



**COVID-19 PANDEMIC FIGHT IN GHANA:
DOMESTIC PRODUCTION OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE
EQUIPMENT (PPE) AND LINGUISTIC CHOICES IN PRESIDENTIAL
ADDRESSES FROM MARCH – NOVEMBER 2020**

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Abstract:

This article does a critical discourse analysis of the first nineteen (19) addresses delivered by president Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo (from March – November 2020) with regards to the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic to determine the content and context of the linguistic choices in relation to the laid-out measures in favour of developing the local fashion and textiles industry. Critical discourse analysis was used as research design and as data analysis plan. Inductive content analysis formed part of the analytical tools. The analysis revealed that specific measures put in place to curtail the importation of PPE was engagement of the local fashion designers, tailors and seamstresses some of which had begun production of some the PPE in smaller quantities for commodification. The high cost of importation of PPE, its global shortage, and proactive response of the Ghanaian sartorial workers pushed the government to do the needful by falling on local manufacturing companies to assist them in the domestic production of PPE. It recommended that the government must provide the fashion and textiles industry with credit facilities, tax waivers; and logistical support such as industrial machineries and other needed equipment for expansion of the industry in the subsequent budgets, and maintain fiscal and tactical discipline to these. This must be done with the aim of strengthening domestic production, advancing the nation's self-reliance, stopping the imports of the PPE and at the same time creating more jobs in the multimillion sector in this time of economic hardship.

Keywords: Covid-19, critical discourse analysis, personal protective equipment, pandemic, fashion

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1. Introduction

COVID-19 disease started gradually in faraway Asiatic China and soon became a pandemic plaguing the lives of thousands of people globally. It was declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on March 11, 2020 (WHO, 2020a). Due to the catastrophic and destructive nature of this pandemic, many, if not all governments across the globe, have tried to put measures in place to eradicate it. The major measures put in place include activities that could limit and stop the spread, provide care for infected persons, and minimise the harsh social and economic impacts of the pandemic on the respective countries. In the case of Ghana, the government formed the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Coronavirus response on February 7, 2020 with the oversight responsibility of monitoring developments and reporting on a daily basis. This was aimed at handling the corona crisis. Per its work, the committee was to ensure strict checks at the country's entry points through screening of persons entering the country.

Ghana's heavy reliance on imports of manufactured goods including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as hand gloves, nose masks, face shields, boots and coveralls for use by health facilities, and the general public raised issues of resourcing the local fashion and textiles industry to produce some of the PPE. This was to curtail their importation. To communicate Ghana's government measures put in place for the COVID-19 pandemic fight, the President of the nation, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo has been addressing the nation intermittently through the state media (and private-owned media) to share information about the fight against the virus, and outlining decisions taken about the next chapter of that common battle.

Starting from March – November 2020, he has addressed the nation nineteen (19) times on the pandemic. With these public addresses delivered, the issues we seek to interrogate are: what specific measures have been put in place to curtail the importation of PPE which the local fashion and textiles industry has the capacity to produce? What were the implications of the measures on the conscious development of the local fashion industry? This paper analyses the addresses/updates to determine the content and context of the linguistic choices in relation to the laid-out measures in favour of developing the local fashion and textiles industry in the fight against the pandemic.

It also examines the practicalities and implications of measures put in place in building a formidable domestic capacity of the fashion and textiles industry that has been neglected, all in a bid to deepen national self-reliance. To this end, the study analyses the linguistic choices made by the president. Language has been identified as more than just a tool for communication. In many discourse domains, it serves as a useful tool for enacting and recognising power, manipulation, identities and ideological stance. It is for this reason that the article examines president Akufo-Addo's addresses to the nation on Ghana's enhanced responses to the coronavirus pandemic which raised issues of resourcing the local fashion and textiles industry to produce some PPE. In this sense, the study is premised on contents of the addresses that hinge on the nation's response to local production to meet the demands of the population in dealing with the pandemic; and the

use of language in enacting the response to local production. In other words, the study looks at how language is enacted in encouraging local production and how the speech contributes to the revamping and developing of the fashion and textiles industry. This is to help find out the links between the kind of language used in the updates and how that kind of language can be explained in socio-economic and political terms, as well as drawing attention to how texts are so closely related to power relations in the Ghanaian society (even) in the face of crisis.

