

Linguistic Analysis of the Language of Soldiers in Military Barracks in Nigeria**Luka Barnabas Jauro¹**

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Abstract: *Because of the peculiarity of the spoken language discerned amongst soldiers in the barracks, this study carried out a linguistic analysis of the language that soldiers use in communication in the barracks with a view to understand the issue of language in occupational register and as a variety in English language use. To this end, a survey of English language use of 100 soldiers in the 23 Armoured Brigades, Gibson Jalo Cantonment, Yola was made and language use by soldiers was examined to discern whether such use are linked to and constrained in their Sociolinguistic Contexts by the educational qualification of the soldiers. An eclectic method of data analysis was adopted, focusing, amongst other, on the stylistic, syntactic and lexical features of the discourse. It was found that the language used by soldiers in the barracks is not only an effective and convenient tool for institutionalised occupational communication, but also a reflection of the educational realities of the soldiers. Finally, it is recommended that like study be used to understand the manipulation of language registers used in the realisation of professional discuss. Learners will also be able to use this knowledge to respond to language that has been manipulated to create new forms of discourse to achieve contextual usage.*

Key Words: *linguistic analysis, occupational register, stylistic, syntactic and lexical features*

INTRODUCTION

Human thinking and activities is complex and are conveyed, not only by actions but also by the vehicle of language. Language use at any particular time is a reflection of the activities being carried out and gives rise to the concept of register in its broadest sense (Fakuade, 1998). Language enables one to imagine counterfactual objects, events, and states of affairs; it is intimately related to intentionality, the feature of all human thoughts whereby they are essentially about, or directed toward, things outside themselves (Drew and Heritage, 1992).

Basically, language can be described as a mediating system interposed like a layer between a layer of 'reality' and a layer of 'society', which talks in and about that world. Thus giving rise to the concept of sociolinguistic – the reality of society that shapes and constrains language use. Using language typically makes most actions more worthwhile and effective, and makes many other actions possible quite apart from acting upon reality (Morris and Hirst, 1991).

Language effectiveness is possible because Language is a rule-governed activity. When the rules are disobeyed, misunderstanding, lack of clarity, confusion, and ambiguity and so on may occur. In a situation where language structure does not bring about effective communication, probably due to some stylistic manipulations, difficulties of understanding and interpretation may be faced by the language users. In Pragmatics however, meanings are implied and the rule being followed are “unspoken, unwritten” rules (Keith, 2001)

The language used by soldiers in the barracks in Nigeria constituting a dialogic conversation is one of such reflection of pragmatics. The language used among soldiers is unique and peculiar and is identified as a variety of language based on occupation; therefore, its study as a variety of language to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is not in doubt. This study, conducts a linguistic analysis of the language used among soldiers in the barracks. Particularly, it identifies the stylistic and lexical choices of the English language used by soldiers. It also examines the syntactic features as well as appraises their English language needs.

The linguistic features identified will be useful to ESP practitioners and linguists in general whose interest is in the area of occupational register. Furthermore, a stylistic analysis of soldiers' barrack language will be useful in language study especially in the area of text interpretation. Stylistic analysis from a linguistic point of view will help in authenticating text analysis through portraying language resources used in communication and will also be of value to teachers and students of language and pragmatics in tertiary institutions of learning through its attempt at clarifying and classifying language used in a given context. It is hoped that the findings of the study will provide a pedagogical means of improving the communicative competence of the Nigeria soldiers in English language as the findings can be used in designing language teaching skills to soldiers

To conduct this study, a survey research design is used. The researcher sort permission from the appropriate authority to be allowed into the barracks. Two complementary research instruments were employed to collect data for analysis: a tape recorder was used to record segments of conversational dialogues among soldiers during parade rehearsal within the barracks. 30 soldiers were used to elicit recorded data for analysis. The data for the study was collected over a month period (March 2012). 100 copies of the questionnaires were also distributed to 100 soldiers who were randomly selected. The questionnaires were filled and collected on the spot.

The data recorded in the barracks by the use of audio tape was replayed and then transcribed for analysis. The recorded conversations were carefully listened to for accurate transcription. The data elicited through the structured questionnaire was used to complement data transcribed from the audio tape. This study adopts an eclectic method of analysis, thus, different approaches to linguistic analysis was utilised. In order to analyse the data collected adequately, the models of analysis employed by Crystal and Davy (1985) and that of Leech and Short (1985) were used. These models were adopted for this study because their underlying assumptions, general principles and practical applications are appropriate means by which the goals of this investigation can be achieved.

