

Calabar lesbian cryptic languages

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Abstract

Africa does not guarantee the freedom of transgender people, still, this practice is spreading across regions, traditional cults and cultures within the continent (Kwame & Aderinto, 2009, p. 125). This sexual revolution is acknowledged as clandestine. It is also viewed more than ever in Nigeria and some sub-Saharan African countries as being against African humanness, (Onuah, 2014). In this paper, we focus on the use of this sociolect among lesbians in Calabar which was conceived out of the societal strict pressure-seeking conformity to the cultural and traditional norms through symbolic violence, expelling lesbians from school. To this effect, twenty female students who attended female single public schools were interviewed. This is in order to find out the prevalence of the language's use, how messages are encoded using this language form, as well as how the language can easily be decoded. The sociolect is also interpreted to English using the codes invented and utilized by this lesbian community, with the help of the informants, and the support of semiotic and linguistic cryptanalysis.

Introduction

The use of cryptic language by humans is not new. It had been practiced in Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, Greece, The Roman Empire, Persia, Russia, and Britain (Gem, 2006 (2014), pp. 17–18, Gardner, 1972, p. 46). These sources also record that this form of language was used in World War I and II. Herodotus (484–420, BC), the Greek historian has reported that the cryptic language had been in use before the birth of Jesus Christ. It was being affirmed that “in a complicated plot”, by the Greeks against the Persians, Histiaeus earned a place in the pantheon of secret messages, wishing to prompt a rebellion against Darius, but stranded in court in his role as ambassador...” (Gem, 2006, p. 17; Rousselet, 2006, p. 12).

The fear of attacks and dreadful feeling of being punished by the state and the conservatives who inherit and enforce lay down norms and customs threaten the activities of lesbians. Parents and teachers who are important agents of behaviour building in a child's

formative years aid to nip lesbian behaviours in the bud by disapproving of them, expelling any student cut in the lesbian activities. These realities compelled lesbians in the single public secondary or high schools to create their own cryptic languages (secret codes) and use them as they go about their daily socio-educational activities. They live within the same society as others but operate outside the scope of the established social norms and culture that sustain symbolic violence against them; constraining them to create a cult group with a particularity in linguistic identity.

This is in order to shield their lesbian sexual orientations. Crypto-linguistic subtleties have been used in technical security intelligence and computational linguistics for the purpose of national security espionage and diplomatic confidentiality (Mattingly, 2012). However, this research focuses on steganography linguistics which is grafted into socio-linguistics in the Calabar lesbian context.

In the course of this work, we initially embarked on looking at the reasons for the use of these codes, the effect of such usage on users and non-users alike, the form and structure of the language as well as the freedom it enables the lesbians in the University of Calabar setting to have. However, upon interviewing our subjects, the compass shifted to the cryptographic linguistic system which galvanizes this sociolect (spoken codes) and became the fascinating aspect of this work.

Definition of terms

Lesbian cryptic language: it is a lingua incognita invented to make the public unaware of the practices of the lesbian social community. It is a sociolect which has cryptographic structures and values as well as special spoken codes to aid esoteric communication.

Semiotic and linguistic cryptanalysis: it is a framework developed in this work to explain how to decode assigned secret semantics to the already general accepted meaning of the normal graphemes, numeric symbols (codes) or the combination of both.

Cipher: it is art of writing alphanumeric symbols to conceal meaning from the general public.

Ciphertext: it is the presentation of the cryptic language in its ciphered form.

Plaintext: it is normal alphabet of a standard language.

Calabar: it is the Capital city of cross River State, South-South, Nigeria. It is so believed to be the tourism and cultural Capital of Nigeria where it plays host to the popular yearly Carnival referred to as Africa's largest street party.

Literature Review

There are many cryptic languages around the globe such as Opish, Tut Latin and Pig Latin in English, Zaurance in Hausa etc. To decipher Opish, one has to add the two glyphs combination 'op' after each consonant. For example 'Cook' transforms into 'Copookop' and 'coke' is 'copokope'. (Gem, 2006 (2014), p. 21) whereas the Pig Latin is considered as the simplest and popular with children then, one needs to follow the three basic guidelines:

[Sic]

- Words that start with vowels have ‘ay’ added to the end, so ‘actually’ becomes ‘actuallyay’.
- For words starting with a consonant, that letter is moved to the back, and then ‘ay’ is added at the end, so ‘can’ becomes ‘ancay’.
- If two consonants are at the start, they are moved to the end, adding ‘ay’, so ‘speak’ becomes ‘eakspay’.

