

TRAFFIC POLICE DISCOURSE: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The study investigates Traffic Police Discourse through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA henceforth). The data for the study was collected in three different traffic points and analyzed in terms of the constituent features of CDA by accounting for all the discourse values: experiential value, relational value, and expressive. The formal features of language were also brought to bear in the analysis by accounting for the lexical, syntactic and semantic features. CDA is a vital tool for unveiling the disguised or unspoken contextual meanings of expressions; as a result, the study beams light on the personality of the Traffic Police (TP henceforth) which is characterized by pomposity, force and threat and the road user's resistance of being dominated. The study also exposes the possible reactions of the TP if traffic rules are violated, thereby keeping road users at alert in obedience to traffic rules, and as a result, promoting safer roads and a better society.

Keywords: CDA, traffic police discourse, power asymmetry, power abuse, dominance.

Introduction

As Emezue (2011:1) quotes the words of Crystal, discourse "... is a continuous stretch of language larger than a sentence". In other words, discourse is the conversation, verbal or non-verbal, between individuals in order to arrive at meaning. Crystal and Davy (1969:95) hold the view that "conversation... is the most commonly used kind of English." Mey (2001) states that conversation takes place where a linguistic interchange occurs between, at least, two people. It suggests that, at least, the hearer carries out an action, whether nodding, blinking, winking, silence and so on (Osisanwo, 2003), but to arrive at meaning with actions as responses to a conversation, language users must use language in accordance

with the belief system of that society. Hence McCarthy et al (2010:53) aver that "Life is a flow of discourse of language functioning in one of the many contexts that together make up a culture." As we have already mentioned, explaining Language forms which function in contexts is the aim of discourse analysis which uses the environment of language use to express social relations and personal attitude. Brown and Yule (1983) term the social relations and personal attitudes as the conversational function of language as opposed to transactional function.

The implication of the foregoing thesis is that discourse cannot be considered achieved if the context of use is not taken into consideration. This thesis explains the importance of real-life conversation in discourse analysis. This is why McCarthy et al (2010:54) assert that discourse analysis "is the analysis of language in its social context." Gregory (1974:109) posits that discourse has "a place within a framework of human social activity other than that of itself." Stubbs (1983) asserts that discourse is concerned with language in social contexts and, in particular, with interaction or dialogue between speakers. In Crystal's (1987:78) view, the concept involves

... more complex exchanges, in which the participants' beliefs and expectations, the knowledge they share about each other and about the world, and the situation in which they interact play a crucial part.

Emezue (2011) corroborates this viewpoint in his postulation that, as much as a discourse is tied to context, it is also concerned with actual speech acts. Hence the analyst studies a text (written or verbal) and its relationship with the context in which it evolves and operates. This can only be achieved by looking at real texts and not invented or isolated examples or instances of language use. Following from the above, it becomes obvious that pragmatics and discourse analysis work hand in hand, where meaning relevance is attributed to the perspective of the addressor or in a given condition or situated context (Emezue, 2011). That is, discourse analysis and pragmatics are both interested in the meaning a text carries in consideration of or in tandem with the situational context that prompted the discourse. The present study, therefore, deploys the resources of CDA to investigate language use in Traffic Police discourse in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Olateju (2004:16) describes CDA as "a young science" and refers us to the following for details of the concept: Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995; Wodak et al, 1994; Wodak and Matouschek, 1993; Matouschek and Wodak,

1995/1996; Woodak,1996; Wodak and Reisigl,1999; Weis and Wodak, 1999; Van Leeuwen and Wodak, (1999). The critical fact is that, in recent times, scholars are attracted to different forms of discourse analysis on different civic engagements, dealing with social and ideological issues. It is this social and ideological consciousness among language producers that CDA deals with. Hence Olateju (2004:17) affirms Fairclough's perspective on CDA as investigating "... the tension between the two assumptions about language as being both socially constitutive and socially determined." Van Dijk corroborates this perspective when he asserted that "critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context"(quoted in Ahmed, 2014:39). This explains why its literature is robust and thriving. For instance, Austin (2014) carried out a critical discourse analysis on the dominant discourses in celebrity substance abuse articles from 2012 to 2013; Silverman (1997) carried out a discourse analysis on HIV counselling as social interaction; Smith, Lucas, and Latkin also did a study on rumour and gossip as a social discourse on HIV and AIDS; Cazden, as well did an analysis of classroom discourse which explains the language of teaching and learning.

