

A Contrastive Analysis of Reporting Verb Usage in English and Okpameri

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Abstract

Reporting verbs are used to report the expression of a language user. Usage of reporting verbs in utterances varies in languages. These variations sometimes pose problem to ESL learners. Predicating this study on Contrastive Analysis, the study generated Okpameri data from text instrument administered to SS 3 students in Okpameri linguistic environment. Participatory observation is also adopted for data collection. English data were got from the English grammar texts. From the findings, the two languages are grammatically marked for reporting verbs. However, the usage of these reporting verbs differs. While reporting verbs in English have unlimited vocabulary choices, reporting verbs in Okpameri have limited vocabulary choices. Also, English reporting verbs are morphologically realized for tense and number, but this is not so in Okpameri as Okpameri reporting verbs are not morphologically inflected. The use of English reporting verbs are context-based. This is not so in Okpameri because the reporting verb 'ai' in Okpameri for instance, is used to suggest that the speaker has given information, whereas in the real

sense of it, the speaker intends to give an order or issue a query. This study, therefore, suggests that English language experts, should adopt systematic approach to the teaching of reporting verbs as this will broaden the knowledge of Okpameri ESL learners.

Keywords: English, Okpameri, Reporting verbs, Reported speech, Usage.

Introduction

The features of verbs and of course, reporting verbs are usually occasioned by the culture that produces them. In this case, culture becomes one of the determining factors of reporting verbs usage, because every language usage goes in line with the culture that produces the language. For instance, the use of English reporting verbs might seem not to be the same with that of Okpameri because of cultural differences. Since English is the target language, it is important to view the usage of Okpameri reporting verb with that of English, as this will definitely reveal the areas of similarities and differences. The differences of the two languages will improve on the teaching of reporting verbs in ESL context.

The rationale behind this study is borne out of the fact that, Okpameri language is yet to receive much scientific study, particularly, in the area of reporting verbs. Also, Okpameri ESL learners sometimes find it difficult to use the appropriate verb in a reported speech. Beaming searchlight on the identified problem area(s), the present study will reveal the likely problem the use of English reporting verbs will pose to Okpameri learners of English in the course of learning English reporting verbs. The likely problem predicted will definitely go a long way in improving on the teaching methodology of the English reporting verbs.

A Brief Histo-Linguistic and Socio-Cultural Background of Okpameri

Elugbe (1989) classifies Okpameri language as one of the Edoid languages. According to him, all the languages (such as Okpameri) that have generic resemblance must have descended from a common proto-language as it were, and of which each had later emerged as a distinct language over a long period of time. (Damola, 2004; Omolaiye, 2017; 2019). The linguistic affinity among the Okpameri nation is one of the greatest pieces of evidence of their oneness as a people. This explains why the word "Okpameri" means "we are one". Okpameri is further classified as belonging to Northwestern Edoid nation who had retained its Edoid

language and speaks a heavily accented variety of Yoruba language as L₂. (Hakeem, 2003; Ekharo, Aliu & Akanji, 2007).

Okpameri is in Akoko-Edo Local Government Area of Edo State. It is made up of twenty communities to include Ibillo, Lampese, Bekuma, Imoga, Ekpesa, Ekor, the Ikirans, the Ugboshis, Aiyegunle, Ogugu, Somorika, Ojah, Ojirami, Dangbala, Makeke, Ekpe, Ogbe, Ayanuza, Eshiwawa and Onumu (Omolaiye, 2013). Okpameri is a language widely spoken in the local government, and it has population of about 62,200 (Omolaiye, 2013, p.5 citing population census of 2006 in Edo State). The people are predominantly farmers. A good number of the adult female population are gari producers while some trade with the nearby communities of Ondo and Kogi states. Some of the Okpameri communities who share common boundaries with Ondo and Kogi states fairly speak Yoruba and Ibirra languages. Since the focus of this paper is to investigate how reporting verbs are used in English and Okpameri in reported speeches, it is imperative to briefly review some existing literature on reporting verbs of the two languages under study as this will serve as the theoretical base of our discussion. Usage of reporting verbs shall be viewed in line with functional classification of sentence.

