A Sociolinguistic Perspective of Language Role in Reforming the Narratives of Insecurity and Migration in Nigeria

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Abstract
This study explores the sociolinguistic perspectives of language roles and the reformative lexemes in reforming the narratives of insecurity and migration in Nigeria. The challenges and dangers of insecurity on people's life increase the rate of migration through legal or illegal means. This study is hinged on the social identity theory (SIT) of Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1979). Twenty-five (25) samples of reformative lexemes constitute the data. The study aims to provide insight into the different sociolinguistic perspectives and the multifaceted roles of language in reforming the narratives. It is revealed that resilience, empowerment, integration, compassion, inclusion, protection, justice, dialogue, education, partnership, coexistence and others are reformative lexemes of language roles to curb insecurity and migration. Therefore, it is recommended that appropriate language use will reform the narratives and curtail insecurity/migration to the barest minimum.
Key words: Sociolinguistic, Language, Reforming, Insecurity and Migration.

Introduction
Language is a social phenomenon which can be used to create, influence, reform, generate conflict, instigate crisis and cause undue relocation. Language is evidently the most versatile means of communication among human beings. Through language, feelings/emotions, ideologies, identities, instigations, desires, suggestions and so on are communicated. We use language to persuade others to our convictions and urge them towards action by crafting text that demonstrate the logic and appeal to those convictions (Fasold and Linton, 109). It is a pivot around which every human activity revolves. Bhasin (1) avers that language is a formal system that includes sounds, signs, symbols, and gestures that are used as an important means of communicating thoughts, ideas, and emotions from one individual to another. Language is used as a weapon for individual and societal marginalization, intimidation, discrimination, conspiracy, exclusion and aggression (Umelo 2). It can also be a means through which crisis emanate, instigations, robbery, kidnapping, murder, looting and illegal migration occur. This study opines that language is the means by which thoughts are formed or reformed in a positive or negative way depending on one's desire. Appropriate effective language use reforms the mindset, understanding, ideas, actions and inactions towards a secured and productive society.

Research Objectives
This study is set to:
- ✓ Highlight language roles in human communication
- ✓ Explore the sociolinguistic perspectives of language roles in reforming the narrative
- ✓ Examine the reformative lexemes in reforming the narratives of insecurity and migration

Conceptual Clarification
Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and the society with the aim of understanding how language functions in communication (Wardhaugh 12). Coulmas (2) identifies two aspects of sociolinguistics as thus; micro-sociolinguistics and macro-sociolinguistics. Micro-sociolinguistics investigates how social

structures influence the way people talk and how language varieties and patterns of use correlate with social attributes such as class, sex and age. Macro-sociolinguistics studies what societies do with their languages, that is attitudes and attachments that account for the functional distribution of speech forms in society, language shift, maintenance and replacement, the delimitation and interaction of speech communities.

Reformation implies improvement, to return, to rescue, to change, to modify, to rectify, to ameliorate etc. Reformation is the amelioration of a condition and situation from an existing thing, idea or thoughts to a better/beneficial one. It can also mean the transition of one phase/stage to another. Language roles in reforming the narratives of insecurity and migration means the adoption and usage of lexical expressions such as; empathy, inclusion, unity, accountability, transparency, integration and so on in communication.

Insecurity can be defined as a situation that threatens the lives and properties of a particular society. Achumba (2023) as cited in (Njoku 82) asserts that insecurity is lack of safety or the existence of danger, hazard and uncertainty. To buttress the assertion, this study deposits that insecurity implies any unprotected situation subject to threat, risk of lives, lose of properties, violent attack, manipulation, conflict and exclusion in and around a particular place. Insecurity can be in form of physical or social. The forms are; life insecurity, job insecurity, food insecurity, political insecurity, home insecurity and any of these forms do not add value but rather a threat to the individual or nation.

Migration refers to people's movement from one country to another as a change of residence. It is also the movement that cuts across national and international borders. The movement can also be by individual, family or groups either for a short period or long stay. Migration occurs for different reasons such as; job, education, visit and security.

