

Making Sense of Male Varieties of Language in Small Group Communication

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Abstract: *A remarkably vast number of studies describing the characteristics of men's and women's language have already been published by sociolinguists such as Trudgill (1974), Lakoff (1975), Coates (1986), Tannen (1990) etc. These studies highlighted gender differences based on language taking into account cultural, ethnic, and psychological dimensions. Early studies were largely impressionistic and anecdotal, but more recent works have begun to provide empirical evidence. In the same article, the author has tried to describe six types of the languages used by men namely: Esikweta, Troepitaal, Tsotsitaal, Boop lingo, Indubil and Kongobalula. Indeed, the variety of language used by men is not always innovative; it is also progressive in the way that it increases far in identity and solidarity, a way to create and maintain this solidarity between men. Generally speaking, the languages of men are innovators than those of women. That is, the linguistic variety of men is not always standard, it also serves for taboo.*

Keywords:

- a) *Abakwetha*: (Initiate in Xhosa, South Africa).
- b) *Isikwetha*: (language of initiation in Xhosa traditional life).
- c) *Nsm*: (A traditional language of initiation used by Ding tribesmen in DRC).
- d) *Nswomeba*: (Initiate in Ding tribe in DRC).
- e) *Troepitaal*: (Slang used within the South African army forces from 1960 to 1980s).
- f) *Tsotsitaal*: (Variety of male language uses particularly by teenagers in South Africa originated from different linguistic and cultural background who have been brought together in a new urban environment, who have supposed to form a new identity different with that of their tradition rural background of their parents).
- g) *Boop lingo*: (is prisoners' tricky language. The antilanguage. It functions as a language of solidarity for prison inmates).
- h) *Bloubaadjie*: (A long - term prisoner) in Afrikaans.
- i) *Springbok*: (A prisoner who escapes).
- j) *Wazurubaya/Lifelo*: (Central prison Makala in Kinshasa DRC).
- k) *Ko lia coin*: (to escape from the prison) in *Lingala* one of the four national language of DRC.
- l) *Engambé*: (Prisoners' leader) in *Lingala*.
- m) *Indubil*: (A kind of prisoners' jargon in DRC).
- n) *Kongobalula*: (Reversed language or style. A tricky and secret language used among teenagers in Kwilu province in DRC).

1. Introduction

The present paper reports on ongoing research which deals with young male varieties of language, focusing on some South African and Congolese forms of speech. The research extends the concept of the (socio) linguistic variable to slang, and I attempt to show that adolescent' perceptions and assessments of their own social universe are embodied in a distinct argot which is their status terminology. Thus, the study will test the validity of assertions made by sundry scholars to characterize jargon or slang.

1.1. The research problem

The following specific research questions raised in this study: what are the rhetorical aspects of communicative behavior when group members successfully communicate? How did the communications of the participants contribute to their organizing behavior?

To examine my basic question, I raised indirectly several subsidiary questions to describe the symbolic acts that attempt to induce cooperation, the rhetorical strategies of each member including: how did the organization come into existence?

How did the communication behavior evolve? How does the collective behavior maintain itself? How does

communication relate to the development of organization and communication rules and norms and to the development of group and organizational culture? I began the research by studying the emergent informal communication channels. I document and interpret the shared group fantasies which helped create the small group subcultures and contributed to the organizational mythology.

In this paper, I concentrate on the shared fantasies relating to power, authority, and gender within the organization. In doing so, I do not intent to place an undue emphasis upon their influence in the total communication system which developed. I think that these fantasies were important and influential, and I have selected the material that in my judgment was most significant for my analysis. But I make no case for the shared fantasies as being sufficient to account for the novel aspects of this organization. Furthermore, I argue that the shared fantasies play a significant role in the symbolic interpretation and resolution of conflicts.

Similarly on the basis of the evidence gathered from the comprehensive case study of all the communication involved in creating and sustaining the organization, I formulated the following question to guide the development of this report: what was the influence of shared fantasies on male roles in regard to solidarity and within the small groups and in the organization?

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2. Methodology

The instruments used for collecting data of this investigation were, interviews, by choosing free - flowing interviews with selected informants, tape recorder, books, journals and articles. The target population were the group of male teenagers in DRC and South Africa and in the capital city of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In DRC, the investigation took place from 2019 - 2022. The target places were different public places such as the bus stations, buses, the markets, the universities, the stadiums and the restaurants. Whereas in South Africa the research study was conducted at the University of South Africa (Unisa) during the period from 2005 to 2008 when I was a postgraduate student, at the neighborhood of Sunny Side, a popular area in the center of Pretoria, where I was staying. The library of Unisa, helped me to get enough materials related to male varieties of languages too.

3. Study theoretical background

For several decades anthropologists have pointed to adolescent initiation ceremonies of non - Western peoples as examples of alternatives or supplements to formal schooling. There have been very few attempts to evaluate objectively what is learned by initiates in particular ceremonies. Most accounts focus on details of the ritual themselves, outcomes for individuals are reported (if at all) in terms of cultural stereotypes.

Anthropologists and linguists have known for some time that differences in language also tied to gender. If sex is biological, gender is culturally constructed. The ideology of gender categories is typically enacted in linguistic practices. Indeed, it is through language that the individual cultural understandings of gender categories are learned and the coordination of gender roles achieved (Lakoff, 1975). Emphasis on embodied social relations makes possible public discussion of practices that are considered below the level of social significance or outside common discursive categories.