Literature Review

Reporting verbs are verbs used in reported speech. They are often used to introduce reported speeches. Also, they are used in narratives and research articles where ideas and views of cited scholars' works are being reported. The significance of reporting verbs are therefore, hinged on the premise with sole aim of providing adequate learning materials for ESL learners for academic purpose. This is why reporting verbs in research works and narratives attract the attention of language scholars. Bloor and Bloor (1995) see the function of reporting verbs as sources of projection because reporting verbs state the position of scholars in any research work. Some of these reporting verbs identified by language scholars are 'points', 'asserts', 'claims', 'submits' etc.

Consider the following:

- Fafunwa points out that...
- Ojo asserts that...
- Jimoh claims that...
- Halliday submits that...

Thompson and Yeyiyun (1991) propose a three-part classification of reporting verbs to include Textual, Mental and Research. The scholars see Textual as verbs referring to processes in which the verbal expression is an obligatory component e.g 'state', 'write', 'challenge', 'point out' etc. Mental verbs, according to them, are verbs referring primarily, to mental processes. Examples of such verbs are believe, think, consider, prefer etc. Research verbs. Mental or physical processes refer to parts of research work. Some of these types of verbs are 'measure', 'calculate', 'quantify', 'obtain' etc. In the same manner, Thomas and Hawes (1994) identify patterns of choices available in terms of a network. Following an in-dept analysis of the reporting verbs in the medical journal articles, the scholars identify three patterns of choice to include Real-world Activity verbs (observe, find, categories etc.), Cognitive verbs (think, believe, consider etc.) and Discourse Activity Verbs (state, suggest, report etc.).

It is pertinent to mention here that English reporting verbs which serve as determining factor in reported speeches often pose problem to the ESL learners. These learners sometimes find it difficult to use the appropriate verb in reported speech. One often hears expression like: 'He said I should give you this pen', instead of 'He asked me to give you this pen'. It is therefore important to examine how reporting verbs are used in reported speeches. We shall begin with the English reporting verbs.

The English Reporting Verbs

According to Murthy (2007), reporting verbs are used to introduce reported speeches. Farinde and Ojo (2000, p.43) have identified reporting verbs peculiar to sentence type (under functional classification). These are:

- declarative - said, told, pointed, out, stated etc.
- interrogative - asked, questioned, queried etc.
- imperative - ordered, commanded, instructed etc.
- exclamatory - exclaimed, blurted etc.

Reporting verbs, according to Ojo (2011), are commonly found in narratives and research articles. This is so because narratives and research articles are third person narration. So, the use of reporting verb is often used in narration. Scholars (Farinde & Ojo, 2000, Jimoh, 2010, Quirk & Greenbaum, 2002, Ojo, 2008) lay much emphasis on English reporting verbs usage.

It is important to mention here that linguistic context determines appropriate use of English reporting verb in a reported speech. Consider the following:

- 1a. **Direct:** 'I eat food,' said Ayo.
- 1b. **Indirect:** Ayo said (that) he ate food.

- 2a. **Direct:** ' I can do it', said John.
- 2b. **Indirect:** John assured us that he could do it.

- 3a. **Direct:** ' What goes up must surely come down',
said Nike.
- 3b. **Indirect:** Nike claimed that what goes up must
surely come down.

In (1a) Ayo, simply gives information about what he does. So, in reporting the speech, reporting verb 'said', is selected as the appropriate verb in the context. However, in (2a), it is not just a mere information about the ability of what John can do. The modal auxiliary verb 'can' does not only denote John's ability, but also gives assurance of John's ability. Thus, the reporting verb "assured" is appropriate in that context. The kind of information given by Nike, in (3b) is like a confirmation of a principle after a hypothesis has been tested. The reporting verb 'claimed', thus, becomes a principle established. Hence, the reporting verb "claimed" is appropriate as it has revealed the speaker's intended meaning.

English reporting verbs are morphologically realized for tense and number. Consider some of these hypothetical examples below:

- 4a. **Direct:** 'We do the assignment' (speaker: They)
- 4b. **Indirect:** They said they did the assignment.

- 5a. **Direct:** 'Do the job' (teacher to a student).
- 5b. **Indirect:** Teacher instructed a student to do the job.

- 6a. **Direct:** "Thou shall not kill" (from the Bible).
- 6b. **Indirect:** The Bible says thou shall not kill.