Language and Communication

Language is a hallmark of any group of people, community or society. It is a vital instrument in human existence; with language man has the capacity for dealing with changes in his environments, organizing his society and facing other various emergencies in life; thus, Traugott and Pratt (1980) state that language distinguishes human from other creatures as they use it as a medium of communication.

According to Langacker (1973) language is the instrument which spread through our thoughts, mediates our relation with others and creeps into our dreams. It is fundamentally a system of conceptualization, which facilitates thinking and determines action for the individuals. It is a means by which people communicate. Language has a structure or a series of structures and this structuring can be analysed and systematically presented. It agrees with the present research as the language used by soldiers in military barracks are analysed and systematically presented. When language is spoken, a complex series of events take place. These events are on many planes of experience: physical (the sound waves); chemical (the body chemistry); psychological (reaction to stimuli); general culture (the situation of the speaker in respect to the cultural system of his society); semantic (its meaning) and linguistics (the language being spoken); and this is the focus of this study.

Bride (1980) opines that communication maintains and animates life. It is the motor and expression of social activity and civilization; it leads people and peoples from instinct to inspiration through variegated processes and systems of enquiry, command and control; it creates

a common pools of ideas, strengthens the feeling of togetherness through exchanges of messages and translates thoughts into actions, reflecting every emotion and need from the humblest task of human survival to supreme manifestations of creativity or destruction. While according to Lucas (2001) using language accurately means adapting to the particular occasion, audience and topic at hand. Language should be appropriate to the topic, the speaker, and occasion and to the audience. It should follow the standard procedures of a given context. From this perspective, the English language variety used among soldiers in military barracks is analysed with particular focus on its lexical, morphological and syntactic features in order to reveal how such language operates in the context of barracks.

The Concept of Variation

The term “Variation” is used in linguistics as: “the difference that exists in any given language”. There are two main types of variation – dialectal and diatypic variation (Hudson, 1980). Dialectal variation is a variety of language spoken only in one area in which words or grammar is slightly different from other forms of the same language. Any one language therefore has many varieties.

Hudson (1980) characterized dialectal variation as varieties according to user. Dialectal variation is the variation which every individual has by virtue of speaking a particular language as a native language or mother tongue or dialect. The variation is between the individuals’ dialect and other dialects of the same language. Examples of such variations are Standard English and indigenous regional dialects of English. Such variations are permanent and difficult to change even if speakers want to change for strong social reasons. Dialectal variations may also be distinguished based on historical factors; Old English and Modern English. An Example is seen in the lexical changes; Old English differs lexically from Modern English. Many words have ceased to be used. An example of a common old English term for ‘man’ was ‘were’. This is no longer in general use, but within the domain of horror films, it has survived in the compound form, “Were wolf” (Crystal and Davy, 1985). Dialect gives a person sense of identity.

Diatypic variation on the other hand is the second category of the linguistic varieties. Stubbs (2005) characterizes diatypic variation as variation according to use. That is variation based on the use to which language is put. It is mainly determined by the formality or social context in which language is used. People tend to acquire diatypes throughout their lives through training, exposure, association and so on.

Register Analysis and Functional Variation

Related to the concept of variation is the concept of Register. There are various definitions of register that are put down by linguists. According to Bhatia (1993), the concept of registers should have something to do with names, terms or words which are used for a particular activity. According to them, it is necessary to acquire as many of the registers as possible because it is

only then that one can have a good understanding when people are talking about any specific activity.

Widdowson (1974:27) contends that, category of register is needed when we want to account for what people do with language. When we observe activity in the various contexts in which it takes place, we find differences in the type of language selected as appropriate to different types of situations. He further asserts that, the choice of items from the wrong register and the mixing of items from different registers are frequently mistakes made by non-native speakers of a language. He concludes that the crucial criteria of any given register are to be found in its grammar and lexis.

However, the well-known characterization of the concept of register is that by Halliday et al (1964). In their seminal work on the concept, they contend that “language varies as its function varies. It differs in different situations. The name given to a variety of a language distinguished according to use is register” (Halliday et al, 1964: 87-89). Halliday and Hassan (1985) further define register as a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, mode and tenor which also expresses “the lexico-grammatical and phonological features that typically accompany or realize these meanings.” He also explains that “register is “what you are speaking (at the time), that is determined by what you are doing (nature of activity in which language is functioning) (Halliday and Hassan, 1985: 87-89).