Particularly germane to the present study is the fact that several scholars have carried out some discourse analyses on police discourse and traffic police discourse. For instance, Dastjerd, Latifi and Mohammadi (2011) did a critical discourse analysis of the illegitimate conversation exchanges between fined drivers and traffic police officers. Farinde (2013) discussed the organization of discourse in Police-Accused discourse. Ayodeji, Moses and Lawrence (2014), as well, did a work on the Nigeria Police Force being satirized by the TELL Newsmagazine. Fox (1993) made a comparison between Police speech and normal speech. Brunson and Braga (2015) analyzed the Police and public discourse on "black-on-black" violence, and suggest the need for discourse participants to refrain from using such descriptions as black-on-black when describing outbreaks of serious criminal violence in black neighbourhoods. The present study which investigates traffic police discourse from a CDA perspective, adds to the corpus of scholarly works available on the subject.

Definition of Terms

The following terms or concepts are very critical in the present study. They provide or constitute the pivot around which the study revolves.

Civic Engagements

Civic engagements are mutually agreed upon duties appointed for every citizen to carry out. These duties are the responsibilities of a good citizen of a state with associated rights and obligations. That is, every member is required to carry out certain duties in order to make them become effective and quality members in society (Alexander, 2012). There are numerous civic engagements such as: education; responsible parenthood; youth empowerment; human trafficking; drug and its abuse; traffic regulations; and so on. But, as our topic suggests, we shall limit our discussion to traffic regulations as civic engagement.

Traffic Regulations

Traffic regulations are the official traffic rules made by the government and enforced by the road safety agency of Nigeria i.e. Federal Road Safety Commission of Nigeria (FRSCN). These road traffic rules are made to guide road use for such users as: motorists; pedestrians; motorcycle operators, tricycle operators; bicycle riders, passengers and animals. It is expected of the road user to use the road in accordance with the laid down rules and regulations in order to ensure safe roads. Some traffic regulations listed in the Road Traffic Act (CAP. 548) are: obeying traffic officials and signs, avoiding over-speeding and so on. In fact, Alexander (2012:271) enumerates forty-four (44) traffic regulations but our concern in this study is limited to the road user's attitude to traffic officials and signs.

The Road Traffic Signs and Symbols

The word "symbol" could be used to represent verbal utterances, meaningful body gestures and signs. A symbol, as Saeed (2009:5) explains, "is where there is only a conventional link between the sign and its signified ... words would seem to be examples of verbal symbols." Words are symbolic entities; as a result, interactants owe much to the concept of words as signs. The study of gestures and other forms of body motion used in non-verbal communication has it that humans use more than 250,000 facial expressions which have different meanings in different circumstances (Scupin & DeCorse, 2008). The need for the use of symbols is conventional, otherwise, meaning will not take place. Yeibo (2011:83) posits that "a symbol shares no overt resemblance with the object it represents but is accepted and interpreted according to convention." According to Osisanwo (2003), the movement of the head, eyes, eyebrows, hands and even the body

posture may be associated with specific symbolic meanings that are contextually defined.

The critical fact is that interactants use various types of symbols and signs to ease communication and to promote prompt compliance of intended actions in specific contexts. Omololu (2009) explains that conversation is an interaction of symbols among interactants where a symbol could be anything as long as it refers to something beyond itself. Other scholars are also in agreement with the use of symbols as non-verbal communication (see Finch, 2006; Ogum 2002, for instance). A certain context may suggest the use of non-verbal symbols, another may warrant the use of speech. Anurudu and Lawal (2014) adumbrate this view in their affirmation that an utterance is composed of context-influenced elements. Hence certain uses of language are unacceptable while others are acceptable in given contexts. The context of language use is seen as a rationale for the speaker's choice of expressions (Owens, Jr., 2001), but here, we are more concerned with language use in relation to the immediate environment, both physical and psychological. This is justified by Brown and Yule (1983:25) that "... the grammarian who tries to make claims about 'acceptability' ... is implicitly soliciting for contextual considerations." The traffic light is conventionally related to its meaning (Osoba & Sobola, 2014). The colour 'red' means 'stop', 'amber' means 'ready' and 'green' means 'go' in traffic, but they may signify differently in other contexts. Meaning clues of symbols are made possible by the context of use, such clues could be gestures, signs of intonation, etc (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams, 2007; Anko, 2010).