[Sic] (id.)

As for Calabar lesbian spoken codes, it is simple to decipher too similarly to those ones above but the added glyph is a long vowel ‘[a:]’ with Arabic numerals not a combination of vowel and consonant (‘op’ and ‘ay’). The cryptic language – Spoken codes’ usage in Calabar city has taken different pattern from those ones around the world. It centres on the transformation of the English plain alphabet whereas Pig Latin, Tut Latin, Opish, Cockney Rhyming slang and Zaurance lay emphasis on the word-metamorphosis. Zaurance in Hausa adds a combination of a vowel and a consonant for example ‘da’, ‘ki’ or ‘ni’ to a syllabic sound to dissimulate meanings from the third parties especially parents and friends cf. Calabar lesbian cryptic spoken codes language, if one wants to get Calabar lesbian ciphertext, one needs to add the vowel ‘a’ to the end of the consonant phonemes whereas the five vowels for instance in English are represented by the serial numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, and 5). To this respect Peterson has to emphasis on the writing system formation. He opined that

“Before you sit down to create glyphs, several questions have to be answered first – specifically, who are the speakers of the language who need a writing system? Where do they live? What plants and animals are around them? What resources are available to them? These are the same kinds of questions a language creator has to answer, but in drafting a writing system, they take on a different significance” (2015, p. 172).

Therefore, the Calabar lesbians have checked all these criteria and invented their spoken and writing systems which are formed from the Standard English orthography.

Methodology and theoretical framework

The data of this research was fetched through passive participation and observation as well as unstructured interviews. We, therefore, develop a framework called semiotic and linguistic cryptanalysis to explain the cryptic language version of the lesbians in Calabar, Nigeria.

This research report is in two phases. Phase one deals with the presentation and analysis of data on lesbian community and her cryptic language. The second part is where the semiotic and linguistic cryptanalysis is emphasised. This later part will help us understand the conceptual semantics (Jackendoff, 1990, p. 38) of these lesbian codes.

Significance of the study

This research is of help especially to parents, teachers, lecturers, matrons, guardians and care givers who may wish to protect their wards from strange sexual orientations such as same sex relationships, as far as the Nigerian community is concerned.

Table I

S/n	Single School attended	Age	Public school type	Moral Perception	Freedom for LB	Sociolect	Violence in school
1	Annunciation Girls' Juniorate, Ogoja, Cross River State	16-18	Roman Catholic School	Demonic and spiritual act	No	No idea	No idea
2	Assumption Girls' Juniorate, Ndo-Ebom Akwa Ibom State	20-19	Roman Catholic School	Taboo, and demonic	No	Yes	Seniors forcing juniors
3	Holy Child Secondary school, Mount Camel Ogoja	11-18	Roman Catholic School	Demonic initiation & luck destroyer	No,	No idea	Seniors Enticing juniors
4	Federal Government Girls' College, Calabar	10-16	FGGC	Abomination	No	No idea	No idea
5	Immaculate Conception Secondary School. Itak-Ikono, Uyo.	10-18	Roman Catholic School	Disgusting	No	Yes	Seniors forcing juniors
6	Infant Jesus Model Secondary School, Oron-Ake.	10-18	Roman Catholic School	Disgust, Taboo	No	Yes	Seniors forcing juniors
7	Ederely Memorial Girls Secondary School, Calabar.	9-22	Protestant School	Taboo	No	Yes	Seniors cajoling juniors into it.
8	Federal Girls Government College, Calabar.	15-20	FGGC	Unnatural	Yes	Yes	School mother and daughter
9	Federal Girls Government College, Kano	8-20	FGGC	Taboo	No	Yes	Fanaticism of parents and teacher
10	Holy Child Secondary School, Hills Marian, Calabar.	17-18	Roman Catholic School	Taboo, demonic	No	Yes	Seniors forcing juniors
11	Holy Child Secondary School, Marian Hills, Calabar.	9-15	Roman Catholic School	Taboo, pervasion	No	Yes	Seniors punishing the juniors

