

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE COORDINATE BILINGUALS: ANAANG ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Dr. Aniekan Nyarks

Department of English Akwa Ibom State University
Obio Akpa Campus, Oruk Anam Local Government Area.

Abstract

This study, “Linguistic Analysis of the Coordinate Bilinguals: Anaang English Speakers” aims at the assessment of the phonological, semantic, morphological and lexical features emanating from the contact of the two languages in question. To research into this work, we needed the assistance of forty Anaang indigenes, five (5) from each dialect community who acquired Anaang language first properly before they learnt English Language, using four functional sentences as instrument. Later, a cross examination was conducted and we realized that there are conspicuous divergences in the phonological level due to the differences in the phonological components of the two languages. We also find out that on the lexical level, there are comprehensible imbalances in the distributive equivalence; on the semantic and morphological sector, there are admixtures due to the earlier establishment of Anaang linguistic components before English language. The differences in the features of the two languages produce code mixing, code switching, transliteration etc. This study is very important for linguists and researchers of the language so that when these features are displayed by Anaang speakers of English, the reasons might quickly be understood.

Keywords: Interference, Bilingualism, Code Mixing and Code Switching.

Introduction

In this study, we will make a general survey of linguistics, sociolinguistics and the four levels of linguistics: phonology, syntax, morphology and semantics.

Linguistic generally refers to the scientific study of a language. The word “scientific” in this context refers to the method used in investigating the structure of a language. Science generally makes use of empirical methods of investigation and a linguist usually carries out investigation by means of controlled and empirical verifiable observation with reference to some general theories of language structure. Sociolinguistics on its own is concerned with language in its social context, with relationship between language and society. It explores the variation in languages associated with social phenomena such as the social group to which speakers and/or hearers belong (for, differences in speech according to class in Western societies) McGregor (2009:4). Other topics of interest in sociolinguistics are multilingualism,

language choice (what motivates language choice in multilingual settings), attitude to languages and language variation, standard and non-standard varieties of language. Phonetics and phonology on the other hand deals with the sounds of language. According to McGregor (2009:4).

Phonetics is concerned with the ways speech sounds are made, their nature (the physics of sound waves) and how they are perceived. While phonology is concerned with the ways sounds are patterned in a language, with those characteristics that are significant in the sound system of the language.

Moreover, Semantic is concerned with the aspects of meaning that are encoded by words and grammar while Syntax is concerned with the ways words go together to form sentences, and how the words are related to one another. Linguistic has basically the same range of concerns as sociolinguistics, but takes inspiration more from anthropology than sociology, and usually deals with small-scale non-Western culture, while, morphology deals with the way words of a language are structured, how they are made up of smaller meaning parts.

Language involves a vast, complex and systematic study, with different core areas. These areas intertwined with various other disciplines and contains fields like sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics etc. Linguistics is being recognized as an independent discipline of study, thus paving the way to a lot of developments and research. It is a subject that keeps changing, as languages change. Although some aspects of the subject are based on historical notes and sets of rules, it continues to evolve out of old boundaries into new, with developments that occur in different languages. Hakuta (2009) sees Language as a hierarchical structure. In order to study the science of language systematically, we sub-divide the area of study in an analytical and easier way. Each level of the system that constitutes the study of linguistics is independent on its own. These levels can be represented in the following manner: Phonemes, Syllables, Morphemes, Words, Phrases, Clauses, Sentences/Utterances, and Texts/discourses.

Apparently, bilingualism (multilingualism) refers to the coexistence of more than one language system within an individual, as contrasted to monolingualism. The question of how the two languages interact at the cognitive and behavioural levels has been of long-standing interest.

Bilingualism as an individual condition is nested within a distribution of broader societal circumstances that cause language contact. There are many different manifestations of this variability. Bilingualism that is accompanied by literacy in both languages is different from bilingualism in which schooling is available in one language (the one that also carries social prestige) but not the other.

Li Wei (2006) asserts that Bilingualism is a product of extensive language contact (i.e., contacts between people who speak different languages). There are many reasons for speakers of different languages to get into contact with one another. Some do so out of their own choice, whereas others are forced by circumstances. Among the frequently

cited factors that contribute to language contact are education, modern technology, economy, religion and culture, political or military acts, and natural disasters. One does not have to move to a different place to be in contact with people speaking a different language. There are plenty of opportunities for language contact in the same country, the same community, the same neighborhood, or even the same family.