Male varieties of language constitute a category intended for languages which are used in initiation ceremonies or among initiated adults, which are not the native language of the community. This paper is a partial report of a comprehensive sociolinguistic study of the male varieties of some languages. My data are derived from field observations of peer group operating in their natural habitats. Much of my data on the boys' languages came from less structured contexts such as conversations in buses or public places. A considerable portion of my data was gathered in talks with youngsters at dances, parties, etc. Although the number of interviews with each informant has varied, I find that some of my six months on the basis of two or three tape - recorded interviews per month. The interviews were usually with individual informants, although occasionally small groups of two to four persons were interviewed.

3.1. Pragmatics of linguistic deviations in male varieties of language

Pragmatics is often restricted to the field of speech act theory, but in this context, it must not. Rather, its definition should be extended to the full range of regulated relations between words and the situation in which they are used. Fricke (1982) renews one important question, "is jargon defined by semantic or pragmatic conversation?" I agree with his negative answer "by none at all," and with his view that it will be more fruitful to take the opposite standpoint: jargon is constituted not only by rules but by the infraction of rules or some linguistic conventions. That is, it must be defined not by norms but are fulfilled by those norms that are violated. Thus, to initial question, the answer is obviously "it depends." What then is linguistic norm? According to Fricke (1982: 440 - 441), a pattern of verbal behavior is referred to as linguistic norm on the one hand if:

- It is relevant for communication success;
- It can be proved to be recurrently observed within a linguistic community;
- Disregard of it is recurrently penalized by the linguistic community with sanctions in such a way that;
- By and large no sanctions are accepted for its sake.

On the other hand, "deviation from linguistic norm fulfills a function if it establishes a relation which would not exist in this particular way without that deviation."

3.2. Gender identity: Making sense of masculinity

In many cultures, displaying characteristics not typical to one's gender may become a social problem for the individual. The discourse surrounding the notion of masculinity reveals that masculinity is not a conscious process. Within sociology according to Kluckhohn (1954), such labeling and conditioning is known as gender assumptions, and is a part of socialization to better match a culture's mores.

In some non - westernized societies men's spaces are separated social and cultural spaces, roles and norms available to men. It is the membership of these spaces that determines a male's manhood while failing to get a membership of this space amounts to being denied manhood, and be liable to queerhood, i. e., to be counted as a 'third gender' or a non - man male.

<http://www.wikipedia>. [accessed on August 6, 2012].

Also, masculinity is possessing qualities or characteristics considered typical of or appropriate to a man. The term can be used to describe any human, animal or object that has the quality of being masculine. The opposite can be expressed by terms such as unmanly or epicene. A typical near - synonym of masculinity is virility.

Constructs of masculinity vary across historical and cultural contexts. The dandy, for example, was regarded as an ideal of masculinity in the 19th century, but is considered "effeminate" by modern standards.

The extent to which masculinity is due to socialization versus inborn factors has been the subject of much debate. However, it seems rather clear that masculinity is

perpetuated through social institutions and enforced and policed through individual interaction. Some authors have introduced the idea of multiple masculinities rather than a single category that every man fits into. Thus, intersections and variations of masculinity based on race, location, culture, time period, age, ability, etc. Moreover, men and women can benefit from or be opposed by the expectations of masculinity that are meant to be hired up to in society.

3.3. Some characteristics of male and female speech

Labov (1985: 243) makes important observations with regard to the role of gender in the study of language in a social context. He concludes that ‘In careful speech, women use fewer stigmatized form than men and are more sensitive than men to the prestige pattern.

Women tend to change their style according to the social context in which they move, especially in formal situations. This is especially true of lower - middle - class women who fall into the habit of showing the most extreme form of this behavior. It is clear that women are more sensitive and intuitive than men to overt sociolinguistic values. They also tend to correct themselves more sharply than men.

For Hudson (1980) women’s speech is more conservative than men swear more, do not talk about emotions, talk about sport more, talk about women and machines in the same way, insult each other frequently, are competitive in conversation, speak with more authority, give more command, interrupt more. Note that some of these are objective descriptions, which can be verified (ask questions, give commands) while others express unscientific popular ideas about language and introduce non - linguistic value judgments (nag, speak with more authority). I also found that women talk more than men, talk too much, are more polite, are indecisive, hesitant, complain and nag, ask more questions, support each other, are more co - operative than men.

3.4. Youth culture

Adolescent orientations to their own social milieu are largely autonomous inasmuch as they are embodied in systems of meanings whose implications are not immediately apparent to adults (Cole, 1969). As stated formally, “the youth culture consists of those adolescent norms, standards and values which are discussed in a language particularly intelligible to members of this age - group. Youth culture contains a normative vision of social reality. It is embodied in a normative order predicated upon conceptions of those personal qualities which its members believe make a male admirable and a female desirable” (Schwartz and Merten, 1973: 220).

