

Language of Open-Air Market in North-Central Nigeria

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Abstract: Language plays a significant role in business, trade and commerce. Bargaining in open-air markets often involves the speech act of negotiating, compromising and manoeuvring, which could either result in conflict or persuasion of the potential buyer to patronize a seller. This article examined the sociolinguistic aspects of language use between sellers and buyers in Ipata, a popular market in Ilorin, north-central Nigeria. The call strategy, spiel, honorification, pragmatic mechanics as well as sociolinguistic style employed by vendors were observed. The objectives of the study were to: identify the number of languages used in Ipata market; investigate the factors that influence the choice of any of the languages used between sellers and buyers at a particular time; analyze their sociolinguistic and stylistic features; and discuss some of the barriers that could cause intercultural communication breakdown between sellers and buyers in a market situation. Oral interview, systematic observation and Bauman's (2001) method of street recording were used to gather data for the study. Sixty-five people comprising thirty-six females and twenty-nine males were interviewed. The survey which spanned three months discovered that open-air markets bear some universal features, however, due to cultural relativity, variations occur. To this end, it was established that Ipata market harbours different languages; it also identified calls and spiels with their characteristic stylistic, sociolinguistic

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and discourse features in the market. In conclusion, the study argued that studying the verbal discourse of marketplaces is significant as it defines what the language-culture-society-relationship is all about.

Keywords: sociolinguistics, open-air market, code-mixing, call and spiel, buyers and sellers, Ipata market

1. Introduction

Sociolinguistic studies have been largely characterized by the exploration of the systematic relationship between language and sociocultural organization of speech communities. The basic assumption behind this is that speakers functioning as members of a particular speech community, and within the ambit of a particular culture, have internalized not only the rules of grammar, but also the rules of appropriate speech usage. The language spoken by somebody and his or her identity as a speaker of his language are inseparable. One of the functions of language is to identify people as representatives of groups, communities and cultures in relation to others.

There is no doubt that language plays a very significant role in interactions between sellers and buyers in open-air market setting where the buyer, who is a bargain hunter, is in diametrical opposition to the vendor, who is out to make profit (Alo & Soneye, 2014). Alo & Soneye (2014) observed further that in the case of the latter, the line between profit-making and profiteering becomes quite thin in a market place, where the norm is for the vendor to name an unusually high price with the expectation that the buyer will respond by bargaining tenaciously until they arrive at a purchase price that is acceptable to both parties. According to Ayoola (2009), bargaining often involves the speech acts of negotiating, compromising and manoeuvring which sometimes falls into conflict.

Speakers are creative in speech communication. In view of this, the study uses a combination of theories in analysing the data. The theories are persuasion theory, sociolect theory, Grice's cooperative principle and speech act theory. According to Shrum et al. (2012), persuasion theory covers reasoned action theory and elaboration likelihood model. Reasoned action theory is, although perhaps not a strict persuasion theory, a model of behavioural intentions developed by Fishbein & Ajzen (1975). It is, however, the first theory that provided a clear articulation and qualification of the inputs into behavioural intentions, and did so in a way that was easily measurable and thus easy for marketers. This theory incorporates both attitude and subjective norms that people hold in predicting their future behaviour. This theory posits that the most proximal input into behaviour is a person's intention. Thus the intentions of both the sellers and buyers play significant roles in the choice of their languages during bargaining.

Elaboration likelihood model (ELM), in contrast, is a model of persuasion that proposes

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two distinct routes to persuasion, the central route and the peripheral route. The central route refers to the attitudes and changes that occur through different levels of evaluation processing. These attitudes are formed through extensive and effortful process that scrutinizes a message for the quantity of its argument. In contrast, the peripheral route refers to attitude formation that is based on no argument cues, such as mood, source attractiveness and heuristics. Attitudes and changes that occur during bargaining play significant roles in the choice of language. Likewise, no-argument cues also determine the attitude of the sellers and buyers during bargaining.

This study also benefits from sociolinguistic theory of sociolect – an idea that working-class speakers use context-based, limited focus of language. This implies that the way language is used within a particular societal class affects the way people assign significance and meaning to the things about which they are speaking (Bernstein, 1971). Speech acts theory posits that utterances are not mere propositions but an action, which are: locution, illocution and perlocution. Locutionary act of utterance is the intention of speakers which is conveyed in proposition. Illocutionary act then conveys the action behind the proposition which may include: apology, request, question, and appeal among others. Perlocutionary act consists of the effect the utterances achieve (Searle, 1969). Grice (1975) has it that in a conversation, a speaker should be guided by certain maxims such as maxim of quality – speakers should say only what is true; maxim of quantity – speakers should say no more or less than it requires; maxim of relations – speakers should say only what is relevant; and maxim of manner – speakers should be perspicuous. These theories were used to investigate the pattern of language use in Ipata market between buyers and sellers and the factors responsible for their choice of language use.

Three principal methods were used to collect data for this study: tape recorder, oral interview and observational field note. This study makes use of tape recorder as a means of data gathering technique on five different occasions. Adopting Bauman's (2001) technique, the researchers wandered through Ipata market with tape recorders running, the phones with their recorders were also on, yielding a corpus of market-soundscape recordings from which the researchers have drawn the data for the discussion of general speech features of Ipata market. In transcribing the calls and spiels, the researcher set them out into lines marked primarily by significant breath pauses, paying attention to use and choice of language, though with occasional attention as well to syntactic structures and tone patterns.

