

The Analysis of Nigerian Police Report (Statement): Problems and Solutions: (Forensic Linguistics Perspectives)

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Abstract

The conventional practice in Nigerian court cases begin with Police investigative reports (statement) in the police stations (oral/written) to the level of filing, presenting and hearing at different stages of court proceedings, is in the state of complexity as it may involve some logical terms used in committing crime that need to be clearly understood by the stakeholders. This leads to many challenges faced by police in taking statement from accused person/witness, while judges in passing final verdict on a legal case(s) presented in the court of law. This indicates the relevance of Forensic Linguistics (FL) in tackling complex linguistic issues in court cases. As such, the present study is set to examine some inconsistencies in police report that may hinder the validity of the report or may even render it null and void. The study also is aim to provide the significant role of forensic linguist in crime solving. The sample to use in the study comprises of police statements gathered from various police stations via random sampling procedure. This will cover some selected police stations from metropolitan area of Kano, Jigawa and Katsina States where possible. The linguistic evidences are the variables extracted from the data collected to study and analyzed. Descriptive analysis method (DAM) is used to presents what is realized from the data collected. As established that language data and its usage in crimes are the basic evidences that lead to judgment. However, in police statement problems such as inconsistencies, redundancy, linguistic deviations, improper writing, and incompetence in the language use are the major issues that hinder the validity of the statement. In addition to that, some statements are taking from the suspect under duress. The study suggest special training in use of language in statement and introductory lesson on Forensic linguistic to police officers as vital tool in curtailing the major occurring problems in police investigative report.

Keywords: forensic, police, investigation, language, evidence

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Forensic science is the application of scientific principles and techniques to investigate and solve crimes, as well as to analyze evidence for legal proceedings. It involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of physical evidences, such as DNA, fingerprints, hair, fibers, *written evidences*, *voice recordings* and other materials, to help reconstruct events and identify perpetrators. This made the science (Forensic) to encompass many disciplines, linguistics inclusive. It is a new field of linguistics study and rapid growing area in modern applied linguistics. One of the phase setter researches in Forensic linguistics is Bryant's (1930) compendium on function of words in legal language. In addition, Wetter (1960), whose work is on written appellate.

Linguistics as a scientific study of language become part of the approaches in applied forensic investigation, which investigate language evidences involve in committing crimes, be it suicide letter, scary and threat messages, trademark disputes, voice messages, authorship identification, voice profiling etc. Therefore, Forensic Linguistics is an area in applied linguistics, where linguistic knowledge is practical in solving crimes that involve use of language by any means be it oral or written language. So what is Forensic linguistics?

According to *Encyclopaedia of Forensic Sciences* (2013), Forensic linguistics is a branch of applied linguistics related to the law and legal processes. The discipline subsumes a wide variety of research and casework, as suggested by Coulthard, Grant & Kredens (2010, p.529) that, “forensic linguistics is the application of linguistics to three main areas, ‘written legal texts, spoken legal practices, and the provision of evidence for criminal and civil investigations and courtrooms disputes.’” By this definition it shows that forensic linguistics is not restricted to only criminal cases, it may also involve resolving some civil (societal) dispute such as clear interpretation on the ownership of a property or some misperceptions and misconceptions in the use of oral language.

Mohsen et al (2014:223) asserts that “Forensic linguistics involves the application of scientific knowledge to language in the context of criminal and civil law.” In a simple way it can be said that Forensic science is a method of applying scientific approach in solving crime issues, thereby investigating all the necessary facts/evidence to prove and established how it was occurred.

Olsson, (2004:2) describe it that; “Forensic Linguistics is the interface

between language, crime and law, where *law* includes law enforcement, judicial matters, legislation, disputes or proceedings in law, and even disputes which only potentially involve some infraction of the law or some necessity to seek a legal remedy”.

Conversely, the application of forensic linguistics include analysis of police report, voice identification, interpretation of expressed meaning in law and legal writing, analysis of discourse in legal settings, interpretation of intended meaning in oral and written statements, authorship identification, language of the law (e.g. legal language), analysis of courtroom language used by participants (i.e. judges, lawyers, witness), trademark law, interpretation and translation where more than one language is used.