When national rhetoric is studied from a wide range of different angles, it provides room for cross-disciplinary cooperation. Unfortunately, according to (Syrstad, 2017), this room has not been used as much as it could have been. Specifically, in available literature, there have not been closer ties between fashion and textiles industry and linguistic analysis research, that is, language use concerning fashion and textiles development in Ghana. There have been few/no attempts to carry a unifying analysis regarding both disciplines. It is therefore our deep-felt insight that a collaborative analysis of linguistics, and fashion and textiles industry, two different academic fields, in a national discourse could foster a fruitful innovation.

2. Theoretical Framework

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is concerned with the critical study of spoken or written texts. Discourse analysts (Fairclough 1989, 1995; van Dijk 1993, 1996; Wodak, 1996, 2001) thus, study texts to find links between the kind of language used in a specific discourse and how this kind of language can be explained in socio-economic and political terms, as well as drawing attention to how texts are so closely related to power relations in our societies. This study seeks to contribute to linguistic studies on power by examining how Nana Addo in his capacity as the president of the Republic of Ghana employs various linguistic features to express Ghana's capability in dealing with the pandemic. Thus, since the expression 'critical' in CDA has to do with exposing the connections between language and power, a concept which is very key to the present study, the study is situated within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) by van Dijk (1993) and Lukes (2005).

Unlike some works on CDA which focus on power and dominance (van Dijk, 1996; Weiss & Wodak, 2003), this study adopts van Dijk's (1993) concept of power which he refers to as control in addition to Lukes' (1974, 2005) concept of CDA as a guide. The study upholds the view that power is enacted not only by the grammatical forms within a text, but also by a person's control of a social occasion by means of the genre of text.

According to van Dijk (1993), power means to control, the control that one group exercises over another group. This kind of control has two spheres in which it operates: the sphere of action and the sphere of cognition. Whereas the first sphere means limiting the actions and behaviours of a group of people, the second sphere simply means making an influence on their minds. Van Dijk asserts that cognition control is more subtle and sophisticated than action control and exemplifies this assertion by saying that action

control means using corporal punishment or physical coercion (as in police violence against demonstrators, or male violence against women), while cognition control uses smart strategies such as persuasion, dissimulation or manipulation to make a heavy impact on minds and to change attitudes in one's interest (van Dijk, 1993).

Lukes (1974, 2005) also adds his perspective to the power theory and provides an elaborate view on it. Lukes (2005) defines power in three categories. He explains that power is enacted when a speaker causes a hearer to perform an action or to do something which the hearer would not have performed. He also maintains that power is enacted when a speaker indicates an ability to perform a particular action and lastly, power is posited when a speaker makes an assertion authoritatively from a particular knowledge or information. He argues that power is one of those concepts which is unavoidably value-dependent, that is, *"both its definition and any given use of it, once defined, are inextricably tied to a given set of (probably unacknowledged) value-assumptions which predetermine the range of its empirical application"* (Lukes, 2005, p. 30).

Lukes (1974) earlier outlines three dimensions through which power had been theorised in the earlier parts of the twentieth century. These are *one-dimensional power*, *two-dimensional power*, and *three-dimensional power*. One-dimensional power is characterised by these features: power is decision making, exercised in formal institutions, measured by the outcomes of decisions. In other words, Lukes (1974) states that the "one-dimensional" view of power involves a focus on behaviour in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as expressing policy preferences, revealed by political participation. With the two-dimensional power, Lukes (1974) includes decision making and agenda-setting, institutions and informal influences, and the measured extent of informal influence. According to him, techniques used by two-dimensional power structures include influence, inducement, persuasion, authority, coercion, and direct force. Three-dimensional power shapes preferences through values, norms, and ideologies. Almost all social interactions, therefore, are embedded with power because ideas operate behind all languages and actions.

Lukes' (1974, 2005) concept of power with regards to CDA very much relates to that of van Dijk's (1993) concept of power and CDA. This study, therefore, combines the concept of power by the two authors in the analysis of the data as the issues discussed in both concepts very much feature in the linguistic choices made in the updates concerning boosting local production and encouraging self-reliance. Consequently, Lukes (1974, 2005) and van Dijk's (1993) notion of control serve as the theoretical lens for this study.

Also, the study considers van Dijk's (1993) and Lukes (1974, 2005) perspectives of CDA given the fact that in the updates regarding issues relating to local production, the president does not seek to abuse power or dominate the people as other sides of CDA postulate, but to influence them towards ways in dealing with the virus; and to encourage a boost of the local industry and self-reliance, hence van Dijk (1993) and Lukes (1974, 2005) notion of CDA serve as a guide for the study.