The researchers observed and listened to vendors, hawkers and shoppers to gather information on the patterns of language use in Ipata market. Participant and systematic observation were also used in this study. All the observed information was recorded in the researchers' notes and also on a tape recorder. The researchers conducted a face-to-face unstructured interview with vendors: questions were asked on how they interact and get

themselves involved with people from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds. Sixty-five vendors comprising thirty-six females and twenty-nine males were purposively interviewed at the market. In the same vein, a hundred and twenty buyers were randomly interviewed on the impacts of calls and spiel on them and the attendant effects on patronage of the displayed goods.

The location of the study is Ilorin, a cosmopolitan city located in the north-central Nigeria. There are numerous mini and modern markets which are connected with the history of the city. Markets such as Ojà Oba, Oja Mandate, Ojà tuntun , Ojà gbọṛọ, Ojà àgọ , Ojà Okọ Olówó, Ojà Gada, Ojà Kulende, to mention a few, are all considered to be markets with high patronage. Ojà Ipata, which is the subject of this study, is one of the biggest markets, where varieties of goods are traded and services rendered. The market has enjoyed the investment of different ethnic groups across Nigeria. Historically, *Ojà Ipata* was formally inhabited by butchers. History has it that *Ipata* was initially called *Ojà Mǎǎlù* ‘cattle market’ as selling of cattle was the prominent trade in the market. This market qualifies as an open-market as it possesses almost all the features of an open-market with respect to the activities that take place there (Bauman, 2004).

Having introduced the subject of this study and discussed the methodology and relevant theories, it is pertinent to briefly define open-air markets. According to Franco et al (2020), open-air markets are considered one of the earliest forms of trade where exchange occurs between buyers and sellers. Colloquially, they are known by various names such as flea markets, swap meets, rural markets, farmers’ markets, wet markets, etc. The question is: are markets mere trading centres where people procure products of biodiversity? Anthropologists consider markets as an integral part of complex societies. Beyond being essential trading centres, they are also natural units of social interaction. This shows that the market is also a space where people of diverse ethnic groups meet and socialize, an aspect that is often overlooked.

Franco, et al (2020) argues further that the confluence of multiple ethnicities could be considered indicative of the representation of multiple languages. The language of traders and customers have been considered as a genre, as one order of speech style, a constellation of systematically related, co-occurrent formal features and structures that contrasts with other such constellation and provides a conventionalized orienting framework for the production and reception of particular kinds of text. It is this peculiarity in the use of language that constitutes the pith of this work.

This paper presents the data gathered for the purpose of this work. The presentation is purposive and ordered according to the features of language use in the market under focus. The market is a conglomerate of different ethnic groups. More interesting is the fact that these groups are associated with particular goods they sell. Hence, buyers know which part

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of the market to go when in search of a certain item. In a mixed situation, however, there are other cues, buyers use for identification. This paper identifies and discusses the socio-stylistic features of the language of selling in Ipata market in north-central Nigeria.

2. Socio-stylistic features of the language of selling in Ipata market

Sound is one of the semiotic resources that is intensified and elaborated in the construction of the market ambience of abundance (Bauman, 2001). There are two strategies used in Ipata market as the market language: 'calls' and 'spiels' to borrow Bauman's (2001) terms. Bauman (2001) defines calls as relatively brief, formulaic, formally economical and condensed utterances designed to attract the attention of potential customers, which inform them about the commodities for sale and induce them to buy. Through systematic observation, it was discovered that about four ethnic groups dominate Ipata market, while there are about six languages used for bargaining/communicating.

These ethnic groups include Igbo who are known for selling tooth brush and torch on their wheel barrow, food stuff, stock fish and other sea food ingredients. The Hausa are known for selling vegetables (cabbage, carrot, green pepper and green beans), beans and onions. The Fulani trade in *wara* 'Nigerian cheese', *fura da nunu* 'fresh cow milk plus millet' and some herbs. The researchers observed that Fulani people do not speak Fulfulde rather, they speak Hausa language. The Yoruba are not known for selling a particular item as they dominate the market. They tend to engage in selling different items which include foodstuff, beef, ram, goat, pepper, and as a result of this, most of the conversations are in Yoruba language. Therefore, one can say Yoruba language is a major language used in Ipata market. However, it is equally important to mention that all these facts were gotten through systematic observation. There are various factors that influence the choice of language use in Ipata market, few among which are: the language of the seller/buyer. In situations where the language the buyer speaks is different from that of the seller, they tend to have problem communicating the intended messages properly. It was observed and noted that when a situation like this arises in Ipata market, they switch code to Nigerian Pidgin English. Age is another factor that determines the choice of language use in the sense that the way a seller will address an elderly person differs from the way he/she will address a younger person, and that is why there are certain terms of address used for an elderly person and a younger person. We refer to this as style shift. Gender is also another factor that influences the choice of language use in Ipata market as there are certain terms of address accustomed to each gender. The social class as well as the mode of dressing of a buyer, most of the time, determines the language use of a seller, as almost every ethnic group has her traditional outfit.