Table I

S/n	Single School attended	Age	Public school type	Moral Perception	Freedom for LB	Sociolect	Violence in school
12	Federal Girls Government College, Calabar.	18–20	FGGC	Evil	No	Yes	Seniors enticing the juniors
13	Holy Child Mount Camel, Ogoja.	16–40	Roman Catholic School	Taboo	No	Yes	Senior ladies Seducing juniors
14	Holy Child Secondary School, Marian Hills, Calabar	9–15	Roman Catholic School	Perversion	No	Yes	Senior punishing junior
15	Federal Girls Government College, Calabar.	14–18	FGGC	Taboo	No	Yes	Enticing
16	Annunciation Girls' Juniorate	13–19	Roman Catholic School	Immoral act	No	Yes	Seniors forcing juniors
17	Federal Girls' Government College, Calabar.	10–21	FGGC	Dirty, irreligious	No	Yes	Seniors versus juniors
18	Egderely Memorial Girls' Secondary School, Calabar	9–18	Protestant School	Evil	No	Yes	Seniors versus seniors
19	Holy Rosary Secondary School, Abia	15–18	Roman Catholic	Disgust, occult initiation	No	Yes	School mothers molesting school daughters
20	Federal Girls Government College, Calabar.	10–16	FGGC	Irreligious, barbaric, taboo	No	Yes	No idea.

Background information on Calabar lesbians

These data below present the background of the respondents before coming to the University of Calabar to further their studies. We can see from this **Table I** that there are categorically three single public schools here: Roman Catholic Schools, Federal Government Girls Colleges and Protestant schools. It is only number eight person who attended Federal Government Girls' College, Calabar that canvassed freedom for the lesbian although even she and the rest of the nineteen respondents affirmed that the lesbian arts as unnatural and taboo against the cultural ethics and values of the African womanhood. Among the twenty respondents only two reported not having the idea of violence committed by the lesbian's community against the fresh students in the boarding house whom they did victimise to join them in the lesbianism. Only three of the twenty are reported not aware of the lesbian sociolect what we tagged as Calabar lesbian cryptic languages.

Data Analysis of the Calabar Lesbian Community

Table II: Distribution of the increase in the practice of lesbianism in Single Public schools

s/n	Single Public Schools	Age	Students/20
1	Protestant Schools (PS)	9-22	2
2	Federal Government Girls College (FGGC)	8-21	7
3	Roman Catholic Schools (RCS)	9-40	11

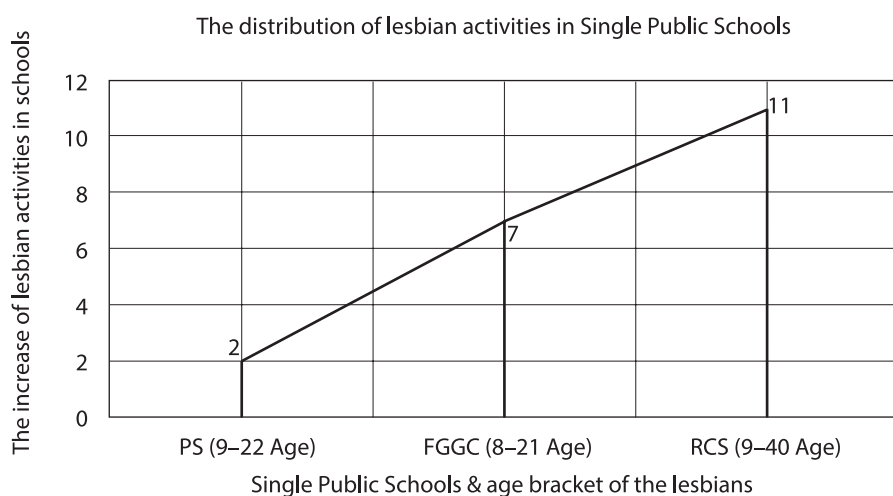


Figure 1: Lesbian activities are observed to be on increase in Calabar City and its environs particularly in the Roman Catholic Girls' public schools. Eleven out of every twenty female students which are in the University of Calabar may have participated in the act or seen other mates making love in the hostel. This is compared to those of the Federal Government Girls Colleges within the South-South region where for every twenty female students admitted into the University of Calabar, seven are lesbians. Whereas, in the Protestant Schools, two out of every twenty students are either lesbians, might have participated in it or are witness to this fact.