3. Methodology

Data for the study consisted of the texts (updates/addresses from March 6, 2020 to November 2020) delivered to the people of Ghana by the president of the Republic of Ghana, Nana Akufo Addo in response to dealing with the coronavirus pandemic. The president has made it a duty to periodically inform the people of Ghana about the state of the nation regarding the virus and measures put in place by his government to deal with the virus. The area of interest to the study is the issues relating to local production and how through language such issues are conveyed to the Ghanaian public in the addresses. It then looks at how power is enacted in communicating those issues to the people. As at the time of this research, a total of nineteen (19) speeches/updates were available and obtained for this study. Out of the 19 updates, a total of twenty-five (25) paragraphs devoted to issues of attention on local production in the face of the global shortage of PPE that impact the fashion and textiles industry were extracted from the data. All such issues are embedded with language of control aimed at influencing attitudes towards local production both in mind and in action were extracted from the data and critically analysed to bring out issues of control as the president seeks a change of attitude in dealing with the pandemic.

CDA and qualitative content analytical tools consisted data analysis plan. CDA highlights how the president through some rhetorical strategies seeks to control both the mental models and physical actions of the people through the updates/language towards measures taken in dealing with the spread of the virus. The analysis of the linguistic aspect in this study considers the two spheres of control; action and cognition, as postulated by van Dijk (1993) as the president seeks to influence the people by encouraging them to perform certain actions; local production in the face of global shortage which implies a change of attitude, and the use of physical coercion to enforce compliance with the protocols. Inductive content analysis was used because, it is relevant in circumstances where there are no previous studies dealing with the phenomenon or when knowledge is fragmented; for it is suitable in dealing with large volumes of textual data and different textual sources in corroborating evidence (Elo & Kyngas, 2008).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Domestic production of PPE

Of the first nineteen (19) addresses on the COVID-19 (from March 6, 2020 to November 2020) delivered by the president of the republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo, that was selected for the study, the first update was contained in March 6, 2020 Independence Day celebration speech. In couple of paragraphs at the tail-end of his speech, the president took some time off to draw attention of the nation on the novel coronavirus outbreak, how fast it was spreading and the fact that it was claiming lives and bringing in its wake economic difficulties on nations, and spreading fear and panic throughout the world. In that address, the president hinted the nation that *“Five thousand (5,000) personal*

protective equipments [equipment] for health workers have been procured and distributed to all regions and major health facilities, points of entry, teaching hospitals, treatment centres and selected health facilities. Additional protective health equipment is being procured” (Akufo Addo, 2020a, para 38). On Wednesday March 11, 2020, Akufo Addo’s second update strongly emphasised the need to support the local industries to produce some of the medicines and PPE to curtail their importation. He says: *“Indeed we must take advantage of this crisis to strengthen our domestic production capacity so we can advance our self-reliance and reduce our dependence on foreign imports. Necessity they say is the mother of inventions”* (Akufo Addo, 2020b, para 20).

Before the delivery of the third update on Sunday March 15, 2020, there had been recorded cases of the pandemic in the country. It was, therefore, not surprising that in the interest of public safety and protection, the president announced suspension of all public gatherings *“including conferences, workshops, funerals, festivals, political rallies, sporting events and religious activities, such as services in churches and mosques”* for four (4) weeks. Private burials were limited to not more than twenty-five (25) people in attendance; while all *“Universities, Senior High Schools, and basic schools, were to close on ... Monday, 16th March, 2020, till further notice”* (Akufo Addo, 2020c, para, 5 & 6). The President imposed lockdown on some places considered to be hotspot of the spread during his fourth update. The areas included Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA, which includes Awutu Senya East), and the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area and other contiguous districts, for a period of two (2) weeks, which was subject to review (Akufo Addo, 2020d, para 7). The lockdown took effect on 1:00 am, Monday March 30, 2020. The President also announced that government had

“...taken delivery of additional PPEs and more are being procured. Distribution of seventeen thousand (17,000) coveralls, three hundred and fifty thousand (350,000) masks, seventeen thousand (17,000) goggles, two thousand four hundred (2,400) non-contact thermometers, three hundred and fifty thousand (350,000) gloves, twenty-five thousand (25,000) sanitizers, and thirty-thousand (30,000) tests kits are ongoing for healthcare personnel and those undertaking contact tracing and testing.” (para 14)

The president recounted the additional number of PPE government had procured for frontline health workers in his fifth update. He announced that thus far (Akufo Addo, 2020e, para 20 & 21),

