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CONCEALMENT IN POLICE-SUSPECT INTERACTION IN IBADAN, NIGERIA

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Abstract:
Police-suspect interaction (PSI) is an integral aspect of forensic discourse studies. Existing scholarly works on police discourse have engaged PSI from the linguistic and non-linguistic viewpoints. However, studies have been silent on the use of concealment in extracting confessional statements from suspects. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the discursive roles of concealment in PSI, with a view to describing concealment strategies and their implications for the language of police interrogation. The study is anchored on Dell Hymes' ethnography of communication (EOC), considering its unequivocal engagement with contextual linguistic resources in representing participants' goals in discourse. Interrogation sessions on conspiracy, felony, stealing, affray, and illegal possession of arms were tape-recorded at the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (SCIID), Ìyágankú, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopts the non-participant observation technique, as well as unstructured and structured interviews. Analysis of data reveals that interrogating police officers (IPOs) and suspects adopt veiling, jargonisation, lexical replacement, hedging and deflection as concealment strategies. While suspects resort to concealment to seek exclusion, ignorance, withdrawal and anonymity, IPOs' concealment strategies were orchestrated to seek suspects' co-operation, allay suspects' fears, boost suspects' confidence, achieve confession with minimal input and protect suspects' rights during interrogation sessions. Further studies on PSI could engage a comparative analysis of the use of concealment in PSI and civil cases.

Keywords: Forensic discourse, **c**onfessional statement, concealment, police-suspect interaction, Ibadan

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1. Introduction

PSI is a form of institutional discourse that is characterised by peculiar genre and style. The social actors (police officers and suspects) involved in the discourse manipulate linguistic resources to achieve institutional goals in the encounter. A police officer is a person whose job, within the confines of the law, is to apprehend suspects while a suspect is a person who is thought to be guilty of a crime (Akinrinlola, 2016). During PSI, the two social actors work at cross purposes; IPOs are motivated by the desire to get suspects confess to crime while suspects weave their responses to escape incrimination. IPOs' questions and suspects' responses are laden with varying linguistic devices aimed at expressing a number of ideologies in PSI. One of the noticeable discourse devices employed is the preponderant engagement of concealment. IPOs and suspects withhold certain information for specific purposes. Concealment is "the use of language to hide information and intentions during interaction" (Clark 1992: 2). It is a discourse device aimed at making information unknown to a third party. The Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Ìyágankú, Ibadan, Oyo State, is a unit of the Nigeria Police Force devoted to crime investigation. It is a section of the Force to which serious criminal cases within Oyo State are referred. This unit parades highly trained police officers who possess respectable crime investigation skills. In their interactions, the use of concealment by these social actors is context-driven. In other words, the context of the cases informs the use of concealment in such encounters.

Studies (Abbe and Brandson, 2014; Szczyrbak, 2014; Akinrinlola, 2016; Akinrinlola, 2017; Sunday and Akinrinlola, 2017; Akinrinlola, 2019; Ajayi and Akinrinlola, 2020) have investigated police discourse from the linguistic and non-linguistic viewpoints. However, sufficient discourse analytical investigations have not engaged the resourcefulness of concealment and its roles in PSI. Besides, studies have not sufficiently engaged Dell Hymes' contextual variables in assessing how information is managed via concealment in PSI. Although studies have interrogated the deployment of concealment in news reports, such studies have not established the role of concealment in institutional discourse. This study maintains that scholarly investigations have not engaged the discursive import of concealment in PSI. More specifically, existing studies have not interrogated how contextual features: setting, participant, ends, key, instrumentalities, norms and genre of discourse activate meaning via concealment. It is against this

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background that this paper investigates the role of concealment in PSI with a view to describing the motivation behind concealment in PSI. This paper is premised on the following research questions: What is the motivation behind the use of concealment in PSI? What are the discursive tools of concealment in PSI? What does concealment reveal about the language of police interrogation? To respond to these questions, this study uses Dell Hymes' Ethnography of Communication as the theoretical framework, considering its resourceful engagement of context in representing meaning in language. This study is significant for a number of reasons. Apart from provoking an understanding of how police interrogation works, a discursive engagement of context-motivated concealment in PSI will be of immense benefit to students and teachers of discourse analysis. The study will also be a good inclusion to existing studies in forensic discourse studies.

1.1. Concealment in discourse

Concealment is a discourse strategy for managing information in discourse. Since information is central to decision making, concealment becomes a strategy for achieving an end in any discourse enterprise. From the linguistic perspective, concealment is the act of withholding information for specific reasons. It is the deployment of linguistic variables to hide information and intentions. From the pragmatic perspective, concealment is interpreted as a form of positive politeness strategy (Rana and Al-Deleimi, 2018). It is conceived as an aspect of Gricean maxims, which is laden with a number of pragma-rhetorical import. Clark (1992: 2) describes concealment as "a means of hiding information and intentions from other over-hearers." To Schroter (2013: 5), concealment is "a form of silence, although it can also be rather wordy." Concealment is presented as "an act that prevents others from gaining access to facts" (Odebunmi 2011:12). Akinrinlola (2017:13) sees concealment as "a strategy of deception or manipulation". Fyke (2014: 10) explains that concealment is "a means of persuasion in that the concealer controls information by creating a way that suits him in a bid to win others' admiration". He further argues that concealment is an act of withholding information for specific purposes. He maintains that the act of concealing information is characterised and defined in terms of context and purpose. He contends that these conditions determine the nature and the strategies of concealment in discourse.

