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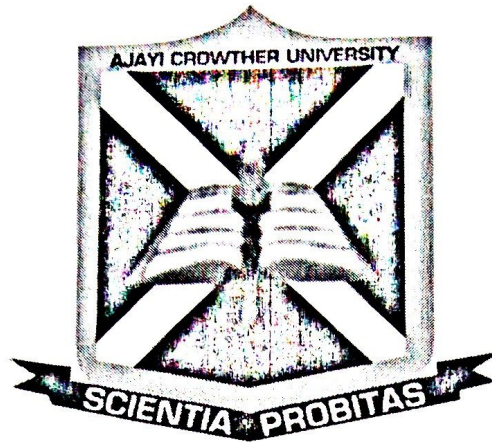
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A PRAGMA-SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF SELECTED SONGS RENDERED AT IMMUNISATION CENTRES IN ILORIN

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Abstract

The symbiotic relationship between music and culture creates an avenue for the enactment and re-enactment of the attitudes and ideologies of people, as well as, the structures in societies. The role of music as an educative tool can be traced, in part, to the Traditional Grammar Translation and recital methods of teaching language. It was recorded that via these methods, students (through rhymes, sounds and songs) were able to retain lessons taught in the classrooms. Similarly, songs are utilised in health centres, particularly Immunisation Clinics in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria to sensitise nursing mothers in the roles they are meant as being the primary custodian of their children. The peculiarity of the importance of the songs which is influenced by the immediate physical context has motivated this research. Thus, this study sought to carry out a systematic analysis of the effect of regional and social factors on the language (and by extension, the contents) of the songs. Twelve randomly selected songs were observed, recorded, and translated following insights from literal translation with the aim of deploying socio-pragmatic features to their analysis. Also, the researchers interviewed some mothers at the clinic in order to validate the content analysis of the selected songs. The findings reveal that the ages and ethnicity of the mothers present at the immunisation centre vary, but despite these discrepancies, the songs are well-received and appreciated by the mothers in spite of age and ethnic barriers. The oral communicative features in the songs reveal implied messages or indirect communicative acts. The nonverbal behaviours include physical and psychological acts. The potpourri of these language features reveals the practs and allopracts of sensitising, informing, educating, among others. Thus, it is needless to say that the goal for singing the songs is both for educative and entertainment functions or simply put, 'edutainment' purposes.

Introduction
Communication, as one of the main functions of language, can be defined as the ability of a speaker to encode his intentions; a hearer to draw the right inference from the intention of the speaker. Communication is critical to the human societies as it can either make or mar personal, inter/intra-ethnic and cross-cultural relationships. Medical communication, as one of the unique types of communication, enhances understanding among health workers and patients; it involves health education, sensitisation, and promotion. Odebunmi (2011) reiterates that medical practice is a two-way affair: scientific and social. The former involves the diagnoses and management of diseases, while the latter deals with the maintenance and sustenance of relationships between health workers and clients through communication. The social approach to medical practice is what spurred this current study.

Over the years, there has been a radical and massive crusade on the different means through which Nigerians can be educated on how to manage their health in order to curb the increasing mortality rate in the country. Therefore, health workers try to inform their patients using the language widely spoken in the immediate context of the discourse. Usually when addressing a large population, health workers utilise the English language and some indigenous languages; often times they code mix and code switch in order to achieve intelligibility. Nigerian health workers, who focus on mother and child health, often express their intention of encouraging good health practices via songs. The encoding and decoding of these songs are heavily dependent on the immediate context of use, as they often consist of non-literal expressions and are, at times, accompanied by nonverbal cues. The ability to deduce meanings from these expressions, thus, requires a foregrounded common ground or what Mey (2001) refers to as 'common place'. Therefore, the study sought to determine the functions of the songs; the influence of macro-variable factors on the comprehension and reception of the messages in the songs and; also evaluate the success of the delivery of the communicative intentions of these songs via socio-pragmatic features.