However, although language contact is a necessary condition for bilingualism at the societal level, it does not automatically lead to bilingualism at the individual level. For example, Belgium, Canada, Finland, India, Luxembourg, Paraguay, and Singapore, to name but a few countries, are bi- or multilingual, but the degree or extent of bilingualism among the residents of these countries varies significantly. There are large numbers of bilingual or multilingual individuals in Luxembourg, Paraguay, and Singapore, but considerably fewer in the other officially bi- or multilingual countries. Schmitt E. and Verplaetse L. S. (2010) see bilingualism as a speaker's ability to use two languages for communication. Due to the complexity of its nature, the study of bilingualism relies on several fields within linguistics, anthropology, psychology, neuroscience, and education. It also describes language behaviours of bilingual speakers, social and pragmatic patterns of using two languages, language development, and acquisition and loss, among other issues. This work will therefore explain the effect of bilingualism in Anaang speakers of English and the influence of the mother tongue on the later.

When an individual uses two or more languages he becomes the centre where these languages are contacted. Definitely, there must be some effect on the language pattern of this individual. This is because language controls greater percentage of the social and behavioural pattern of an individual since language is the conveyor of culture. As such, when an individual adopts two languages he has also adopted the linguistic structure of the languages and also their cultures. This contact must therefore affect the pattern of the L1 and also his culture.

However, as pointed out by Weinreich, (1974:1), an individual who speaks two languages is called a bilingual whereas the art is called bilingualism. Later, he said that there is nowhere two or more languages meet without an effect. This effect emanates from the coming together of the linguistic structures of the two or more languages. It is either the linguistic structure of language B affects that of language A or A affects language B. This effect creates a deviation from the convention of each of the languages adopted by the bilingual or multilingual. According to Weinreich (1974:1):

The practice of alternately using two languages will be called BILINGUALISM, and the persons involved BILINGUAL. Those instances of deviation from the norms of either languages which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than a language, i.e.... as a result of language conflict, will be referred to as INTERFERENCE phenomena.

With reference to the present study, it does not matter whether the contact involves languages or dialects of the same language. What is paramount is that the more the difference in the linguistic pattern, the greater the interference. Altogether, the amount of interference is almost the same whether the contact is with language or with dialects. According to Weinreich (1974:1):

...it is immaterial whether the two systems are “languages”, “dialects”. The greater the difference between the systems i.e. the more numerous the mutual exclusive forms and patterns in each, the greater is the learning problem and the potential area of interference.

The situation is applicable to this study which involves varieties of Anaang Language because some elements of one or two languages are found in Anaang language and four varieties are also noticed in the language. All these features are cases of interference.

Deduced from the above, we have noticed a similar situation in Anaang language which brings about the purpose of this study. Local Government Areas that are close to Igbo tend to be influenced by the Igbo and those that bound by Ibibio are affected by Ibibio languages. For instance, the Anaang people living in Abak and Etim Ekpo are bounded by the Ibibio in the East Central part of Anaang. Their contact with these people has made the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ to interfere in the linguistic pattern of the Anaang people of this zone. So instead of using the voiceless palato alveolar affricate /tʃ/ dominant in the Anaang language, they tend to use the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ prominent in Ibibio language in the word initial and medial positions. More cases of this interference are noticed in the Western part of Anaang with the people of Essien Udim bounded by Ngwa people and Ndoki. Also, in the list, are Obot Akara and Ikot Ekpene bounded by the Isoughbo in the Eastern part of Anaang. Lastly, the Ika people who are bounded by the Azumini Igbo are also influenced. All these contacts have cases of interference as a result of their contacts with other languages, which has produced different variants of Anaang language.

Language is a dynamic phenomenon which changes with time. Records of the language like English can testify that there are great changes between the Old English, Middle English and the English of today. Moreover, outstanding changes are noticed in the British and American English. This situation is applicable to all languages. The only problem is that there are no such records in our language and we could not prove this as we have done in English.