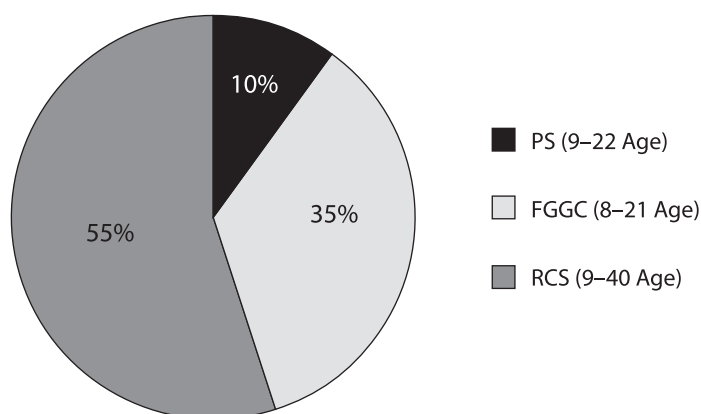


Figure 2: The proportion of the growth of the lesbian act in the City of Calabar and her environs are viz: Roman Catholic Schools have the highest percentage with 55%. Federal Government Girls College with 35% whereas the Protestant schools have only 10%. It means, the religious institution contributes 90% of the lesbian activities in Calabar and her regions in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria than any other social institutions. Lesbianism is fast growing due to the material benefit attached to this sexual orientation in the Calabar city. Adeniran (2012) confirms the report of a lesbian called Ufot, who said that “her lesbian partner bought a Nokia X3 phone for her, and often gave her money. She recounted that each time she made a move to return to school, her lesbian partner would weep and discourage her.” It is believed that even men in Calabar prefer to relate sexually with lesbians compared to ladies with regular sexual orientations.” Cash and kinds encourage the increase of lesbian activities in Calabar.

Intimidation and victimization of non-members by participants in Lesbian activities

We have dealt with the violence orchestrated by the students who are lesbians against non-lesbians in public schools, in the analysis and the presentation of data above. The analysis also looks at how the lesbian population instigate fear in newly admitted students in order to recruit them into the act. We report also the rash judgment of the school authority in the name of salvaging the situation and saving the new students for example expelling lesbians from schools is not an option for the authorities. It is a denial of their right to education. Instead, psychotherapy, proper guidance and counselling could be of enormous help to change their perception towards the practice, which will encourage their putting an end to it.

It is popularly believed that single female public schools are the standard trustworthy conservative institutions set in other to raise students to attain academic and moral excellence. It is for this reason that very religious fanatical parents send their children into such citadels.

However, our findings stand contrary to this traditional belief or rather this fact because socio-cultural decadence, violence against the female child among other things are also very prevalent in Single public schools where Senior students and self-declared school mothers force, entice and cajole the juniors in the hostels to practice lesbianism, abortion and prostitution.

Acts of discipline on those who practice lesbianism in Secondary Schools

We note that in 2012, thirty six senior secondary school III (SSS III) students in Annunciation Girls' Juniorate, Ogoja, were expelled from school by Rev. Sister Theresa, the principal, for engaging in lesbianism. Out of thirty-six accused, six of them were vindicated but they still served the same punishment said our informants.