Mc Cornack (1992) holds that concealment is a strategy of manipulation alongside three other strategies: fabrication, distortion and equivocation. Ekman (1985) sees concealment as "a preferred form of deception compared to lying". They define concealment in terms

of 'incompleteness' not telling the whole truth, whereas lying is the act of telling the untruth. According to Baron (2003:21), concealment "involves issuing lies and false assumptions to hide the truth". Baron (2003) and Asya (2013) agree that the mental activity is instrumental here. The speaker could rely on the emotions of the target to manipulate. From the foregoing, concealment could be described as a resourceful information management strategy employed by IPOs and suspects to achieve institutional goals. The goal of such information management strategy, from the perspectives of IPOs and suspects, is to extract confessional statements from suspects and evade incrimination.

2. Review of related literature

A plethora of studies have been done on police discourse. While some of the studies engage PSI from the non-linguistic approach, a good number of the studies investigate PSI from the linguistic viewpoint. Carter (2009) examines police interview interaction using conversation analysis. She adopts participants' mutual understanding and orientation to the context shown through their own talk. The study explores thirty-five (35) extracts from a corpus of one hundred and fifty (150) police interviews. The study reveals that policing talk uses laughs and silence as forms of conveying ideologies in police interview. On the impact of police behaviour on confessional statements by suspects, Karlijn, Giebels, and Taylor (2010) examine how the use of different influencing behaviour by IPOs affects the provision of information by suspects. Using authentic video-taped police interview, the study submits that rational arguments were more effective in eliciting case-related information from low-context suspects than high high-context suspects. On the contrary, high-context, rather than low-context suspects, seemed to respond negatively in terms of explicitly refusing to give information. On the use of the English language in the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Udoh (2010) engages a description of linguistic features of the language of the Nigeria Police, using Onitsha as a case study. The study uses participant observation technique to investigate the use of the English language in the Force. Results show that proficiency in the use of the English language in the Nigeria Police Force depends on police officers' level of education. Udoh's study revolves around features of occupational variety of the English language in the NPF.

Drawing data from police interviews, Abbe and Brandson (2014) investigate how rapport is built and managed in police interview. The study holds that rapport in police interview can increase information from witnesses and improve trust, cooperation, agreement and

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negotiation. He however, regrets that law enforcement agents pay little or attention to rapport in police interrogation. Szczyrbak (2014) studies pragmatic marker use in police interviews. The study submits that IPOs and suspects rely on contextual import of pragmatic markers to signal their intentions during interrogation. Farinde, Olajuyigbe and Adegbite (2015) investigate discourse control strategies in the use of the English language in police interrogation in Nigeria with a view to identifying the themes embedded in such discourse. Using the meta-pragmatics model, the study reveals that, assault, affray, house-breaking, obtaining by false pretense, abduction and robbery cases were the common themes in the discourse. The study equally submits that IPOs employ illocutionary force to demonstrate control in the discourse. The study is relevant in terms of its exposition of power negotiation via pragmatic means in PSI. Akinrinlola (2017) investigates the discursive import of deception in PSI in Ibadan, Nigeria. Tape-recorded interrogation on assault, burglary and stealing, rape and affray constitute the data for the study. The study submits that equivocation and baiting are vital instruments of deception in PSI.

On negotiation tactics in PSI, Sunday and Akinrinlola (2017) investigate negotiation strategies adopted by IPOs in eliciting confessions from suspects. They identify persuasion as one of the potent strategies of eliciting confessing, especially with hardened criminals. On the discursive representation of evidence in police interview, Harworth (2017) examines the construction of evidence in rape discourse. The goal of the study was to produce defense evidence. The paper demonstrates the interactional mechanisms through which interview co-constructs the interviewee's own version of events. The study equally provides justification for the legal ramifications by focusing on the construction of consent. Kahn, Steels, Mc Mahon and Stewart (2017) investigate differential activities across cultures during PSI. The study focuses on white, black and latino suspects. The study uses 139 white suspects, 42 blacks and 35 latino suspects. The use of force case files and associated written narratives were analysed. Results show that blacks and latino suspects receive more force in the beginning stages of the interaction whereas whites escalated in level of force faster after initial levels.

With regard to influence of procedures on police interrogation, John and Michael (2017) analyse and develop series of hypotheses regarding the use of procedurally just policing during suspect encounters. The study relies on systematic social observation of data from police encounters with suspects. Findings show that from regression model, the most important predictors of police officers' exercising authority in a procedurally just manner

include: the level of self-control displayed by suspects, the number of citizens onlookers voice and social status. Considering the influence of police behavioural pattern on criminal identification, Omoroghomwan (2018) examines four known police behavioural strategies towards criminal identification among police personnel in Nigeria. The study uses two hundred and seventeen (217) respondents. Analysis of data reveals that police officers' use of service and defection is vital to criminal identification. It establishes that the strategy assists the police in tracking criminal activities. While Omoroghomwan's study investigates behavioural patterns on criminal identification, the present study describes how concealment functions as a means of extracting confessional statement from suspects. Considering the role of deixis in PSI, Akinrinlola (2019) investigates the discursive roles of deixis in PSI in Ibadan, Nigeria. Tape-recorded interrogation sessions on rape, burglary and stealing, affray, obtaining by false pretense, arson, kidnapping and robbery were analysed, using insights from discourse analysis. The study reveals that IPOs and suspects manipulate deixis to express collectivism, self-assertion and labeling.