What this means is that, in Nigeria, every ethnic group is identified with a dress pattern

and outfit. Hence, their appearance oftentimes gives them away as a member of a particular ethnic group. The choice of which code to use to bargain is easily made for the buyer provided he speaks the language, otherwise, pidgin English comes in handy.

2.1 Code mixing

Code mixing and code switching contain elements of at least two languages in a communication process. In the discourse of buying and selling, switching and mixing of codes abound and these can be noticed in the discourse of sellers and buyers. Code mixing takes place within the sentence and that the features are the consequences of the multiple languages being used in a particular place (Alo & Soneye, 2014). Code mixing helps people with different linguistic background to grasp the major registers that are needed in the market situation, it also aids effective communication. Thus, code mixing has been noticed to be one of the features of communication in Ipata market. Examples of this feature are given in (1).

(1) Buyer: Good morning.

Seller: Good morning.

Buyer: *How much you dey sell your rice?*

How much you EMPH sell your rice

‘How much do you sell rice?’

Seller: *I dey sell dari biyar,*

I EMPH sell hundred five

‘I sell it five hundred naira.’

Buyer: *Wo, no Hausa fah.*

See, no Hausa EMPH

‘I don’t understand Hausa now.’

Seller: *Dari biyar, na five hundred naira.*

Hundred five it five hundred naira

‘Five hundred, it is five hundred.’

Buyer: *Four fifty n ko?*

Four fifty ASP what

‘What of 450:00 naira?’

Seller: *Ahnahn, four hundred last,*

EXCL four hundred last

‘The last price is four hundred.’

Buyer: Ok.

Code mixing as a sociolinguistic feature is evident in the conversation in (1). Both the seller and the buyer mix three languages, Yoruba, Hausa and pidgin within their sentences, and one obvious reason for this is that the language of the seller differs from the language

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of the buyer. In order to enable communication and understanding between them, language mixing evolved which invariably assisted the parties to have a fair bargain. The buyer made it known to the vendor as soon as he heard him mention the price in Hausa language that he did not understand Hausa: *Wò, no Hausa fah* in (1) which made them converge in pidgin.

(2) Seller: *Oga mi sa, kí lo fé*

Master my sir, what FOC-2SG want?

‘What do you want?’

Buyer: Lettuce and Carrot.

Seller: *How much make I do am?*

How much make I do it

‘What quantity do I sell?’

Buyer: One hundred each.

As mentioned earlier that gender is also another factor that influences the choice of language use in Ipata market, as there are certain terms of address accustomed to each gender. For example, *Oga mi sa* in (2) as used by the seller is a general form of address used for male. Form of address such as *màdámú* ‘madam’ is used to address a woman, *ìyá mi* ‘my mother’ in (14) is also another form of address used for elderly female customers.

(3) Seller: *Alhaja e wá, ugu wà, soko wà, e wa*
Name 2SG come pumpkin leaf available spinach available, 2SG come
‘Alhaji, please come, pumpkin leaf and spinach are available, please come.’

Buyer: *Aje a wá, mi ò rá efo*
Market FUT come I NEG buy vegetables
‘You will sell well, I am not buying vegetables.’

From the conversation above, the seller addressed the buyer as an *Alhaja* (a woman who has been on pilgrimage to Mecca) due to her mode of dressing which is one of the factors that determine the choice of expression. The moment a seller associates the mode of dressing of a prospective customer to a particular religion, tribe or social class, it is extended to such person’s identity, hence language choice.

2.2 Free standing calls

We provide few examples of standing calls from our collected data in the studied market, followed by our analysis and discussion.

(4) Seller: *Edé, Edé*
Cray fish cray fish
‘There is cray fish, there is cray fish.’

(5) Seller: *Ilá, Ilá. Ilá, Ilá*
Okro Okro Okro Okro
‘There is okro. There is okro.’

- (6) Seller: *Wàzó, Wàzó*
 fifty naira, fifty naira
 ‘It costs fifty naira, It costs fifty naira.’
- (7) Seller: *póun màrún-un ni. póun màrún-un ni.*
 Naira five-LEN FOC naira five-LEN FOC
 ‘It is for five naira. It is for five naira.’

(4)-(7) are elementary forms of independent, free-standing calls. They exhibit two essential kinds of information: the identity of the commodity and the price. (4) is a nominal form that is not reducible, for, in calls that include the name of the commodity for sale only, it is repeated, at least, twice. (5) doubles that and this yield two lines of nominal repetition each. (6) and (7) include the price only; minimal calls of price only require repetition. Therefore, one can say the goods are announced by single noun *Edé* in (4), *Ilá* in (5), while the price is by two word combination which could consist of a unit of currency and a quantifier or a preposition and a quantifier. The data in (4)-(7) generally show one of the characteristics of calls, which is that a seller can call the attention of a potential buyer by howling the name of the commodity or just the price. Apart from lexical repetition in (4)-(6), and phrasal repetition in (7), there is also structural repetition; the three combined together to exhibit the rhythmic quality of the dialogic interaction of vendors and customers. Our analysis here explicates further the position that there is a significant non-verbal dimension to the vending of the commodities that adds a semiotic component to the process like the common resort of ostension, building up or pointing to an example of the commodity being offered for sale. Therefore, it should be borne in mind that even the most condensed calls are part of a multisemiotic and multisensory process that combines verbal and visual appeal (Bauman, 2001).