Our respondents were not bold enough to say that they are still lesbians. Two of the twenty respondents told us that they practiced it in the single high school but they are no longer involved in the lesbian activities because they realised it is evil and caused some health issues such as the cancer of the clitoris, vagina wall scrubbing, hormonal imbalance, barrenness etc. One said since she was prayed over by her Pastor, the spirit of lesbianism left her, she did not have any urge for that sexual orientation. That is how she got herself out of it. Lesbians preferred not to be known by the general public in Nigerian society. They claimed to abhor same sex relationship

Most of the female hostels in public high schools and universities within the geopolitical zone are informally endemic centres for breeding lesbians. Lesbian activities transcend single secondary or high schools mixed sex higher institutions when participants graduate from the earlier to the later. The widespread practice of lesbianism is perceived to be disgusting, taboo, a pact with the devil and a dirty lifestyle (see **Table I** above). However, they continue to involve themselves in it without the knowledge of their parents and teachers. Lesbian partners in the Immaculate Conception Secondary School, Itak-Ikono, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State celebrate marriages openly, among their student counterparts in the hostels says our informant.

In brief, we observed that the unique unifying factor among all the practicing lesbians and ex-lesbians of higher class in the schools is the cryptic language and the adornment language. Even though, most of African nations still perceive this sex revolution as an aberration to humanity due to her conservative inclination, Europe and America are at the stage of undergoing linguistic mutation of neutralising the gender status itself completely under aegis of the post-human concept of the post-colonial era. This gender neutrality reflects in their languages now namely Swedish and Finish languages adopted "hen" and "hän" as neutral pronoun respectively whereas English approved "ze" to replace "he" and "she" (Odroważ-Coates, 2015, pp. 113–133, PNW Staff, 2016).

Semiotic and linguistic cryptanalysis

Cryptic language is conceived to protect lesbians' interests and aid esoteric communication among members in Calabar and its environs. It denotes emotional and sexual liberation, as well as anthropological security. Conventional codes are encrypted to give the lesbians freedom of expression within the Nigerian setting due to the societal persecution and socio-educational violence against the Lesbians, Gay and Transgender people generally... This language is different from lavender linguistics of the homosexuals developed by William Leap: a linguistic study of how LGBT use vocabularies, and pronouncing

them... (Kulick, 2000). Calabar lesbian cryptic languages are forms of cryptography. Youths involved in this act, do rap lyrics, speak in codes and write secret ciphers in order to communicate among themselves. We discovered that the ciphers can be spoken, written and encrypted or enciphered using any language of the world. Calabar lesbian languages' forms differ from Gary Goldschneider's secret language which reads people's personalities, relationships and destinies through these persons' dates of birth. The cryptic languages discovered in this research are distinct and depend on already existing languages for their materials (vowel combinations). The lesbian cryptic languages are of three forms namely: the secret numeric language, the spoken codes cryptic language and the adornment language (a form of non-verbal communication).

1. The secret numeric language

This involves the use of symbolic Arabic numerical figures to express hidden meaning among dating and married lesbian lovers. Onwuzurike who does not seem to be familiar with the lesbian cryptic language rather called it, "love codes". In a personal interview with Onwuzurike, she asserted that

"It is just to have a different and unique language from the normal stuff. Just two of us can understand the love codes. It is an imaginary language. I use codes to show how much I love my guy. I was in love with someone and I wanted things to be different and unique. Then, the love codes just came to my mind as an inspiration. I never knew others know about it, initially. Love codes became our language." (2016)

This lady is not the first person to invent love codes in order to keep her love affairs secret. It had been practiced in England since the nineteenth century. Albeit, it was tagged "playfair cipher or Baron playfair": According to Gem (2006 (2014), p. 55) "in Victorian times, when courtship was regulated by social etiquette, lovers would communicate through coded messages in newspaper personal columns, especially the Times." Therefore, love between opposite sex as well as the same sex is always enigmatic.

Semantic cryptanalysis

In order to decipher the meaning of the symbolic numeric form of this lesbian language, one needs a profound sense of imagination. However, to get its meaning is not as sophisticated as it requires systematic arithmetic modulation knowledge, statistics and theories which are needed in computational linguistics. In Hebrew, there is a similar interpretive method called gematria. Lizorkin-Eyzeneberg (2016) says that

"Gematria is well-known as a Jewish interpretive method that assigns numerical values of Hebrew letters to words, phrases and/or sentences. Then, by adding them together, seeks to determine their deeper meaning. Sometimes that connection is farfetched, but sometimes it is quite clear."