Statement of the Problem

The prevailing practice in legal cases from the stage of Police interrogation/interview and statements (Police statements) up to the stages of court proceedings to the final judgments, less attention is paid in relation to such language (linguistic) evidences that are involve in committing the crime which will serve to resolve some disputed evidence, such as ‘who say this’, ‘what does this mean’, ‘whose handwriting is this’, ‘from where does this threat text/massage or demand of ransom notes/massage comes from’, ‘whose voice is this’ and more. This practice tends to ignore other important evidences in some cases uncovered, which may lead to convicting a suspect that is not guilty in the case.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study is to find out the role of language data in police investigative report as evidence that can be tendered in a court, and what are the inconsistencies that are found to occur in the report. While the objectives was;

- i. To evaluate the effect of Linguistic evidences in investigative police report.
- ii. To examine how Forensic Linguistic analysis can be use in authenticating the validity of police report that qualify to be presented as evidence in court.
- iii. The function of forensic linguistic in resolving disputes on any language related evidence in a police statement.

Application of Forensic Linguistics

Use of language in different form (oral or written) is inevitable in our daily

life, as such when committing any form of crime. For such to be investigated and analyzed, the expert applies forensic linguistic analysis. Therefore, the "Applications of forensic linguistics include authorship identification, voice identification, interpretation of expressed meaning in laws and legal writings, analysis of discourse in legal settings, interpretation of intended meaning in oral and written statements (e.g., confessions in police report/court proceedings), the language of the law (e.g., legal and plain language), analysis of courtroom language used by trial participants (i.e., judges, lawyers, and witnesses), trademark law, interpretation and translation when more than one language must be used in a legal context." (Gerald R. McMnamin, *Forensic Linguistics: Advances in Forensic Stylistics*. CRC Press, 2002).

Therefore, as police investigative report is the first thing to present when filing any cases in court, and issues pertaining to confession and any other issues relating to linguistic evidence, the application of linguistic analysis, (forensic investigation) is very vital, as it will solve many disputing cases and established uncovered fact about use of language in committing any language related crime.

Research Questions

The current study is set to provide answers to the following questions:

- a. What is the role of language in crime committing?
- b. How does language data be use as evidence in court cases?
- c. What are the procedures in police report (statement)?
- d. What are the problems associated with police statement?
- e. How can those issues be resolve?

The concept of Forensic Linguistics

As a new field of study in Applied Linguistics, scholars gave several definitions of the term just to capture its concept in the study. Thus; McMnamin (2008: 86) states that "Forensic Linguistics is the scientific study as applied to forensic and contexts". Forensic linguistics need another linguistics fields in identifying and solving cases in legal forum, whether the cases appear in the courtroom or out of courtroom. The target of forensic analysis is forensic tests taken from criminal context like murder, suicide letter or note, suspicious death, narcotics investigations, terrorism, etc. While Olsson (2008:1) states; "Literally any text or item of spoken language has the potential of being a forensic text. If a text is somehow implicated in a legal or criminal context then it is a forensic

text.” It means that every text can be a legal text as long as the text itself is involving legal or criminal context. The text itself can be a letter, book, an essay, contract, thesis, police report, almost anything. (International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory, Vol. 6, No. 4, December 2013, 217-227) 218 (Eva T. S. et-al 2013).

The concern of Forensic linguists in their study and analysis of language related data are issues in many areas that relate to crime, both solving crime and absolving people wrongly accused of committing crimes and solving civil disputes on ownership cases. The research area in Forensic linguistics evolves as the field develops. Some of these areas of research and expertise include:

- a. Authorship identification: i.e. determining the author of a particular text by comparing to known written samples of a suspect.
- b. Voice identification: i.e. determining the owner of the voice, and establishing whether the voice is that of the defendant.
- c. Discourse analysis: i.e. by analyzing the structure of a written or spoken utterance often covertly recorded.
- d. Linguistic proficiency: i.e. the high degree of using the language by the culprits (suspect) which portrays his exposure and educational level and so on.
- e. Dialectology: i.e. determining which dialect of a language an accused person speaks, usually to show that a defendant has a different dialect from that on an incriminating tape recording. As opposed to voice identification, which analyzes the acoustic qualities of the voice, dialectology uses linguistic features to accomplish similar goals)
- f. Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO): i.e. determining the origin of a person seeking for asylum, through his use of language.