It is imperative to state that, English reporting verbs account for tense sequence in some reported speeches. Consider the following:

- 7a. **Direct:** 'I built the house' (speaker: the bricklayer).
- 7b. **Indirect:** The bricklayer said he had built the house.

- 8a. **Direct:** 'God creates everything on earth'
(speaker: pastor)
- 8b. **Indirect:** Pastor says God creates everything on earth.
- 9a. **Direct:** 'I see the moon', (the poet)
- 9b. **Indirect:** The poet says he sees the moon.

In a nutshell, usage of English reporting verbs are in line with the dictates of the its language as English has unlimited vocabulary choices of reporting verbs. The reporting verbs are morphologically realized for tense and number. Hence, verb sequence is often used in a reported speech.

The Okpameri Reporting Verbs

As earlier mentioned, much work has not really been done on Okpameri language simply because the language is yet to have a standard written form. However, scholars like Elugbe (1984) and Lewis (2004) work on the phonological aspect of the language. Also, Omolaiye (2013) carries out research on lexicology of Okpameri language. 'Tense and Aspect' of the language is also carried out by Omolaiye (2015). However, reporting verbs which may likely constitute problems to Okpameri ESL learners are not scientifically examined.

Despite the fact that Okpameri language is yet to have a standard written form, the natives still use the language for communication. Hence, the researchers, with their intuitive knowledge about the language, have generated hypothetical examples of direct and indirect speeches in Okpameri in order to examine their usage.

Consider the following:

- 10a. **Direct:** 'Ọ sua l'uvie' (speaker: He mogbo).
He sing song.
- 10b. **Indirect:** Mogbo ai ọ sua l'uvie.
Mogbo say he sing song.
- 11a. **Direct:** 'Li waha' (Speaker: Ojo to John).
Be going.
- 11b. **Indirect:** Mogbo ai John- o li waha.
Mogbo say John -he be going.
- 12a. **Direct:** 'Aina -o wehe l'mi' (speaker: James)
Aina -she tell me.

- 12b. **Indirect:** James ai Aina - ϕ wehe l'onini.
James say Aina- she tell him
- 13a. **Direct:** 'Ene ki Inanoh'? (speaker: He)
What is today?
- 13b. **Indirect:** O vbinai l'ohanako inanoh.
He ask day today.
- 13b. O ai ene ki inoroh
He ask what is today.
- 14a. **Direct:** 'Segun o i Zila' (speaker: Tunde).
Segun he can run.
- 14b. **Indirect:** Tunde ai Segun- o I Zila.
Tunde say Segun- he can run.
- 15a. **Direct:** 'Oshokozi noh ma ase' (speaker: she)
God that create people.
- 15b. **Indirect:** O ai Oshokozi noh ma ase
She say God that create people.

The examples above have revealed peculiarities in Okpameri reported speech. The reporting verb 'ai', which its equivalent is 'say' in English, is used in almost every sentence type. For instance, the reporting verb 'ai' in (10b) – declarative sentence is also use in (11b) (imperative reported speech). In (13b), 'vbinai' and 'ai' are interchangeably used in interrogative reported speech. In essence, Okpameri has limited vocabulary choices of reporting verbs. For instance, the reporting verb in the expression. 'Tunde ai Segun-O iZila' (Tunde say Segun-he can run) in (14b) lacks the capacity to actualize the speaker's intended meaning as the expression does not give information of Segun's ability. It is, rather, a statement of assurance.

It also important to mention that Okpameri reporting verbs are not morphologically realized for tense and number. That is why the reporting verb 'ai' does not inflect for non-present tense in the reported speeches above. It much also be added that the issue of tense sequence is absent in Okpameri reporting verbs. This has been revealed in (14b) as the reporting verb 'ai' in the main and 'i' (can) in the subordinate clauses do not have verb sequence, because Okpameri reporting verbs do not inflect for tense and number.

One uniqueness in Okpameri reported speech is that, the reporting verbs “ai” (say) could be used in interrogative reported speech and ends in rising tune. On the other hand, when the reporting verb ‘vbinai’ (ask) is used, such reported speech ends in falling tune.