The Road User

The road user is the individual who accesses the hard surface built for vehicles to move or travel. Such users as motorists; pedestrians; motorcycle operators; tricycle operators; bicycle riders, passengers and animals (Olayanmi & Co.). The civic duty of the road user is to comply with the rules and regulations stated in the Road Traffic Act. President Buhari, when he was the president-elect, told his escorts to obey traffic rules as he ordered them to stop and wait for the green lights (Alechenu, 2015). It is the duty of the road user to carefully study all the traffic rules (signs inclusive) and obey them in order to promote adequate traffic flow and to make society a better place.

The Traffic Warden (Police)

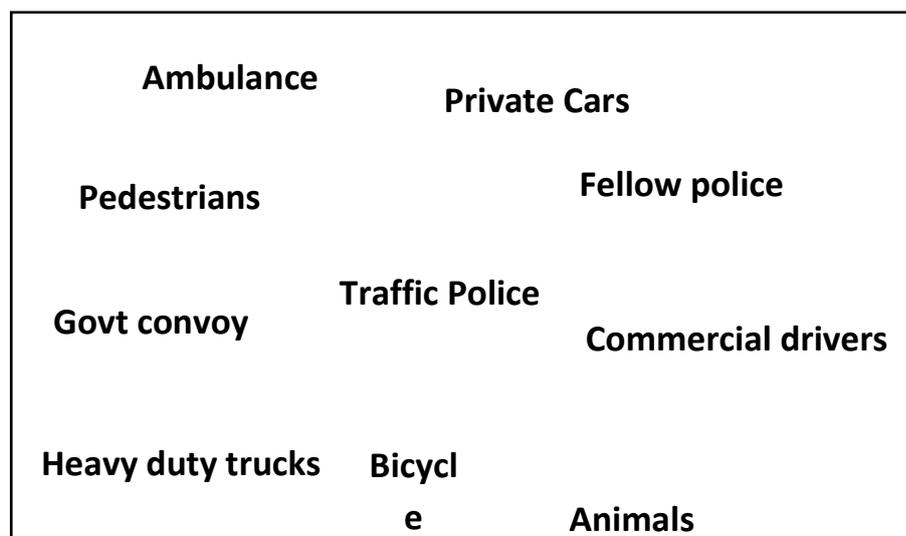
The traffic warden, otherwise known as the Traffic Police (TP), is assigned or appointed from time to time to carry out such functions as the general control and direction of motor traffic on the highway; informing pedestrians about when to

cross the road; controlling vehicles stopping or parking in unauthorized places (Police Act CAP. p19, 55). The TP has been trained in the traffic training school, with a chest measurement of at least 86.36 cm and at least 167.64 and 162.56 tall for men and women respectively (Police Act CAP. p19), 56", (c), (d). It is the duty of the TP to hold anyone found guilty of the offences stated under this Act.

The Status of the Traffic Police

The TP has a master status. This is a status he attains by his occupation which in turn dominates and shapes much of his personality, activities, and position in society (Ballantine & Roberts, 2011). Farinde (2013) also highlights the fact that the language of the police has an overriding pomposity. The police may use language in a certain way because of the nature of the job, dealing with different individuals from different social backgrounds in order to make them obey laid down rules. Research has proven that the aggressive nature of the police is innate. Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis and psychiatry, views human behaviour as a reflection of innate (inborn) emotional factors (see Scupin & DeCorse, 2008). Psychoanalysis indicates that people are often unaware of the real reasons for their actions. This fact led Freud (ibid) to postulate that man's personality is made up of three sectors: *id*, *ego* and *superego*. The '**id**'- stands for the parts which represent the unconscious, innate drives for sex and aggression which is rooted in the biological organism and is present at birth. Freud (ibid) further explains that this innate aggressive drive is often frustrated by society. This repression (the control of strong emotions) is later redirected into socially APPROVED FORMS OF EXPRESSION. Freud (ibid) describes The '**ego**'- as the 'reality part'. The ego tries to balance the id with the demands and realities of the society. The personality develops the '**superego**' which is the presence of culture within the individual's conscience.