These authors further maintain that youth culture does not emerge out of a cultural vacuum but, as a cultural system, which consists of those norms, life styles, and ideals which are intimately associated with a variant, age - graded system of cultural meanings. In fact, every cultural system has internal normative inconsistencies, that is, the multitude of discrete norms which regulate a person’s relations with his peers are integrated into a meaningful system of action by

distinctively adolescent conceptions of personal worth (Grinder, 1970: 223 - 224) ” They also assert that “an adolescent’s estimation of his own interpersonal competence depends, to a great extent, upon whether the particular terms his peers use to describe his status have laudatory or pejorative connotations. These terms indicate whether he is able convincingly to present a ‘cool’ self - image in highly competitive social contexts.” (Grinder, 1970: 224)

In our present - day society, language is one of the most important things we possess and our main form of communicating with each other and showing our difference as men and women and also as individuals (Grice 1989). Sociolinguists have found that male speaking patterns have largely been taken for granted, whereas recent research has disclosed that various linguistic styles accompany various objectives of youth culture: sexual, mystical, religious, kicks, etc. Looking beyond artifacts of clothing and appearance, juveniles may be more accurately identified by their language and their social communication. The use of hemp or other narcotics, for example, is learned behavior transmitted through communication channels and social contexts already established. It is discussed and evaluated among the users in verbal and non - verbal acts distinct from those of the larger society. The language of any given “society” is part of its social heritage, passed from old generations to new ones. Drug language is as much a sign of ‘belongingness’ and ‘togetherness’ as it is a device for communicating the content of an experience. A social ritual to establish rapport or achieve solidarity, such communication is deliberately utilized with selective audiences.

The social setting in which communication occurs always affects it to some degree in various ways. More precisely, communication is affected by how individuals in a particular social setting define the situation. Such language is not only a group product and the embodiment of group interests; it is the necessary medium without which most it seems apparent that societal reactions to juveniles are due not entirely to criminalistic behavior, but mostly to a number of social disabilities that are popularly associated with deviance: unkempt appearance, inappropriate responses due to lack of interpersonal skills, and educational deficiencies (Becker, 1963).

3.5. Language in male adolescent society

Adolescent perceptions and assessments of their own social universe are embodied in a distinctive argot, their status terminology that they use with a demonstration of rhetorical flourish or skill (Burke, 1969). Though participation in dozens of conversations in a wide variety of venues, I have found that the best ones share an egalitarian commitment to process information. The diverse, casual stew produced by the informal model builds a sense of group cohesion. Indeed, everyone is welcome to talk with each other. Saying the words, allowing the dialogue, making dialogue happen is an act, a useful act in the moment. Audience members participate in the conversation on equal footing, with no waving of credentials or establishment of expertise (Austein, 1962). There is no pressure to show the depth of one’s critical acumen in order to be heard. Rather, the dialogue

often serves as a venue for the individual stories of audience [memberships].

We agree with Chafe (in Yasuhiks, 1998: 235)] that “language is shaped in fundamental ways by numerous factors external to it, some of which are localized in specific cultures and even specific individuals. Among these factors are, for example, various functions of the human mind (such as consciousness, memory and imagination); the various ways people interact with each other; and various historical forces that cause languages to change.” The role of language in object - orientation is as vital as in self - orientation.

Kluckhohn (in Grinder, 1970: 218) who claims that “the vocabularies of different languages both reflect and perpetuate habitual and distinctive ways of categorizing experience or modes of thought.” He goes on to say that “how people behave toward one another is, in part, a function of what they call each other and they conceive objects, themselves, other people and types of events which enter into their relations.” The linguistically conditioned ways in which the members of a group perceive and evaluate their social environment have determinant consequences for their behavior. In the following lines, I would like to touch briefly upon what has been conventionally called ‘jargon’. The so - called jargon is defined as the lingo of delinquents, with the exception of initiation languages.

At this juncture, I need more careful study of the way official and social responses to juvenile behavior contribute to definitions of delinquency and delinquent subcultures, either by overemphasizing their uniqueness or by contributing to their development.

Taken at their face value, Josselyn (1948) claims that it is the findings suggest that moral education inside or outside the family or the school has no lasting effect. In fact, concepts of good or bad conduct are psychologically irrelevant and that moral conduct must be understood, like any other conduct, in terms of youth’s needs, group’s values, and the demands of the situation. While from the standpoint of society, behavior is either ‘good’ or ‘bad’, from the standpoint of the individual; it always has some positive value. Moreover, behavior is not clearly good or bad either, since there are multiplicities of standards that can be used in judging the morality of an action. As sociologists have pointed out, delinquent actions may be motivated by the need to ‘do right’ or conform to standards, to both the standards of the delinquent gang and the general standard of success.

Personal access to various adult role models as contrasted to a vague and abstract relationship with them, would likely affect the selection of deviant or conformist behavior. There must be a certain amount of understanding, agreement and shared knowledge as to common processes in collective behavior, and language makes possible the continuity of activities as well as their conceptual bases in time and space. Male friendships are often, in fact, formed on the basis of use, and frequency of use, of the special language. Thus, a drug user must learn which words go with which objects and situations, word - order, pronunciation and the numerous

nuances of meanings. It is common misconceptions that word meanings are consistent and static. In fact, they are dynamic and negotiable.

In order for communication to progress smoothly and without conflict accommodation are continually and often subconsciously made, and interpretation varies according to context. Older members in the group have linguistic standards to which the new comer must conform. While different individuals may set unique stamps of combination and meaning upon established ways of speaking, there is a common core to all these individual treatments.

Language is a group product which, like every other part of the social heritage must be learned, thus becoming a social rather than merely an individual possession. That a special language does exist is noticeable when a person who is an “outsider” to the culture is acutely made aware of being a stranger to the ways of the group solely upon encountering its distinctive speech.

3.4.1. Slang

According to Dumas and Lighter (2006), put the following question: “Is Slang a word for linguists? For them, there are four characteristics of slang. Firstly, it is lower in prestige (except in juvenile groups) than the standard English. Secondly, it appears in a certain community with low status, little power and responsibility. Thirdly, it is often taboo and unlikely to be used by people of high status. Fourthly, it tends to displace conventional terms.