The scholar went ahead to give the example of the Roman Emperor, Nero Ceaser whose name in Hebrew stands for the numeric value, 666, whereas Calabar lesbian secret

numeric language differs from the gematria in setting serial figures for glyphs that built up a word.

This particular secret numeric writing is read horizontally in one, two, three, four and six digits as it is illustrated in the **Table III** below:

Table III. Calabar Lesbians Secret Numeric language

Cipher	Connotation
1	I
69	Sex
143	I love you
145	I love pussy/penis/butts/boobs/boots.
146	I love penfig.
147	I love someone.
1434	I love you more.
1437	I love you scatter.
14697	I love sex scatter.
142469	I love to have sex.

As shown in the Table III above, the numbers used for composing this secret language stand for letters. For instance,

- 1 stands for the one letter word “I”.
- 2 stands for the two letter word “to”.
- 3 stands for the three-letter words “you”.
- 4 stands for the four-letter words “have/love/like”.
- 5 stands for the five-letter word “Penis/pussy/butts/boobs/boots/titis”.

6 stands for the six-letter words “penfig i.e. penis and finger which are clipped and blended to form the secret word.

7 stands for the seven-letter words: “perfect/scatter/someone”. It should be noted that penfig is a lesbian act of fingering a female-lesbian or the use of the finger instead of the penis.

69: It is being believed that 6 and 9 are opposite to each other. Therefore, it is interpreted by the lesbians as sexual intercourse. 6 stands for lesbian and 9 stands for tomboy (male-lesbian).

In Calabar lesbian language, “Scatter” denotes a high degree of passion, which can be equated to “being crazy over someone” as a popular romantic expression, “I can do anything for you or I love you with my whole being”. Scatter is a seven letter-word. In a new lesbian linguistic style, the word “scatter” is shorten to “scara”. Seven is a number that stands for wholeness, perfection and completion etc. According to Nozedar,

“Seven gives a pivotal point to the indecision of the number 6, rendering it satisfyingly complete and whole. Very early on, it seems, this number was given special status as a number of completeness and perfection. For the Ancient Egyptians, 7 was the number of eternal life.” (2009, p. 338)

However, the Calabar lesbians consider seven to be a symbol which connotes unquantifiable love for one another within their circle. “Someone” can be what they call a bed-warmer (a female lesbian who is invited to keep company with a tomboy) who may later turn to become an unfaithful partner in lesbian world.

II. The Spoken Cryptic Language

In this language pattern, the cipher is alphanumeric in nature. The vowels are turned into numeric values whereas English consonant glyphs are suffixed with the long vowel “a” to creatively interfere with general speakers’ linguistic knowledge of the English language. This renders it comprehensible only for lesbian speakers. These spoken codes are used among the youths in single high schools and the University’s female hostels. It is important to note that female Nigerian students are not the first to invent this type of sociolect. Such secret spoken codes are used around the globe. Examples include Pig and Tut Latin, Opish i.e. Turkey Irish, Cockney Rhyming slang, leet (Gem, 2006 (2014), pp. 20–21) as well as Zaurance in Hausa.

Calabar lesbian cipher alphabet and its transcription

Plaintext(English alphabet): A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Table IV: Ciphertext:

1 [wʌn]	2 [tu:]	3 θ.i.i.]	Ma [mɑ:]	Qa [kɑ:]	5 [faiv]	Ya [jɑ:]
Ba [bɑ:]	Fa [fɑ:]	Ja [dʒɑ:]	Na [nɑ:]	Ra [rɑ:]	Va [vɑ:]	Za [zɑ:]
Ca [kɑ:]	Ga [gɑ:]	Ka [kɑ:]	4 [fɔ:]	Sa [sɑ:]	Wa [wɔ]	
Da [dɑ:]	Ha [hɑ:]	La [lɑ:]	Pa [pɑ:]	Ta [tɑ:]	Xa [zæ]	

Lesbian cryptic language vowels: A = 1, E = 2, I = 3, O = 4, U = 5.