The TP interacts with every category of road user that passes his way. This might be the reason he shows aggression ie. pressure from dealing with so many people at short intervals. Below is a hypothetical figure showing the possible encounters the TP has with the road users which suggests the degree of pressure he faces at his duty post:



With this kind of environment or functional context, the TP is bound to be aggressive even with all the tediousness of his job.

Theoretical Framework

Critical Discourse Analysis is the theoretical framework on which this work is based. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse which views language as a social habit. As we have mentioned above, it studies both the text and the social factors that are comprised in the text. This view is predicated on the fact that, as Ayoola (2005:2) put it,

Critical discourse analysis (CDA), being context sensitive, acknowledges that real texts are produced and disseminated in real situational contexts. CDA employs interdisciplinary techniques of text analysis to draw out how texts portray social identities, social relationships and political ideologies.

This theory was influenced by Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics and emerged from critical linguistics developed at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s. Norman Fairclough is the most prominent figure, following Fairclough is Ruth Wodak who has also made remarkable contributions to this field of study (Chiluwa, 2013). Of critical relevance to the present study is the fact that CDA studies the way discourse reproduces (or resists) social and political inequality, power abuse or dominance. Ayoola (2005:2) posits that

..... the utterances of political leaders for instance have the performative force to persuade or manipulate the public to a predetermined ideological or counter-ideological line of action.

The point is that CDA does not limit its analysis to specialized structures of text or talk, but relates the text logically to the socio-political context. Hence Fairclough (1989; 1995) identifies three elements of discourse:

1. Text
2. Interaction
3. Context

This scholar proposed a model for the critical analysis of a text viz: description of the text, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and the explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context (Mccarthy et al., 2010; Chiluya, 2013). The description of the text is to identify the formal features of the text, either of vocabulary or grammar attainable in the discourse type, which the text draws upon. This is expedient because as Ayoola (2005:2) asserts,

it is the duty of the discourse analyst with linguistic background to apply a combination of the analytical tools of linguistics with his knowledge and experience of the world to arrive at an empirical interpretation of a text.

Van Dijk (1993:6) highlights this point in his assertion that CDA “seeks to explore the role of formal structures, features, or other properties of text, verbal interaction, or communicative events in the interpretation of power relations. Hence Fairclough (1992:6) explains that “Critical discourse analysis seeks to forge links between mainstream linguistics and critical social theory in order to comprehend the role played by language use in asymmetrical power relations and social and political identity. It typically seeks to link the formal features of texts with social and political contexts and often broadens out the definition of text to include symbolic representations which may appear alongside the written and spoken word”. Against this background, Ayoola (2005:2) posits that,

...CDA is necessary for describing and interpreting, analyzing and critiquing social life..... discourse analysis does not merely reflect social order, it actually helps to shape social order.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997:258) also state that:

Critical DA sees discourse - language in speech and written as a form of social practice. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular happening and the situation or social structures which include it. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned. It

constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to changing it.

According to the scholars (*ibid*), because discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important issues of power. The scholars add that discursive practices may have major ideological effects –that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance), social classes, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people.

Formal Features

Fairclough's (1989) explanation of formal features (as discussed in Chiluya, 2013), that the formal features must have important discourse "value" known as "experiential", "relational" or "expressive" is very germane in this study. According to the author (*ibid*), experiential value is an evidence of and hint about the way the natural or social world (knowledge and belief) experience of the text producer is represented in the text; relational value is an evidence of and a hint about the enacted social relationships by means of the structure (text) in the discourse; and expressive value is an evidence of and a hint about the text producer's evaluation in relation to reality, expressly with subjects and social identities.

The basic concern of critical discourse procedure is interpretation. This entails the study of discourse *modus operandi* and their dependence on society and ideology (background assumption). Interpretation is generated via a combination of what is in the text and 'in' the interpreter, since he is a member of the society and its resources, which he brings to his rendition. This also includes interpretation of situational context, a consideration of the features of physical context, properties of participants, what has previously been said, and portrayals of society and institutional social orders. Fairclough's four dimensions of interpretation of social context (as listed by Chiluya, 2013:239) bring to the fore the overt social concern of the discipline:

1. What is going on (activity, topic, and purpose)?
2. Who is involved?
3. What relationships are involved?
4. What is the role of language in what is going on?