However, traditionally, the community held initiation ceremonies for young men, which involved circumcision, which is undergone by all men following the appearance of facial hair. The second type of initiation was purely voluntary. Initiates took a month - long oath of silence and are taught a sing language which, through limited in its semantic scope, is fairly complex.

While the *abakhwetha* (the language of the initiates) was essentially a male language, the non - initiates were forbidden to speak it. *Abakhwetha (Xhosa)* is phonologically, lexically and semantically distinct from *Ding zone B80* according to Bantu classification of African languages by Malcon Guthrie, 1971 (*DRC*), though its syntax and morphology seem to be analogous. Research into the language has proved controversial, since the *Ding* community regards it as cultural property and explicit permission was given to make its words public.

One interesting example is the use of necronyms. In fact, in the *Ding* community, death tends to be treated euphemistically. It is taboo to mention the name of a deceased person, even when referring to living people bearing the same name. Other strategies are used to refer to the dead, such as circumlocution via kinship terms.

Slang distinguishes the “ins” from the “outs”. Slang changes so quickly because the outside world cottons on so quickly, [it must be] incomprehensible to outsiders to have any value at all (Bormann, 1992). Some of the slang expressions are acceptable and others are rude words or phrases [that] may

be considered as slang if they fulfill one or more of the following characteristics that is, when they are:

(1) Creative: slang is creative from existing terms, (2) Flippant: slang produced has irrelevant meaning within the context. That makes the term considered rude, e. g., *fucking chicken, son of bitch, motherfucker, and shit*, (3) Fresh: slang terms are produced from old words and they differ from existing ones, (4) Onomatopoeic: slang produces words by imitating certain sounds, e. g., buzz, yucky, [wow] etc. (5) Short - lived.

Ndoma (1992) points out some specific features of slang at the lexical morphology level. Generally speaking, D. Spender (1985: 144) and J. Saul (2010) observe, [that] males have encoded sexism into language to consolidate their claims of male supremacy. Male varieties of language are thus characterized by. Spender (1985) further claims that 'a feminist study of language its rules argues that men have shaped it in order to instill their own prejudices and viewpoints on society, and shows how male - slanted language affects all women's lives:

(4) False gender neutrality, (2) Invisibility of women i. e., according to good psychological evidence, obscuring women's importance, (3) Maleness as norm i. e. (a) there are more words for males than for females, and more of these words are positive; (b) a word for women assumes negative connotations even when it designated the same state or condition as it did for men; (c) words for women are for more frequently sexualized than words for men. g. She/he is a professional... [lesbian, fucker, loose woman, sex object]she is for more likely than the former to be taken to mean that the person in question is a prostitute. The significant sexualization of words for women showing sexual objectification (4) Sex marking, (5) Encoding of male worldview i. e. (a) some terms encode a male (5) worldview, terms which can be seen as based on a male perspective (cfr. Sex).

Languages may also lack words for things that matter a great deal to women. This sort of gap is another way that a language can be seen as encoding a male worldview. (6) Maleness of language, (7) Metaphor i. e., there exist gendered metaphors.

3.4.2. Word formation devices

(1) Compounding: hand job masturbation, (2) Derivation: fellatio [oral sex] Latin: fellare: to suck, (3) Blends: Paratrooper (parachutist/trooper) a soldierparachutist, (4) Acronyms: NATO (The North Atlantic Threay Organization), (5) Onomatopoeia: brzzz.

3.4.3. Phonetic modification

(1) Back slang: 'énob' [boneferect penis] words are reversed to avoid explicit mention, (2) Rhyming slang: 'Bristols' [breasts], a shortened, and further euphemized, version of 'Bristols cities' [titties] which becomes a 'semi - concealing device', (3) Phonetic replacement: 'shoot' [shit], a euphemistic mispronunciation, Abbreviation: 'eff' (as in "off off!!") [fuck (off)].

3.4.4. Loanwords: A striking feature of slang is the number of loanwords that fill the vocabulary.

4. Semantic innovation

All in all, we paraphrase Kemmer (2011) who thinks that there are some general features that define slang prototypically. They are not necessary or sufficient conditions to call something slang, but define a 'prototype'. The more characteristics of slang a word has, the example it is of slang.

- a) **Register characteristics:** (a) Not part of the standard language, (b) Informal, i. e., not likely to be used in formal contexts, (c) Typically, oral, (d) Can betaboo.
- b) **Group characteristics:** (a) Often a novel creation, (b) Often conventionalizein a subgroup, (c) Associate with certain social group that are not part of "establishment", (d) Favored by young males, (e) Often found in group disfavored by society: criminal, poorer groups; minority ethnic groups; drug addicts, hobos, (f) Typically used as a marker of an 'In - group', (g) Typically marks a subculture, an elaborated set of behaviors associated with a group within a larger group.

5. Semantic Characteristic

(a) Often found in taboo semantic domains such as sex, drug, violence, bodily elimination (including, defecation, vomiting, burping, etc.), body parts associated with sex and elimination, and death (this semantic characteristic often goes with taboo register), (b) Often vividly metaphorical, picturesque (e. g., Australian liquid laugh), (c) Often involves exaggeration, (d) Formal characteristics some typical types of form, (e) Often short, punchy words (e. g., smack, dope, screw) or compounds of these (blow job, jerk off (n), pizza - face), (f) Certain sounds often favored: rhyme alliteration, systematic deformations.