As observed in Ipata market and many markets where this style is commonly used, it was noticed that language of calls is expressively economical to call prospective buyers. It is elementary and pronounced as single nouns. The prices are equally given in similar fashion. The little difference is that the unit of currency is given by two-word combinations, e.g., *muri marun* (i.e., hundred naira).

2.3 Commodity amplification

In this section, examples of commodity amplification are presented and discussed, bringing out the linguistic features attested in our data.

- (8) Seller: *Epo wà. Òróró wa, Epo.*
 Palm oil available groundnut oil available palm oil
 ‘Palm oil is available. Groundnut oil is available, palm oil.’
- (9) Seller: *Àpò kan ni. Àpò kan ló ní bá ló.*
 Two hundred naira EMPH Two hundred naira FOC FUT reach go

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‘It is two hundred naira. It will be sold at two hundred naira.’

In data (8) and (9), one may observe that both the commodity and price is expanded, this is done by the amplification of the commodity for sale and syntactic extension in the form of a declarative *wà* in (8), and the price is expanded by syntactic extension in the form of declarative *ló ñ bálo* in (9). A sterling or unique form of this pattern of calls is that it is poetic and grammatically lean. In example (9), for example, the sentence is a declarative one, tacit and economically explicit. The intoned rendition of the call is explicit enough for prospective buyers to decide whether to buy or walk away. The prosodic import of the calls in form of rapidity and fluency all culminate into the musical nature of their displays in this market. The ostensible effect of the style is that customers are easily drawn to these vendors. Some of these vendors, oftentimes, accompany their calls with musical percussion. By this, appeals are made to the buyers to pay attention to their displays.

(10) Seller: *Ogèdè, múrí márùn-un Muri márùn-un*
 Banana, hundred naira-LEN hundred naira-LEN
 ‘Banana sells for one hundred naira. One hundred naira.’

There are occasions where the seller combines the price and the name of the item, when he/she is trying to draw the attention of potential customers as shown in (10). Therefore, a range of extension is possible beyond the elementary form.

(11) Seller: *Àpò kan àbo ni. àpò kan ni. múrí márùn-un ni.*
 Three hundred FOC two hundred FOC hundred naira-LEN FOC
 ‘It sells for three hundred naira. Two hundred naira. One hundred naira.’
Múri márùn-un ni, ẹ wò ó.
 Hundred naira-LEN FOC, EXPL check it
 ‘It is one hundred naira. Look at it.’
Àpò kan àbò ni, àpò kan ni, múrí márùn-un, eelo
 Three hundred FOC two hundred FOC hundred naira-LEN condiment
 ‘It sells for three hundred naira, two hundred naira, one hundred naira, condiment.’

Here, the seller used one of the most common directives sellers used in Ipata market to call the attention of the potential customers, this directive *wòó* ‘look at it’ works for the visual engagement of the customer and the commodity.

2.4 Depicting qualities of commodities through adjectives

The data presented below illustrate how qualities and attributes of commodities are depicted through the use of modifiers and qualifiers.

(12) Seller: *Agbàdo òòjò. Osàn dídùn*
 Corn daily orange sweet
 ‘Fresh corn. Sweet orange.’

(13) Seller: *Rodo wà. È yà kó rodo.*
 Round pepper available 3PL branch pack pepper
 ‘There is round pepper. Come and buy round pepper in large quantity.’

(14) Seller: *Múrí márùn-un, alubosa. Múrí márùn-un ni.*
 One hundred naira-LEN, onions Hundred naira-LEN FOC
 ‘Onions sells for hundred naira. It is one hundred naira.’
Múrí márùn-ún ni iyá mi. Múrí márùn-ún àlùbòsà.
 Hundred naira-LEN FOC mother my One hundred naira-LEN, onions
 ‘It is one hundred naira, my mother. Onions sells for hundred naira.’

(12) introduces the qualities of the commodities, the use of the adjective *òòjò* ‘fresh’ and *didùn*. In (13), the vendor used the declarative *rodo wà* to draw the attention of what a potential customer can get from him/her. In (14), the seller introduced a term of address *iyá mi* to a potential customer, this term of address could be used to address any woman regardless of the age range. The importance of such term of address is to make a potential customer feel respected. Adopting Bauman’s (2004) view, the declaratives like *epo wà* ‘palm oil is available’, *òróró wà* ‘Groundnut oil is available’ in (8), *àpò kan ni* ‘It is two hundred naira’ in (9) and *ogèdè, múrí márùn-ún* ‘Banana sells for one hundred naira’ in (10) are syntactically slim. Notwithstanding this, the calls are characterized by a degree of formal education that foregrounds the poetic function through repetition, phonological and grammatical parallelism and tonal counterpoint. The rhythmic quality of such devices is further enhanced in (14). The highly condensed formulaic language and poetic structuring that characterize the calls have at least three functional effects. First, it enhances fluency, thereby allowing for the rapid production and extension of calls. Second, it endows the calls with a high degree of cohesion, an insistent tightness of textual organization through the use of lexical and structural repetition. Third, as with the exploitation of the poetic function generally, its mobilization sets up patterns of formal anticipation and fulfillment that elicit the participatory involvement of the passer-by and other market dwellers (Alhamo, 2019).