While most of these studies (Karlijn et al., 2010; Carter, 2015; Farinde, et al., 2015; Akinrinlola, 2017; Harworth, 2017; John and Michael, 2017; Kahn et al., 2017; Sunday and Akinrinlola, 2017; Omoroghomwan, 2018; Akinrinlola, 2019) are devoted to discursive practices in PSI, only Udoh (2010) investigates the sociolinguistics of the English language in the Nigeria Police Force. Studies are yet to engage how context defines extraction of confessional statements in PSI. Concealment remains a viable discursive mechanism used by IPOs and suspects to sustain the management of confessional statements during police interrogation. This explains why this paper examines how concealment functions as a means of managing information in PSI.

2.1. Theoretical Framework: Ethnography of Communication

Ethnography of speaking (EOS) was propounded by Dell Hymes in 1962 to describe what transpires when we engage in communication. It favours the social approach to language. The concept of EOS explains how our experiences are communicated in our cultures. EOS was later redefined as Ethnography of Communication (EOC) in 1964. It is the analysis of communication within the context of the social and cultural practices and beliefs of members of a particular society. Hymes (1964) holds that ethnography of communication describes the relationship between language and social class. EOC explores the connection between language and the extra-linguistic cultural context. The

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concept holds that any speech event comprises several components, and the analysis of the components is an integral aspect of ethnography of communication. These components define the features of context of communication. The features of communication, according to Dell Hymes, include:

Setting: This refers to the time an action takes place. It also includes the psychological setting, nature of the communication and the degree of formality of the speech event. The setting is the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Ìyágankú, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Participants: This refers to the speakers and hearers of a particular speech event. It also takes into account the social roles of the participants, and how it influences the communication. The participants involved in the discourse are IPOs and suspects who share unequal social roles during PSI.

Ends: This has to do with the goal, purpose or outcome of the communication. IPOs and suspects work at cross purpose; while the goal of IPO is to get suspects confess, suspects, on the other hand, manipulate linguistic resources to escape incrimination.

Act and sequence: This refers to the order of the communication. In other words, it has to do with the form a speech event takes. Communication is ordered in a particular manner so that it can be meaningful to the other participants. PSI is rendered in adjacency pairs. IPOs enact control of the discourse through interrogative constructions while suspects also perform a number of acts in their responses.

Key: This has to do with the way we behave during speech event. Context of speech informs the way we behave during interaction. For example, we use different tones when we are engaged in different discursive practices. Our tones and facial expression communicate different meanings in contexts. IPOs and suspects resort to a number of social practices in a bid to achieve their goals.

Instrumentalities: This holds that the context of discourse influences speech. It refers to the style we adopt in speech events. In casual conversations, our words are mostly colloquial. However, in any formal speech, we choose our words carefully. IPOs are formal in their interaction with suspects. The social actors (IPOs and suspects) choose words that would enhance their goals.

Norms: These refer to the social rules governing the behaviour of people in a particular discourse. PSI is guided by some conventional rules, and these rules are strictly followed during interrogation sessions.

Genre: This refers to the kind of speech act performed. Different speech communities have different ways of identifying a genre. PSI as a peculiar genre is marked with institutional formalities. These formalities influence the entire interrogation process.

This paper's adoption of Dell Hyme's ethnography of communication is predicated on the fact that PSI manifests a robust use of concealment as a discourse strategy. Since EOC investigates the connection between language and context, the paper relies on its use in interrogating how the use of concealment in PSI reveals the negotiation of intentions, social action, social roles and discursive practices in PSI.

3. Method

Police interrogation sessions constitute the data for the study. The researcher tape-recorded police interrogation sessions at the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Ìyágankú, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. It is a department of the Force that is saddled with crime investigation of cases from around the State. Approval to collect data was sought for, and obtained from relevant authorities. Twenty-five sessions of interrogations were randomly audio tape-recorded. Interrogations on cases such as conspiracy and stealing, malicious damage, affray and illegal possession of arms were tape-recorded. The non-participant observation technique was adopted. The study also adopted structured and unstructured interview. One hundred IPOs, comprising sixty senior personnel and forty members of the rank and file, were interviewed on the rationale behind the use of concealment in police interrogation. The selected officers demonstrate good knowledge and robust experience of the techniques of engaging concealment as an interrogative strategy in interrogation. The essence of such interview was to compare the submissions of the IPOs with the results of the study. The suspects were briefed that the interrogation process would be observed for research purposes. They were reliably informed that the research was for academic purpose, and that the results of such research would only be kept in the library for teaching and further research. The purpose of informing and educating the suspects was to address the bias that might arise as a result of the presence of non-police officers and a recording device at the venue of the interrogation.