6. Morphological characteristics:

(1) Use of metaphor, (2) Acronymic, (3) Clipping: e. g., teach, prof., (4) Word - final phonology: - augmentation, - apocope, - cluster reduction, - non - apical. (a) Compounding blending: e. g., brain - fart, (b) Popular culture e. g., mc², (c) Word play, (d) Revival of standard words.

7. The sociolinguistics of young male discourse

A look at the English language reveals what is likely to be found in any male discourse. Referring to English the extent of male bias in language is debatable. A confusing aspect of some descriptive account is that the terms are used rather loosely. Recent data indicate that equality between sexes is increasing and women are frequently stepping into male roles and thus adopting male language (Hintikka, 1983). Some of these observed and predicted changes have been assessed in terms of their effects on language use and usage, especially when we consider code switching and contact - induced change when Hymes (1974) discusses the ethnography of communication he tells us that a talk is a

complex kind of activity being engaged by the members of a particular communication group.

It could thus be seen and understood according to its own context. The purpose of language and its grammar is to communicate clearly. The purpose of slang is to defy communication with the “out” group, so it is neither acceptable nor understandable to the public who has only the standard variety of the language as its medium of communication.

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8. General characteristics

The researcher examines some varieties of male language. In the first section I dealt with an overview of eight varieties of language that are: *Isikwetha*, *troepitaal*, *Nsm*, *Tsotsitaal*, *Boop lingo*, *Indubil*, *Gay slang*, *Kongobalula*, as well.

I found that *Isikwetha*, was the language of initiation in Xhosa traditional life. A secret language uses in the first instance by the initiates (*Abakwetha*). Whereas *Nsm* was a specialized language taught to the initiates (*Nswomeba*) by the grandfather of the tribe or clan known as *Nkankhaa*, for some months under the moon light. *Troepitaal* originated from the arrival of young men from every divergent English and Afrikaans - speaking backgrounds, brought together during the military service in South Africa. *Tsotsitaal* was a marker of young urban black males. It formed a kind of people coming from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds that were living together in a new urban environment and had to form a new identity away from the traditional rural life of their parents. *Boop lingo* functioned as a language of solidarity for prison inmates in South Africa. *Kindubil* was also a language of solidarity between prisoners in DRC, it is typified by secret code. *Gay slang* was a male variety of language used particularly by homosexual in South Africa. It is characterized by its own particular linguistic varieties known as ‘gayspeak’. *Kongobulula* was a sophisticated male variety of language used mostly by teenagers in my speech community in DRC. The inversion of words or sentences of the utterance is its main characteristic.

As for the general characteristics of male varieties of language according to their similarities or differences and the functions that they serve. We have found that *Isikwetha* and *Nsm* resembled in some aspects and have differences in some too such as, in the first two schools, the initiates were taught a language of initiation during three months outside the mainstream society, for *Isikwetha* or *Abakwetha*, *umkwetha* and *Themba* by *Ikankatha* and daily during a long period of time whereas for *Nsm*, *Nswomeba* (the initiate) was taught by *Nkankhaa*. Within the two schools, initiates *Abakwetha* and *Nswomeba* are smeared with white or red clay and are not allowed to get in contact with outsiders during the period of initiation.

Failure to respect one of the two customs resulted in a punishment: the inability to father children for both groups. The main characteristics for their differences were: On one hand for *Abakwetha* in fact, the feeling continues to exist those men are not considered to be ‘men’ until they have been to one of these schools.

The initiates *Nswomeba* are taught that if they make sexual intercourse with ladies, they will be unable to father children in their adulthood. *Nswomeba* would be threatened all the night by endless noises of owls, foxes and huge bats, whether they disclosed the secrecy of *Nsm* to outsiders. *Boop lingo* and *Indubil* both are used by prison inmates; secrecy is of the utmost importance for prisoners’ life. They are the languages of solidarity among prisoners.

For their differences *Boop lingo* is considered as typically male variety, because 90% of prisoners are male and men. Regarding *Indubil* the new prisoners are obliged to learn the secret language and they are forbidden to talk *Indubil* with visitors or jailers. *Gay slang* and *Kongobalula* varieties of male language use specific vocabularies related to their inner groups. Secrecy is very important for the groups.

For *Kongobalula*, this variety of male language is spoken by teenagers in the public places or everywhere you find them invert words or the whole sentences in a quick way is its main characteristic.

9. Overview of male varieties of language

The eight varieties of male varieties of language are represented as follow:

(a) ***Isikwetha***: is a language of initiation for young male, in Xhosa tribe in South Africa. In this regard, it is pointing out that, this male variety of language is the language of initiates in Xhosa traditional life. *Isikwetha* is a secret language used in the first instance by the initiates and thereafter to establish a level of relationship with other men. (Finlayson cf.1998) states “knowledge of *Isikwetha* is an integral part of the adult male community.” That is, the knowledge can be used as kind of shibboleth to test whether one has been through initiation and is a bona fide member of the Xhosa adult community. Regarding this male variety of language, Barnes (1988: 96) argues that “the *Abakwetha*, the male initiates, are required to live totally apart from society for a period of three months.”