Consider:

- 16a. **Direct:** ‘Ene kii nene havboh’? (speaker: teacher).
What is name his?.
- 16b. **Indirect:** Teacher ai ene kii nene havboh? (rising tune).
Teacher say what is name his?.
- Or
- 17a. **Direct:** ‘Ene kii nene havboh’? (speaker: teacher)
What is name his?
- 17b. **Indirect:** Teacher -o vbinai l’inene havboh (falling tune)
Teacher- he ask name his

It is worthy of mentioning that the pair of reported or indirect speeches above are grammatical in Okpameri language as some of the Okpameri reporting verbs could be interchangeably used.

Having shed light on the peculiarities of reporting verbs in English and Okpameri, it is pertinent to also briefly examine some socio-linguistic terms (bilingualism and linguistic interference) as they are in contrastive linguistics.

Bilingualism

This is a sociolinguistic term that describes how two languages, with different cultural background, co-exist in a speech community. Adegbite and Akindele (2005) corroborate this when they describe Bilingualism as the use of two languages either by an individual or a speech community. In other words, bilingualism allows an individual or a community to acquire two distinct languages in a speech community. Such an individual or a community has the ability to produce meaningful utterances in the other language in a bilingual society. However, the individual could be deficient in either of the two languages. The resultant effect of this is technically referred to as Linguistic Error. According to Omolaiye (2017), Linguistic Errors occurs when a bilingual unconsciously transfers the structure of the language that he is more proficient in to the language he is less proficient in.

Linguistic Interference

Sociolinguists describe Linguistic Interference as those instances of deviation from the norms of either language that occurs in the speech of a language user as a result of familiarity with more than one language. This is why Weinreich (1953) describes Linguistic Interference as the rearrangement of patterns that results from the introduction of foreign elements into the more highly-structured domains of language. Thus, it is essential to do a comparative study where two languages (as in the case of English and Okpameri) co-exist so as to examine their area(s) of similarities and differences as this will enable an analyst or contrastivist predict the likely problem area(s) for the natives in the course of using reporting verbs in English.

Theoretical Framework

This present study is predicated on Contrastive Analysis (CA) as it is relevant in the comparative study of two languages in a bilingual society. The proponent scholar of this theory is traced to Lado (1957) where he wrote a book titled 'Linguistics Across Culture'. Lado's work was given impetus by earlier works of Weinreich (1953) on the integration of immigrants in the United State of America (see Ojo, 1996; Omolaiye, 2013).

Contrastive Analysis still remains an indispensable instrument in the field of contrastive linguistics. It is a linguistic tool that reveals similarities and differences of a pair of languages contrasted so as to expand and further expound the frontier of language universally. This explains why James (1980, p.3) describes CA as a linguistic enterprise aimed at producing inverted (i.e contrastive) two valued typologies in that, a pair of language is found on the assumption that language can be compared. *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Language Teaching* (1990, p.14) makes distinction between Theoretical and Applied CA. Theoretical CA is seen as the production of extensive account of differences between the languages contrasted, while Applied CA is concerned with a reliable prediction of the learner's difficulties. Contrastive Analysis, like Error Analysis and Translation Theory, is a form of interlingua study in which two languages are involved. In this case, CA deals with issues arising in the process of learning L₂ after the bases of the L₁ have be acquired.

The thrust of CA, therefore, is to do a descriptive study individually of the two languages under study and subsequently juxtapose them for areas of similarities and differences as this will enable the contrastivist predict difficulties, and perhaps postulate a hierarchy of

difficulties hoping that this, would help in improving on teaching methodology. CA hypothesis, hence, sees interference of L₁ system on the L₂ system as the major barrier to the learning of the target language. Corroborating this, Lado (1957:267) submits that where the language patterns are similar in the two languages under study, learners of TL would find language relatively easy, because the inputs they are now exposed to are not new to them. On the contrary, where the language patterns of the TL and the MT differ, the learning of the TL would be relatively difficult. The difficulties predicted by CA cannot be properly taken care of without recourse to Error Analysis (EA) as Error Analysis deals with the actual errors committed by the ESL learners. It is imperative to state that CA and EA are related in that, no contrastivist has ever really predicted solely on the basis of the CA, but has to be relied on his or on teacher's knowledge of error already committed. This explains why James claims that CA is prognostic while EA is diagnostic. Thus, CA and EA are linguistic tools used to account for L₂ learning problem(s).