The implication of these dimensions is that, in a situation where language is used in public, there is the possibility that meaning becomes both direct and indirect depending on the subject, context or interpretation, because the meaning of a particular statement may differ depending on the way it could be analysed in the context of use. CDA thus, becomes essential in such a socio-political subject as Traffic Police discourse in Nigeria. It becomes an adequate tool for understanding an indirect message(s) passed across by certain statements, since it generally deals with social issues disguised in text or talk which are above the mere selection of words.

In order to do a satisfying critical research on discourse, Fairclough and Wodak's tenets of CDA as enumerated as follows, are very relevant, in line with the socially constitutive nature of the discipline:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action

It is also necessary to note that CDA has attracted criticism over adequacy of representation and randomness of the data used for analysis. However, following Sriwimon and Jimarkon (2017:136-142), we apply the 'criteria' set by Wodak & Meyer (2009:98) as follows, to circumvent this perceived problem, in the present study:

- i. Specific periods of time relating to important discursive events, which are connected with the issue in question.
- ii. Specific social and especial political actors
- iii. Specific discourse
- iv. Specific fields of political action
- v. Specific semiotic media & genre

In other words, the specific actions and events of the TP and road user, in specific locations and at different times, with the underlying power play, and the specific data and symbols (semiotics) used in the discourse meet the criterion of sufficient or adequate representation.

Methodology/Data Collection

The population of the data for this work is six texts from six busy traffic intersections. The data was obtained primarily from Yenagoa, the Bayelsa state capital, Niger Delta University, Amassoma, and University of Port Harcourt. This is because, these locations are believed to be representing most traffic intersections (excluding traffic circle 'round about'). The sample data is reduced to three traffic intersections: a 3 way intersection at Unipark gate, Abuja campus, Uniport; a 3way intersection at Imgbi Junction, Yenagoa; and a 4-way intersection at hospital junction, Yenagoa.

Data Presentation and analysis

The analysis consists of the description of three sample texts from Unipork gate, Abuja campus, Uniport; Imgbi junction, Yenagoa; and hospital junction, Yenagoa, to explain the formal features of vocabulary and syntax available in the texts. Fairclough's (1989) discourse values of the texts will be investigated to see how the speakers experiences of the social world are represented. These experiences form part of the context that manifests in the texts. That is, the analysis will seek to explain the arrangement of grammatical items, meanings, and how the texts perform experiential, relational, or expressive roles. These roles will generally explain the social functions or the intentions of the text producers.

The first source of data is a conversation between a TP and a taxi driver (TD henceforth) at Unipork, Abuja campus gate. The second source is a conversation between a TP, a TD, and two pedestrians (p henceforth) at Imgbi junction. The third source of data is a conversation between a TP, a private car driver (PCD henceforth) and tricycle driver (TD henceforth) at Hospital Junction, Yenagoa. The data was recorded and the speakers involved are the TP and road user.

Text one (Abuja gate)

TP: *Wey you!* (points to a taxi driver)

Ol am dea! Ol your brake! (taxi driver stops).

Follow! Follow! (beckons to another driver to move to an intersecting road with his right hand still stiff with the palm facing the waiting TD)

You! Na wa for ona oh!, use your ead na (to the same TD he beckoned to follow as he delays in following the traffic as ordered).

Text two (Imgbi Junction)

TP: *Ol am dea!* (orders a TD to stop with his right palm and TD obeys without hesitation).

Oya, woman cross road with your shudren! (a woman with two kids still contemplating whether to cross or not).

Madam, I say make ona cross!

Wey you, carry doze your loads commot for dea (another pedestrian, a hawker carrying several pillows on his head and seems not to hear the TP).

Commot for dea make I see road! (the hawker still standing and paying no attention to the TP)

Eeh! Pillow case, are you hearing me? Commot make I see road na! (with a loud voice and a frown, then the hawker obeys by moving backwards to enable the TP get a view of the traffic congestion).

Wait oga, please wait! (to the waiting taxi driver, who may be still waiting because of the woman and children in spite of the delay).

Ona fit cross, madam

P: *Tank you oga, tank you sir* (the woman with two kids thanks the TP and the TD with two waves of hand to each respectively)

5.3 Text three (Hospital Junction)

TP: *Oga ahah! Good afternoon sa, au fa na?* (waves with a smile to a

gorgeously dressed middle aged man in a flashy black jeep as he comes to a halt in obedience to the traffic lights showing red and counting down).