2.5 Collaborative co-performance

It is important to indicate that there are situations where two sellers can collaborate to spiel a particular ware or item and this is what Bauman (2001) refers to as collaborative co-performance. Consider the instances in (15).

(15) Seller1: *Owí, aḥéré, tepuriùlù*
 Thread, needle, metric measuring tape
 ‘Thread, needle, and metric measuring tape are available.’

Seller2: *Wò ó, wo bí, machine oil*
 Look look here machine oil

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‘Look, look here, machine oil.’

Seller3: *Sún mọ́ bí, yẹ ẹ wò, wo bí*
 Come close, here check it look, look here
 ‘Come close and check it out.’

In (15), the first seller spiels the primary commodities for sale, while his partner continues by relating his call to that of the first seller. However, he extends it to other related commodities, building support for the catalogue with one-word directives. Seller 2 used one type of directive which works for the visual engagement of the potential customer *wò ó, wo bí*. Other directives like *sún mọ́ bí, yẹ ẹ wò* are also used in drawing the potential buyers’ attention. One may be able to deduce that all directives and declaratives are used to urge potential customers to buy the commodities. Bauman (2001) says directives and declaratives or questions concerning exchange have a special rhetorical power in establishing in the potential customers’ mind a virtual identification with the commodities and the vendors that is a crucial prerequisite for accomplishing the sale that will make the virtual identification an actual one.

2.6 Spiel strategies

Spiels perform some of the same general functions and employ some of the same formal elements and devices as calls but they are longer, continuous rather than bounded, less stereotyped and marked by more elaborated devices and structures of argumentation (Bauman, 2001). Spiels are usually longer with extended structures of cohesion, syntactic complexity and reflexivity. A significant contrast between calls and spiels is correlated with the kinds of commodities that are offered for sale and their cost; calls are used in the selling of kind of things people regularly come to the market to get, such as ordinary clothing and foodstuff. Spiels on the other hand are used for specialty item or probably luxury which may require more persuasion.

(16) Seller: *Ó yẹ owó ẹ. Ẹ yè é wò*
 Expletive worth price expletive 3PL check expletive look
 ‘It’s worth the price. Check it out.’

Sọlẹ lásán. Ó n pá ááyán.
 Drop only Expletive ASP kill cockroach
 ‘Name of the insecticide. It kills cockroaches.’

Ó n pa ekute. Eku tó fenu kàn ijogbon
 Expletive ASP kill rat Rat that use-mouth touch in-trouble
 ‘It kills rats. Any rat that tastes it is in trouble.’

Şàà ti pò ó mọ́ ìrèsì kí o gbé e sábé ibùsùn re
 Just expl mix with rice and 3SG put expl under bed 3SG-Obj
 ‘Just mix it with rice and put it under your bed.’

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Soólè lòògùn nàà. Soólè-lásán nàà rẹ é.
 Product-name FOC-medicine the Product-name Def-Article here
 ‘Soole is the product. This is *Soólè-lasan*.’

Kò yo idun, èfon, omole lè
 NEG exclude bedbug, mosquito, wall gecko remain
 ‘It does not exclude bedbugs and mosquitoes.’

Fon si yàrà à re. Gbogbo-nise ni.
 Spray in room poss All-round FOC
 ‘Spray it in your room. It works for everything.’

Eyi yàtò sómiràn. Tiwa lóga, e gbà á yèwò.
 This different to-another Ours master, EXPL take-check
 ‘This is different from others. Ours is the superior, take and check it out.’

Oga, e yewo. Ó yẹ owó è.
 Master, EXPL check EXPL fit money EXPL.
 ‘Oga, check it out. It’s worth the price.’

Ìyá mi Soólè lásán. Àpò kan péré ní, Soólè lásán.
 Mother my product-name two hundred FOC product-name
 ‘My mother, *Soólè lasan*. It is two hundred naira only, *Soólè lasan*.’

Buyer: *È fún mi níméjì*
 EXPL give me two
 ‘Give me two.’

The seller gave the description of the salient qualities of the merchandise and he also extended his spiel to illustrate how to use it. The use of fabricated formulas as demonstrated in (16), which can be easily memorized suits the merchants’ purpose, and this is achieved in advertising through the manipulative use of voice. From all indications, it is clear that spiel is strong in emotional appeal, rhetorically effective, and it evokes sensory and cognitive appeal with the merchandize on display. A good feature it shares with calls is that it is equally poetic. Bauman (2001) also confirms the condensed and formulaically repetitious elements that are associated with spiel.

3. Sociolinguistics of bargaining between buyers and sellers

This section discusses the choice of language use between the buyers and the sellers, and other attendant sociolinguistic manifestations as attested in our data.

(17) Seller: *È bá mi ra eran. Mo ní se promo lówó.*
 EXPL plea me buy meat I ASP do promo present
 ‘Please buy beef from me. I am doing promo at the moment.’

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Buyer: *Mo ñ bọ*

I ASP come

'I am coming.'

Seller: *Ẹ jọwọ ẹ bá mi rà á*

EXPL please EXPL plea me buy it

'Please, help me buy it.'