“three hundred and fifty thousand (350,000) masks, five hundred and fifty eight thousand, six hundred and fifty (558,650) examination gloves, one thousand (1,000) reusable goggles, twenty thousand (20,000) cover-alls, seven thousand (7,000) N-95 respirators, five hundred (500) waterproof gumboots, two thousand (2,000) reusable face shields ... and five hundred (500) shoe covers have been sent to the regional health directorates, for onward distribution to the district health directorates for use by our health workers in all the districts. The Minister for Health is ensuring that they reach the health workers. This,

notwithstanding, Government is aware that more needs to be done, especially in the face of the global shortage of PPE.

It is for this reason that Government is actively engaged with local manufacturing companies to assist them in the domestic production of PPEs., and I am encouraged by the response from the Ghanaian private sector. Domestic production of face masks, head covers, surgical scrubs and gowns will commence from Tuesday [07/04/2021]. For example, three million, six hundred thousand face masks will be produced domestically, with an output of one hundred and fifty thousand (150,000) per day."

Both the sixth (Akufo Addo, 2020f) and seventh updates touched on how the government has impressed on the health facilities to embark on testing of samples to determine infected persons while the media and other agencies increase public education on protective measures of the pandemic. It was in the second, fifth and eighth updates that the president (Akufo Addo, 2020g, para 6) made mention of engaging local production of the PPE in addition to what the nation had imported since the start of the pandemic. He stated emphatically that:

"Government has enabled domestic production and supply of protective equipment to our health workers to increase significantly – they have received, in recent days, nine hundred and five thousand, and thirty-one (905,031) nose masks, thirty one thousand, six hundred and thirty (31,630) medical scrubs, thirty one thousand, four hundred and seventy-two (31,472) gowns, forty six thousand, eight hundred and seventy (46,870) head covers, and eighty three thousand, five hundred (83,500) N-95 face masks."

He also hinted that the Health Minister, Hon. Kwaku Agyemang Manu, on 25th April, 2020, issued directives to guide the production and mandatory wearing of face masks (Akufo Addo, 2020g, para 7).

It became obvious from the first to the eighth updates/addresses that government was heavily spending millions of Ghana Cedis on importation of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as nose masks, cover-all, head covers, N-95 face masks, gloves, protective shoes and goggles which the local textiles and fashion industry could be supported to produce. This could lead to employment of many people and save the nation from high cost of importation. Meanwhile the nation's dependence on imports of these became expensive, and left the government with the alternative of producing them locally which makes economic sense. The eighth update hinted at the government's readiness and resolve to fall on domestic production. Long before the delivery of the eighth updates, many bespoke Ghanaian sartorial workers and fashion designers had begun the production of reusable nose masks which they sold on the street. These masks were mainly produced with so-called *African print*, and was patronised by the people. This move perhaps, informed the Minister of Health to issue directives to guide the local production.

It is important to note that the swift response to the local production of nose masks and other PPE by Ghanaian fashion designers, tailors and seamstresses demonstrate their readiness to expand should they be given the needed governmental financial and logistical support for their operations. The fashion and textiles manufacturing industry flourished in the 1970s and employed more than 25,000 workers which accounted for 27 percent of Ghana's total manufacturing employment (Abdallah, 2010) but the number of workers in the industry has dwindled to about 2,961 as of March 2005 (Quartey, 2006). Scholars have made a clarion call on government to provide logistical and financial support (Quartey, 2006; Asare, 2012; Amartey, 2012; Abdallah, 2010) to the local fashion and textiles industry to redeem its glory of contributing more than 15% to GDP as in the early 1970s. However, these calls have yielded little or no results as governmental support is not felt by the industry. In the 1960s, the textiles and fashion industry experienced significant growth under President Nkrumah's governmental support which led to creation of more jobs in the sector for the people. Succeeding governments have paid lip service to the growth of the sector which has led to near collapse of the sector as evidenced by the attrition rate of workers in the sector. The Covid-19 pandemic and its resultant huge demand for PPE has further exposed the challenges of the sector. The ninth (Akufo Addo, 2020h) and tenth (Akufo Addo, 2020i, para 9) updates, indicated the total number of various PPE distributed so far to the frontline actors, general public, and the media; and the country's conscious domestic production of PPE:

We have lessened our dependence on foreign imports, and scaled up significantly domestic production and distribution of personal protective equipment to our healthcare workers, evidenced in the provision of four million, four hundred and forty thousand, six hundred and ninety (4,440,690) gloves; three million, five hundred and twenty four thousand, two hundred and five (3,524,205) nose masks; sixty two thousand, one hundred and ninety-four (62,194) goggles; one hundred and nine thousand, eight hundred and twenty-nine (109,829) litres of sanitizers; eighty five thousand, nine hundred and ninety-five (85,995) head covers; eighty two thousand, six hundred and fifty-five (82,655) gowns; fifty three thousand, five hundred and seventeen (53,517) medical scrubs; and forty three thousand, six hundred and thirty-three (43,633) N-95 face masks.