Hence, the focus in this paper is solely on some issues relating to police investigative report, as it is the first thing to tender as evidence in many criminal/civil cases in the court of law.

Police Interview:

Basically, in the event of reporting any civil or criminal cases, the police are the first target as it was the police that will take the statement from the complainant and/or accused person, and it was such that will be presented before the Judge. Therefore, police reports are regarded as one of the most

important evidences in court. So good quality report, free from ambiguities and factual information must be maintained. However, the reporting language may vary based of the method of interrogation and the respond from the interviewee/suspect. This is because questions in police interviews contain ‘meta discursive; you say/ are you saying (occasionally tell/telling), within a *yes/no* or declarative question that summarizes a narrative segment from the suspect’s prior talk’ (Johnson 2020: 357). They are, therefore, a powerful interrogation tool used to suggest that suspects’ answers are problematic and unbelievable. (2021: 26)

Police interviews are goal-focused, frequently having an end-product: a statement and a future use in any subsequent court hearing. Based on that it can clearly indicate that the police interview may be regarded to have the following as its key target:

1. **Purpose:** (i.e. gather evidence, information, and statements to aid in investigations and build a case.)
2. **Setting:** (i.e. it is conducted at a police station, which may be formal or informal).
3. **Tone:** (i.e. the nature of the interrogation by the police can be confrontational or neutral, depending on the context).
4. **Questions:** (i.e. the nature of the questions asked is naturally Open-ended and probing, seeking specific details).
5. **Recording:** (it may be audio or video recorded, with consent of the interviewee).
6. **Outcome:** (i.e. the outcome of the statements can be used as evidence in court).
7. **Rights:** (as in the case of US, suspects have rights, such as Miranda rights (US), which must be explained). (2007:121)

Language as Evidence:

From the Police statement which originated from oral to text and which is enough to be regarded as evidence in court. All what is contained in the statement is the language of the complainer and the suspect as evidence to present at the court hearing. Therefore, language is what is regarded as evidence that the expert is to search and explore any aspect of language to analyze as evidence in any case, as the evidence may require different selection from the linguist’s toolkit, be it phonetic and phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, discursual, textual and pragmatic.

Afifuddin (2023) in his review of Maite Correa's Article on Forensic Linguistic shows how language and law intersect, by which law as a codified term is mediated through language, meaning that without language there is no law. However forensic linguist make analysis on any linguistic data involve in crime that can be used as evidence in court not as a judgment although it may contribute to a larger body of evidence. The author has this to point out that, it is impossible to imagine law without language, because without language there will be no laws, no trials and evidence in many cases as well. (Afifuddin: 2023:48)

Study Design

Research design indicates the style adopted by the researcher to accomplish his aim in his collecting and analyzing data. The study adopts quantitative research design method; this involves the process of collecting and analysis of the data to achieve the research objectives. Descriptive analysis method (DAM) is used in the study to explore language performance and its effect in police report (statement). However, within the context of DAM a contextual analysis (CAM) on documented police report is said to be used in order to justify the effect of the language in crime investigation. The study used a secondary data as it involves documented record of police statement from different police stations.

Sample of the Study

The population in research study refers to all possible objects of a particular type define by the focus of the study. It can be any entity of interest the study aimed at examining. Thus the population of our study is not a group of people or an object, rather it comprises of documented data records of police statement taking from the complainer/suspect in the police station taken from various police stations drawn from Kano, Jigawa and Katsina where possible. The data will be retrieved once (during the research exercise) through the stages of sampling method as indicated above. The sample selected will be the unit of analysis of the proposed study. In effect, the study will adopt the quantitative approach to determine the effect of forensic linguistics in authenticating the police report as evidence in our court. The sample of the study comprises of 5 - 10 Police report/statements gathered from different Police stations that comprises of different incidents. Although the paper will analyse 5 out of the number realised. As the study rely on secondary data, a reasonable and manageable one is used so as to have a thick and rich extract of data (Clerk, V. & Braun, V. :2013).

Research Instruments

This has to do with what is employed as research instruments in conducting the study. Being our source of data is the secondary source, the instruments employed comprises of the extract of linguistic data extracted from the documented records from different sources as indicated above, that is in addition to the use of several forensic linguistic textbooks. Also unstructured interview is used to obtain information from other stake holders in the field of legal activities.

