



## A PRAGMA-STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF COMMAND TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS USED FOR THE NIGERIAN ARMY ARMS, SILENT AND SENTRY DRILL

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### Abstract:

The command terms and expressions in the Nigerian Army reflect discursive practices that indicate language used professionally for operational efficiency. This study investigates the command terms and expressions used by the Nigerian Army for Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill, as a distinct use of language by the Nigerian Army, with identifiable communicative patterns and stylistic essence. The study examines these terms and expressions with a specific interest in the peculiar linguistic and functional attributes which set them apart from other forms of drills or parades in the Nigerian Army. It explains how the command terms and expressions used for this parade are a part of the Nigerian Army's formal use of language, for drills or parades, that reveal the use of power in military functions and activities. It also explains how the Army achieves orderliness and attains meaning using the command terms and expressions for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill. The spoken data are elicited through the fieldwork and are analysed qualitatively with the Speech Acts theory by J.L. Austin and Conversational Implicatures by H.P. Grice. This study interrogates the discourse on command terms and expressions for Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill linguistically focusing on the communicative essence, pragmatic peculiarities, and stylistic features. It clarifies how the terms and expressions constitute formal communicative resources with specific meaning implications. The study reveals that the command terms and expressions in this context reflect performatives used to exercise power over the troops to achieve immediate actions, a perfect drill and other military objectives. The study also reveals that the style of these command terms and expressions reflects the use of sound symbolism, and they rely on their sequential nature to achieve meaning and orderliness. The study concludes that the terms and expressions are contextual and meaningful, though they are implied. The implication is that the use of sequential command terms and expressions in commanding the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill buttresses meaning, aids orderliness and reveals the regimental nature of the military.

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## 1. Introduction

The military profession is exclusive, and it relies on command to carry out its duties. Command is based on the use of language. Language serves as a core facilitator and coordinator of military activities. Patrick et al (2022) indicate that the military “... *has developed a unique type of English through which their daily tasks are carried out ...*” (p. 55). This uniqueness in the use of language is reflected in the use of command terms and expressions for Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill in the Nigerian Army.

Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill is a type of drill performed in military training institutions, battalion competitions, and other military competitions. It is performed in the units by soldiers and not by officers. The officers perform this drill in the Nigerian Army as cadets in the Nigerian Defence Academy.

The command terms and expressions for Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill reflect peculiar characteristics that distinguish them from other command terms and expressions in military parades or drills. Nevertheless, they reflect the background of the Nigerian Army's use of language for parades or drills. Akande (2017) asserts that “*both soldiers and officers represent their occupational identity through the specific use of certain lexical items and slang.*” Therefore, one can say that the military profession and its functional mode of operations influence the style of language used by the Army, which is evident in the use of command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill.

The objectives of this study are to:

- 1) Identify the command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill and investigate their pragmatic inclinations;
- 2) Investigate the performative importance and communicative essence of the command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill;
- 3) Elucidate the stylistic features of the command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army, Arms Silent and Sentry Drill, and
- 4) Clarify the stylistic implications of the command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill.

## 2. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is adopted for this study. Under this, Austin's (1962) Speech Acts Theory and Grecoian Conversational Implicatures (1975) are adopted as theoretical tools for the analysis.

Black (2006) defines Pragmatics as “*the study of language in context*” (p. 1). Huang (2014) asserts that “*Pragmatics can be broadly defined as the study of language in use*” (p. 1). Yule (1996) also states that “*The study of intended meaning is called **pragmatics***” (p. 127). Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics that studies how context contributes to meaning in the production of an utterance. It relates the meaning of a linguistic expression to factors like the manner, time and place in

which the expression is made. It goes beyond the boundaries of sentence structure or linguistic knowledge in its account of an utterance.

Pragmatics considers the interlocutors' pre-existing knowledge and some other features of the context to avoid ambiguity. Yule (1996) identifies two types of contexts: the linguistic context (co-text) and the physical context. Concerning the linguistic context (co-text), he says: *"The co-text of a word is the set of other words used in the same phrase or sentence. The surrounding co-text strongly affects what one thinks the word means"* (p. 129). Yule (1996) also relates the Physical context to the physical location where language use occurs. He says, *"Our understanding of much of what we read and hear is tied to the physical context, particularly the time and place, in which we encounter linguistic expression"* (p. 129).

Austin's (1962) Speech Acts Theory and Grice's (1975) Conversational Implicatures approach are established in the functional dimensions of language, a phenomenon made operational by contextual realities. Hence, they are selected as the theoretical tools for this paper.