From the bargaining, one can deduce that the buyer speaks the same language as the seller. The content of the conversation also reveals the buyer could be older than the seller since the seller used the Yoruba honorific term *Ẹ* for the buyer. Although it is not in all cases that honorific term is used to mean that a person is older, it could only be to show respect as a feature of bargaining. The seller on his part was informative enough as he made the potential customer realize his meat promo is on when he said, *mo ñ se promo lọwọ* 'My promo is in progress', it is obvious the seller borrowed the word *promo*. Therefore, one can say the seller code-mixed when he said *mò ñ se promo lọwọ* as *promo* is a clipped word from the English word *promotion*.

From the bargaining in (17), the seller said *Ẹ jọwọ, ẹ bá mi rà á* 'Please buy from me'. *Ẹ jọwọ* 'please' as used here is an illocutionary act exercitive, which is urging the potential customer to patronize her and the perlocutionary effect on the buyer is to stay. The buyer on the other hand responded with *mò ñ bọ* which is another illocutionary act of promising or assuring the seller in a way showing interest.

(18) Seller: *Ẹ wá bá mi ra ìsù.*

EXPL come plea me buy yam

'Come and buy yam.'

Baba okọ mi, ẹ wá bá mi rà á.

Father-in-law my, EXPL come plea me buy it

'My father in law, come help, me buy it.'

Buyer: *Elo ni?*

How-much FOC

'How much is it?'

Seller: *2,000 nátrà sùghón nítorí mo ñ se bonánsà, ẹ mún-un ní ₦1,500.*

2,000 naira but because I prog do bonaza 3sg take-LEN for ₦1,500

'It is ₦2,000, but because of the bonanza, buy it at ₦1500.'

Buyer: *Haa! Ok. Ìsù ibo ni?*

EXCL! Ok. Yam where FOC

'Where did you get the yam?'

Seller: *Ìsù Benue ni fah, ó fine gan ni fah.*

Yam Benue FOC EMPH EXPL fine EMPH FOC EMPH

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‘It is Benue yam, it is very fine.’

Buyer: *Emi ró pé 700 naira ni, nítorí bònásà.*

I think that 700 naira FOC because bonanza

‘I thought it is ₦700 because of the bonanza.’

Seller: *Kò gbà.*

NEG price

‘No, it does not go for that price.’

The seller used the term *bonanza* to call the attention of potential buyers to a discounted amount. *Bonanza* is not a Yoruba word, but the seller borrowed this word to possibly make the intention of the seller known that the yam is going for a discounted amount. Also, *fine* in *Isu Benue ni, o fine gan* is not also a Yoruba word, but a loan word from English which was used to make the buyer know that the yam is a good one. Situations where a person has to borrow words from one language into another often lead to codeswitching and this sociolinguistic feature is what has happened in the bargaining above. However, the seller was informative enough as she was able to give adequate response to every question she was asked by the buyer about her item. For instance, where the buyer asked *ìshù ibo ni*, the seller was able to reply *ìshù benue ni. ẹ wá bá mi rà ìshù* in the sentence *baba ọkọ, ẹ l wá bá mi rà á* is an illocutionary act ‘exercitive’ which was used to persuade/influence the buyer.

(19) Seller: *Mummy wa, ẹ ra Maggi, ẹ sebe.*

Mummy our EXPL buy Maggi, EXPL cook-soup

‘Our mummy, come and buy magi and make soup.’

Buyer: *Elò ni Star?*

How-much FOC Star?

‘How much is Star?’

Seller: *Sé medium àbí ñlá pátápátá?*

Is it medium or big SUPERL

‘Is it the medium size or the biggest size?’

Buyer: *Nlá pátápátá.*

Big size SUPERL

‘The biggest size.’

Seller: *700 náirà, sùghón ẹ mu-un ní 600 naira.*

700 naira, but EXPL take-Len FOC 600 naira

‘₦700 but you can take it for ₦600.’

Buyer: *Ok, ẹ jẹ kí n san 500 náirà, kí n bá a yín rà á.*

Ok, EXPL let ASP pay 500 naira let ASP help you buy it

‘Ok. Let me pay ₦500, let me buy from you.’

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Seller: *Mummy wa kò gbà-bẹ̀, ó yá ẹ̀ mun ní 550 naira.*
 Mummy our NEG accept-that EXPL EXPL EXPL take FOC 550 naira
 ‘Our mother, it doesn’t go for that price, take it for 550 naira.’

Buyer: *Ajé.*

‘Ok.’

Seller: *Ìyá dáadáa, ẹ̀ wá, ẹ̀ wá mun-un.*
 Mother good, EXPL come, EXPL come take-LEN
 ‘Good mother, come, come and take it.’

In (19), the term of address *mummy wa*, *ajé*, *iyá dáadáa*, are words used in the market during negotiation. The buyer used the word *ajé* to inform the seller indirectly that she cannot buy it for the price she was willing to sell the item. In other words, it was an indirect way of quitting or ending the conversation and that word was the reason the seller agreed to the price the buyer was willing to buy it by replying *ẹ̀ wá, ẹ̀ wá mun un*. The buyer on her part said *ok. Ẹ̀ jẹ́kí n san 500 náirà kí n bá a yín ra a*. Here, there is an illocutionary act of commissive (persuading & undertaking) *ẹ̀ je kí n san 500 náirà* is a language of persuasion and *kí n bá a yín rà á* is an undertaking. However, the seller violated the maxim of quantity which states that we should not be more informative than it is required, when she responded *700 náirà, ẹ̀ gbọ̀n ẹ̀ mún un ní 600 náirà*, she has said more than she was asked. No other maxim was violated.