Related Literature to the Study

Pragmatics and sociolinguistics are interrelated fields of study. This is so because pragmatics aims at considering the effect of contextual pressure on word usage; it also tries to explicate meanings that are covertly expressed in utterances, while sociolinguistics focuses on how the society and its structures affect language use. Thomas (1995, p. 187) posits that

sociolinguistics and pragmatics are both centrally concerned with the effect of context on language: the sociolinguist is primarily

interested in the systematic linguistic correlates of social and contextual variables... how features of context systematically constrain language use. The pragmatist tries to show how speakers use language in order to change the situation they find themselves in.

Schneider (2010) asserts that socio-pragmatics studies culture-specific with macro-social factors such as: age, gender, social class, ethnicity and regional affiliation and micro-social factors such as: power and distance. The study adopted some macro-social factors and pragmatic features of age, gender, ethnicity, speech acts, pragmatic act, context and deixis. The macro-social factors and pragmatic features are:

Age: Age is an index of psychological and usually, physiological maturity which influences the language use and usage of interactants, the discourse topics, as well as, power, distance and the degrees of imposition, etc. Preston (1989) cited in Idiagbon (2007, p. 128) claims that age could also be influential to the use of language in two ways: first, age could mark a generational speech; thus serving as an index to language change which may or may not survive the next generation and second, the use of slangy expressions serves as an important measurement of age-grading, since slangs flourish more within teenagers and youths.

Gender: several researches have delved into the differences between the language use of males and females. For instance, Wardaugh (2010, p. 34) affirms that gender is a social construct heavily grounded in sex involving the gamut of genetic/ psychological, social and cultural differences between men and women. Biological make-up of people is usually influenced and identified by socio-cultural conditionings which then become stereotypes of gender or gender roles and expectations often expressed via language. "If a community is very hierarchical, for instance, and within each level of the hierarchy men are more powerful than women, then linguistic differences between the speech of women and men may be just one dimension of more extensive differences reflecting the social hierarchy as a whole" (Holmes & Wilson, 2017, p.170).

Ethnicity: Ethnicity, as a social variable, affects both the use and usage of a language. It is evident in a second language context in form of lexico-syntactic transfer, semantic shift, over generalisation, and difficulty in some sound production, etc. It often leads to the emergence of language varieties, multilingualism or its relevant variants.

Pragmatic Acts: Mey (2001) describes pragmatic acts as context-determined rather than being dependent on the presence of an executable speech act. Pragmatic act differs from speech acts as it focuses on the contextualisation of both verbal and nonverbal acts rather than on coming up with constricting

taxonomies of possible human linguistic acts. Mey (2001) also identifies two points of view of pragmatic acts:

- i. **The agent:** This concerns the class, gender, age, education, previous life history and so on of the individual agents. The agent is also what Schneider (2010) calls 'macro-social factors'. The use of different terms for the same concepts in pragmatics and socio-linguistics corroborates the earlier submissions that sociolinguistics and pragmatics are sesame twins.
- ii. **The act:** This is particularly interested in the language that is used in performing the pragmatic act.

Mey's model is divided into: activity part and textual part. The former includes: the acts of the discourse interactants, that is, their speech acts, indirect speech acts, conversational dialogue acts, psychological acts, prosody and physical acts; these are the various choices that the language users have at their disposal. The latter, that is the textual part, is heavily reliant on context and the text intended; it is exhibited via inference, reference, relevance, voice, shared situation knowledge, metaphor and metapragmatic joker.