Method of Data Collection

In generating Okpameri reporting verbs for analysis, two methods were adopted viz-a-viz students written test and participatory observation. Secondary data were got from the works of Omolaiye (2013, 2015, 2016, 2017). Native speakers of Okpameri were the target population. Senior secondary school students (SS3 class) in Okpameri linguistic environment, whose their L₁ is Okpameri were randomly selected. The rationale behind the selection is based on the assumption that the selected students must have had proficiency in English in their junior secondary education.

The researchers adopted test instrument of 40 direct and indirect speeches in English and requested that the subjects translate then in Okpameri language. As in the case of validity and reliability of the instrument, experts in language instrument evaluation were consulted and were able to offer valuable suggestions on the contents which helped in ensuring the standardization of the instrument. The subjects', scripts were examined for Okpameri reporting verb usage. It must be added that the researchers' intuitive knowledge in Okpameri language enhanced participatory observation in linguistic exchanges that involve the use of Okpameri reporting verbs in a natural setting. As for English reporting verbs, the researchers made use of relevant literature obtained from library, relevant English grammar texts, and internet sources.

Data Analysis

For the purpose of clarity of data presentation and analysis, reporting verb usage are classified under declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory sentences. English, being the target language, is contrasted with Okpameri, using samples of the data of the two languages. Ibillo variant of Okpameri language is adopted for analysing Okpameri data. The analysis begins with declarative sentences, and the reporting verbs of the two languages under study are underlined in reported speeches where reporting verbs are used. The letters ‘D’ and ‘I’ represent ‘Direct speech’ and ‘Indirect speech’ respectively in the tables provided.

Declarative Sentence

Grammarians describe Declarative Sentence as a sentence type that makes statement or gives information. It usually asserts or declare facts. This sentence type is used in describing things, narrating events, developing ideas, or explaining situations. A declarative sentence usually ends with a full-stop or period, and it is rendered in falling tune. It is important to note that reported speeches are usually rendered in declarative sentences. Some of these are presented thus:

Table 1

S/N		ENGLISH	OKPAMERI
18a.	D:	‘He does it’. (speaker: Esther)	‘O ri lo’.
18b	I:	Esther said he did it.	Esther ai o ri lo.
19a.	D:	‘I can work’. (speaker: Monday)	‘Mi i gba kanyah.’
19b.	I:	‘Monday assured us of his ability to work’.	Monday ai n̄h i gba akanyah.
20a.	D:	‘I will definitely come’. (speaker: the bricklayer)	‘Mi e zi mana’.
20b.	I:	The bricklayer promised of coming.	Bricklayer ai n̄h e zi.
21a.	D:	‘I can do it myself’. (Speaker: Egbemo)	‘Memekpa mi iri.’
21b.	I:	Egbemo claimed she could do it herself.	Egbemo ai oninikpa ai n̄h i ri.

22a.	D:	'Rock cannot talk'. (Speaker: teacher)	'Egba-ẹ i koli'.
22b.	I:	Teacher claims that rock cannot talk.	Teacher ai egba-e i koli.

Contrastive Statement

The table above has revealed areas of similarities and differences of the two languages contrasted. No doubt, the two languages have reporting verbs used in reported speeches. It is obvious that, while English has unlimited vocabulary choices of reporting verbs, Okpameri has 'ai', (equivalent in English 'say') as a reporting verb used in declarative reported speeches. The uniqueness in the use of English reporting verbs is that, the verbs are used in line with their linguistic context. For instance, in (19b), the reporting verb "assured" is used to reveal the speaker's intention as the speaker does not just give mere information about his ability. The use of the modal auxiliary verb 'will' together with the adverb 'definitely' reveals the implicature of the speaker's statement. On the contrary, Okpameri reporting verb "ai" is simply used to mean that the speaker has just pass a mere statement about his ability.

It is also important to note that Okpameri reporting verbs are not morphologically realized for tense as revealed in the table above. However, the English reporting verbs are morphologically marked for tense as we have in 'said', 'assured', 'promised', and 'claimed'. Similarly, the English reporting verbs are morphologically realized for number. This is revealed in (22b) where the reporting "claims" receives morpheme "s" to indicate subject-verb agreement.

Verb sequence manifests in English as we have in 'claimed' and 'could' in (21b). However, this is absent in Okpameri reporting verbs. The likely problem Okpameri users of English reporting verbs will encounter is how to select the vocabulary choice of the reporting verb in English and use it in the appropriate linguistic context as Okpameri has limited vocabulary choices of reporting verb. Also, changing present tense to non-present in English reported speech might constitute problem to Okpameri users of English reporting verbs because reporting verbs in Okpameri are not morphologically realized for non-present.