More importantly, language change does not proceed along predetermined paths; two bilingual language communities who speak the two languages originally will not urgently realize when one language gradually diverge, unless inter-comprehensibility is maintained by continuous contact (Atkinson 1988:64). Records from linguists, according to Atkinson, show instances of such divergences in the breakdown of Latin into the modern Romance Language (French, Italian, Romanian, Spanish etc). These Modern Romance Languages are glaring instances of distinct languages. These

languages in their standard varieties are not mutually comprehensible to the speakers and their many differences are noted.

2.0 THE LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE COORDINATE BILINGUALS: ANAANG ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Historical records have shown that these languages did not spring up as different languages from the beginning but the divergence took place gradually over hundreds of years and the language kept growing and expanding as the users expand. This case applies to Anaang language in the phonological, semantic, lexical and morphological levels.

2.1 The Phonology of Anaang and English Language

Phonology is the study of the sounds of individual languages. Katamba (1996:2) looks at "phonology as the branch of linguistic which investigates the ways in which sounds are used systematically in different languages together with words and utterances" According to Michael (2001:32) Anaang language has thirty alphabets these are: a, b, ch, d, e, f, gh, gw, h, i, j, k, kw, kp, l, m, n, ñ, ñw, ñy, o, q, p, r, s, t, u, u, w, y. The monophthongs are /a, e, i, o, ɔ, u, ʊ/ while the diphthongs are: /ai/, /ei/, /oi/, /ɔi/, /ui/, /ɛi/ while English language has twenty six alphabets which are a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z.

On the consonants, Anaang language has twenty three phonemic consonants are: / b, d, gw, g, dʒ, r, R, m, n, ɲ, j, w, l, ɸ, p, t, k, kp, kw, tɲ, f, s/ while English has twenty four consonant sounds. These are as follows: / p, b, t, d, k, g, f, v, θ, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h, tʃ, dʒ, m, n, ŋ, i, r, l, w, j, /

Analysis

In the phonological structure of Anaang language, the following sounds are not available /ð, z, θ, v/. Close to the above variants are sounds like /d, t, s, f/ so when English is spoken by some Anaang people and they come in contact with strange consonant that are not present in their mother tongue, they will adjust themselves to the one present and nearest to the one found in their L1. Therefore, among these affected Anaang bilinguals, the following phonological influence will occur.

(a) When a voiced interdental fricative sound - / ð/ is alveolar plosive-/d/.

(b) Voiced alveolar fricative-/z/ will be adjusted to voiceless alveolar fricative - /s/.

(c) Voiceless interdental fricative -/θ/ will be adjusted to voiceless alveolar plosive/t/.

(d) Voiced labio-dental fricative - /v/ will be adjusted to voiceless labio-dental fricative /f/.

(e) Alveolar liquid (rolled) /r/ will be adjusted to alveolar liquid (lateral)/l/.

These facts make some affected Anaang people to realize the sounds wrongly in the words where the above sounds are found as shown below:

(a) When /θ/ is found in a word such as "breathing" it will be realized as /bridin/ instead of /briθin/.

(b) When /z/ is found in a word such as "boys" it will be realized as /bɔis/ instead of /bɔiz/.

(c) When /θ/ is found in a word as "thing" it will be realized as /tink/ instead of /θink/.

(d) When /v/ is found in a word such as "very" it will be realized as /feri/ instead of /veri/.

(e) When /r/ is found in a word such as "reign" it will be realized as /lein/ instead of /rein/. Only applicable to the affected ASD variants who are so much affected by the alveolar lateral prominent in their dialect.

Derived from the above analysis, there is no much problem in the vowels since most of the sounds are available in the two languages. Those that are not available have close remnants. Since Anaang language does not get the following sounds /ɕ, θ, z, v / in the consonant while these sounds are found in the English language. There are areas of differences in the phonology of the two languages which have brought some elements of divergence in the acquisition on English by an Anaang speaker.

2.2 Lexical and Semantic Interference

These occur in the form of code switching, code mixing, and transliteration (outright transfer). It is the act of changing from one language to another in an utterance or a mixture of two languages in a description. Olaoye (1998) asserts that there are two types of code switching: situational and metaphorical. According to him, situational code switching occurs when a speaker changes from one language to another as a result of social context.