The Roles of Language
Language plays a vital role in the society and the roles include;
- ✓ **Communication:** Language enhances communication among interactants of diverse communities and also paves way for interpersonal relationships.
- ✓ **Documentation:** Records are kept with the use of language. Records pertaining offices, schools, hospitals, courts and so on are documented with the use of language.
- ✓ **Education:** Impartation of knowledge in any formal or informal environment is done via language. Participation/other activities and academic targets are actualized through language.
- ✓ **Transmission of Information:** Dissemination of information be it written or spoken is passed through language. Again, any information whether political, religion, social or cultural is disseminated by means of language.
- ✓ **Propagation of Culture:** Cultural heritage is propagated from one generation to another generation through language. The societal beliefs, norms and values are preserved through language.
- ✓ **Identity:** Through language, people's identities are made known/given. That is, their place of origin, culture and heritage are maintained or connected together despite the place of residence.
- ✓ **Medium of Socialization:** Language is used in the socialization of man. The agencies of socialization like the home, school, church, mass media, peer group, and others make use of language.

Causes of insecurity and migration
There are many factors attributed to insecurity and they include; marginalization, social exclusion, inequality, unemployment, corruption, kidnapping, bad governance/leadership, murder, inciting statements and poverty.
In Nigeria, marginalization, social exclusion and inequality have done more harm than good. Some parts of the nation feel marginalized towards the basic infrastructures and allocation of profitable/viable positions and fund disbursement. The infrastructural development is mainly carried out in the North and South-West of Nigeria. For instance, railway stations as well as good roads and steady power supply favour the Northern parts mostly. Again, marginalization is perceived as only the Northern people occupy juicy political posts. According to Zubairu (41) "the current government gave the key political positions to people from the North while the South-East was left in the cold". It is also pertinent to say in this study that marginalization, social exclusion and inequality in the South-East is obvious in that no sea-port is situated in the region. These issues are capable of igniting violence that will result to destruction of valuable properties and lives.

Bad government/leadership, unemployment and corruption breeds crime which threatens the peaceful coexistence of the citizens thereby causing the youths to indulge in all manner of evil and criminal acts to make ends meet. Oguntuase (60) avers that "we need no one to tell us that unemployment especially among the youths has turned Nigeria into a potential recruitment ground for terrorist groups such as Boko Haram". Oguntuase also states that "corruption in the system is a destructive cankerworm feeding fat on the fabric of the nation".

Corruption and unemployment pose a threat on the youths who graduated for years without meaningfully engaged in any legitimate job for livelihood. The fact that the youths are unemployed contributed in being involved in kidnapping, rituals, robbery, killings and all sorts of illicit acts in a bit to survive. This is in line with the assertion of Zubairu (41) that "many become frustrated and engaged in violent and criminal acts such as lucrative kidnapping, militancy and armed robbery". The Nigerian top rank politicians loot the money meant for general human development and infrastructural development away to foreign countries thereby impoverishing the poor masses. The nation being infertile/unyielding triggers frustration, anger and violence that causes insecurity and migration of youths to other countries in search of better means of living.

Furthermore, inciting statements stir up resentment, hatred as they are confrontational and ignites crisis. Hence the Council of Traditional Rulers of the South-East cautioned against use of provocative rhetoric and actions that tend to promote violence, fear and insecurity. Generally speaking, language use is the pivot for peace or war, violence or calmness, creation or destruction, security or insecurity and so on. Therefore, in reforming the narratives of insecurity and migration, appropriate language use is paramount among users in the society.

Sociolinguistic Perspectives of Language Roles
- ✓ Language and Identity: Language use plays a vital role in forming, reforming and maintaining individuality in social groups. Through language, people indicate their place of origin.
- ✓ Language and Power: Power and authority is given through language. Anyone or group with power tends to control, influence, exclude, oppress or marginalize others through language.
- ✓ Language Attitude: Attitudes towards a particular language can be used to influence people positively or negatively. Positive language attitude towards education in a given environment tends to promote the system while negative language attitude hampers the growth.
- ✓ Language and Change: Overtime, language use changes based on the trend of events. The change can be attributed to cultural values, language shift, social dynamics and power.
- ✓ Language Contact: Language contact occurs both in convergence or divergence manner. This refers to group of people speaking different languages being together and has the need to interact. Language contact most times result to language shift, language maintenance and language revitalization.
- ✓ Language Policy: Language policy of any society or nation is embedded in language and it promotes linguistic diversity. It gives way for language rights, socialization, accommodation and education.

Methodology
The study design is the qualitative approach, aimed at gathering data through primary source and describing the roles. This research is designed to highlight/assess the roles of language in human communication, explore the sociolinguistic perspectives of language roles and examine the reformative lexemes in reforming the narratives of insecurity and migration in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework
This study utilizes the social identity theory (SIT) of Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1979) which its tenets are social identity as a component of self-concept, group membership and social categorization, social comparison and intergroup differentiation and in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination. It is also applied on how language is used to construct and maintain social identities and how language use can shape and reflect social relationships.