For ethical reasons, the permission of the suspects was sought orally and documented by the IPOs. The names and locations of the suspects were also coded. However, ten cases were purposively selected because of their relative manifestation of concealment in the interaction. IPOs and suspects' contributions were studied closely, and the use of

concealment as means of expressing their motivations was identified. The data collected were transcribed into text, and for conversations in Yoruba and Pidgin, efforts were made to translate them into the English language. The translation process follows a one-to-one process to ensure that meaning is not distorted in the analysis. The study uses Dell Hymes' ethnography of communication to describe the motivation behind concealment in PSI. Concealment strategies of IPOs and suspects were identified and described in relation to their contextual features. The study identifies various discursive devices used in negotiating concealment in PSI. The discursive devices were described in terms of their contextual functions and implications for the language of PSI.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Veiling

Veiling is a discourse strategy employed by speakers or writers to hide information during speech events. Such discourse strategy is aimed at meeting some conversational ends. Our corpus manifest instances of the use of veiling to achieve some discursive ends in the selected interactions. An instance of the use of veiling is presented below:

Excerpt 1

1. P: Ṣé o ṣe tán láti fọwọ́ sọwọ́pọ̀ pẹ̀lú wa?/Are you ready to cooperate with us?
2. S: Ọ̀gá, mi ò sí lára àwon ọmọkùnrin náà./Sir, I was not part of *the boys.*
3. P: Dákẹ́! Báwo lo ṣe mọ XX?/ Keep quiet! How did you know XX?
4. S: Alábágbé mi ni. /He is my neighbour.
5. P: Báwo lẹ se pinnu iṣẹ́ náà?/ How did you plan *the deal*?
6. S: Ìṣẹlẹ̀ náà ṣẹlẹ̀ nígbà tí mo rìrìnàjò./*The incident* happened when I travelled, Sir.
7. P: Ṣé ìyẹn túmọ̀ sí pé o ò sí lára wọn?/ Does that mean you were not part of the gang?
8. S: Bẹ́ẹ̀ ni ọ̀gá. Mi ò lè ṣe irú nǹkan burúkú bẹ́ẹ̀./ Yes, Sir. I cannot do such *a terrible thing*.
9. P: (*Ó súnmọ́ ọ̀daràn náà*) Màá yanjú ìwé ìtúsílẹ̀ rẹ tí o bá sọ òtítọ́. Ẹjọ́ tí ò le ni./ *(Moves closer to the suspect)* I will prepare your bail if you tell the truth. It is a light case.
10. S:(*Ó ń sunkún)* Ọ̀gá, màá sọ gbogbo nǹkan tí mo mọ̀ nípa rẹ̀./ (*Sobbing)* Sir, I will tell you everything I know about it.

11. P: Ṣé o ṣe tán láti fi àgọ́ ọlọ́pàá sílẹ̀?/ Are you ready to leave the Police Station?
12. Bẹ́ẹ̀ ni ọ̀gá. Ẹ jọ̀wọ́, ẹ ràn mí lọ́wọ́./ Yes, sir. Please, help me.
13. Ẹjọ́ rẹ ò le. Sáà fọwọ́ sọwọ́pọ̀, kí n sọ fún olórí àgọ́. A á yanjú ìwé ìtúsílẹ̀ rẹ./ Your case is a bail-able offence. Just cooperate, and let me inform the Station Officer. Your bail form will be prepared soon.

Excerpt 1 presents a case of conspiracy and felony. The suspect was arrested for conspiring with some persons to rob a named community Head in XX. The IPO and suspect resort to the use of nominal group orchestrated veiling. The participants adopt nominal items to exclude and background culpability in their utterances. In line 4, the IPO uses *the boys* to refer to the gang that robbed the complainant. The choice of *the boys* in the above line conceals the identity and role of the criminal. The same linguistic strategy runs through line 7. The IPO demands an explanation of how the gang orchestrated the robbery act. The IPO consciously uses the nominal item, *the deal*, to refer to the robbery case. The concealment of the offence committed through the deployment of veiling is a discursive strategy aimed at luring the suspect to confess to the crime committed. The suspect equally resorts to the use of *the incident* in line 8 to exclude the nature of crime committed.

In line 10, the suspect deploys tagging with the use of nominal items to describe the act as being *a terrible thing*. The suspect uses *a terrible thing* in the above line to dissociate himself from the incident. In other words, the nominal group is adopted to castigate and cast aspersion on the perpetrators. The suspect's social acts includes: castigating, withdrawing, tagging and rebuking. All these discursive acts are consciously performed to evade incrimination. The IPO, on the other hand, presses further by promising the suspect of release from custody provided he confesses. This explains why he (the IPO) affirms in line 11 that, *I will prepare your bail if you tell the truth. It is a light case*. Veiling via the use of nominal group is a veritable concealment strategy adopted in the excerpt to exclude the background information that could reveal culpability of the suspect within the case-related phase of the interrogation. The strategy deployed in the excerpt is aimed at mitigating the suspect's role in the crime. In accordance with Hymes' (1964) ethnography of communication, both the IPO and suspect resort to veiling as a discursive tool to achieve an end in the discourse. The social roles of the participants inform their choice of discursive instrumentalities. This study is in tandem with Akinrinlola's (2017) investigation of deception in PSI. However, the area of divergence lies in the

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discursive approach. The present study reveals that IPOs and suspects tone down information via discursive means in a bid to achieve institutional goals.