Theoretical Framework

Many researchers have conducted a study in the field of Forensic linguistics on different aspect under the subject of forensic investigation that involves different variety of linguistic data. This is by applying different methods, views and theories in trying to find solutions to a specific problem in different situation and circumstances. However, as the current study is not dealing with only single case/records. Therefore, application of only one linguistic theory may not be enough to attend to different form of linguistic data, although different theories depending on the type of data used determine the theory to apply. As the current study is on Forensic linguistics where language is used as an evidence, for a criminal or civil cases that can be analyzed to find the truth based on language performance, the best theory to use that will cater for the variety of data in the study is the Speech Model theory which involve a linguistic interaction activity in one or more forms between two parties, with one conversation topic at a certain time and place (Chaer, 2004:47).

The eight components of the speech model by Dell Hymes (1974)' will be taking into consideration in our analysis as indicated in Waskita (2014). He proposed these to analyze how language is used in social context. The eight components are:

- a. Setting and Scene: Time and Place or where and when
- b. Participants: Parties involve in a speech act
- c. Intent and purpose (ends):
- d. Form and content (Act Sequence): How words are used in speech act and their relationship with the topic of the conversation
- e. Tone of the voice (Key): How the utterances are made, happily or angrily
- f. Instrumentalities: Was it in spoken or written

- g. Norm of Interaction and Interpretation: The rules on how to interact
- h. Genres: Variety of delivering a speech act; narrative, prayer, poetry etc.

Techniques for Data Analysis

The techniques here reflect the procedures to follow and the tools used in analyzing the data in trying to answer the research questions as well as refining the theories used in the study. Thus, descriptive method of analysis and speech model theory was used for data analysis. Though, other supporting language theories were also used based on the nature of the data in question. After gathering the data from the field, the certified copy of the data will be subjected to collating for easy analysis. First to begin with police statement (reports) and then followed by personal views from other stakeholders.

Furthermore, the names of the peoples involved in any case will be replaced with anonymous one in order to observe agreement on the confidentiality with the police record and in accordance to the research ethics.

Analysis

Police Statement

Police statement involves a written or verbal report about an incident of crime/disputes to the police authority. The police statement varies due to the nature of the report brought in to the police stations. This includes;

- a. Complaint statement: It may involve a report from a complainer to the police on criminal or non – criminal issues.
- b. FIR (First information report): This is a report file by the police when they receive information about some sort of crime/offense.
- c. Witness statement: This is a report taken by the authority from someone who witnessed an incident.
- d. Suspect statement: This is a statement from someone suspected to be a perpetrator of a crime.
- e. Victim statement: It is a statement taken from a person who claims to be a victim of a crime, he may be a complainer.
- f. Accident report: This is a statement taken by police for a reported incident of accident of any kind.

However, for the current study, the three types (c, d, & e) of statement will be utilized as it is the common type find in all police stations in Nigeria and it as well covers the remaining types.

Note: The forms use by police in taking the statement (both for c, d, & e above) is labelled ‘Police D 19’. The form carries the following information:-

- Personal information of the person making the statement.
- his signature.
- the signature of the interpreter if any.
- the language used in the statement.
- the information of the person taking the record.
- time commenced and time completed.

* A bold statement is written as; ***“In the case of accused, the formal caution will be given”***

The caution is also given as:

“I have decided to make a complaint against you before court; do you wish to make a statement? You are not **obliged** to say anything unless you wish to do so, and **whatever you say will be taken down in written but may be given in evidence.**”

Sample No.1

This statement is on incident on business transaction between two parties, the complainer and accused person.

Inconsistency and Contradiction

In complainer’s statement (Mr. Dantsoho) contains so many ***inconsistencies*** and ***contradictions*** that may disqualify the whole statement to be accepted if tendered as evidence in court.

First of the entire figure indicated as the value of the transaction does not tally with the bits of amount paid at different intervals, as it says in the statement;

“....., I bought his Starlink V4 at the cost of N400,000, I deposited N40,000 naira to him.....I told him that I couldn’t buy it up to that 40,000...

Few days later he come back and finalized the business he accepted

N240,000, I paid off his money”I bought the missing power supply from Bala at the cost of N130,000.