(20) Seller: *Oga mi sa, ẹ̀ bá mi raja.*
 Master my sir, EXPL patronize me buy-market
 ‘My master sir, patronize me.’

Buyer: *Elo ní òróró?*
 How-much FOC vegetable oil
 ‘How much is vegetable oil?’

Seller: *Igò àbi agolo?*
 Bottle or tin
 ‘Is it bottle or tin?’

Buyer: *Igò*
 ‘bottle.’

Seller: 370.

Buyer: *Se é fe kólé sórí omi ní?*
 Do EXPL want build-house at-head water FOC
 ‘Do you want to build a house on water?’

Seller: *Boda ẹ̀ wá. Elo lè fẹ́ san?*
 Brother EXPL come. How-much FOC want pay
 ‘Brother, come. How much do you want to pay?’

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Buyer: *200 naira*

'200 naira.'

Seller: *E ʃe má san owó rárá. E jòwọ ẹ pa rẹ.*

EXPL do NEG pay money at all. EXPL please EXPL disappear

'Why don't you take it for free? Please, get off!'

The question-and-answer dialogue above shows that the buyer is a male as the seller used the term of address *oga sa* 'Master sir' for the buyer. *Elò ni òróró* is an illocutionary act of exercitive which is used for the purpose of making question in the conversation above, *Boda ẹ wá* is used for persuading the potential buyer and the perlocutionary effect is for the buyer to stay to give more chance for negotiation, *E jòwọ ẹ pá rẹ* is also another illocutionary act of exercitive, but here it was used for ordering and the perlocutionary effect is that the buyer should disappear/leave. *E ʃe má san owó rárá* is sarcasm. However, the buyer violated the maxim of manner where she replied *ʃe é fe kólé sórí omi ni*. The seller did the same where she replied *ẹ ʃe má san owó rárá* and *ẹ jòwọ ẹ pá rẹ*.

(21) (Conversation between a pepper seller and buyer)

Seller: *Olóri ire èyàn.*

Owner of head blessed person

'Fortunate people.'

Boda, ẹ yà, ẹ wá bá mi rà ata

Brother, EXPL branch off EXPL come meet me buy pepper

'Brother, come and help me buy pepper.'

O gbopo, tori yin ní o je ní dúró silè.

EXPL cheap because you that EXPL didn't ASP wait home

'It is cheap, it is because of you I didn't stay at home.'

Buyer: *Elọ ní ilé kan ata?*

How much FOC heap one pepper

'How much is one heap of pepper.'

Seller: *Múri márùn-ún; àpòkan. Ewo ni ká kó nibè?*

One hundred-LEN; two hundred. Which FOC we pack among-them?

'One hundred; two hundred. Which one should I pack amongst them?'

Buyer: *Oní muri márùn-ún ọ̀nà méjì.*

That of one hundred-LEN place two

'The one for one hundred in two places.'

Seller: *Ó dáa, ẹ rí pé mo ti bá a yin fi ẹni sí i*

EXPL fine, EXPL observe I have helped you add extra to it

'It's ok, you see I have added more for you.'

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E ra tomato ni?
EXPL buy tomato wont?
'Won't you buy tomatoes?'

Buyer: *Ẹ fún mi ní ilé kan.*
EXPL give me FOC heap one
'Give me one heap.'

It is evident that the buyer is a male as the seller used the term of address *boda* for the buyer. One can also deduce the seller is older than the buyer; she used the honorific term in Yoruba *Ẹ* to address the seller at every point. Declaratives like *olóri ire èyàn, ó gbopo, tori yín ní o jẹ́n dúró sílè* in (21) are calls used to draw the attention of the potential customers. There are certain illocutionary acts in the conversation that take place above. *Ẹfún mi ní ilé kan ata* is an illocutionary act of request and the perlocutionary effect is that the seller should pack the pepper. They reached an agreement.

(22) (Conversation between a foodstuff seller and buyer)

Seller: *Abùrò mi, ẹwa nkọ?*
Younger one my, beans where?
'My younger one, what about beans?'

Buyer: *Sé ẹwa olóyin wa?*
Is beans the one with honey available?
'Do you have sweet beans?'

Seller: *O wà, sùghón wúwo lẹ wà wá.*
EXPL available, but heavy one that available
'There is, but only the big one is available.'

Buyer: *Elo ni wúwo?*
How much is heavy one
'How much is the big one?'

Seller: *Roba kan, 1,300 náirà.*
Container one, 1,300 naira
'One measure is ₦1,300.'

Buyer: *Sé ẹ lè gba 900 náirà?*
Can EXPL accept 900 naira
'Can you sell it for ₦900?'

Seller: *Ẹ lẹ rà ní wájú. Iyá, kò fa ijà, Iyá, kò fa ijà*
EXPL go buy in front. Mother, NEG call fight, mother, NEG call fight
'Go and buy it elsewhere. Mother, this does not call for an argument.'