The president admitted that the nation has been highly dependent on importation of PPE. This is indicated in his expression that the nation has lessened its foreign imports of the PPE. For nations to prioritise the domestic production of the functional needs as in the case PPE is a conscious effort that needs sustainable investment. As the pandemic struck, nations were hit by a shortage of PPE due to high demand for it. Upon noticing global shortage of PPE, the World Health Organisation in its March 3 2020 press release called on industry and governments to increase manufacturing of PPE by 40 per cent to meet rising global demand. At the time of this press statement, WHO (2020b) had shipped nearly half a million sets of personal protective equipment to 47 countries within four regions namely Western Pacific, Southeast Asia, Eastern Mediterranean and Africa. In

the case of Africa, Ghana was amongst the twenty countries who received PPE from WHO. When WHO charged governments to produce PPE, it became necessary and expedient that Ghana veer into the production of the PPE for use by the citizenry.

With the eleventh (Akufo Addo, 2020j) twelfth (Akufo Addo, 2020k) and thirteenth (Akufo Addo, 2020l) updates, the president made it clear that wearing of face masks must become the norm in any public gathering including schools, market, churches, mosques in addition to following the social/physical distancing protocols. *'Leaving our homes without a face mask or face covering on is an offence. The Police have been instructed to enforce this directive, which is the subject of an Executive Instrument'* (Akufo Addo, 2020j, para 19). The president reechoed in update twelve that leaving home without a face mask, a face covering, or a face shield on is an offence. The president also announced that the basic schools would be writing their final examination. As a result, he said in his thirteenth update that 2.2 million reusable face masks (that is, three per person), would be distributed to students, teaching and non-teaching staff, all with the intent of guaranteeing their safety in the conduct of Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) (Akufo Addo, 2020l). The president added that the wearing of masks has become a part of the routine of school life.

Updates Fourteen, Fifteen, Sixteen, Seventeen and Eighteen reechoed and admonished the people of Ghana to be more disciplined in their adherence to the personal hygiene, mask wearing and social distancing protocols that have become mandatory. The president reassured the people of Ghana that he is committed to *'using the opportunity afforded by this pandemic to expand our domestic production capacity, and deepen our self-reliance'* (Akufo Addo, 2020m, para 18) of the PPE in the Eighteenth update while update Nineteen resounded the message of discipline in the observance of the safety protocols.

Since wearing a face mask has become a routine as indicated by the president in his update on the pandemic, it is an autosuggestion that the nation needs to invest heavily in the textiles and fashion industry for them to engage in massive production for domestic use and for export. Investment in this instance should be beyond rhetoric.

4.2 Linguistic Choices

In the delivery of the updates, power is enacted through two main domains, what van Dijk (1993) considers as control classified in two spheres as the sphere of action and the sphere of cognition. However, the speech employs more of the sphere of action than the sphere of cognition given the fact that it is a period of crisis that is being dealt with and, for that matter, more proactive measures are needed to be taken not leaving out the cognition which is necessary for a change in attitudes to curb the spread of the virus.

The president engaged the two spheres of control; the cognition to influence the minds of the people towards domestic production of PPE to meet local demands in the face of the global shortage and action control to coerce the people to comply with safety measures put in place as well as the use of PPE which when left alone, many would not have used. There was, therefore, the enactment of power both to influence the minds of

people and to ensure compliance with safety protocols. According to van Dijk (1993), power means to control, the control that one group exercises over another group, in this case, the enactment of power in dealing with the virus by controlling people mentally and physically to contain its spread. Table 1 illustrates the presentation of the two main types of control in the update addresses.