2.2.1 Code switching - the transfer of the morphemes of the mother tongue L1 (in this case Anaang language) into the second language (English language)

Borrowing - The use of the morphemes of Anaang language with whose contents they are identified.

The display of this act can be shown below:

- (i) Alalok carry me to Udoette Street.
(Anaang and English) Translated as:
Cyclist carry me to Udoette Street.
- (ii) Mbok stop here (Anaang and English)
Translated: Please, stop here.
- (iii) Sir, in fact nna anam (English and Anaang)
Translated: Sir, in fact, I will do it.

2.2.2 Code mixing: This act refers to the mixing of different words from different languages in utterances in order to explain a situation.

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- (a) My friend, akud mkpo anammade, I don't like it.
(English, Anaang, English) Translated:
My friend, do you see what you have done? I don't like it.
- (b) The people of Sodom and Gomorah eke eba uwem nte unam, I tell you, I don't like them. (English, Anaang and English) Translated:
The people of Sodom and Gomorah lives like animals, I tell you, I don't like them.
- (c) Sa ama nliogo that is why aye abehaveke ntere
(Anaang, English, Anaang,)
Translated: Because he knows me, that is why he behaves like that.

2.2.3 Outright transfer (Transliteration)

- (a) Yak nli; Translated straight into English
"I am coming" When actually that person is going instead of saying, "I will be right back"
- (b) Ibaha ki itie 'He is not on seat'
Instead of "He is not available "or" He is not in the office.
- (c) Ade atai ekamba awo. 'He is a very big man' instead of, 'He is an important personality'.

2.2.4 Unequal Distribution

Lexically, there is lack of one to one correspondence

- (a) What do you do
1 2 3 4
Afo anam nsehe
3 4 5

From the illustration above, it can also be observed that apart from one to one correspondence in the lexical structure, there is a verbal group contraction from complex to a simple sentence.

2.2.5 Total collective responsibility-communal consciousness.

There is influence of the kingship in Anaang language which has affected the acquisition of English. This is brought about by the difference in the culture and tradition of the people.

An eldest person is often regarded as a father and an age mate, a brother; an elderly person, an uncle. On the side of a woman, it follows in the same vein, a mother, aunt and sister. Whereas English language regards a biological, blood father/mother, uncle/aunt, brother/ sister as real but this is not the case in Anaang. Furthermore, the extended family system practiced in Anaang merges all to regard and use the kinship term indiscriminately.

2.3 The Morphological Contrast

The influences of Anaang language on the morphological levels are as follows:

(a) Ommsure: The addition Anaang "Ommo," to English "sure" to mean "Are you sure?"

(b) Usoftke: The addition of 'u' and 'ke' (Anaang) as affixes 'ke' - suffix (vernacular) and prefix vernacular_ - 'u' To English "soft" to form a word " U softke" meaning you are not easy.

(c) Anattyde: The addition of affixes 'A' Prefix and "de" suffix (Anaang vernacular) to "natty" to form "anattyde"

(d) Ubehavekewell:. The Addition of 'U' (Anaang) to English "behave" and "ke"(Anaang) added to "well" to mean 'you don't behave well".

Conclusion

The differences in the phonology and syntax between English and Anaang languages as illustrated above has created a rift which has thrown the Anaang speakers of English language into difficulty. This situation has made the Anaang speakers of English Language to rely on the available sound found in their mother tongue in pronouncing some of the sounds not found in his language. These deficiencies have resulted in contrast of error. Therefore, the Anaang speakers of English language should be very conscious whenever they come across the deficient sounds. However, it should be understood that these Anaang speakers are victims of circumstances but not ignorant of the use of English language. When an individual uses two or more languages he becomes the centre where these languages are contacted. Definitely, there must be some effect in the language pattern of this individual. This is because language controls greater percentage of the social and behavioural pattern of an individual since language is the conveyor of culture. As such, when an individual adopts many languages he has also adopted the linguistic structure of the new languages and also their culture. This contact must therefore affect the pattern of the L1 and also his culture. This is the reason Anaang coordinate bilingual who speaks English is entangled with the different linguistic problems discussed in this study.

Recommendations

The issue of interference is a natural phenomenon which must surely occur in any language contact. The affected Anang people should be very conscious in their verbal communication whenever they get in contact with the phonemes in English that is NOT available in Anang phenology.

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