### 3. Speech Acts Theory

Austin's (1962) Speech Acts Theory covers the acts performed by a speaker in making an utterance. It is a linguistic act made while speaking. It focuses on the assumption that to say something is to do something. Speech Acts shifts emphasis from the sentence as the ultimate unit of linguistic study to utterances. Reiland (2024) states, *"The central pillar of Austin's theory of speech acts is the three-way distinction between locutionary acts like saying, illocutionary acts like asserting, and perlocutionary acts like persuading"* (Abstract). Barrero (2023) asserts that *"every utterance (locution) has an illocutionary act and a perlocutionary effect"* (para. 8).

The locutionary act is the act of saying something. It is the production of meaningful words with certain references. It has three components. They are the phonetic component, the phatic component, and the rhetic component. The phonetic component involves the phonological features, while the phatic component is concerned with the syntactic features. Also, the rhetic component is concerned with meaning, both sense and denotation. The illocutionary act is a non-linguistic act performed through a linguistic or locutionary act. Austin (1962) characterises the illocutionary act as an act performed in saying something; for instance, ordering, promising, and warning. The illocutionary act is accompanied by a force called the illocutionary force. The illocutionary force is under the control of the speaker. It is identified by the explicit performative. The illocutionary act can be successfully performed if done with the right explicit performative sentence, the right intent and belief, and under the right circumstances. The perlocutionary act is also a non-linguistic act performed as a consequence of performing the locutionary and illocutionary acts. Kirsten (2010) notes that *"The effect illocutionary act has on the hearer is called the perlocutionary act"* (p. 500). It is the act performed as a result of saying. It results in the causing of a change in the mind or behaviour of the listener.

Austin (1962) classifies illocutionary acts into five types. They are Verdictives, Exercitives, Commissives, Behabitives, and Expositives. Oishi (2022) explains that the Verdictives *"are typified by the giving of a verdict"* and the Exercitives *"are the exercising of powers, rights, or influence"* (section, 1). Also, the Commissives *"are typified by promising or otherwise undertaking"*

*they commit you to doing something” the Behabitives “have to do with attitudes and social behaviour” while the Expositives “make plain how our utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation” (section, 1).*

Furthermore, Austin (1962) presents the felicity conditions. He says that an act is said to be felicitous or infelicitous depending on how it meets the felicity conditions. There are four felicity conditions: the sincerity condition, the preparatory condition, the executive condition, and the fulfilment condition. Mambrol (2020) states:

*“In order for the speech act to be successful, it must fulfil some appropriateness conditions, or ‘felicity’ conditions: locution is successful if words and sounds are correctly produced; illocution is appropriate if it meets the conditions for its realisation; perlocution may be effective when it produces consequences desired by the producer.” (para, 13).*

In addition, Austin (1962) emphasises that verbs play a prominent role in Speech Acts. We have the performative verbs and the constative verbs. The uttering of certain words by appropriate people in appropriate circumstances can constitute the performing of certain conventional acts. In Speech Acts, this is done by the use of performative verbs. The performative utterance is doing something by saying something. The performative verb operates in a clause known as the performative clause. Austin indicates that a performative sentence should be described from the angle of conventionality, actuality, and intentionality of uttering a sentence. Oishi (2013) indicates that performativity is an aspect of communication expressed with some verbs. Alvarez (2005) says, *“In performative utterances, some kind of action is being done at the moment of uttering by the person who utters.”*

Black (2006) points out that speech acts refer to the whole communicative situation and that it is concerned with achieving the speaker’s communicative intention in verbal interactions. In his submission, a speech act does not necessarily refer to the spoken words, but it is a reference to the whole situation and the participants and other extra-linguistic features involved.

#### **4. Conversational Implicatures**

Grice (1975) uses the term implicature to indicate that which is implied as opposed to that which is said literally. Mane (2024) states that *“an implicature is something meant, implied, hinted or suggested which is different from ‘what is said’” (Abstract).* Musa and Mohammed (2022) assert that *“the conversational implicatures are the speaker’s intended meaning of the utterance” (Abstract).* Kepa and John (2024) also explain this further as they say, *“What is said has been widely identified with the literal content of the utterance: what is implicated, the implicature, with the non-literal, what is (intentionally) communicated, but not said, by the speaker.”* Implicature is the implicit meaning or the additional meaning conveyed by an utterance. It considers the background of the conversational participants. Amrullah (2015) buttresses this as he states, *“To understand the implicature, the instruments such as speech events, reference, cultural background and daily experience are used” (Abstract).*