Table 1: Spheres of Control

Type of Control	No of Occurrence	Percentage (%)
Cognition control	7	28
Action control	18	72
Total	25	100

From Table 1, action control is seen to dominate with a frequency of occurrence of 72% as against cognition control which accounts for 28%. However, in most cases, action control is employed hand in hand with cognition control in a much more attempt at containing the spread of the virus. This implies that to deal with the virus comprehensively, there is the need for practical actions to be put in place as well as an influence in attitudinal change in the minds of the people. Under the sphere of action, the president employed physical coercion, corporal punishment, expressions of ability, and making assertions authoritatively based on his knowledge of events and being privy to some information.

4.2.1 Action Control

Under the sphere of action, power is enacted basically through the use of physical coercion and threats of corporal punishment against persons. Much of the speech in the updates concerning local production has been under what van Dijk (1993) considered as action control. Such linguistic expressions denote corporal punishment or physical coercion against persons who might disregard the stipulated protocols aimed at combating the spread of the virus. This type of control is meant to ensure compliance with the use of PPE to curb the spread of the virus. This is exemplified by the point, *“Leaving our homes without a face mask on or face covering is an offence. The Police have been instructed to enforce this directive, which is the subject of an Executive Instrument”* (Akufo Addo, 2020j, para 19). In this example, power is enacted to ensure compliance with the wearing of face masks. The president employed both physical coercion and corporal punishment to ensure adherence to the directives given, as evident in the use of expressions in the extract as, leaving home without a face mask being an *“offence”* and the police having been instructed to *“enforce the law”*. Van Dijk (1993) posits that action control involves using corporal punishment or physical coercion as seen with the deployment of the police to ensure adherence to protocols. The enactment of power has become necessary for compliance with the safety protocols put in place to contain the spread of the virus. This type of power has been necessitated given the stubborn nature

of the virus as posited by Mensah (2017) that power is exercised given the type of social occasion.

The president reiterated the enactment of power when he repeated himself in another update (Akufo Addo, 2020k, para 21), *“Before I conclude, let me remind all Ghanaians, once again, that the wearing of masks is mandatory. Leaving our homes without a face mask, a face covering, or a face shield on is an offence.”* Power is enacted through the use of physical coercion to ensure adherence to protocols as evident in the words *“...the wearing of a mask is mandatory”*. This kind of control is exercised over all Ghanaians without an exception as seen in *“let me remind all Ghanaians”*. This means that all are expected to adhere to the directive. To legitimise this type of control, the president engaged in making assertions authoritatively about the ability of his government as well as the nation to fight the virus. He did this based on some known information at his disposal. For example, he pointed out that (Akufo Addo, 2020e, para 21):

“Government is actively engaged with local manufacturing companies to assist them in the domestic production of PPEs., and I am encouraged by the response from the Ghanaian private sector. Domestic production of face masks, head covers, surgical scrubs, and gowns will commence from Tuesday. For example, three million, six hundred thousand face masks will be produced domestically, with an output of one hundred and fifty thousand (150,000) per day.”

From this extract, we see the enactment of power as the speaker made an assertion authoritatively about the production of PPE locally. Lukes (2005) posited that power is exercised when a speaker authoritatively gives out some information. Given his position as the president of the nation, Nana Addo spoke authoritatively from some known facts informing the people of the government’s preparedness to combat the spread of the virus. The linguistic features in the extract under discussion also fall within Lukes (1974) one-dimensional power under his categorisation of power into dimensions. According to Lukes (1974), power is decision making, exercised in formal institutions, measured by the outcomes of decisions. In the extract, the president and his government made decisions and set the agenda for combating the spread of the virus.

In the updates, the president upheld it as a duty to periodically/monthly inform the public of the decisions taken to contain the spread of the virus. The information is presented to the public authoritatively given the fact that it is considered first-hand information coming from the president himself. This is done to inspire confidence in the people that the government is up to the task of helping the people to fight the virus through local efforts, local production of PPE. This type of power enactment involves a focus on behavioural change in the people to induce in them the need to collaborate in the local production of PPE in the fight against the virus.

Other instances of enactment of power were a show of ability to locally combat the spread of the virus through the production of PPE. Lukes (2005) is of the view that power is enacted when a speaker indicates an ability to perform something. The speeches

abound with a show of ability on the part of the government to aid local production and distribution of PPE, to more importantly health workers and the general public as a whole. The president (Akufo Addo, 2020g, para 6) stated that,

“Government has enabled domestic production and supply of protective equipment to our health workers to increase significantly – they have received, in recent days, nine hundred and five thousand, and thirty-one (905,031) nose masks, thirty one thousand, six hundred and thirty (31,630) medical scrubs, thirty one thousand, four hundred and seventy-two (31,472) gowns, forty-six thousand, eight hundred and seventy (46,870) head covers, and eighty-three thousand, five hundred (83,500) N-95 face masks.”