He further, maintains that during this period all contact with the outside world is strictly prohibited and they are taught the language of initiates, that is, ‘*isikwetha*’. This language of initiation is marked by a specialized vocabulary consisting of words relating to the initiation process. It is also important to note that, there is a strong prohibition in the society on using the language in front of women or younger males who have never been through an initiation ceremony. Traditionally it is believed by Xhosa people that if the initiate fails to respect the custom by not using the *isikwetha* vocabulary, his circumcision wound will not heal or some misfortune might befall him, such as an inability to father children (Barnes, 1988).

(b) *Nsm*: is a traditional language of initiation used by *Dingtribesmen*. According (Guthrie cf.1948) classification of Bantu languages, Ding language in the central part of Congo DR is classified in group B, zone 80. This male variety of language was taught to the initiates *Nswomeba* in our speech community by the grandfather of the tribe *Nkankhaa*. The grandfather of the tribe is also called *Munkorbong* that is, someone who stays in a hut all the day. To get in touch with him, *Nswomeba* must pass through *Nkankhaa's* sender, *Ntem*. The initiates were forbidden to relate the language of initiation to women or other teenagers' boys of the tribe or clan. They were taught the language and vocabularies of the initiation by *Nkankhaa* for long period of time during the night, under the moon light.

If *Nswomeba* fail to cope with *Munkorbong's* instruction or advice, unpleasant situation might come to him such as being threatened by endless noises of foxes, owls and huge bats all the night around his house. During the initiation period, he was taught also how to hunt antelopes and hares, how to make traps, how to build a hut, how to live with a wife, how to behave in front of adults and outsiders. Despite all the previous aspects of *Nsm*, what is interesting to note during that period is that he was taught that if *Nswomeba* has sexual intercourse with ladies before getting marriage, he would not be able to make children in his adulthood.

It seems to me that this piece of advice was a kind of avoidance of sexual immorality in my speech community. Another similar advice was that of telling him that after a woman has given birth, she is sent to her parents for two years in order to allow everything inside the womb to be set up before a man starts a new life with his wife. I consider it like a kind of unconscious family planning.

First and most obviously it is clear that *Nswomeba* was allowed to marry two or three wives even though it was a kind of polygamous permission which is anti - Biblical but the reason was that of limiting prostitutes in the tribe. After attending a long period of initiation, the initiates' body was smeared with *Nkhool* (red clay), covered by two lines of *mpiom* (white clay) beside the right and left eyes, and one line of white clay from the top of the nose up to the forehead. Nowadays with modernization the custom has died out.

(c) **Troepietaal**: was a slang used within the South Africa army from 1960 to 1980s. This variety of male language was used during the time of conscription when young men from often very divergent English and Afrikaans - speaking background were forced to join the military services. In this regard, Branford (1984: 20) describes toepitaal as a "weapon against isolation from their fellows, a safety valve defusing some of the frustrations of unfamiliar military discipline and overzealous corporal, and unifying factor among men from every walk of life". I understood that, this variety of male language serves linguistic solidarity between the members of that group.

(d) **Tsotsitaal**: was a variety of male language uses particularly by teenagers in South Africa. It is a marker of young black males originating from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds that are brought together in a new urban environment and have to form a new identity away

from the traditional rural background of their parents and grandparents Branford (1984). It seems that, in order to be identified among urban teenagers from rural parts of the country those teenagers created their intermediate language to facilitate or enhance communication between their fellow students, and be effectively integrated in South African youth community. For instance, in South Africa lexicon, the words *mara* to mean (but) and *wena* (you) is basically popular among black South African students in their daily speech, even when they speak English with foreigners, they interfere with the word *mara* instead of 'but' and *wena* in the place of 'you'

(e) **Boop lingo**: was a prisoners' language. This antilanguage, functions as a language of solidarity for prison inmates (Barnes 1992: 7). It is also known as the language of criminal class in general, as it gives expression to a subculture in which the norms of the dominant culture are often inverted. This prisoners' variety of language is also known by various names such as (prison lingo, con lingo, criminal argot). In fact, prison language can be regarded as typically a male variety because about 90% of prisoners are male and men (Barnes cf.1992). Boop lingo is also the language of solidarity and exclusion in the sense that men tend to use their own varies of language. Labov (1966: 108) maintains that "... males often identify with working class speech because of its connotation of masculinity; there is a degree of 'covert prestige' associated with non - standard varieties". Such variety is typified by its own specialized vocabulary, centering on prison practices and issues that are vitally important to them. For example:

South Africa: The big house (In English) - Central prison (Pretoria) *Bloubaadjie* (Afrikaans) - Long - term prisoner Springbok (In Zulu, small S. African gazelle) - A prisoner who escapes

Democratic Republic of the Congo:

Wazurubaya/lifelo (*Indubil*) - Central prison (*Makala*) in Kinshasa

Kolia coin (In Lingala) - To escape from the prison

Engambé (In Lingala) - Prisoners' leader

Mukubwa (In *swahili*) - Old prisoner

With regard to the above - mentioned details, it is also important to note that prison language functions as a secret - code, secrecy is indeed, a very importance aspect of prison life. Prisoners do not want jailers or outsiders to know what is going on, especially when they are planning an escape or some other crime. Lotter and Schurink (1984, in Barnes 1988: 96) state that "there is an inner vocabulary known only to gang members." That is, prisoners' male varieties of language serve both an inclusive and exclusive in function: inclusive, in that it is a marker of one's inclusion in the gang, and exclusive, in that it prevents the outsiders from knowing the secret of the gang.