Halliday and Hassan (1985) refer to variation based on the register characterization of language identified in the definition above as “functional variation,” the systematic variation of language according to what we are doing – what we are using language to achieve. The notion of “functional variation” by Halliday and Hassan (1985) is closely related to what Stubbs (2005) refers to as “diatypic variation”. In other words diatypic variation can also be referred to as “functional variation”.

However, the level of functional variation that exists within the category of register ranges between the closed and limited to the relatively free and open ended. In other words, there are some registers in which total number of meaning of linguistic expressions is fixed and finite, while in others, the range of discourse is enormous. For instance, military signals and air traffic controls are highly restricted and in most cases coded and fixed. Open registers on the other hand, include those which allow a range of possibilities in their discourse; examples are the language of technical reports, science and technology, law, media, language of the classroom and other forms of discourse used in professional settings.

Thus, Stubbs’ (2005) concept of diatype, Halliday and Hassan’s (1985) concept of functional variation which he also used in relation to the notion of register and Widdowson’s (1979) concept of language varieties are all similar in approach, because their main focus is on language varieties. These studies have relevance to the present study of the variety of English language

used by soldiers in the military barracks because they provide one of the theoretical frameworks upon which this study is based.

The Notions of Field, Tenor and Mode

Halliday, et.al (1964) classify the semiotic structure of situation as 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode', which, they suggest, tend to determine the selection of options in a corresponding component of the semantics. Crystal (1985) points out that Halliday's, et.al (1964) 'tenor' stands as a roughly equivalent term for 'style', which is a more specific alternative used by linguists to avoid ambiguity. While the *field* is the activity associated with the language used. In Fowler's (1996) view, different fields produce different varieties of language, most obviously at the level of vocabulary. Fowler (1996) also comments that within the category of tenor there is a power relationship, which is determined by the tenor and the intention of the speaker to persuade, inform, etc.

Halliday's, et.al (1964) third category, *mode*, is what he refers to as the symbolic organisation of the situation. Downes (1998) recognises two distinct aspects within the category of mode and suggests that not only does it describe the relation to the medium: written, spoken, and so on, but also describes the genre of the text. Halliday, et.al (1964) refers to genre as pre-coded language, language that has not only been used before, but that also predetermines the selection of textural meanings.

From the above, it is clear that the notions of field, tenor and mode are quite helpful in determining a variety of language used by certain language users in a given setting or context. Based on this fact, the notions of field, tenor and mode are very important to this study as they will become useful tools for the researcher in categorising the variety of English language used in the barracks among soldiers in Nigeria.

The Concepts of Style and Stylistics

Style is the some or all of the language habits shared by a group of people at one point in time or over a period of time. It therefore, varies from one domain to another, the manner in which an individual says or writes something is automatically referred to as his style. It is also referred to as some or all of the language habits of one person. (Crystal and Davy, 1985). Fakuade (1998) opines that style is a controlled and guided manner of creating text, the central and guiding elements being the writer/speaker's social and cultural environment, his message and audience and of course the writer/speaker himself. In view of the above, one can describe style as a collective language habit shared by a group of people in the form of the style of poets or the style of soldiers' language and also the manner and way one speaks or addresses a gathering.

Stylistics on the other hand is aimed at analysing language habits with the main purpose of identifying from the general mass of linguistic features common to English as used in every

conceivable circumstances or occasions. Thus, carrying out stylistic study means identifying these features which are restricted to certain kinds of social context; explaining why such features have been used, as opposed to other alternatives, and classifying these features into categories based on their functions in the social context of use (Crystal and Davy, 1985). Vilman (1964) points out that stylistics is determined by many factors such as setting, (the time and place in which the language is used), participants or audience, (the language users themselves, which comprises of the sender and the receiver of the message), channels of communication, (the channel or mode of communication), activities being performed, (the different activities or occupations that are performed), the Subject Matter, (the nature of the topics being discussed).

Embedding within the present discourse, it is expected that military men or soldiers have their own style of using language conditioned by their profession. It is such a variety of language that this study seeks to analyse.