There are few illocutionary acts in the above conversation. *ẹwà nkọ* is an illocutionary act exercitive which was used to ask a question and the perlocutionary effect on the buyer

is that she was aware the seller sells *ewà* which made her ask for a particular kind of beans. *o wà* is another illocutionary acts, “assertive”, and the perlocutionary effect is assuring the buyer. *Roba kan 1,300 náíra* is another illocutionary act of disagreement; the buyer replied *iyá kò fà ìjà* is an illocutionary act “expressive” which shows that the buyer does not have anything against the seller. However, the seller violated maxim of manner as she hissed at the end of the conversation as a sign that the buyer has probably wasted her time, she could have simply replied the buyer by saying *kò gbà* as in (18) but rather she hissed.

(23) (Conversation between a pure water seller and buyer)

Seller: *O tutù, ówọ yín. Má jé kí ó gbóná.*

EXPL cold, hand your. Do not allow it hot.

‘It is cold, watch your hand. Do not let it get hot.’

Buyer: *Fún mi ní méjì pèlú 30 náíra change.*

Give me it two plus 30 naira change

‘Give me two with ₦30 change.’

Seller: *Mo ní bọ.*

I ASP come

‘I am coming.’

Buyer: *Kò tutù dáadáa gan.*

NEG cold very well

‘It is not even so chilled.’

Seller: *Egbón, eléyì ò tún tutù tó? Tó bá fẹ tutù ùkó?*

Elder, this one NEG cold enough? If it were cold how?

‘Elder, this one is not so chilled, how chilled will it be?’

Buyer: *Iwọ lọ mọ, fún mi ní change mi.*

You FOC know, give me FOC change my

‘That’s your problem, give me my change.’

Seller: *E gbà.*

You take

‘Have it.’

From the conversation in (21), one can deduce that the buyer is older than the seller as the seller used the term of address *ègbón* for the buyer which is also indicative of the social relation between the seller and buyer. There are few illocutionary acts in (23). *Ó tutu, ówọ yín* is an illocutionary act “exercitive” which is stating a fact and the perlocutionary effect on the buyer is to make him know the pure water is so chilled, *má jé kí ó gbóná* is an illocutionary acts “directive” which is advising the potential buyer to buy before the chilled water gets hot, *fún mi ní méjì* is an illocutionary act “exercitive” which is used to make request. *Kò tutu dáadáa gan* is an illocutionary act “assertive” which is stating a fact. *Fún*

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mi ní change mi is an illocutionary act “exercitive” which is used to make a request.

However, the seller violated the maxim of quantity which states that there should be no use of exaggeration or hyperbole when he said *ó tutù, ó wọ yín*, but the buyer confirmed the water was not as chilled as the seller claimed. The seller as well violated the maxim of manner when he replied *Egbón, eléyì ò tún tutù, tó bá fẹ tutù ñkọ*.

(24) (Conversation between an orange seller and buyer)

Buyer: *Aboki. Yaya?*

‘My friend. How are you?’

Seller: *Laafia.*

‘Fine.’

Buyer: *Orange.*

Seller: *Méta 50 náírà.*

Three 50 naira

‘Three for ₦50.’

Buyer: *Kai, aboki. Do am four ₦50.*

No, my friend. Do it four N50

‘No, my friend. Sell it four for ₦50.’

Seller: *Toor, kawo kudi.*

Ok, bring money

‘Ok, bring the money.’

Buyer: Thank you.

The conversation in (24) is a pointer to the diverse cultural and ethnolinguistic backgrounds of sellers and buyers in Ipata market. One can deduce that the two parties have different cultural backgrounds which make them speak different languages. However, they were able to converge through the use of code mixing and Nigerian pidgin. In an instance where the buyer could have said *I want to buy orange* or *How much do you sell your oranges* in Hausa language; he only mentioned the name of the commodity, *orange*, which helped the seller to deduce what he was trying to say. *Aboki, Yaya, laafia*, are all illocutionary acts “behavitive” performing the function of greeting and *Do am four ₦50* is an illocutionary act “exercitive” which was used to plead/persuade. The buyer violated the maxim of quantity which states that one should be informative as much as possible, but as a result of the intercultural differences the buyer could not be as informative as he pleases when he was trying to communicate with the seller. For instance, when he said “orange” when he could have said “I want to buy Orange” or even ask for the price.

4. Conclusion

This research work has identified the language of bargaining in Ipata market which are

classified as “calls” and “spiels”. It also revealed the different types of directives, declaratives, and vocative/term of address used by different sellers in order to call the attention of potential customers. This article has also identified the number of ethnic groups as well as the languages used in the market, which shows that multicultural marketing is practised in Ipata market. It further shows how code mixing as a sociolinguistic feature aids effective communication between the sellers and buyers in situations where they belong to different linguistic/cultural backgrounds. The study also established that the choice of language in the market is determined by the age, gender, social class and sometimes the mode of dressing of the buyer.

Abbreviations

2	Second Person	FUT	Future Tense
3	Third Person	LEN	Lengthening
ASP	Aspect	NEG	Negative
EMPH	Emphatic	PL	Plural
EXCL	Exclamation	POSS	Possessive
EXPL	Expletive	SG	Singular
FOC	Focus	SUPERL	Superlative
PROG	Progressive Tense		

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