Context: Spencer-Oatey and Zegarac (2002, p. 83) conceptualise context as "the set of assumptions that have a bearing on the production and the interpretation of particular communicative acts". Context can be traced to Malinowski (1923); and Firth (1957) furthers Malinowski's concept of context and proposes three categories of context of situation which are:

- a. The verbal features of participants, persons, etc.
- b. The relevant objects
- c. The effect of the verbal action

Malinowski's and Firth's definitions are somewhat similar as the two view context as a social phenomenon. Lawal (1997) develops "the model of the aspect of a pragmatic theory" which identifies six contexts of an utterance: cosmological, sociological, social, psychological, situational and linguistic contexts. Cutting (2002) categorises context into situational, background knowledge and co-textual context. Vershueren (2003) bases his own classification on the mental world, social world and physical world. Osisanwo's (2008) classification of context includes: the physical, socio-cultural, psychological and linguistic contexts. Odebunmi (2006) gives four aspects of situational level and they are:

- a. **Shared Knowledge of Subject Topic:** this is the idea or subject of the discussion among discourse interactants.
- b. **Shared Socio-Cultural and Situational Experiences:** Odebunmi (2006) submits that when participants have common socio-cultural and situational experiences, interactions move on smoothly; these experiences can be a previous or immediate one.

- c. Shared Knowledge of the Situation of Utterance: this according, to Odebunmi (2006), is the knowledge of events leading to the utterance.
- d. Shared Knowledge of Word Choices, Referents and References: the knowledge of lexical items used by discourse participants is crucial in meaning negotiation.

Indexicals: these are context-sensitive expressions. David (2007) opines that indexicals are linguistic expressions whose reference shifts from one context to another. Spencer and Zegarac (2002, p. 78) state that "indexicals are linguistic items that point to contextually salient referents without naming them explicitly." It can be inferred from the definitions that the meanings of indexicals rely on context.

Indexicals are also referred to as deixis and the origin of deixis is traced by Yule (2002) to a Greek term that means 'pointing' via language. Various scholars of pragmatics have classified indexicals (or deixis) into three types (Grundy 2000; Mey 2001; Yule 2002 & David 2007). The three types identified are person, place and time indexicals. This study, however, employed the following:

- i. Person indexicals: This classification belongs to the category of linguistic expressions used for speakers, addressees and others. Examples of person indexicals are: I, we, he, his, etc.
- ii. Place indexicals: This is also called spatial deixis by Yule (2002, p. 9). They are also used to indicate the location of people and things being discussed. Examples include: there, here, behind, etc.
- iii. Time indexicals: They can also be called temporal deixis. Time indexicals refer to events, persons or objects that are near or away from the speaker or hearer in relation of time. They reflect in adverbs of time and tense of the verb. The words 'later', 'now', 'then', etc. are some examples of time indexicals.

A closely related pragmatic resource to indexicals is reference. Reference deals with the relationship between the word and the world. This study deployed two types of reference to the analysis of the data:

- a. Constant reference: these are expressions which do not need contextual pressures for their understanding.
- b. Variable reference: these are non-literal referents that are meaningful in the appropriate context of use as they are not stable.

Twelve songs randomly selected from three recorded sessions at UITH, Old Maternity Immunisation Clinic were explored by considering the import of situational and contextual variables on the content and intention of the songs. The researchers also interviewed some mothers and health workers at the clinic in order to validate the findings of the study. The analysis of the data is in two parts: the first showed the tabular analysis of indexicals, context or situational

MCBs as well as pragmatic acts. The second part presented a detailed analysis of three instances from the recorded data collected.

Data Analysis, Discussion and Findings

Age
The age range of the active participants, that is, the interviewed mothers and nurses, is between 20-45 years of age. It was observed that most of the discourse participants are within the childbearing age. This means that the songs are appropriate for its target. Most of the songs focus on the age and prospects of children. For instance, the following extract from the data, "my children will go to school; they will not sell bean cake", is a reference to the aspirations of the mothers for their children, that is, what they wish for their children when they advance in age. Thus, the song talks about the present age of the child and the future prospects for educated children. The song, thus, builds on the common ground that mothers generally desire prestigious future for their children to sensitise parents that the future of their children is dependent on them being formally educated. The aim of the song is to dissuade parents from child labour, such as hawking, and other menace that constitute child abuse in the country.