The ability of government to deal with the pandemic has as a consequence reduced dependence on foreign imports of PPE to combat the spread of the virus and this indicates an enactment of power on the part of the president and his government, demonstrating to the people that he is a trusted leader in the fight against the virus. The following exemplifies the point (Akufo Addo, 2020i, para 9),

“We have lessened our dependence on imports and scaled up significantly domestic production and distribution of personal protective equipment to our healthcare workers, evidenced in the provision of four million, four hundred and forty thousand, six hundred and ninety (4,440,690) gloves; three million, five hundred and twenty-four thousand, two hundred and five (3,524,205) nose masks; sixty-two thousand, one hundred and ninety-four (62,194) goggles.”

The president gave the people this elaborate information of ‘ability’ to instill in them confidence in his government’s ability to deal with the virus so he can continue to stay in power. Further, the enactment of power is seen in the president’s efforts to provide evidence to the people that he is a man of his words, walking the talk of his government’s ability to deal with the virus. This is seen in the linguistic expressions, *“we have lessened our dependence on foreign goods”*. He then provided evidence by giving statistics of the PPE that have been distributed, and the recipients of those provisions. By this, he sought to earn the trust of the people that the pandemic is under control to alleviate their fears.

Also, in the updates, power is enacted through delegation. The president is not the only one exercising control to boost local industry, but, he has also delegated power to his appointees as well who are also exercising power in boosting the local industry. For example (Akufo Addo, 2020g, para 7),

“Kwaku Agyemang Manu, Member of Parliament for Dormaa Central, has, as of yesterday, 25th April 2020, issued directives to guide the production and mandatory wearing of face masks. We should all familiarize ourselves with them, and apply them, as the Regional Coordinating Councils of the Greater Accra, Ashanti, and Central Regions are demanding of their residents.”

In the extract, the use of the expressions, '*Kwaku Agyemang Manu* has issued *directives* to guide production', '*...mandatory* wearing of face masks', are all indicators of enactment of power to protect lives and boost local industry. The highlighted linguistic features are meant to physically coerce the people to act in ways they would otherwise not have acted and that, according to Lukes (2005) is an enactment of power. Lukes is of the view that power is enacted when a speaker causes a hearer to perform an action or to do something which the hearer would not have performed.

4.2.2 Cognition Control

The study recorded 28% usage of cognition in the president's bid to influence the minds of the people towards a change of attitude. Most of the occurrences of the use of cognition in the enactment of power has been the employment of cognition control hand in hand in with action control. In the updates, however, cognition control is more subtle than action control.

The president employed cognition control through the use of manipulation, persuasion, and other cognitive devices to influence the minds of the people towards managing the spread of the virus and the need to take advantage of the crises and boost domestic production. He pointed out that, "*Indeed, we must take advantage of this crisis to strengthen our domestic production capacity so we can advance our self-reliance and reduce our dependence on imports. Necessity they say is the mother of inventions*" (Akufo Addo, 2020b, para 20).

In the speech, Nana Addo invoked the cognitive sphere. In his capacity as the president of the nation, he tried to make a heavy impact on the minds of the people for an attitudinal change in their own interest (van Dijk, 1993). He sought a change of attitude in the people towards local production to promote self-reliance and also, challenging them to perform certain actions. In the extract, we see the enactment of power through the use of persuasion; showing the necessity of some actions while at the same time imposing an obligation on the listeners about the need to perform an action which they would not have performed as in '*Indeed, we must take advantage...*' The use of the obligatory modal operator '*must*' does not only convey an obligation but also suggest urgency as enforced by the intensifier '*indeed*' showing that certain actions are required. In the extract, the president sought to influence his countrymen of their ability to contain the spread of the virus with his expression, "*we can advance our self-reliance and reduce our dependence on imports*". He persuaded the people of their ability to deal with the crisis through a collective expression of effort as in the use of the modal operator of ability with a plural personal pronoun, '*we can...*'

Apart from persuasion, he also employed manipulation to convince the people of his commitment and dedication to helping them contain the spread of the virus through any means possible. This is exemplified in expressions like, '*I assure you*', '*I remain committed to these objectives*', '*I will not stray from them*' as shown in the extract (Akufo Addo, 2020m, para 18). He engaged this strategy by giving elaborate information about efforts put in place to protect the nation as well as expand domestic production capacity.