(f) **Indubil**: is a kind of prisoners' or gang jargon in DRC. A look at this male variety of language in our speech community suggests that it is [a kind of illegal language] used among the prison inmates to create solidarity between them. It has its own specialized vocabularies related to prison's issues only, in order to avoid other people, know

what is going on in the prison. They have secreted code of communication. For example, they say: *trezê yê*, (French treize) to mean mug him/her. *Mboka epeli moto, mwana na mwana bendanalina coin* simply means, (Everybody must be prepared to escape from the prison). *Kota yé* (French=enter, penetrate) is used to mean “fuck a new comer girl or women prisoner”. *Masta oza na ndambo ya pelouse, mbaka té?* (French=grass), (Dear friend do you have a scanty of opium?), *pesa ngayi ndambo ya supu na tolo* (French=sauce, soup), (give me a quantity of whisky), any kind of it

(g) **Kongobalula**: is a reversed, tricky and secret language among male teenagers in Kwiluprovince in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is a male variety of language in *Kikongo*, used by teenagers, gang, and prisoners in DRC. This argot is often used when teenagers or prisoners want to carry out illegal activities and do not want other people understand what they are planning to operate. They just invert syllables the whole words or structures in a quick way in their talk. The members of this group are able to do it in front of their parents, sisters or other relatives, who are unable to grasp this variety of male language. For example, the following sentence in *Kikongo*, one of the four national languages in DRC can be heard in *kongobalula*:

Kikongo (mono kutuba)

e. g. (a) *laBo mbusa nkina gen kasakwi ev an ndanzoka an nteki?=Bola sambu nanki nge kwisaka ve na nzonkanda na kintete?* (Bola, why didn't you come to school on Monday?)

In the same way the following sentence can be heard in:

Lingala

e. g. (b) *maThos lole bayikoto actcon ay turevoi ay papa an sobi gobon ot maki an ngoya ngota zalakoa an ngipo=Thomas lelo to koyiba contact ya voiture ya papa na biso, bongo ot kima na ya ngo tango akozala na pongi* (Thomas, today when our father rests, we will steal his car's ignition key and run away with it.) These specialists of *Kongobalula* are able to invert the following sentence in English in a tricky and quick way

e. g., My dear friend, hurry up we are late for the exam (*ym eard endfri rryhu pu ew rea tela orf eth amex*). Really to speak such a language one must be trained for hundreds of years unless he has the memory of computer. Nowadays, *Kongobalula* and *Lingalabongola* are taking place among the gang, teenagers, prisoners, *kuluna* and drug smokers and the like in our speech community. They identify a fellow of the group by the pass words. For example, *yenge ke baza ku batu ngandi an tobe?* (*Kikongo*) or *bieyo baloko an nokomo an sobi* (*Lingala*) (Do you know to speak our language?) If one replies to the pass word, *nomo ke baza* or *biyena* (I know) he automatically belongs to the group. Then they can talk to him for other tricky matters

9. General characteristics of male varieties of language compared

Bearing all these male varieties of language in mind, it is interesting to look at their resemblance. However, in this section my particular attention will be focused on general trends, that is, ‘initiates’ languages which have common features, in South Africa and in my speech community in DRC. I will compare their general characteristics according to their relevance, mostly some similarities and differences between them.

9.1 Similarity

Isikwetha versus **Nsm**

On one hand **Isikwetha** has the following general characteristics:

- The initiates cannot use this language in front of women or younger males who have never been through an initiation ceremony.
- During the period of initiation all contact with the outsiders is prohibited.
- Traditionally it is believed by Xhosa people that if the initiates fail to respect this custom by not using **Isikwetha** vocabulary, their circumcision wound will not heal or some misfortune might befall them, such as an inability to father children. On the other hand, **Nsm** has the following general characteristics:
- The initiates' boys **Nswomeba** are kept at **Nkankhaa's** (grandfather of the tribe or clan) hut that is, **Munkorbong** for a long period of time, are taught the language of initiation “**Nsm**” under the moon light.
- **Nsm** is the language of initiation taught to **Nswomwba** in the initiation school before entering the adults' world.
- **Nswomeba** gets in touch with **Nkankhaa** through **Ntem** (sender) of **Nkankhaa**
- It is a language of secrecy.
- The initiates' bodies are smeared with **Nkhool** (red clay), covered by two lines of **mpiom** (white clay) beside the right and left eyes, and one line of white clay from the top of the nose up to the forehead.
- Only the initiates are allowed to use the language of initiation with other initiates. They are forbidden to use it in front of women and young boys who have never been initiated by **Nkankhaa** at **munkorbong's** hut.
- The initiates are prohibited to divulge the secrecy of **munkorbong** to the outsiders. For example, **Nkankhaa** eats the meat of dog in order to get a long life, he does not drink water, except wine.
- If the vocabularies of the initiation are disclosed to outsiders, misfortune might befall them such as being threatened every night by the endless noises of owls, foxes or huge bats around their houses. This phenomenon would not stop until the initiates tell the truth of their disobedience to **Nkankhaa** and the later would ask the spirit of the dead ancestors of the clan to forgive them.

The following lines indicate differences among the linguistic varieties.

9.2 Differences

Isikwetha

- Lends power to its ability to create solidarity.
- Among the Xhosa, many young men are still required to attend an initiation school.
- In fact, the feeling continues to exist that, those men are not considered to be ‘men’ until they have been to one of these schools.

Nsm

- **Nkankhaa** stays in a hidden hut without windows all the day. He eats dogs and never drink water, only wine.