Gender
The present participants at the Immunisation are all females. Mothers bring their babies and in some cases, they are often accompanied by their mothers or mother-in-laws. This reflects that fathers in Nigeria are not fully involved in child care unlike in western world where husbands attend antenatal / immunisation clinics and even stay in the delivery rooms when their wives are being delivered of their babies. The songs reflect the mental makeup of mothers, as they covertly portrayed them (the mothers) as the primary caregiver of a child. The women that understand Yoruba language sing passionately and dedicatedly in manners that suggest their reaffirmation of their roles as caregivers. The study revealed that the primary target of the songs is the mothers.

Ethnicity
The ethnic backgrounds of discourse participants have immense influence on their access to information in a context. This implies that shared linguistic knowledge is also part of Mutual Contextual Beliefs. The songs and even the health talks at Immunisation Clinics are delivered in the wide or popular local language of Ilorin, that is, the Yoruba language, alongside the English language (in order to accommodate non-native speakers of Yoruba). This investigation revealed that ninety-five per cent (95%) of the mothers present, as at the time of the data collection, are competent Yoruba language users. During the

observation period, it was discovered that those who do not understand the wordings of the songs tried mimicking others who sang the songs well, while also joining in clapping their hands and dancing to the rhythm of the songs. To them, the songs serve as a means of entertainment after the long hours of lectures. Most of the mothers who do not speak the Yoruba language submit that after singing the songs they felt reinvigorated and refreshed. The Yoruba mothers affirmed that the songs resonate in their memory after the session, and that they usually sing the songs at home. They also stated that the songs are constant reminder of their roles as caregivers. According to them, the songs are educative and entertaining. It can be deduced from the above explanation that the purpose (perlocutionary effect) of the activity part of the discourse is heavily reliant on the 'linguistic presumption' of Bach and Harnish which explains that in a linguistic community, whenever any member utters a word of that language, the hearer, who is also a member, has an understanding of the word used..

The analysis of the data is presented on a single table below, while the content analysis of some data is presented after the table.

Datum	Word/expression	Indexicals or Deixis	Basis for context/ situational MCBs	Pract
1	What is in my hand? Come and see minister in my hand; Come and see Governor in my hand.	Definite personal deixis referring to the child being carried.	Shared situational and socio-cultural knowledge of the power in man's confession.	Questioning and confessing
2	If I see eggs, I will buy for my child. My child is the bank I store my money.	Definite personal deixis (I, My child) Constant (eggs) Variable (...the bank)	Shared knowledge of situation, referent; socio-cultural knowledge of the fact that a child is an investment that one can rely on or draw from in the future.	Informing and reminding
3	<i>Pareke!</i> I will be a mother to my child. <i>Pareke!</i> I will be a husband to my child.	Definite personal deixis (I, my child)	Shared knowledge of situation, referents, and of socio-cultural background of the meanings of "be a mother and	Informing, stating and affirming

4	A child is a bead; He must not cut; My first child must not die.	Definite personal deixis (a child, He, my first child) Variable (a bead)	a husband to my child". There is a shared knowledge of referents and socio-cultural knowledge of the meanings of the Variable reference (the metaphor of bead).	Informing, asserting, and confessing
5	My child will go to school. He will not fry bean cake in the garage. He will not fry plantain under the bridge.	Definite personal deixis (I, He, My child) Temporal deixis (garage, bridge) Constant reference (plantain) Variable reference (bean cake)	Shared knowledge of the situation, referents, and socio-cultural background of the reflexive/ pejorative meanings of staying or working in a garage and under the bridge.	Asserting and confessing
6	I am so happy I planned it. Injections, thank you; Pills, thank you Condoms, thank you; May you all be rewarded!	Definite personal deixis (I) Constant (injections, pills, condoms, etc.)	Shared knowledge of the situation and uses of the references to the Constant reference.	Stating, appreciating, and educating
7	Kidnappers will not take my child from me. Meningitis will not take my child from me. Hepatitis will not take my child from me. Tuberculosis will not take my children from me.	Variable reference (kidnappers goes beyond the literal meaning) Definite personal deixis (my child) Constant reference (meningitis, tuberculosis, Hepatitis)	There is shared situational knowledge of the referent 'kidnappers'. The mothers are aware that the meaning of the word is non- literal and that it refers to deadly diseases that can kill their children. Hence, the song relies on the socio-cultural	Asserting, confessing and charging