*I told him that whenever we meet he **most** give me back my Starlink or pay me the sum of N520, 000.*

The first sentence shows that the transaction has already been completed from the tense **‘bought’** used which is a past tense. While the word **‘couldn’t’**, shows his denial after completing the transaction. Also in his word saying, few days later.....finalized.....he accepted N240, 000.

The contradiction on the amount finalized, was the N240, 000 being the total or is added to the initial deposit of N40, 000? and what about the 130,000 for power supply? Finally how does the N520, 000 realized as the amount to pay back.

For the inconsistencies, in the first place the complainer is stating he bought Starlink from (someone), but he stated that; ‘later I promised him to replace him his Starlink with the same issue’.

The question is who is to replace for who? is ambiguous not very clear.

Improper use of words/terms/language and incompetency:

In the suspect statement, the whole language of the statement is not properly used, no gender distinction, **‘her’** is used in place of **‘he’** throughout which confuse the reader. The word **‘her’** is used 12 times in the statement in place of **‘he’**.

The whole statement of the accused person shows complete incompetency in the language (English), as so many words are not properly written, such as;

‘where issue’ is written instead of **‘we have issue’**... **‘in the amount of’** is written in place of **‘at the amount of’**... **‘the rung’** is used instead of **‘the remaining’**, **‘cond’** in place of **‘code’**. Also the sentence; **‘he call me there’s a problems the kit is not his on I told his is his on he refuses, told him is his on’**. Here preposition **‘on’** is used in place of pronoun/adjective.

Therefore, looking at these issues in this police reports, renders it to be invalid as ambiguity and inconsistencies are found prevalent in it.

Sample No.2

The report is on suspicious act on somebody for a missing property (Smartphone) at a GSM market place.

Omission of part of sentence

In complainer's (Abba) statement, there is omission of personal pronoun (pp) '**I**' and the preposition (prep) '**to**' in the first sentence thus; '**....was going the mosque**', which supposed to be '*I was going to the mosque*'. Also an auxiliary verb '**have**' is missing in the '**.....and they stolen away our phones**', the phrase should be written as '*.....and they have stolen away our phones*'.

On the first accused person's statement the language is clear, however the figures of amount stated is not capture in the complainer's statement.

Another accused person also makes his statement in another language (Hausa) which is not clearly readable and one cannot deduce anything from it.

However, for the last person, the writing is fairly readable, and clearly testified as claimed by the complainer that, the phones were stolen. Although, each among the accused person is claiming to went to the mosques at the time of incident. In addition to that, the statement will be regarded as confessional one.

There is need of clarity in all the statement either written by the suspect or received by the police officer.

In such a case the task of a forensic linguist was to establish clarity and conformity between the statement reports taken on the case. He did this by examining the linguistic data under the speech act theory as indicated earlier.

Sample No.3

This statement involves a case of misunderstanding and abuses/insults and threats between two parties, the complainer (Talle) and the accused (Yawale). In the complainer's statement there is some sort of syntactic/semantic and morphological deviation.

For syntactic deviation the complainer says;

"He also says he will not give me my money because I was distabilize his close"....., 'the word destabilize was written wrongly as distabilize. And the sentence is ambiguous because the statement is incomplete. Also the word sew/sewed is wrongly written as 'suide'.

Also another sentence is wrongly written as; '*I have now completed bot yesterday at he come and collect the at my shop when I was no around.'*

The sentence should correctly be written as; '*I have now completed but*

*yesterday that he **came** and collect **them** at my shop when I was **not** around.'*

In complainer's statement, it shows how the exchange in conversation between parties turns into abuses, insults and threats. Though the abusing words are in Hausa language as the customer abuses the complainer in words when the complainer said to him;

*"A wannan karon ba zan yi Allah ya isa ba, wallahi ko ba ka zo ba se na zo na karbi kudina, na baka daga nan zuwa safiya. Then he called me immediately and say; "kai **jaki** ne, **wawa, jahili, mahaukaci, dabba** ba zan ba da kudin ba na **cinye** in ka isa ka zo ina kasuwa."*

This is translated as; *"At this moment I will not leave it, wallahi (I swear) even if you didn't come, I will come and collect my money, I give you from now to tomorrow morning". The respond from the accused was,.... "you are **donkey, fool, illiterate, mad, animal**, I will not give the money I confiscate it, if you have the **gad** come and meet me I am at market place."*

And the complainer stated that, then I responded with the same insult.