As President of the Republic, I assured you of my continuing commitment to limiting and stopping the importation of the virus, containing its spread, providing adequate care for the sick, slowing down community spread, reducing the impact of the virus on social and economic life, and using the opportunity afforded by this pandemic to expand our domestic production capacity, and deepen our self-reliance. I remain committed to these objectives, and I will not stray from them. (Akufo Addo, 2020m, para 18)

He also engaged the strategy of manipulation by constantly offering detailed information about efforts put in place to protect, especially, health workers and the general public as well as boosting the local economy. In so doing, he employs the sphere of cognition hand in hand with the sphere of action. He does this by providing evidence through giving statistics of PPE supplied to health workers. In employing such a strategy, he sought to build confidence in the workers and subtly control their minds towards the achievement of the desired goals of curbing the spread of the virus. The following exemplifies the point,

“Fellow Ghanaians, it is vital that we protect the lives of our frontline health workers, who are risking their lives every day to battle this virus. That is why Government is placing a high priority on the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPEs) for them. Thus far, three hundred and fifty thousand (350,000) masks, five hundred and fifty-eight thousand, six hundred and fifty (558,650) examination gloves, one thousand (1,000) reusable goggles.” (Akufo Addo, 2020e, para 20)

5. Conclusions

Ghana was not spared by the novel Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to the death of millions of people worldwide. The disease began in Wuhan, China in November 2019 and spread to other parts of the world. In a bid to protect lives, nations instituted measures to stop the spread, contain the virus and eradicate it. Ghana’s government made intermittent updates on the measures put in place to control the pandemic. This article analysed the first nineteen (19) addresses/updates delivered by president Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo (from March – November 2020) to determine the content and context of the linguistic choices in relation to the laid-out measures in favour of developing the local fashion and textiles industry in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, it examined the practicalities and implications of governmental measures put in place in building a formidable domestic capacity of the fashion and textiles industry in producing PPE through the opportunity offered by the pandemic.

Hitherto, Ghana has been heavily dependent on imports of PPE. However, given the novel nature of the virus, throwing all nations in the world, both great and small into disarray, it has demonstrated that despite us living in an interconnected and globalised world, each nation, ultimately, stands alone in its challenge to protect its people. Nevertheless, as with any other form of hardship, there are always lessons to be learnt,

as there are growth opportunities. It has become necessary that Ghana encourages local production of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to meet local demands and at the same time advance economic growth.

It is evident through the addresses examined that the specific measures put in place to curtail the importation of PPE was fruitful engagement and use of the local fashion designers, tailors and seamstresses to produce them. The high cost of importation of PPE, its global shortage, and the proactive response of the Ghanaian sartorial workers contributed to pushing the government to fall on local manufacturing companies to engage in the domestic production of PPE.

The Covid-19 pandemic and its resultant huge demand for PPE has further exposed the challenges of the fashion and textiles industry. Prioritising the domestic production of the functional needs as in the case of PPE is a conscious effort that needs sustainable investment. Investment in this instance should be beyond rhetoric. With wearing of face mask becoming a routine as indicated by the president in his updates on the pandemic, it is implied that the nation must invest heavily in the textiles and fashion industry for it to engage in massive production of the PPE such as hand gloves, nose masks, face shields, head covers, boots and coveralls for use the health facilities and the general public; and for export purposes. It is recommended that the government must provide the fashion and textiles industry with credit facilities, tax waivers; and logistical support such as industrial machineries and other needed equipment for expansion of the industry in the subsequent budgets and remain disciplined to these. This must be done with the aim of strengthening domestic production, advancing the nation's self-reliance, stopping the imports of the PPE and at the same time creating more jobs in the multimillion sector in this time of economic hardship.

Through the linguistic choices made by the president in the delivery of the updates, power is enacted through two main domains: control, classified in two spheres – sphere of action and the sphere of cognition. However, the updates employed more of the sphere of action than the sphere of cognition given the fact that it is a period of crisis that is being dealt with and, therefore, more proactive measures are needed to be taken. However, the cognitive control has also been employed through the use of persuasion and manipulation as the president seeks an attitudinal change in the behaviour of the people to curb the spread of the virus. This implies that to deal with the virus comprehensively, there is the need for practical actions to be put in place as well as an influence in attitudinal change in the minds of the people. The attitudinal change is required on the part of the government supporting the fashion and textiles industry and people of Ghana observing the safety measures laid out by the government.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

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