Imperative Sentence

This is a sentence type that issues command, gives instruction or compel someone to carry out certain activities. This sentence type also gives pieces

of advice. A command not too strong, may take a period while a strong one ends with an exclamatory mark. Some of these imperative direct and indirect speeches are presented below:

Table 2

S/N	ENGLISH	OKPAMERI
23a.	D: 'Come here'. (speaker: Tunde to the boy).	'Kezi nọh'.
23b	I: Tunde asked the boy to come here.	Tunde ai omokozi oweni o kezi
24a.	D: 'Go there, Ola!'. (speaker: the police)	'Le la lumoh .
24b.	I: The police ordered Ola to go there.	Police ai Ola le lala asah
25a.	D: 'Listen to your parents'. (speaker: teacher to the student)	'Sugue ibowhe'
25b.	I: Teacher instructed the student to listen to his parent.	Teacher ai omo isikulu o Sugue ibovboh.
26a.	D: 'Ojo, call me Peter'. (speaker: Ade to Ojo)	'Ojo, guẹh Peter maimi'.
26b.	I: Ade asked Ojo to call him Peter.	Ade ai Ojo guẹh Peter mainini.
27a.	D: 'Don't go out please!' (speaker: invigilator to students)	'Ki fiwaha aguguai'
27b.	I: Invigilator warned students not to go out.	Invigilator- ai ivbiasikulu ki fiwaha

Contrastive Statement

Just as it occurs in table (1), reporting verbs in imperative reported speech in English also have much vocabulary choices. The usage depends on the linguistic context in which the direct speech is made. Also, the use of exclamatory mark at the end of the direct speech is an indication that such a verb used does not just indicate a mere instruction. For instance, the use of exclamatory mark '!' in (24a) is an indication that an order has been issued by the speaker a (police man). This is ditto to (27a) where invigilator

issues a serious warning to students not go out because of one reason or the other.

The Okpameri reporting verb used in declarative reported speech is also used in imperative reported speech. However, this is not so in English as the English reporting verbs are carefully selected to report the intended meaning of the speaker. In (27a), the words ‘examiner, ‘write’ and ‘margin’ indicate examination context. The information given is an instruction to the candidates who are about to write a particular subject in an examination. This gives the reason for selecting the reporting verb ‘instructed’ in (27b).

Interrogative Sentence

This is a sentence type used to elicit information. An interrogative sentence ends with a question mark, because the sentence simply asks a question. It is important to mention here that not all interrogative sentences are out to elicit information as some questions are rhetorical. However, the data gathered, with respect to interrogative direct speeches, are out to ask questions or gather information. Consider the data below:

Table 3

S/N	ENGLISH	OKPAMERI
28a.	D: ‘Where are you going to?’ (speaker: Peter to John)	‘Aha u la?’
28b	I: Peter asked John where he was going to.	Peter-o vbinai li John asa noh la.
29a.	D: ‘Hello, where are you going to?’ (speaker: Peter to a man)	Aha u la?
29b.	I: Peter questioned a man where he was going to.	Peter ai aha noh ohozi oweni o la?
30a.	D: ‘Hello, why did you go there?’ (Peter to a man)	‘Ene u mie ęri u lala ęa?’
30b.	I: Peter queried a man for going there.	Peter-O vbinai emi o noh yo aęa.
31a.	D: ‘How can I see her?’ (Speaker” He)	‘Elegu milo ia mi o’?’

31b.	I: He elicited information on how he could see Bose.	O vbinai ele lo ia mio
32a.	D: 'What is your name?' (speaker: Teacher to Sola)	'Ene ki nene avbeh?'
32b.	I: Teacher asked Sola what her name was.	Teacher-o vbinail I ene ki nene avbeh. .