DATA ANALYSIS

The following findings are presented as the features that soldier's language exhibit based on eclectic approach of analysis. The data presented were analysed and discussed. The linguistic features analysed were: lexical and syntactic features, sociolinguistic Contexts as Constraints on Soldiers' Language and English Language Needs of Soldiers

Lexical Features

The analysis of the corpus reveals that though soldiers use simple everyday language, they however, have usual usage of words which can be referred to as their jargons. Let us examine the extracts from the corpus below:

Text A:

Commander: Quarter guard parade Guard, guard attention. Shouldered arms. Guards salute. Present arms

Sergeant 1: sir, 96NA/43/10386 Sgt Ndable Yilnnah

Guard presented by headquarters 23 Brigade. Guard ready for your inspection sir.

Text B:

Guard 1: Morning Sir.

Sir, the work is necessary for your action

Commander: O.K. sound fire alarm.

Where is GI Sule

Guard 1: Sir, he is AWOL

The texts above show that the words used in the language of soldiers are simple everyday vocabularies. However, these simple words are usually used in a way that they have different meaning from their everyday usage. The choice of words although unusually used, they are however not difficult as they are words that are familiar to anyone who is semi-literate in English language. The commonly used classes of words are examined below.

Use of Nouns

In the corpus, it was observed that soldiers used a lot of concrete nouns. Examine the following examples below:

- i. *Guard*
- ii. *Squad*
- iii. *Arms*
- iv. *Commander*
- v. *Officer*

As said earlier, the nouns used by soldiers in barracks may seem simple but a close examination of these words shows an oddity in their usage; for example, the word “guard” is protecting something against danger but here, the word is used with entirely different meaning, it is used generally to refer to soldiers without regards to their ranks. Thus, the above examples reveal that nouns are regularly used in the language used by soldiers in the barracks.

Another observable peculiarity of the nouns used by soldiers in the barracks is the fact that most of the nouns found in the corpus are nouns inflected from verbs; for example:

- Guard:* formed from the verb form of the word meaning “to protect” or “prevent”.
- Arms:* formed from the verb form meaning “to equip with weapons”.
- Commander:* formed from the verb form command which means to “give order”.
- Officer:* formed from the verb officiating.

This heavy use of nouns that are inflected from verbs (especially action verbs) are not surprising as the duties of soldiers often involve actions, and since language usually reflects the

use to which it is put, it should be expected that the language of soldiers should reflect the act of soldiering in general.

Use of Adjectives

Analysis of the corpus reveals that soldiers sometimes make use of adjectives in their use of English language. The following are examples:

- i. Shouldered arms
- ii. Senior officer
- iii. Quarter guard
- iv. Ordered arms

Analysis of the corpus reveals some use of adjectives in the language of soldiers in the barracks. From the samples above, the underlined are some examples of the use of adjectives. It was particularly observed that these adjectives are used not in the regular sense as found in very day language but to issue commands to the soldiers. The meaning of their usage is conditioned by the barrack's context which is examined later. However, the analysis of these adjectives shows that they are all used attributively.

Use of Verbs

A lot of verbs were found in the corpus but one striking thing about the use of verbs by soldiers in the barracks is the presence of the heavy use of dynamic verbs. Examples of such usage include the following:

- i. Guard presented for your inspection
- ii. Guard halt
- iii. Stand at ease
- iv. Sound fire alarm

The heavy use of dynamic or action verbs (underlined above) is in line with the use of nouns derived from inflected verbs. These findings point to the fact that a variety of language is to a large extent conditioned by the use to which it is put. The presence of action verbs and nouns is an indication that the occupation of soldiering involves actions.

Use of Coined Words and Acronyms

The analysis of the lexical features of the corpus reveals that soldiers often invent words that they use specifically among themselves. Some of such coinages are sampled below:

- i. Guard-at-tion
- ii. Standat-ize
- iii. Parade-tion

The above coined words were observed to be used during the parade. Analysis of the data collected also reveals that soldiers make use of acronyms in their speech habit in the barrack, for example

- i. AWOL
- ii. Cpl.

“AWOL” means absence without leave; it is used when an officer do not report to duty and has not been given any official permission to be absent. “Cpl” (Corporal) means an officer with two white robes as rank on his shoulder. Most of the soldiers use this shortened form of words probably to maintain a distinct barracks slang and jargon.

Syntactic Features

According to Yule (1996), the word syntax literary means “a setting out together” or arrangement”. According to him, if we concentrate on the structure and the order of components within a sentence, we are studying what is technically known as the syntax of a language. Various sentence types were identified in the text under review and they are discussed below.