Text 1. Inclusion: By the expression of inclusion, the nation tends to curb insecurity and drastically minimize migration in that people are involved and included in both cultural and political affairs.
Text 2. Empowerment: Engaging individuals or communities in meaningful means of livelihood either by self-employment or government employed gives them right to exercise and participate in national and international issues without fear. Empowerment can be through education, skill acquisition and trade.
Text 3. Justice: By addressing the root cause of problems, giving equal opportunities, not discriminating and passing judgments with sentiment but rather devoid of sentiment and favour then individuals and communities feel secured and stay put.
Text 4. Social Cohesion: The expression of communal unity reduces conflict, violence, tension and other social vices. Social cohesion entails giving the masses sense of belonging which fosters unity, peace and security in a nation.
Text 5. Integration: By ensuring that people are involved in decision-making, taking responsibilities in community works promote security and reduce migration.
Text 6. Equality: Expressing that people are giving equal services, rights, healthcare, education and employment without discrimination promotes security and cuts down the level of migration.

Text 7. Participatory Governance: Language use that allows people or community to be active in government affairs maximize development, economic growth and builds up security.

Text 8. Sustainable Development: Creating favourable projects and carrying the people along makes them feel secured than exploitation.

The above reformative lexemes support Tajfel and Turner's SIT ideas which emphasizes on social identity as a component of self-concept and group membership for individual or community growth towards a better and secured nation.

Text 9. Transparency: By expressing a transparent system in community affairs, the masses feel secured than to hoard valuables for future use instead of satisfying people's need.

Text 10. Peaceful Coexistence: Ensuring that peace reigns in the community between the various groups and the government enhances security more.

Text 11. Compassionate Leadership: In a society where the leaders exhibit the attributes of compassion attracts support and security for all while migration occurs at will.

Text 12. Dialogue: The expression of calling for dialogue in a community is the best measure to combat insecurity and migration. Dialogue is always better than polarization.

Text 13. Mutual Understanding: By expressing mutual understanding about the root cause of problems in a society, peace, unity and development becomes the order of the day than violence.

Text 14. Partnership: This bridges division and promotes success which enhances security,

Text 15. Hope: Giving hope to the people or community tends to provide a secured environment than the expression of despair.

Text 16. Resilience: In a society where people tirelessly work together to succeed in the face of challenges promote security and reduce migration.

Text 17. Protection: By ensuring that lives and properties are secured minimizes insecurity and migration.

Text 18. Globalization Solidarity: Rather than talking about global conflicts which creates fear and anxiety, people are more secured with news of global solidarity.

Text 19. Education: Empowering people or the community can be achieved through education better self-concept and development of the society at large.

Text 20.Conflict Resolution: By amicably resolving issues through dialogue than confrontational tunes promote security and drastically minimize migration.

Text 21. Human Centered Policies: The expression that is focused on human beneficial policy reduces insecurity and tends to promote economic growth than the focus on political ideologies.

Text 22. Cultural Diversity: This ensures that cultural varieties are well embraced to the societal norms and values for a more secured nation.

Text 23: Accountability: Nothing triggers violence which results to insecurity more than impunity. Non being accountable to the masses gives rise to migration.

Text 24. Community-led Initiatives: By expressing and ensuring grass root ideas and allowing the people to initiate projects for human development and economic growth promotes security than initiatives from top to down.

Text 25. Human Rights: Making human rights a priority than national security minimize insecurity and migration.

The above reformative lexemes reflected the social identity theory (SIT) to maintain and retain the individuals or societies for economic growth, interpersonal relationship, positive social change and secured nation. They are also capable of reforming the narratives of insecurity and migration in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study concludes that appropriate language use facilitates understanding, encourages unity and hard work. The identified reformative lexemes are capable of creating a more secured, equitable, peaceful and favourable Nigeria for all. Again, making the people get involved and participate in decision-making, giving equal rights/opportunities, supporting community-led initiatives, providing means of financial resources and supporting social connection will certainly arrest the narrative of insecurity and migration for a secured and productive Nigeria.

Recommendations

The study recommends that government leaders, top rank politicians, the masses and communities should adopt the use of these lexemes; empowering, inclusion, resilience, transparency, education, accountability etc that express "us", "we", "together" in speech making, interactions and actions during the day to day activities with the populace. Again, expressions with encouraging and supportive utterances to individuals or communities during challenging periods, aids in promoting security and reducing migration.

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