PCD: *I'm fine, how is work?*

TP: *We are fine oh shairman. You are running away from me oh.*

PCD: *Why? Why will I run from you, officer?*

TP: *Bot why I never see you na shairman?* (suddenly he locates a TD)

See where you dey trafficate see where you dey go. You be learner? (to the TD trafficating to an intersecting road on the adequately flowing side of traffic, who unknowingly trafficates on the wrong side)

PCD: *Oya take na* (gives the TP some money as he gets ready to move as traffic is almost showing green (amber))

TP: Oga. ahah, tank you sa, tank you very much sa (TP thanks the PCD).

TD Agbero! (TD gives an insult to TP with a shout and zooms off)

TP: Boko Haram! Why you no wait for me? (TP also tries to get back at the TD)

The Structural (formal) Features

The higher level of formality in the context where the Traffic Police Discourse is taking place is triggered by the high status of the TP which confirms that power belongs to him. This type of environment, that is, the culture of the traffic life allows an informal use of language. Fairclough and Wodak (1997:55) observe that critical discourse analysis sees discourse language use in speech and writing

as a form of social practice: describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation (s), institutions and social structure(s) which frame it. A dialectical relationship is a two-way relationship. The discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it shapes them.

In this study, the relationship between participants is highly formal, but this does not demand the use of Standard English, at least, not always. The choice of words as we see in the texts betrays that fact.

Lexical Features

In the texts, we see the use of expressions such as: 'ol am dea', 'wey you', 'you no dey use your ead; na wa for ona oh', 'ol your brake'. 'commot for dea, make I see road', 'agbero' and so on. All these words are available in the vocabulary of the Nigerian pidgin which is used all over the country in informal and, in few cases, formal contexts. The TP uses mostly the unofficial code (pidgin) to communicate with the road users. Listeners (the road users) are aware of or have the knowledge of this code and, therefore, logically deduce (e.g an insult, a command etc) from his expressions. Pidgin violates the phonological rules which is portrayed in such words as: 'ol' for 'hold', 'ead' for 'head' 'dea' for 'there', sa 'sir', 'shairman' for 'chairman', 'shudren' for 'children', and so on. Another thing to note about lexis is

the use of deictic elements. Yeibo (2012:109) describes deixis as “elements (also called shifters) which are particular words whose referential meaning shifts with every new speaker.” The TP makes use of person deixis as: ‘you’, and also some derogatory categories as ‘wey you’, ‘pillow case’, ‘woman’, and place deixis as ‘there’ (Ayoola,2005). Thus, in the context of use, the, these elements have experiential, relational and expressive value.

Syntactic Features

As stated above, the TP makes extensive use of the unofficial code by employing the Nigerian pidgin which shows the informality of the context, and as a result, it makes it difficult to account for the grammar of the expressions. Despite that, we can still trace ungrammaticality in such areas as:

- 1) Inserting the progressive in state verbs ‘hearing’ instead of ‘hear’
- 2) The pluralization of non-count nouns ‘loads’ instead of ‘load’
- 3) The omission of articles ‘cross road’ instead of ‘cross the road’
- 4) Repetition of expressions like ‘wey you’, ‘ol am dea’ which seems to be common in this context.

Semantic features

Meaning is the essence or heart of communication. As we have stated earlier, the meaning of a text or talk in discourse analysis can only be extracted if we put into consideration the context of use and the participants involved with the help of the clues (words or expressions) that are in the texts. The ideology or presupposition of the participants about road traffic before the time of discourse determines the level of understanding of the different shades of meaning found in the texts. In the TP’s intonation, the change in the pitch (low) is an indication of his loyalty to the private car driver which could be detected through such words as: ‘Oga’, ‘shairman; Also, the combination of words such as: ‘how far?’ ‘how is work?’ are exchanges of greeting in Nigerian context among familiar and almost equal (status) individuals. Others are, ‘wey you’ (‘you’), ‘learner’ (who has not graduated from the driving school due to imperfections, or one who is legally unfit to drive with no driving license), ‘agbero’ (one who takes things by tricks or force), Boko haram (one who kills without human feelings).