Use of Simple Sentence Type

The analysis of the language of soldiers in the barrack reveals that it is not restricted to one predictable variety of language as the language samples collected that soldiers often mixed their use of English language with local varieties. However, the analysis of the samples of English language used by soldiers show that there seems to be a heavy use of simple sentence structures in the text and it is this heavy use of simple sentence type that helps to maintain the simplicity of the language. The simple sentence types consist of mostly imperatives, declaratives and interrogatives. The data below show examples of simple sentences found in the corpus:

Example 1: Declaratives

- i. *Guards presented by Headquarter 23 Brigade*
- ii. Guard ready for your inspection sir

Example 2: Interrogative Sentences:

- i. *May I have your permission to dismiss the guard into the guardroom?*
- ii. *Where is Cpl Sule?*

Example 3: Imperatives

- i. Stand at ease
- ii. Stand for alarm

From the display of the extracts above it can be observed that sentences under example 1 are declarative sentences; they make statements. While sentences in example 2 are interrogatives; they ask questions. In the same vain, sentences under example 3 are imperative sentences which are used to give commands or polite request. Despite these seemingly differences in the functions of the sentences used in the corpus under review, it was observed that the sentences have certain features in common – they all have implicit subjects. In other words, most of the sentences found in the corpus have no explicit subjects. This feature is to be expected because the corpus is taken from face-to-face conversation which is usually characterised by lack of apparent subject. This is so because when people engage in conversation, they hardly referred to each other by name except when the conversation has to do with a third party.

A syntactic analysis of some of the sentences above reveals the following structure:

- i. *Guards / presented / by Headquarter 23 Brigade* **SVO**
- ii. *Stand / at ease* **(S)VA**
- iii. *Where / is/ cpl Sule* **CVS**

From the display above, the verb in sentence (i) is an intransitive verb and the sentence is in the passive voice. In sentence (ii) the subject of the sentence is the implicit pronoun “you” that characterises a face-to-face discourse. In sentence (iii), the verb is a linking verb “is”.

Sociolinguistic Contexts as Constraints on Soldiers’ Language

This aspect of the analysis examines the social constraints on the language use in a parade rehearsal in a military barracks. It presents a theoretical construct of the military, highlighting the effects of the social variables as role relation, participants, context (of speech and situation) and most importantly, field of discourse.

Analysis of the Effect of Context of Speech on Soldiers Language

The scrutiny of military language presents two distinct categories of sociolinguistic context. These are the context of speech and the context of situation (Holmes, 1992). Holmes further points out that context of speech refer to elements within an utterance that provides a basis for the interpretation of the utterance. An extract is presented below from text as an example.

- i. *Commander:* *Number in twos from the left...Number!*
- ii. *Squad:* *(One after the other) One, two, one, two, one, two...*
- iii. *Commander:* *All one, one a step forward, all two two a step backward in open order march*

So, the 'one one' and the 'two two' in example (iii) refer to the squad members who had identified themselves with numbers 'one' and 'two' respectively in compliance with the order given in (i).

Analysis of the Context of Situation on Soldiers Language

The context of situation exerts more influence on the language use. It comprises of the totality of the physical and non-physical circumstances which surround an utterance. The relevant situation is not overtly indicated in the text; but it could be understood with the necessary extra textual reference. For instance:

- iv. *Commander:* *On your 'yarnsh' you go*

This is understood by a member of the squad as a punishment for an offence or his act of indiscipline on the parade ground when others are standing erect. The utterance requires the offender to just fall off the squad and sit on his buttocks.

- v. *Squad Member:* *(Swiftly responds) Mercy sir!*

This is an apologetic expression indicating that the subordinate who is being reprimanded is atoning for his misconduct.

- vi. *Commander:* *On your feet up!*

This is a clear indication that the offender's apology is granted and that he should join the squad again. Hence, the deduction which the offender makes from (iv) and (vi) rests on his intuition in relation to language use in that domain rather than the seemingly incomprehensive message that the utterances overtly convey.