4.2. Jargonisation

One of the discursive tools adopted in the interrogations to conceal intention is the use of police jargon. Police jargon are lexical choices that are strictly technical and restricted to the Nigeria Police Force. Many of these words were used in the course of the interrogation. Some of the jargon include: *exhibits, complainant, suspect, custody, bail, bail bond, defendant, station, statement, crime, beat, surveillance,* and *patrol* were mainly used by IPOs during interrogation. Here is an example from the data:

Excerpt 2

1. P: When did the incident happen?
2. S: That was on 5th August, 2013.
3. P: Were you not on duty that day?
4. S: I was, Sir.
5. P: What do you do in the office?
6. S: I am a technician.
7. P: So, as a technician, what do you do?
8. S: I repair all electronic gadgets there.
9. P: Okay. I don't want to treat you as a suspect if you confess to me. The complainant even said you could not have done something like this.
10. S: (*Shaking his head*) Yes, Sir! He knows me!
11. P: If you confess your part in the case, I won't keep you in custody.
12. S: Okay, Sir!
13. P: Why did you run away yesterday when our surveillance team came to your shop?
14. S: Sir… sir… I was afraid!
15. P: You thought you would get away with such a crime?
16. S: I did not commit any crime, Sir.
17. P: The Station is a place where you can explain your part in the crime and be granted bail after obtaining your statement.
18. S: Yes, Sir!

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The above interaction is a case of stealing. The suspect was one of the workers in a computer firm. Four of the laptops in the company got lost, and the case was reported to the Police Station. Having investigated the case, the IPO got to know that the suspect was one of those that conspired with another worker to steal the laptops. In the interaction, the IPO engages a number of police jargon. Such jargon are laden with contextual meanings. In line 9 of the excerpt, the IPO asserts that, *Okay, I don't want to treat you as a suspect if you confess to me. The complainant even said you could not have some done something like this*. In the above lines, the choice of *suspect* underscores the fact the suspect being investigated has committed a crime, though his culpability has not been ascertained within the confines of the law. The IPO's words technically exonerate the suspect because suspects are usually subjected to series of manhandling during interrogation, but the IPO declares that the suspect would not be treated as such. The choice of the word, *suspect* conceals the intention of the IPO.

The IPO's use of *complainant* in the interaction also expresses concealment. A complainant is the person who reports a crime to the police. Ordinarily, a complainant expects the police to interrogate a suspect so as to ascertain his culpability, but in this circumstance, the IPO informs the suspect that the complainant had attested to the integrity of the suspect. The IPO further conceals his intention in line 11 by asserting that, *If you confess your part in the case, I won't keep you in custody*. The use of *custody* by the IPO has contextual connotation; it means the state of being detained before trial. The choice of *custody* includes detention, loneliness, fear, discomfort and ill-treatment. In this circumstance, the IPO has only requested the suspect to confess. The suspect's confession automatically guarantees freedom.

In line 13, the IPO uses *surveillance* to establish that the police had been trailing the suspect. In line 17, *crime* and *bail* are used to express the degree of the suspect's crime and the positive face of the law. The IPO uses *crime* and *bail* to affirm the strength and positive face of the law. The use of *bail* prepares the suspect's mind for amicable settlement. In line with Hymes' ethnography of communication, the choices made in the interaction reveal orientations of the participants towards the subject of interrogation. Jargonisation is used by the participants to achieve discursive ends in the interaction. The use of jargonisation as a form of concealment in PSI reveals that, within the sequence in PSI, the IPO and suspect deploy contextual variables to express inherent institutional goals. The use of such contextual variables reveals linguistic peculiarities of police interrogation.

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4.3. Lexical replacement/ Orchestrating anonymity

Richardson (2007:47) states that "words convey the imprint of society and value judgments'. Words convey connoted as well as denoted meaning". Richardson explains further that all types of words, but particularly nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs carry connoted in addition to denoted meanings. These categories of words are often referred to as content or lexical words. Deictic elements were used in the sampled interactions to manipulate and conceal vital pieces of information. The success of any interrogation is hinged on voluntary confession. Aware of such consequences, suspects concealed information from IPOs. IPOs also deployed deictic elements to shroud information in a bid to achieve confessions from suspects. The case of illegal possession of arms in the excerpt below presents the resourcefulness of deictic elements as a concealment strategy in the data:

