fonts in the presentation of the verbal signs in the photographs. Typographic features such as small letters, capital letters and bold prints are employed for emphasis purposes to achieve the aim of creating awareness, appeal for caution and support for cooperation in waging war against the spread of COVID-19. The verbal texts on the photographs are bold and readable and the font sizes are used to grab the attention of the audience.

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