Contrastive Statement

The areas of similarities and differences of reporting verbs of the two languages compared in the table above have been revealed. The two languages have reporting verbs used to gather information. However, there is a great difference at the level of usage. The English reporting verbs- 'asked', 'questioned', 'queried' etc. are commonly used in interrogated reported speeches. However, their appropriateness in usage lies in the linguistic context. The direct speech in (28a) is just a mere question, and as such, the speaker simply wants to gather information about the movement of John in (28b). This is not so in (29a) as the word "hello", suggests that the person questioning a man is not familiar with the speaker. Thus, the speaker intends knowing the suspicious movement of the addressee. The question asked suggests that the speaker might be a security personnel who monitors the movement of customers in a hotel arena. So, questioning the addressee's suspicions' movement is intentional and serious. Thus, 'questioned' in (29b) is appropriate in the context of usage. A critical examination in the interrogative statement in (30a) shows that the addressee had already gone there. This is why the speaker makes the use of the verb 'did', and the adverb 'why' which suggest that the man is queried to have gone there without the knowledge of the speaker. Thus, the reporting verb queried is appropriate as it gives the intended meaning of the speaker in (30b). These aforementioned features are alien to Okpameri language.

The Okpameri reporting verbs 'vbinai' and 'ai' are interchangeably used to mean one and the same thing. It must be added that when 'vbinai' is used, the reported speech ends in falling tune while reporting verb "ai" when used, the reported speech ends in raising tune. This is not so in English because all English reporting verbs when used, in reported speech, ends in falling tune.

Exclamatory Sentence

An exclamatory sentence is that which expresses strong feeling or sudden and spontaneous emotion such as wonder, surprise, delight, fear, alarm etc. It usually ends with an exclamatory mark. Basically, exclamatory statement is personal to the speaker. In essence, the primary aim of exclamatory statement is to express the speaker's inner mind in form of soliloquy. Data containing statement of such are presented thus:

Table 4

S/N	ENGLISH	OKPAMERI
33a.	D: 'What a tragedy that he has died in the accident'. (speaker: Ayo)	'Ugugbelunu accident awilegu awene kanoh non a nyani''
33b.	I: Ayo exclaimed with sorrow that he had died in the accident.	Ayo ai accident aweni ai gelunu.
34a.	D: 'How gracefully Bukola smiled and looked at me'. (speaker: I)	Khahe elegu ni Bukola-o leta noh gbehemi noh.
34b.	I: I exclaimed with happiness that Bokola had smiled and looked at me very gracefully.	Ma ai khahe elegu ni Bukola - o le gbehe mi noh.
35a.	D: 'Congratulations on your good work'. (speaker: I to Suzan	"Mi ikhamanise ze akanyah anesemi"
35b.	I: I exclaimed with joy for congratulatory Suzan for her good work.	"Mi zeza lisuzan tanah zi Ikhamanise".
36a.	D: 'What a shameful act is this!' (Speaker: Tunji)	'uka kun oh!'
36b.	I: Tunji exclaimed with sadness the situation of things.	Tunji o zhahi likhama ugunube
37a.	D: 'Ah, he is dead!'. (speaker: she)	'Yeah, o gu a!'
37b.	I: She exclaimed with sorry that he had died.	O suluhana a o gua.

Contrastive Statement

As earlier mentioned, exclamatory statement is not meant to give information. It is rather used to express the speakers' inner feeling. Such utterances are spontaneously produced. In other words, exclamatory utterances are sometimes incautiously uttered by the speaker. English and Okpameri have reporting verbs to report exclamatory reported speeches. While English often use 'exclaimed'(a reporting verb) to report exclamatory utterances, Okpameri resorts to using 'ai' as a reporting verb in exclamatory reported speeches. However, the reporting verbs 'Ozhahil' khama' (sad) su (exclaimed with sorrow) in (36b) and 37b) respectively, are also used in Okpameri exclamatory reported speech.

It must be mentioned here that reporting verb 'exclaimed' in English has positive and negative semantic implications. If it has negative semantic implication, certain group of words with negative linguistic features are usually associated with the verb 'exclaimed'. This is what happens in (33b) where 'exclaimed' is associated with 'sorrow' to suggest that the speaker is not happy for the accident that claims someone's life. Also, the use of reporting verb "exclaimed" associating with a word 'happiness' gives the impression that the speaker in (34b) is in a happy mood. What actually suggests the use of the English verb "exclaimed" with other group of words associated with it is the presence of some words used by the speaker. For instance, the words 'tragedy' and 'accident' show that the speaker's exclamatory utterance is negative. However, the reported speech in (35a) gives the impression that the speaker is in the happy mood because of the word 'congratulations'. Thus, the appropriate reporting verb - 'congratulated' is used in (35b).