Dastjerd et al (2011:255) have drawn our attention to the fact that CDA “captures the relationship between the role of social status and discourse in relation to choice of words and tone of the speakers. The way people put the words together and express it can sometimes be the source of coercion, threat and somehow extorting the orders.” Hence, in this study, personalities are put to the test. The TD resists dominance by the show of calling the TP ‘agbero’ as the former sees the latter taking money from the PCD. The TP also uses the expression ‘Boko haram’ to emphasise that the TD is worse than the police, that an ‘agbero’ may take money from people by tricks or force, but unlike a Boko haram, the TP is not a terrorist, which is far worse. The personality contest is made clear by speaker meaning which is implicit, and is different from linguistic meaning which is explicit (Mpoche,2008).

The expression ‘pillow case’ also has a semantic implication. The semantic relationship between ‘pillow’ and ‘pillow case’ is hyponymic. That is, they are of the same hyperonym ‘bedding’. Hyponymy is a meaning relation where the meaning of an expression A is part of the meaning of expression B, where A is a hyponym of B and B is called a hyponym of A (Lobner, 2002). According to Dastjerd (2011:255), one of the rather new techniques of investigation used in qualitative research is CDA. According to the scholar (ibid), Foucault (1972) in his influential work on the ontology of knowledge, purported that a discourse “includes not only written and spoken ideas and knowledge, but also attitudes, the way topics are addressed, the terms of reference used and the social practices embedded in conventions.”

Discourse Values

We shall now look at specific discourse values viz experiential, relational and expressive, as they manifest in the texts:

Experiential

Both the TP and the road user, as Nigerians, share a common cultural experience (experience of traffic culture), which is depicted in their actions. In the culture of the traffic world, there is the common assumption (ideology) that the visual semiotic signs and the TP are to be obeyed, and also the offensively rude and unfriendly behaviour from both the TP and road users is a common or shared knowledge. It is also a known fact that road users tend to disobey traffic rules thereby making the job of the TP a difficult one. Even with the efficient traffic lights, the TP still keeps doing the work of the traffic lights with body gestures. In the case of the pillow hawker, the TP is a bit hard by shouting and frowning before the former obeyed. The expression: “ol your brake’ indicates a command to

stop, a stiff hand with the palm facing a vehicle also means 'stop', while a beckoning hand indicates 'go' or 'move'.

Relational

The TP has an institutional power, which affects his behaviour. This results in power asymmetry. That is, the relationship between TP and the road user is asymmetrical (high and low). Here, power is exercised in considerations of inequality. This could be seen in the following expressions: *'ol am dea'*, *'use your ead na'*, *'wey you'*, *woman'*, *common for dea make I see road'*. The social relationships enacted here are social distance and power relations (Levison, 1987; See also Brown's analysis of real-life communication between speaker/writer and his listeners/readers, as cited in Ayoola, 2005). The point is that the higher status of the police is superimposed on the lower status of the road user. As Farinde (2013) suggests, it may be as a result of the very high level of formality. Language behaviour is due to social stratification. Status and role usually come to play. as Wolf (2000) explains them as sociological, and imply the hierarchical relationship of 'higher' as against 'lower' terms of prestige, power and privileges.

There is a status scale of superiority versus inferiority in the gender asymmetry portrayed in text 'two'. The TP refers to the woman with two kids' with such deixis as *'woman'*. This would not have been the case if a fellow man was standing there; the TP would not have called him 'man'. Another gender asymmetry is the humility of the 'woman' with two kids'. She took time to thank the TP and the taxi driver, referring to them as *'oga'* and *'sir'*, respectively, in order to show the ideology or practice of respect accorded to men by the womenfolk due to gender inequality in the Nigerian culture.

Expressive

Apparently, the evaluation of the TP in relation to reality around the traffic domain is that of disobedience on the part of road users. This makes the former to always be at alert in his duty post which results in power abuse. For instance, if a road user disobeys, he quickly shows off his powers. This could be seen in all three texts: *'you! na wa for ona oh'*, *'madam, I say make ona cross', eeh! Pillow case!'*, *'are you hearing me? 'commot' 'you be learner?'* and so on. The TP abuses power in reaction to the road users' lack of prompt compliance. Language use here is harsh and the vocabulary abounds with imperatives such as the explicit use of commands, orders, and threats, as seen in the expression *"commot make I see road'*, *'woman cross road with your shudren' why you no wait for me? et cetera.* The ideology behind such expressions is power. For instance, the expression *'why you no wait for me?'* signifies a threat. The TP threatens to deal with the TD for

calling him Boko Haram, and the TD tries to resist dominance by zooming off. It also shows power abuse by the TP who dares the TD to wait for him when they both show expressions of anger by exchanging insults: "you be learner?" 'Agbero' 'Boko Haram'. The TP is not unaware of the fact that his power is not absolute, hence his choice of words: 'oga ahah, good afternoon sa', 'tank you sa' and so on. There is a clear twist in status (high and low) between the PED and the TP in respect to financial or social status.