Lesbian cryptic language consonant (combinations of vowels and consonants which stand for their consonants) ba, ca, da, fa, ga, ha, ja, ka, la, ma, na, pa, qa ra sa, ta va wa, ya za.

One can use this cryptic language enciphered in English pattern method to encode in any language in the universe. Taking French as an example, it is made up of six vowels and twenty consonants out of the 26 alphabetic letters, (Riegel, M. et al., 81, 114–123). The six vowels are represented by numbers serially as thus: A = 1, E = 2, I = 3, O = 4, U = 5 and Y = 6. Therefore, the vowel glyph ‘a’ would be suffixed to the consonant phonemes in other to get the ciphertext of the cryptic language using French linguistic symbols. The only variance in applying the lesbian cryptic language in every standardized languages is the oral pronunciation of the cryptic language – spoken codes.

The Prototype of the Calabar lesbian Cryptic Language (Spoken Codes and Secret Writing)

Calabar lesbian cryptic language is a distinct language because its linguistic characteristics (morphology, phonology, syntax, and semantics) can be built after the pattern of existing languages. It is both written and spoken language. For instance, a lesbian's letter to her lover is written thus:

Ba1baya ga3rala, 3 la4va2 5. 5 1ra2 sa4 ba215ta3fa5la. 3 na22da 5 3na maya la3fa2. Wa3lala 5 la4va2 ta4 ba2 maya fara32nada? 3 para4ma3sa2 ta4 la4va2 5 1nada 5 1la4na2. Ra2palaya !

Letter written by Dopy

English Translation

Baby girl, I love you. You are so beautiful. I need you in my life. Will you love to be my friend? I promise to love you and you alone. Reply!

Table V: Syllabic Count for cryptanalysis.

S/n	Words	Syllabi
1	Ba1baya [ba:/wΛn/ba:/ja:]	4
2	Ga3rala [ga:/θii:/ia:/la:]	4
3	3 [θii:]	1
4	La4va2 [la:/fɔ:/va:/tu:]	4
5	5 [faiv].	2
6	1ra2 [wΛn/ia:/tu:]	3
7	Sa4 [sa:fɔ:]	2
8	Ba215ta3fa5la [ba/tu:/wΛn/fa/iv/ ta:/fa:/fa/iv/la:]	10
9	Na22da [na:/tu:/tu:/da:]	4
10	3na [θii:/na:]	2
11	Maya [ma:/ja:]	2
12	La3fa2 [la:/θii:/fa:/tu:]	4
13	Ta4[ta:/fɔ:]	2
14	Ba2 [ba:/tu:]	2
15	Fara32nada [fa:/ia:/θii:/tu:/na:/da:]	6
16	para4ma3sa2 [pa:/ia:/fɔ:/ma:/θii:/sa:]	6
17	1nada [wΛn/na:/da:]	3
18	1la4na2 [wΛn/la:/fɔ:/na:/fa/iv]	6
19	Ra2palaya [ia:/tu:/pa:/la:/ja:]	5

Transcription

[ba:wʌnba:ja:] [ga:θi:i:ia:la:] [θi:i:] [la:fə:va:tu:] [faiv]. [faiv] [wʌn.ia:tu:] [sa:fə:]
 [ba:tu:wʌnfaivta:fa:faivla:]. [θi:i:] [na:tu:tu:da:] [faiv] [θi:i:na:] [ma:ja:] [la:θi:i:fa:tu:].
 [wɒθi:i:la:la:] [faiv] [la:fə:va:tu:] [ta:fə:] [ba:tu:] [ma:ja:] [fa:ia:θi:i:tu:na:da:]? [θi:i:]
 [pa:ia:fə:ma:θi:i:sa:] [ta:fə:] [la:fə:va:tu:] [faiv] [wʌnna:da:] [faiv] [wʌnla:fə:na:faiv].
 [ia:tu:pa:la:ja:].

Analysis of the Spoken Codes of Calabar lesbian cryptic language.

In the Spoken Calabar lesbian cryptic language, the commonest sound is the long single vowel [a:]. It is added to every consonant before any vowel sound that is represented by the first five Arabic numerals. The pronunciation is read in syllabic stress speedily so that the non-members will not fathom the conversations or dialogue at hand. (See the syllabic pronunciation of the transcribed letter written by Dopy, one of the informants.)