Analysis of the Constraint of Style on Soldiers' Language

In the area of style, one discovers certain peculiarities which condition the manner of expression in relation to the contextual variables of a military setting. The style is characterized by a

language with short phrases performing sentential functions; and which are normally accompanied with unusual noise and assertive tone but with a directive illocutionary force / act as identified by Searle (1969). For example:

- i.** *Commander:* *Stand at ease!*
- ii.** *Commander:* *P'rade! p'rade 'tion!* *(for parade at attention)*
- iii.** *Commander:* *Shouldered arms*

It is understood that 'register' is a manifestation of variety associated with a particular context or discourse type. In the military text, certain operational terms which are colloquial in nature are common. Let's examine the examples below:

- Ajuwaya* for 'as you were'
- lop...hi* for 'left...right'

This is an example of such usage where you have a phrase or group being compressed into a word. Other peculiar jargons are clipped English words such as:

- mon* for 'morning' (in salutation)
- mon sir'* for 'good morning sir'
- 'p'rade' for 'parade'

Analysis of the corpus also reveals the use of bound morphemes like 'tion' for 'attention'. Let us consider the extract below:

- i.** *Commander:* *Recognizing the presence of a Patriot after two: one ! two*
- ii.** *All* : *Mon sir!*
- iii.** *Commander* : *P'rade, p'rade 'tion !*
- iv.** *Patriot* : *Are we happy?*
- v.** *All* : *We're ha!*
- vi.** *Patriot* : *Are you sure?*
- vii.** *All* : *We're shu !*

As can be seen from the chorus responses of the squad to the Patriot's questions in (v) and (vi) above, there are marked but idiosyncratic cases of other forms of structural reduction. For instance, 'happy' is a disyllabic word which has been shortened to a monosyllable, *ha*; and

which does not qualify as a meaningful segment outside this domain. Also, there is an overt reduction in the length of the phonemic segment which closes the word 'sure'. Consequently, this begets 'shu'. This feature is unique and peculiar with, to a large extent, the military discourse. Essentially, it is a way of foregrounding the philosophy of the military which has to do with minimizing time for 'talk exchange' and maximizing time for 'action'.

Analysis of the Constraint of Participants on Soldiers' Language

The relationship existing between the major participants (or groups of participants) is that of master/boss to subordinate. Due to this reason the language of soldiers is found to maintain a measure of formality which indicates the existing proximity in the status-quo of the participants. In the military, the language is essentially masculine. It disregards feminine language as there is no gender distinction in the military. This accounts for why *mon sir* is used; not *mon ma* even when the addressee is a woman.

In the same vein, the language of soldiers also reflects difference in relation to the social situation of the participants. Whereas the officers use 'good English' for their commands and among themselves, the recruits and lower cadre officers at the 'club house' use pidgin which has the potential of expressing informality and high level of intimacy in role relations. Let us consider a discourse extract from the lower cadre members which was recorded during their recess time.

- i. *Sule: John, Abeg come make we 'mama' this food before oga go call the parade again*
- ii. *John: Okay, make we 'wak', am 'kiakia'*
- iii. *Sule: I hear say the 'bature' wey launch our campaign don go him country*
- iv. *John: Look, no place be like home o. The 'okrika' man wey leave him papa land to do business for 'oyinbo' country go receive 'sannu' when he come back.*

From the foregoing, the implication is that the barrack domain seems to present a diglossic situation. From the discourse, one is able to draw an inference that the participants are mere recruits, not officers. Their status allows them to use the Low variety (i.e. Pidgin) as opposed to the High variety (i.e. pure English in this case), thus providing a clue to a functional segregation of language use in the military setting.

The choice of words like *mama* and *wak* for 'eat' is an indication of the substrates which feed or harmonize with the substrate – English. The word *oga* is a generalized term used to label or identify an officer irrespective of his rank; and the role relation which is depicted there is that of

boss and subordinate. Other words like *kiakia*, which means 'quickly' (a Yoruba substrate), *bature* which stands for 'white man' (a Hausa substrate) and *okrika* which implies 'business of fairly used materials' (an Igbo substrate) confirm that Nigerian Pidgin relies heavily on local languages for lexemes, while to an extent, conforming with the grammatical orderings of English as the substrate. For instance in datum (iv), the last clause: 'when he come back', even though the syntagmatic arrangement is good, the expression lacks structural agreement between 'he' and 'come'. Here, little obedience is paid to the syntax of the substrate as constrained by the grammatical systems of the various languages feeding the Nigerian Pidgin as its substrates. All the same, the use of an adage in datum (iv) provides an attestation to the fact that Pidgin is widely developed and used, though at informal levels.

English Language Needs of Soldiers

Having analysed the variety of English language used by soldiers in the barracks, it becomes necessary to understand the English language needs of the soldiers. This section of the analysis examines the English language needs of the soldiers in the barracks. In order to elicit data for analysis, the questionnaire with ten question items was presented to the respondents.