Excerpt 3

1.P: (Ìgbà wo lo darapò mọ́ (*Ó tọ́ka sí àwọn ìbọn tí wọ́n gbà padà*) ẹgbẹ́ yìí?
   When did you join this (*pointing to the recovered weapons on ground*) group?
2.S: Ọ̀rẹ́ mi ló mú mi wọ̀ ọ́.
   (My friend introduced me to it, sir.)
3.P: Mo rò ọ́ láti fọwọ́sọwọ́pọ̀ pẹ̀lú wa ní ẹjọ́ yìí. Rí i pé o sọ òtítọ́.
   (I advise you to cooperate with us in this matter. Ensure you tell the truth.)
4.P: Báwo lo ṣe darapò mọ́ ẹgbẹ́ yìí?
   (How did you get initiated into the group?)
5.S: Ọ̀rẹ́ mi ló ràn mí lọ́wọ́. Mo wà ńlé lójọ́ kan tí mi ò ṣe nǹkankan ni ọ̀rẹ́ mi wá tí ó ní kí n darapò mọ́.
   (It was one XX, a friend of mine that assisted me. I was just at home doing nothing
    when he came, and introduced it to me.)
6.P: Báwo lẹ ṣe rí àwọn ohun èlò tẹ́ẹ fi ń ṣiṣẹ́?
   (How did you get the materials you use to operate?)
7.S: XX ló máa ń kó o wá sí ibi ìpàdé wa.
    (XX usually brought them to our meeting point.)
8.P: Báwo lẹ ṣe ń pinnu iṣẹ́ láabi tẹ́ẹ ń ṣe?
   (How do you plan the terrible things you do?)

9.S: XX ló máa ń ta wá lólobó a á sì lọ síbẹ̀ kété tí a bá ti ṣe tán.
    (XX usually gave us hints about operation and we mobilise to the area whenever we
        are set.)
10.P: Àwọn nǹkan wọ̀nyí (*Ó nawọ́ sí ìbọn, ọ̀bẹ àti oògùn*) ni a rí ní ilé rẹ. Báwo lo se rí
      won?
    (These things (pointing to guns, knives and charms) were found in your house. How
     did you get them?)
11.S: 'Idea' ló fún mi gẹ́gẹ́ bíi irinsẹ́ tèmi.
    ('Idea' gave them to me as my own instruments.)

Excerpt 3 presents a case of illegal possession of arms. The suspect being investigated was arrested for having some ammunition in his custody. The IPO resorts to the use of deixis as lexical replacement in a bid to avoid labeling the suspect during interrogation. The IPO's use of *this group* in line 1 captures the use of lexis to shield the real identity of the suspect. Considering the setting of the interaction, the IPO and the suspects share unequal roles as participants. The unequal roles of the participants are reflected in the sequence of the interrogation. Using Dell Hymes' ethnography of communication, the IPO deliberately tones down the culpability of the suspect by using the phrase *the group*. However, the recovered weapons, available at the scene of the interrogation, justify the *ends* of the interrogation. The IPO is geared towards extracting confessional statements from the suspect while the suspect, on the other hand, is keen on escaping incrimination. The use of *the group* by the IPO is a strategy aimed at luring the suspect to confess to crime.

In line 2, the suspect further conceals the identity of the group with the use of an exophoric reference, *it*. He (the suspect) affirms that, "My friend lured me into it, Sir". Both participants in the discourse use language to shroud the suspect's culpability by repressing the severity of the crime committed. On how the suspect got the weapons, the IPO mitigates the interrogation by deploying lexical replacement to save the suspect's face. In the IPO's use of *How did you get the materials you use to operate?*, two important choices, *materials* and *operate* are consciously made to douse the tension of the suspect. These choices are instances of what Dell Hymes calls instrumentalities. The IPO's use of *materials* instead of *weapons*, is a strategy to get the suspect confess to crime. The suspect, in line 7 says, *XX usually brought them to our meeting point*. The use of *them* in line 7 refers to the weapons used in perpetrating criminal acts. In line 8 of the excerpt, the IPO uses the phrase, *the terrible things* as a replacement for the criminal acts

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of the suspects and his gang. The same concealment strategy is adopted in line 9. The use of *these things* refers to the ammunition used by the suspect in perpetrating criminality. Hymes' ethnography of communication reveals how meaning is achieved via the use of contextual variables in the interaction. The social roles of the participants inform the use of language to communicate intentions. The IPO uses lexical replacement to conceal the severity of the suspect's crime, in a bid to get him confess to crime. The use of such lexical replacement functions as the key and instrumentalities that allay the fears of the suspect. The deployment of the instrumentalities of interaction by the IPO in the excerpt reveals the social action negotiated in the interaction.

4.4. Hedging

Hedging is used to dissociate self from the truthfulness or otherwise of a statement. Hyland (1998:1) states that, hedging refers to "any linguistic means used to indicate either a lack of complete commitment to the truth value of an accompanying proposition, or a desire not to express that commitment categorically". Hedging as a linguistic strategy may be used to facilitate turn-taking, show politeness and mitigate face-threats. Speakers make use of this to lessen threat to public self-image of others. Sometimes, hedge is expressed to conceal information. This is done through vagueness. IPOs and suspects deploy hedges as instrumentalities of discourse. Since interrogation centres on information management in PSI, IPOs and suspects are conscious of their utterances. Confessional statements made by suspects are laden with preponderant use of hedges to achieve a number of interactive goals. An example from our data is presented below:

Excerpt 4

1. P: Dem sey you fight with the Fulani man.
      You fought with the Fulani man.
   S: Oga, dis Fulani don dey disturb us since many months now. Dem dey destroy our crop de way dey like.
   Sir, these Fulani people have been disturbing us for months now. They destroy our crops at will…
2. P: Dem sey you kill two of im cow.
   They alleged you killed two of his cows.
   S: (*silence*)

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      S: Na lie be that.
      That is a lie!