Findings and Discussion

This study has revealed areas of similarities and differences of reporting verbs usage in English and Okpameri. The findings are highlighted thus: An appropriate use of reporting verbs in English tends towards giving credit to the subjects' narrative. In this case, semantic value becomes the focus of contextual usage of reporting verb in the ESL situation. While English has unlimited vocabulary choices of reporting verbs, Okpameri has limited vocabulary choices. This may influence Okpameri users of English reporting verbs to overuse certain reporting verbs, thus generating non-contextual-based meaning. While English reporting verbs are morphologically realized for tense and number, this is not so in Okpameri. Hence, Okpameri users of English may likely be confronted

with how to change present tense to non-present in reported speech. They may render this expression thus: 'Ojo say he knows the place' instead of 'Ojo said he knew the place'. Also, different verb types (that is, verbs used in declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences) used in reported speech in English to express speaker's intended meaning, may pose difficulties to Okpameri ESL. For instance, an Okpameri user of English reporting verb may render this expression thus: "The police said he should go out" instead of 'The police ordered him to go out'.

- White reporting verb - 'exclaimed' is used to express the speaker's feeling in exclamatory reported speech, Okpameri reporting verb - 'ai' is used in exclamatory reported speech to give information about what the speaker has said. Problem of usage may likely arise when Okpameri user tends to say. 'The man said with sorrow that the child had died in the accident' instead of 'The man exclaimed with sorrow that the child had died in the accident'. It is grammatical in Okpameri to interchangeably use reporting verbs - "vbinai" and "ai" in interrogative reported speech even when it is noted that the use of "ai" usually ends with interrogative reported speech in raising tune. The problem of its usage may likely occur when Okpameri user renders this expression as 'He said what is her name' (rising tune) instead of 'He asked what her name was' (falling tune). In view of the CA hypothesis, English and Okpameri have reporting verbs. This has revealed grammar universality. However, reporting verbs of the two languages differ in terms of vocabulary choices. Thus, Okpameri ESL learners may be confronted with the appropriate use of English reporting verbs. They may also be confronted with the use of English verb sequence in a reported speech. This study therefore, suggests that English language experts should concentrate more on the areas of differences in the teaching and learning of English reporting verbs.

Implications for Pedagogy

Implications for pedagogy are highlighted below:

- Okpameri ESL learners' knowledge in the use of reporting verbs of the two languages examined should be broaden because the grammatical usage of any language is usually occasioned by the culture that owns the language. Hence, ESL learners should be exposed to the cultures of the two languages.
- Emphasis should be on the teaching of literature component of English and Okpameri since literature is the practical use of language.

- The teaching of reporting verbs should be handled using systematic approach as this will make teaching and learning more effective and productive.
- Learning environment should be made conducive for efficient and effective teaching and learning.
- Since reporting verbs are culture-bound, and a good understanding of them demands familiarity with the cultures that produce them, the teaching of the English reporting verbs should be handled by language experts in the context of ESL as this would aid learners in studying the reporting verbs of the two languages.

Conclusion

The pre-occupation of contrastivists is to embark on comparing two languages (particularly, the indigenous and the target language) in order to provide the methods or approaches for language teaching. Features of the language usage revealed in CA may suggest modifications, and this will certainly be further modified in the light of future experience as it may enhance a finer grading of learners' learning problem(s). Thus, this paper has revealed the variations in the usage of reporting verbs of the two languages contrasted. These variations have reflected the culturally important features of how reporting verbs are used to reveal the intended meaning of language user. Hence, the acknowledgment of universal grammatical features are internal to the culture in which it operates and its usage has reflected on those variations that are important to its culture. For instance, while English has unlimited vocabulary choices of reporting verbs, Okpameri vocabulary choices of reporting verbs are very limited. This might likely cause problem(s) to Okpameri ESL learners in the cause of using English reporting verbs because linguistic context is key to the use of reporting verbs in English. This is evident in the data of the two languages analyzed. This paper, therefore, suggests that Okpameri speakers and users of English should be exposed to the similarities and differences of English and Okpameri reporting verbs as this will enable them (Okpameri ESL learners) cope with the likely problems identified in the findings.

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