Vowel combinations

There are only three words that have combined vowels. Two of them have diphthongs and one of them has a triphthong. For example, the triphthong, Ba215tafa5la [ba:tu:wʌnfaivta:fa:faivla:] means beautiful in English. The triphthong 'eau' is found in the word beautiful. In cryptic language it is represented by 215. Na22da [na:tu:tu:da:] means need in proper English. The diphthong is 'ee' represented by 22. The diphthong, Fara32nada [fa:ia:θi:i:tu:na:da:] means friend in English. The diphthong 'ie' is represented by 32.

III. The Adornment language

Apart from the cryptic language that Calabar lesbians have developed as a communication art, they also invented a form of non-verbal communication which we tag lesbian adornment language. Adornment language is the symbolic language of wearing objects to depict hidden meaning, such as

1. The wearing of anklets on the left or the right ankle.
2. The wearing of a silver ring on the right thumb
3. The wearing of a nose ring.

Lesbians read significant meaning to these adornments as means of identity. Most non-lesbians in the city of Calabar see these adornments to be making ordinary fashion statements. An anklet worn on the left ankle is a symbolic declaration of membership of the lesbian community while adorning an anklet worn on the right ankle means normal fashion in general sense but for lesbian it means married lesbian, not opened for any relationship. Also, wearing a silver ring on the right thumb is symbolic virility of the tomboy. Putting on a nose ring by women in the northern and some parts of western Nigeria is considered normal. However, in South-South Nigeria, especially in Calabar, it is a symbol recently adopted by lesbians who are hoping to be spotted and by tomboys for engagement in intimate relationships.

The quest for freedom of expression is inborn in all human beings, (Joseph, 2016, p. 20). Human being by nature is rebellious. Therefore, marginalization engenders motivation for creating means and avenues for expression. Lesbians in Calabar have not only invented

something new but also unique. Angela Davis, an American musician, and Bob Marley, the Jamaican musician are known by their hair cut, with which their revolutionary ideology for freedom were propagated, said Tilles and Grund (2013, p. 75) Their collective resolution is to exist behind the eyes of the public and forge a means of communication in order to survive even in a hostile environment.

Conclusion

Cryptic language is usually invented to seclude the communication of members of a group from the general public. Calabar lesbians have been fascinating in this imaginative invention to give particularity to the sexual orientation and also protect themselves from attacks from the wider community where they operate... In this research, we established the existence of the lesbian cryptic languages and identified their phonological and graphic structures. We have also interpreted a script written with these linguistic symbols. The nonverbal communication cues used by the community under study has also been identified. Since same sex relations are still taboo in the Nigerian society as a whole, and Calabar society in particular, children and students of primary, secondary and tertiary levels can be educated on how to identify members of the lesbian community in order to stay away from them. The tide in the skyrocketing increase in the practices of this unacceptable socio-cultural group can also be stemmed through knowledge of these unique lesbian languages. This is because their being secret codes engenders widespread practice of their activities. Calabar is culturally an African window to the global community. This is because of her tourism inclinations. The viral spread of Lesbian acts poses grave concerns for the conservatives in Nigerian society and even around the world. PNW Staff (2016) says that "in government offices, universities, elementary schools, workplaces and even in the military, the transgender movement is invading both our culture and language like a deadly virus." The cryptic language of the lesbians namely: spoken codes, secret numeric writing and adornment language. Our discovery has helped us to identify two classes of lesbians in Calabar namely the higher and lower classes. What is referred to as higher here, is socio-economically determined by depth of experience and wealth of the participant. Conversely, the lower class consists of less wealthy and inexperienced members. In fact, some young ladies of lower class practise it without knowing that it is lesbianism whereas, those of the higher class are the ones using the cryptic language to puzzle the non-participants. Those experienced in lesbian activities invented and developed this form of language to initiate members into this group and conceal their unacceptable activities in the African setting.

Lesbianism is popularly believed to be diabolic, taboo, disgusting and irreligious. Therefore, socio-educational violence is inevitable.

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