However, in suspect statement, there are some morphological deviations and omissions, as he stated; *".....i was not near by the phone he **tust** me a massage threatening me....."*,

The word he **tust** me is improperly written, the correct word is supposed to be written as, *'he **text** me...'*

Also for the omission, it appears in his writing as; *.....**the** I called him and **why are** saying this like you didn't know me before, **the** he started insulting me on phone and asking **tell where ever** you are I will come and meet you will see the consequences."*

However, those items in the statement (above) supposed to be written as, *... **then** I called him and **said why are you** saying this..... **then** he started insulting me.....**tell me wherever**'*

The accused person has admitted about their long relationship and the transaction that occurs between them. Although he denied owing him some amount of money, and in reverse to complainers insult, he also insults him the same way he did.

For the statement given above, the linguistic data shows evidence of:

- Bridge of trust between two parties.
- Usage of abusing and offensive words to insult

- Threats

Sample No.4

This statement (report) is about the reported case of theft reported to the police division by the management of the school where the incident occurred. The management reported a case of missing school properties (17 ceiling fans), which they suspect a watchman of the school, where he responded as he is suspecting his son on that. The statement given on the case file read as follows:

- a. Statement from witness1&2: (PTA member and the Principal), that they realized that 17 ceiling fans out of 20 were remove by unknown person, which they called on gateman on that, and he agreed that they were stolen, he is suspecting his children on that. He even admitted that he consulted his son and he confessed that he is the one that stole the fan and sell them all.
- b. Statement from witness 3: (Security man), when interrogated he said that; ‘ I was *suspecting* my son that X, *because he is the one that use to collect key from me* and whenever I go round I will meet the door and the window closed, that is why I am not thinking of anything’
- c. Statement from the accused (suspect 4): (the son of security man ‘X’). when interrogated he made a confessional statement as, *when I came back from school I will meet my father and collect the key of the school..... I use silence to remove a ceiling fan myself and one person ‘Y’, and sold 2 to somebody ‘Z’ at ...place... and other 2 to another person at’ ...place.*
- d. Statement from the accused (co-suspect 5): Stated that he partake in removing some of the ceiling fan by testifying that; ‘X’ *called me and told me ‘akwai haja’ (there is a deal),we enter into classroom and took 2 ceiling fans, we go to..... we sell them.....’*

The statement recorded on the police case file shows a confessional statement from the accused person on the criminal act of theft. As the language used in the statement indicate admitting that he commit the offense as he says, ‘*I use silence to remove a ceiling fan myself*’.

The language use here is clear and precise as the evidence of committing the crime is established from the suspect language (confession). However, the statement was not written by the suspect himself, as this curtail the prevailing problems when writing a statement by the complainer/suspect.

***Sample No.5**

This statement is extracted from police case file on the offense of causing grievous hurt reported to the station by the victim. The incident occurred on 13th of July, 2025 between the complainer; ‘2XY’ and accuse person ‘YZ’. Report on the police investigation record shows that the victim sustained grievous injury and the suspect confesses all the allegations levelled against him.

On the victim (complainer)’s statement ‘2XY’, it indicate the interaction that occurs between them as; “ *I went to one communicating shop.....to buy recharge card and data, one boy come to enter into the shop, he is a shop boy, he didn’t talk to me.....one ‘XY’ come to the place and said I should give the boy in order to enter in the shop, I told him that I don’t know that the boy want to enter.....and continue exchanging words with him, I just bought the card and data left the shop.....along my way he blocked my way while driven my bicycle, I just heard he stab me with unknown items at back and as a result of that I sustained injury on my back and head....*’

However, the suspect confess the crime by saying; ‘*while standing in front of the house, he come to pass riding bicycle he sees me and just throw his bicycle aside and come to me and said I should repeat what I said from the beginning he try to beat me along the way **I removed a very sharp knife and stab him on his back**, as a result of that he sustained a very **serious injury**.....’*

Although, the report was taken and written by the police officer, improper use of punctuation mark such as comma, period, and question mark is frequent in the statement.

However, as the suspect confesses the crime committed via the use of simple language to indicate his action, the linguistic data here serve as evidence in establishing the perpetrator of the crime.