			knowledge of the fact that mothers are generally very protective of their children and that no sane mother would want to lose his or her child. This shared socio-cultural knowledge is exploited to encourage mothers on the need to immunise their children and also take good care of them.	
8	I joined the group of pregnant women; I became a mother. I joined the group of mothers and I became a true mother	Definite personal deixis (I, a mother)	The meaning of the song relies heavily on shared situational and socio-cultural knowledge of the difference between a mother and a true mother.	Informing and boasting
9	I am glad I was made a woman. God made me a fruitful woman. He gave me a free gift which is breast. My breast is a flower; It does not make my child stool; I will breastfeed my child so he can pray for me; This my breast is already made; It does not cost me money or stress; I will give my child so he can pray for me;	Definite personal deixis (I, a mother, God, He, my breast, my child)	Shared knowledge of situation and referent. There is also a shared societal expectation on mothers to breast feed their babies.	Informing, boasting, admonishing and challenging

	My dear o, please breast feed your child.			
0	I will give three thanksgiving; I carried the pregnancy safely; I delivered safely and I have a baby to dance with.	Definite personal deixis (I) Constant/ indefinite deixis (a baby)	Shared situational and socio-cultural knowledge of the joy and celebration that accompany the announcement of pregnancy and the subsequent arrival of babies in the Nigerian context.	Stating and appreciating
11	My child is a source of joy. Whether he is big, he is a source of joy; He has a head full of hair- my child is a source of joy He is bald- my child is a source of joy; Good looking or not- he is a source of joy.	Personal definite deixis (he, my child, I me)	This song also reveals the situational and socio-cultural background of the Yoruba people of Nigeria who believe in the power of confession and contentment. A true mother is expected to love her child irrespective of his looks or short coming.	Stating, confessing, and prophesying
12	My enemies should not make jest of me; When my baby was requesting for kobo, I gave him; When he was requesting for six pence, I gave him; Now that he is driving a car, do not criticise me.	Definite personal deixis (my enemies, me, I, him, he) Variable reference (sixpence and kobo)	There is a mutual knowledge of the referents. The Variable reference: six pence and kobo used to be the lowest denominations in Nigeria prior to independence and just after independence. Despite the fact that they are not acceptable and are no longer in	Informing and appealing

			circulation now in Nigeria, they are still used in the song as the nurses leading the songs take their knowledge as part of MCBs or shared socio-cultural knowledge.	
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Table 1: showing the Pragmatic Features in the Data

Discussion and Findings

Three extracts (data) representing the one-fourth of the total earlier analysed data presented in the above table would be explained with discussions and findings of the study:

Datum 1:

What is in my hand? Come and see minister in my hand; come and see Governor in my hand.

The personal definite deixis in the above datum is a reference to the baby being carried by the mothers. The reference is definite in this context because the babies are physically present.

The practs in the song include: questioning (*What is in my hand?*), confessing (*Come and see minister in my hand; come and see Governor in my hand*). The requesting act is rhetorical, thus, it is not a call and response song. The mothers are responsible for saying positive words (confessing pract) into the lives of their children. The aim of the song is to entertain the mothers, while also implicitly, encouraging them to invest in their children so that they can become influential persons (such as, Ministers and Doctors) in the future.

The physical act comprises of clapping and dancing. The mothers rock their babies to the rhythm of the song and being aware of the common belief that there is power in confession, they wholeheartedly sing and dance to the songs.

Datum 9:

I am glad I was made a woman. God made me a fruitful woman; He gave me a free gift which is breast. My breast is a flower. It does not make my child stool. I will breastfeed my child so he can pray for me. This breast of mine is already made. It does not cost me money or stress. I will give my child so he can pray for me. My dear o, please breast feed your child.