- The language of initiation is taught to the initiates for long hours under themoonlight.
- The initiates are taught that if they make sexual intercourse with ladies, they will be unable to make children in their adulthood.
- They are learned how to cut field, how to build a hut, how to hunt antelopes, hares and other animals, how to make traps, how to behave in front of an adult or an outsider and, how to father children.
- If they divulge the secrecy of *Nkankhaa* (Grandfather), misfortune might befall them and they will be threatened every night by the endless noises of owls, foxes or huge bats around their houses

Troepietaal: is characterized by the mixture of two different languages, English and Afrikaans, during the time of conscription (from 1960s through the 1980s) in South Africa. One may listen to the conversation between two Xhosa saying: either **sambreel** (in Afrikaans) or **umbrella** (in English), depending on whether one of them is from the South or the East of South Africa. Nevertheless, there is mutual intelligibility between the two speakers. We can have actual phoneme substitution, to refer to phonemes that are 'identically defined in two languages but whose normal pronunciation differs, we refer to as code - mixing

Tsotsitaal: is characterized by a similar pattern of linguistic solidarity seen in male groups, particularly teenager students originating from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds that were brought together in a new urban environment and had to form a new identity away from the traditional rural backgrounds of their parents and grandparents.

9.3. Similarities:

(a) **Boop lingo** versus *Indubil*

- Both are used by prison inmates.
- In both, secrecy is of the utmost importance for prisoners' life.
- They are the languages of solidarity among prisoners.
- The members of these communities do not like jailers or outsiders to know what is happening in their place especially when they are planning an escape or another wrongdoing.

9.4 Differences

(a) **Boop lingo:**

- It is considered as typically male variety, because 90% of prisoners are male and men (Barnes, 1988).
- It is also called, 'con lingo', 'criminal argot'.
- Prison language serves both as inclusive and exclusive in function. Inclusive in that, it is a marker of one's inclusion in the gang. Exclusive in that it prevents outsiders from knowing the secrets of the gang.

(b) *Indubil:*

The new prisoners are obliged to learn the secret language and they are forbidden to talk in *Indubile* with visitors or jailers.

9.5 Similarities

(a) **Gay slang** versus *Kongobalula*

- Both varieties of male language use specific vocabularies related to innergroups.
- Secrecy is very important for the groups.

9.6 Differences:

(a) *Kongobalula*

- These varieties of male language are spoken by teenagers, gang members and prisoners, in the public places or whenever one of the groups meets them.
- They identify a fellow member of the group by the pass words. If one replies to the pass word, he is automatically a member of the group.
- The use of inverted sentences in a quick way is their characteristic or specialty.

10. Conclusion

Youth culture is a unique cultural system. This progress research report focuses on gender identity, particularly on masculinity as it is manifested through language. Popular discourses about the linguistic exclusivity and impenetrability of male varieties of language appear greatly exaggerated. The survey of different male groups allows the evaluation of male speech which is based on a limited number of markers well on the way of becoming stereotypes. Serving the sociolinguistic maxims of brevity and speed, paralinguistic restitution, and phonological approximation, young males' messages are both linguistically and communicatively adept. Thus for, the results point to the considerable significance of linguistic derivations as the symbol par excellence of identification for a particular age group, along with unwritten rules of "coolness." Gender differences in communication cross linguistic borders and take cultural, ethnic, and psychological dimensions.

Acknowledging the fact that the data for this study are taken from one type of respondents only, the author is careful not to generalize the differences found in male varieties of languages. Based on available data, the study has so far revealed the following [aspect]. The data support previous findings on gender differences in communication and show that such differences may be influenced by... backgrounds. However, there may be some sociolinguistic variables that are not investigated here.

Even though I have elucidated an approach to jargon from an anthropological perspective and judging by my observations, it would be best to pursue what was started here, involving larger samples and more variables. It would be fruitful for future research to perform quantitative survey (employing measure such as small group analyses) recording the number of people with whom anyone interacts directly in one situation, the length of the time spent, overt reactions to such interaction, etc. Other particular questions for study would be to investigate the amount of verbal interaction between strangers. While there are innumerable questions raised concerning male varieties of language, it remains important that research be defined in terms of either the

viewpoint of the user or from the perspective of the observer, for definition of the situation from those respective vantage points will be distinctively different.

This paper focused on gender identity particularly on masculinity as displayed through [by examining explicit verbal interaction]; it focuses on the way in which talk among males works socially and functions as communicative action. In conjunction with these emphases, I confirm that qualitative strategies of research are increasingly acknowledged as valid and useful methods for generating explanations of discursive events, including small group contexts. I believe that this study yields interesting and potentially, fruitful statements about small group communication [in understanding small group dynamic].

Observation drawn from the data are grounded in the assumption that the statements of any one member are meaningful only in context and in relation to the messages of other members. Members of group had divergent backgrounds in terms of age, academic standing, major fields of study, professional and nonprofessional predilections. However, each member had indicated some degree of interest in the same topics.

Thus, far of my study suggest a theoretical line of thought worthy of further consideration. An ability to induce the cooperation of other group members increasing feelings of cohesion through the creation of a theoretical vision seems consistent with successful [communication].

A corollary is that the tendency to present symbolic reality that emphasizes individual differences and ignores commonly shared needs within a group discourages cooperation and is consistent with unresolved struggles. The value of testing this notion lies in its explanatory and predictive potential for small group communication theory. An adolescent must earn his status in the peer group. The core of the youth culture thus, resides in its distinctive evaluative standards including ideological sanctions and adaptive modes of behavior

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