Of the ten questions, four of the questions are concerned with eliciting information on the bio-data of the respondents while the remaining six are on the issues of English language experiences and English language needs of the respondents. The elicited data are first presented in tables and subsequently analysed below.

Data to Elicit Bio Information of Respondents

The first part of the questionnaire is designed to elicit information on personal data of the respondents. The responses of the respondents are analysed below.

Sex of Respondents

The sex distribution of respondents shows that 88% are male while 12% are female. This shows that the male are more in number than the female soldier

Age of Respondents

The age of the respondents shows that majority (49%) are within the ages of 31 to 40, however, 26% of respondents are within the age range of 20 to 30 years, while 25% are within the age bracket of 41 and above. These points out that most of the soldiers are still young and agile for the profession.

Marital Status of Respondents

68% which is majority of the respondents are married and 12% unmarried and divorced respectively. Only 8% are widows. The 68% is a pointer that most of the soldiers are married and have responsibilities other than their military functions.

Level of Educational Qualification

The questionnaire assesses the educational qualification of the respondents. It reveals that majority (66%) of the respondents have obtained secondary school leaving certificate, 24% diploma certificates while 9% first degree and 1% master's degree. The above responses points out that majority of the soldiers are not very educated as only 10% are degree holders and 66% are secondary school leavers.

Data to Elicit English Language Needs of Respondents

This section of the analysis is concerned with the language needs of the respondents.

English Language Experience of Respondents

This section reveals that the language experience of all respondents is restricted to school environment, none of them has used the language with native speakers abroad.

English Language Needs of Respondents

Majority (37%) of the respondents indicate that they need English Language for all activities below: 30% for study, 23% indicated that they need it for work and 10% for training. The above responses show that most of the respondents need English Language for effective performance in their proficiencies.

Most Needed Language Skills of Respondents

This section reveals that the most needed language skills of the respondents are writing (40%) and reading (30%). Other respondents consider speaking (22%) and listening (8%) as their most needed language skills. The above responses show that most of them might be engaged in security report writing as the highest per cent of the respondents show.

Language Channels of Respondents

40% of the respondents are of the opinion that the language channel through which they need to use language is writing. While 38% would want to use language more for face-to-face interaction, another 12% and 10% chose telephone conversation and impromptu/other channels of communication respectively. This indication is not far away from the fact that most of the respondents' official duties involve written documents.

When Respondents will need to use English Language

45% of respondents are of the opinion that they need to use English on their job/employment while 30% during their course of study. However, 15% and 20% of the respondents indicate that they need English language for socializing and when at home respectively. The respondents are

of the view that they need English on their job which is the official language and it also helps them in their proficiencies.

With whom Respondents will need to use Language

21% of the respondents indicate that they will use English language with native speakers, the majority of the respondents, 79% indicate that they will need English language to use with non-native speakers. The above responses show that the highest per cent (79%) of the respondents are of the opinion that they use English with non-native speakers as most of those they come across daily are those in their offices, homes, places of worship, etc. and the native speakers may not even come in contact with most of the respondents.

Conclusion

This study is concerned with the linguistic analysis of the language of soldiers in the barracks. The analysis reveals that the language of soldiers in the barracks is a mixture of different varieties of English constrained by the setting in the barracks. The barrack setting generally reveals a union of different peoples with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Hence, the need for peaceful co-existence within the 'barracks society' necessitates the development of an indigenized linguistic medium which owes allegiance to the various languages of its speakers.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher therefore recommends the following:

- i.** Language experts need to carry further investigation into the use of language in the barracks which helps to strengthen ethnic unity in a complex multilingual society as such language can be helpful in helping to reduce the ethnic distance that always seem to threaten the unity of Nigeria as a nation.
- ii.** English language texts should be specifically designed to meet the language needs of soldiers in the barracks.
- iii.** Since Nigerian soldiers are now engaging in international warfare that will require them to use English language outside the domain of barracks in Nigeria, there is therefore an urgent need for the encouragement of frequent use of Standard English language in the barracks as this will enhance the English language abilities of soldiers in the barracks.
- iv.** Soldiers should be encouraged to attain higher academic levels above the diploma and secondary level of education as this will give them greater ability in the use and manipulation of English language beyond the constraints of the context of barracks.

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