The song starts by extoling motherhood and God for creating women (mothers) perfect. The use of indexicals or deixis which are personal (I am, my breast, me, etc.) refer and point to women (and the primary active participants). The

utterance "my breast is a flower" is a metaphor connoting that mothers' breasts are beautiful and as perfect as the nectars of flowers which feeds butterflies and other insects. There is a shared knowledge of the situation of the song, that is, the song fits the physical context and the mothers are aware of this. There is a shared socio-cultural understanding of the role and beauty of mothers in the societies. A popular adage in Yoruba says: "an untrained child will one day sell the house we build". This saying buttresses the fact that onus lies on the parents (especially mothers) to train their children or wards, so that in future they (that is, the children) will not be thorns in their flesh.

There are practs of boasting: '*I am glad I was made a woman. God made me a fruitful woman*'; Informing: '*My breast is a flower; this breast of mine is already made. It does not cost me money or stress. I will give my child so he can pray for me*' and admonishing act: '*My dear o, please breast feed your child*'.

The mothers utilise nonverbal features to complement the wordings of the song. For instance: they touch their breasts while singing the part "this breast of mine". Also, they point to other mothers while singing the part "*My dear o, please breast feed your child*". The most predominant physical acts which are performed by all irrespective of ethnic background is clapping and/or dancing and it is suggestive of the fact that the mothers cooperate with the health workers leading the songs.

Datum 2

If I see eggs, I will buy for my child. My child is the bank I store my money. There is a shared knowledge of the variable reference 'bank'. Bank is mostly seen in Nigerian context as a financial institution where money and other assets can be stored for safe keeping. The semantic scope of the word 'bank' in the song is expanded to mean a mother's readiness to invest solely in her child by buying all that the child needs to grow well. The song is a challenge to all mothers not to invest in mundane things but on the welfare of their wards so that the Yoruba proverb which says "when rats get old, they suckle on the breast of their children" can be realised in their lives. Thus, a child given proper care will in future take care of his or her parents when their strengths wane. The use of the first person singular pronoun 'I' is a reference to the individual mothers singing and its usage is to make the singers personalise the meaning or message embedded in the songs.

The pract in the song are informing and reminding acts. The mothers via the song are informing themselves of their individual decision to buy eggs and other things that would enhance the growth of their children. Thus, they are also reminding other mothers to do same. The practs can be said to be promises and pledges made by the mothers to the babies they brought to immunisation clinic. The physical acts include singing, dancing and clapping. The physical act

reveals the positive disposition of the mothers to the edutainment session of singing.

The foregoing has uncovered the fact that the mothers present at the Immunisation Centre are within child-bearing ages (although, some babies are, at times, accompanied by their grandmothers); the ethnicities of the mothers differ with ninety percent of them from Yoruba tribe. The deixis and reference in the data are mostly definite personal and constant ones, while few are variable. These deixis and reference, just like, the pragmatic acts, are heavily reliant on shared situational background.

The practs and allopracts found in the songs are mostly informing, confessing, asserting, boasting, 'edutaining' acts, etc. Overall, the songs serve as reminders to the mothers to take adequate care of their children and wards. The predominant physical acts are dancing, clapping and singing. The psychological acts of the mothers are obvious via these physical acts as in most settings, they imply a joyous occasion and countenance.

Conclusion

The compendium of insights from sociolinguistics and pragmatics for the analysis of songs rendered at Immunisation Clinic has revealed shared knowledge of situation, referent and socio-cultural background as the nexus of this research endeavour. The songs expose the socio-cultural beliefs of the Yoruba; and they adequately challenge and educate mothers on their role as the primary day-to-day caregivers. It can, thus, be deduced that there is a high expectation from mothers by the society in nurturing children, particularly, in the context where the data was retrieved. In fact, one of the songs, which has the following content: "I will be a mother and husband to my child", reveals gender ideology of women and their roles. The songs can be modified in future to accommodate and buttress the responsibilities of men in the upbringing of children. Doing this would also help sensitise and mobilise the fathers in fulfilling their obligations to their children.

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