3. P: I don go where the thing happen. You don know?
      I have been to the scene of the crime. Do you know that?
      S: I no know sir.
      I don't know sir.

4. P: The Fulani man sey one of im cow don sick.
      The Fulani man told us one of the cows is sick.
      S: I think im dey talk lie.
      I guess he is telling a lie.

5. P: How?
      S: I no sure sey any of the cow dey sick.
      I am not sure anyone of the cows is sick.

6. P: Watin you mean?
      How do you mean?
      S: He talk that one to put me for trouble.
      He said that to implicate me.

7. P: You no hit the cow?
      Didn't you hit the cow?
      S: Wetin I know be sey the cow no sick. All the cow dey well when I see them for farm.
      As far as I know, the cow is not sick. All the cows were healthy when I saw them on the farm.

The suspect involved in this interaction was arrested for fighting a Fulani herder on his (the suspect's) farm. The suspect was also accused of hitting one of the cows. The suspect, on the other hand, accused the Fulani man of malicious damage. In the interaction above, the IPO's social act is that of alleging the suspect. He does this by establishing the fact the suspect fought with the Fulani man. The suspect, on the other hand, performs the act of denying such allegation. In a bid to further establish the suspect's culpability, the IPO affirms that he had visited the crime scene. The IPO's mention of the crime scene serves a discourse instrumentality aimed at luring the suspect to confess to crime. Instead of yielding positively to the IPO's demands, the suspect decides to hedge in a bid to achieve his interactional goal. The suspect's goal is to avoid being incriminated. In line 3, the IPO asks if the suspect is aware that he had visited the

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crime scene. The suspect's response, *I don't know* is a deliberate hedge to express ignorance so as to escape being held responsible for the crime.

In line 4, the IPO informs the suspect about the state of one of the cows. Instead of claiming responsibility, he says, *I guess he is telling a lie*. The use of *I guess* by the suspect expresses uncertainty towards the subject of the interrogation. It is an attempt to conceal meaning in a bid to avoid being held responsible for the crime. In line 5, the suspect further pursues his interactional goal by asserting that he was not sure if any of the cows was sick. Here, the suspect hedges to express withdrawal and ignorance. In line 7, the suspect responds, *As far as I know, the cow is not sick*. The use of *As far as I know* is a form of hedge which is aimed at dissociating the suspect from the crime committed. In line with Hymes' model of communication, the participants deploy hedges to achieve interactional goals. The suspect resorts to hedges in a bid to conceal his involvement in the crime. The suspect's use of hedges in the interaction is aimed at establishing his innocence and ignorance. The contextual use of hedges in the interaction affirms that hedges are resourceful linguistic devices used in projecting thematic issues in PSI (Farinde et al., 2015; Harworth, 2017; Sunday and Akinrinlola, 2017). This study contends that IPOs and suspect deploy hedges to express their orientation towards the subject of interrogation. Hedges function as a viable interactional instrumentality in PSI.

4.5. Deflection

In the course of interrogation, both IPOs and suspects sustain their turns by introducing extraneous details in their responses and testimonies. Deflection is "a communicative strategy in which a current speaker veers into some other details, which are extraneous with the goal of sustaining and holding the floor and seeking attention or registering his presence during communication" (Akinrinlola, 2016:11). Suspects adopted this strategy when IPOs confronted them with questions in the interrogation room. They deflected in their responses to achieve a number of interactional goals. An example from our data is described below:

Excerpt 5
1.S: Oníṣòwò ni mí.
        (I am a business man.)
2.P: Kínìtúmọ̀ oníṣòwò?
        (What do you mean by business man?)

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3.S: Mo ń ta epo ròbì fún àwon oníṣòwò kékèké.
     (I sell crude oil to retailers.)
4.P: Ǹjẹ́ òwò yẹn bá òfin mu?
     (Is that a legal business?)
5.P: Kí ló sún ẹ dé ìdí olè?
     (What led you to stealing?)
6.S: Ọ̀gá, oníwàpèlẹ́ ọkùnrin ni mí. Mi ò jalè rí láyé mi.
     (Sir, I am a gentleman. I have never been involved in any crime before.)
7.S: Ní àgbègbè yẹn, ọ̀pọ̀lọpọ̀ iṣẹ́ láabi ni àwọn ènìyàn ṣe.
     (Along that area, so many people perpetrate different crimes.)
8.P: Ǹjẹ́ o ti rí wọn rí?
      (Have you seen them before?)
9 S: Bẹ́ẹ̀ ni ọ̀gá. Mo lè mú yín lọ sí ibi tí wọ́n fojú pamọ́ sí.
     (Yes sir. I can even take you to their hideouts.)
10. P: Olódodo ènìyàn ni ẹ́. Màá sọ fún ọ̀gá mi nípa ìwà dáadáa rẹ.
       (You are an honest person. I will tell my boss about your cooperation.)
11. S: Mo gbọ́, ọ̀gá.
       (Okay, sir.)
12. P: Ìgbà wo ni àwọn ìgárá ọlọ́sà yén máan sẹṣẹ́ láabi won?
       (Those at the crime spot, when do they carry out this act?)
13. S: Ìrọ̀lẹ́ sátidé àti alẹ́ ọjọ́rú
       (On Saturday evenings and Wednesday nights.)
14. P: A máa lọ síbẹ̀ láìpẹ́. Fún tìẹ, màá rí ọ̀gá mi láti ṣètò àtijáde rẹ.
       (We may need to go there in few hours' time. And as for you, I will see my boss
       and arrange how to prepare your bail.)