Conclusion

Critical discourse analysis has enabled us to accountably get the gist of what the traffic police does with language in his day-to-day activities. For instance, the clamour for power, which is seen through the threatening utterances, which may also indicate anger (Osisanwo, 2012), the explicit use of force, command, and insults were made evident with the use of CDA. Van Dijk (2001), (cited in Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 258) states that

a key concept in most critical studies of discourse is that of power of groups or professions. In a nutshell, based on complex philosophical and social analysis, the social power is defined in terms of control. Thus, groups have power if they are able to control the acts and minds of the other groups. This ability assumes a power, and more specifically, the social power stand of advantaged access to limited social properties, such as force, money, status, fame, knowledge, information, "culture," or indeed various forms of public discourse and communication.

The scholar (ibid) suggests that "different types of power may be distinguished according to the various resources employed to use such power: the coercive power of the military (traffic police in the present study) will rather be based on force and threat and the rich will have power because of their money. According to the scholar (ibid), it is worth mentioning that power is seldom absolute since it depends on situation and context and this power can change from one place to another. Groups may more or less control other groups, or only control them in specific situations or social domains. moreover, dominated groups may more or less resist, accept, comply with or legitimise such power, and even find it "natural." The scholar (ibid) adds that the power of dominant groups may be integrated in laws, rules, norms, habit, and even a quite general consensus and, thus, take the form of what Gramsci (1971) calls "hegemony," by means of which, some of the traffic police abuse their position. Thus, it is important also to stress that discourse analysis not only mirrors social order but also shapes it. This is

apparently what van Dijk (2003:353) has in mind when he asserts that critical discourse analysis

... focuses primarily on social problems and political issues rather than on current paradigms and fashions, and on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimise, reproduce or challenge relations of power and dominance in society.

The TP's choice of words in their lexical, syntactic and semantic values points to the fact that his business is no child's play, and his job is not to plead with road users but to seriously make sure his command is obeyed without question. The choice of the non-standard code presents language as a social semiotic by which means status is reflected (Ogum, 2002). The critical fact is that the task of discourse analysis, basically, is to investigate the code deployed by language users for certain or specific purposes. Olateju (2004:19) contends that..."in discourse analysis as in pragmatics... we are concerned with what people using language are doing, and with regard to accounting for the linguistic features in a discourse as the means employed in what they are doing."

It should be noted that the scope of this work has not covered extensively every conversation between the TP and the road users. For instance, the discourse between the TP and the defaulted road user, and the discourse between the TP and the road user whereby no verbal speech is involved but only traffic signs and body gestures. Nevertheless, it has successfully carried out a critical discourse analysis of the everyday and strategic linguistic engagements or exchanges of the TP in his duty post in line with Olateju's (2004:19) view that "discourse analysis should give attention to description of structures, strategy or processes that are interesting, new or original." As Fowler (1981:25) avers, "critical discourse analysis is a careful analytic interrogation of the ideological categories and the roles and institutions and so on, through which a society constitutes and maintains itself and the consciousness of its members." According to the scholar (ibid), all knowledge, all objects, are constructs: criticism analyses the processes of construction and acknowledge the artificial quality of the categories concerned, offers the possibility that we might profitably conceive the world in some alternative way. In this regard, Olateju (2004:15) contends, quite aptly, that "Fowler seems to be concerned with objectivity, normality and factuality. To Fowler, texts must be probed, in order to discover hidden meaning and value structures. He sees society, as a set of groups and institutions structured through discourse." This is certainly the Kernel of Fairclough's (1995:27) view that social institutions contain "diverse ideological, discursive formations (IDFS) associated with different groups within the institution." What is paramount in this study and

as Leeuwen (1993:193) suggests, is that critical discourse analysis is an instrument for the social construction of reality which is evident from our analysis of both the textual and contextual variables that shape Traffic Police discourse in Nigeria.

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