Summarily, based on the speech model theory as stated earlier, the above samples examined can be illustrated via the theory in tabular form below:

Sample	Setting and Scene: Formal	Participants	Intent and purpose	Form and content	Tone of the voice (Key)	Instrumentalities	Norm of Interaction and Interpretation	Genres
1.	Police office	Complainer, IPO & Suspect	Complainer and suspect write the statement themselves.	IPO ask questions, complainer narrates what happened,	Complainer react seriously with factual words	English language is used and written in formal English	Complainer waits for police officer's directives	Date, place, narrated (no time) by & sign all recorded
2.	Police office	Complainer, IPO & Suspect	Complainer and suspect write the statement themselves.	IPO ask questions, complainer & accused narrates what happened,	Complainer & witness react seriously with factual words	English and Hausa (Local) language is used and written in formal English	Complainer waits for police officer's directives	Date, time, place, narrated by & sign all recorded
3.	Police office	Complainer, IPO & Suspect	Complainer and suspect write the statement themselves.	IPO ask questions, complainer & accused narrates what happened,	Complainer & accused react seriously with factual words	English and Vernacular language is used and written in formal English and Hausa language.	Complainer waits for police officer's directives	Date, time, place, narrated by & sign all recorded
4.	Police office	Complainer, IPO & Suspect	Police record the case, suspect invited.	IPO ask questions, complainer narrates what happened,	Complainer react seriously with factual words	Local language is used and written in formal English	Complainer resolve the case with the accused, later withdraw the case.	Date, time, place, narrated by & sign all recorded
5.	Police office	Complainer, IPO & Suspect	Police record the case, suspect invited.	IPO ask questions, complainer & suspect narrates what happened,	Complainer react seriously with factual words while accused confess	English language is used and written in formal English	Complainer waits for police officer's directives. The case was presented to the court.	Date, time, place, narrated by & sign all recorded

Overall Findings

Considering the foregoing discussions and analysis on the police investigative report in Nigeria, the study find out that Police expert who have skills in English and other local languages should be put in place when taking any statement from the complainer or suspects. Because the statement can be tendered as first evidence to consider in court cases. However, some complainers/suspect/accused may prefer to write by them, as such clarity, consistency and unambiguous statement must be maintained.

In addition to that, in some police statements other vital information are ignored, such as the name of the interpreter, if other language is used, the time, date and place of the statement, which may help the legal authorities in making the judgment.

Furthermore, the study also reveals the followings as its finding in

analysing police investigative report:

- a. Improper use of English language
- b. Some linguistic deviation in writing the statement, such as syntactical, morphological and semantic
- c. The influence of the L1 on L2 (English) in taking the statement.
- d. Lack of skills in using the formal English language.
- e. Non clear handwriting that cannot express accuracy of the findings (information) about the incidence.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study accounted for some inconsistencies, ambiguity, contradictions linguistic deviations in the use of language by the police officers and the complainer/witness and accused as well in writing statement at police stations. By following the eight steps in language speech model by Dell Hymes (1974), the report (police) was analysed to reveal the different steps in the model on how language is used. However, inconsistencies were found to occur in the statement (improper use of tense, auxiliary verbs, prepositional phrases, omission of personal pronoun, determiner and inconsistencies, syntactic and morphological deviations).

It can also clearly be seen that, as the layman (complainer/suspect) can make a mistake in writing the statement, police officers who are professional in the field can also make the same error. And this can definitely hinder the validity of the report to be accepted by the judge as evidence in either criminal or civil cases. Therefore, these problems should be addressed since it may contribute to ambiguity of the report that may lose any value in legal context.

In general, the study shows that the issues found occurring in writing police reports in Nigeria show the lack of knowledge in the use of language (both local and English) in writing. And this report is taken as the supporting evidence when presenting cases in the court.

Therefore, the study recommends that,

1. Proper language usage skills should be enhanced and encouraged among experts, thus; legal practitioners, police officers and users of the police investigative report.
2. In addition, basic knowledge in forensic linguistics should be put in

place in all police training institutions as part of the tools in investigation and writing report.

3. Indigenous language needs to be put in place in taking the statement for the avoidance of any contradiction or misinformation which may affect the final judgement and for maintaining accuracy.

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