The case above is that of stealing. The suspect was arrested for engaging in illegal crude oil business. He was part of the gang that carried out the destruction of a particular pipeline. He was subsequently arrested and subjected to interrogation. In the course of the interrogation, the suspect, in a bid to sustain the interaction, creates extraneous details to engage the attention of the IPO. The participants engage deflection as a form of concealment to douse tension in the interrogation room. In line 6, the suspect's response to the IPO's question on why he ventured into crime is a form of deflection to create a positive face before the IPO. The suspect affirms, *Sir, I am a gentleman. I have never been involved in any crime before*. Such contradicting response is orchestrated to conceal the suspect's involvement in the crime. In line 7, the suspect adopts deflection as a form

of discourse instrumentality to achieve his interactional goal. He technically manipulates the interaction to foreground deflection. In a bid to pursue his interactional end, he calls the attention of the IPO to several criminal activities carried out in the area. His utterance in line 7 is a radical departure from the required responses desirous of the IPO.

The suspect's concealment of his crime via deflection runs through lines 8 and 9 as he expresses readiness to take the IPO to the scene of the crimes. However, the IPO, in line 10, appeals to the suspect's positive face so as to elicit the needed confessional statements from him. In a bid to pursue the goal of the interrogation further, the IPO demands information on the activities of other suspects in the said area. The suspect's positive response in line 13 propels the IPO to assert that, *We may need to go there in few hours' time. And as for you, I will see my boss and arrange how to prepare your bail*. In the entire interaction, both the IPO and suspect resort to deflection to orchestrate concealment. While the IPO deflects to douse tension associated with the case being investigated, the suspect deflects to engage positive face so as to escape incrimination or reduce the charges against him. Deflection is adopted in the interaction to achieve rhetorical effect. Apart from functioning as discourse instrumentality, it connects the context of the interaction to realise interactional goals.

5. Implications of concealment for police-suspect interaction in Ibadan, Nigeria

The discussions presented reveal that IPOs and suspects at the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Ìyágankú, Oyo State, Nigeria deploy concealment in interrogation to pursue distinct institutional goals. In the sampled interactions, IPOs and suspects rely on concealment to extract confessional statements from suspects so as to evade incrimination. Concealment is a strategy for manipulating the setting and genre of the discourse. In the data presented, IPOs adopted concealment to seek suspects' co-operation during interrogation. The idea behind the use of concealment is to get suspects committed to the interaction. Besides seeking suspects' co-operation, concealment is adopted to allay the fears of suspects in the interrogation room. IPOs deploy concealment as a strategy to appeal to suspects' emotions. To boost suspects' confidence during interrogation sessions, linguistic resources are deployed to tone-down the severity of cases being investigated. The use of concealment in PSI equally reveals that the language of investigation is persuasive. IPOs engage discursive strategies to orchestrate concealment in a bid to get suspects confess without resorting to physical torture. On implications of the use of concealment by suspects, the study reveals that

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suspects are significant stakeholder in PSI; they negotiate power through their manipulative deployment of linguistic resources to escape incrimination. One of such engagements of linguistic tools is the use of concealment to tone down their incriminating acts. Worthy of mentioning also is the premium placed on suspects' rights during investigation. The deployment of concealment prevents suspects' rights from being abused during PSI. Adoption of concealment as an interrogation strategy in PSI reveals that the language of police interrogation is persuasive and context-driven.

5.1. Conclusion

This study reveals that concealment is an effective strategy for managing confessional statements in PSI. Concealment strategies function as veritable devices used for negotiating motivations and ideologies in PSI. IPOs and suspects resort to the use of concealment to achieve a number of discursive effects during interrogation sessions. This study has engaged an investigation of concealment in PSI in Ibadan, Nigeria. It reveals the contextual import of concealment as a discursive practice in police interrogation. Of particular concern in the study is how the orientations of participants (IPOs and suspects) are communicated and negotiated via concealment. The study identifies that PSI is premised on information management. Managing information is crucial to crime investigation. The study's adoption of Dell Hymes' EOC as theoretical model reveals how contextual variables function in orchestrating concealment in PSI. In accordance with the objectives of the study, attention was on the linguistic devices adopted in negotiating concealment and its implication for police communication (interrogation). The study reveals that IPOs deployed concealment through the use of veiling, jargonisation, lexical replacement, hedging and deflection. These concealment strategies are geared towards excluding, withdrawing, dousing tension, seeking co-operation, boosting confidence and extracting confessional statement from suspects with minimal input. The findings of this study are relevant in teaching the discursive practices involved in negotiating confessional statements in PSI. In addition, the study extends the frontiers of knowledge in PSI; an engagement of concealment in PSI improves an understanding of how police interrogation works. The study suggests that further research could focus on comparative investigation of concealment in PSI and civil cases.

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