Implicatures are related to Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principles. Kepa and John (2024) explain that *"What someone says is determined by the conventional meaning of the sentence uttered and contextual processes of disambiguation and reference fixing; what she implicates is associated with the existence of some rational principles and maxims governing conversation."* According to Nordquist (2019) the cooperative principle *"is the assumption that participants in a conversation normally attempt to be informative, truthful, relevant, and clear"* (para. 1). It is related to Grice's maxims. These are the maxims of Quality, Manner, Quantity, and Relation. The Maxims generate Implicatures when flouted or violated. They are the principles obeyed by those who observe the cooperative principles. These principles encourage effective communication. Harsa (2024) states that *"Implicit meanings, known as implicatures, play a pivotal role in communication, as individuals convey messages beyond literal interpretations."*

This paper adopts a Pragma stylistic analysis of the data for this study. In essence, it considers Pragmatics and Stylistics essential in analysing the command terms and expressions used for Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill. Waheeb (2022) states:

*"Pragmatic stylistics is part of the manifestation of linguistic stylistics. This variety of stylistics shows the meeting point between pragmatics and stylistics, that is, how pragmatic resources, such as performative and speech acts, can be employed to achieve stylistic effects. Scholars have demonstrated that the objective of pragmatics is to show how users of any language can use the sentences to convey messages which are not directly or explicitly shown in the propositional content of the sentences."* (section, 3 – 4)

**Table 1:** Pragmatic Analysis of Command Terms and Expressions for Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill

**Event:** Drills Competition

**Context:** Arms, Silent and Sentry Drills Competition

S/N	Utterance	Contextual Meaning	Communicative Function			Communicative Intention	Implicatures
			Locutionary Act	Illocutionary Act	Perlocutionary Act		
-	-	-					
D1	/s/ Take up arms.	Pick up your rifle.	<b>Command Locution</b> Firm assertive Command.	<b>Instruction</b> Instructs the soldiers to pick up their rifles. Hence, they pick up their rifles.	<b>Obey</b> The soldiers obey the instruction to pick up their rifles. Hence, they do so.	This is to enable the soldiers to commence the arms drill.	Commence the arms drill.
D2	/s/ Shoulder arm.	Take the rifle to your shoulder level, by your right side.	<b>Command Locution</b> Firm assertive command.	<b>Instruction</b> Instructs the soldiers to take their rifles to their shoulder level, by their right side.	<b>Obey</b> The soldiers obey the instruction to take their rifles to their shoulder level, by their right side. So, they do that.	This is to enable the soldiers to march easily.	You are about to perform some acts with your rifles.
D3	/s/ Change arms.	Change the rifle from your right to left.	<b>Command Locution</b> Firm assertive command.	<b>Instruction</b> Instructs the soldiers to change their rifles from their right to left.	<b>Obey</b> The soldiers obey the instruction to change their rifles from their right to left. Hence, they change it.	This is to assess the soldiers' concentration and synchronisation.	Your concentration and synchronisation are assessed.
D4	/s/ Change arms.	Change the rifle from your left to right.	<b>Command Locution</b> Firm assertive command.	<b>Instruction</b> Instructs the troops to change their rifles from their left to right.	<b>Obey</b> The troops obey the instruction to change their rifles from their left to right. Hence, they do so.	This is to assess the soldiers' concentration and synchronisation.	Your concentration and synchronisation are assessed.

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D5	/s/ Trail arms.	Place your rifle perpendicular to your body.	<b>Command Locution</b> Firm assertive command.	<b>Instruction</b> Instructs the soldiers to place their rifles perpendicular to their body.	<b>Obey</b> The soldiers obey the instruction to place their rifles perpendicular to their body.	This is to enable the soldiers to carry their rifles for a long time.	Hold your rifles for a long period.
D6	/s/ For inspection; port arms.	Throw your rifle up, hold the guard and the rifle grip, then cock the rifle for inspection. After the inspection release the working part of the rifle.	<b>Command Locution</b> Firm assertive command.	<b>Instruction</b> Instructs the soldiers to throw their rifles up, hold the guard and the rifles' grip, then cock the rifles for inspection. After the inspection, they should release the working part of the rifle.	<b>Obey</b> The soldiers obey the instruction to throw their rifles up, hold the guard and the rifles' grip, and then cock the rifles for inspection. After the inspection, they release the working part of the rifle.	This is to enable the guard commander or the reviewing officer to inspect the rifle.	The reviewing officer will inspect your arms now.

The command terms and expressions used for the Arms, Silent and Sentry Drills display a peculiar feature that is not found in other types of parade. Just like the title implies, the command terms and expressions used in this parade are silent. They are implied. In other words, they are not uttered by the Parade Commander; instead, the sibilant sound /s/ represents the terms and expressions. The expressions used are in sequence. The sibilant sound uttered by the Parade Commander implies that the next act should be performed. So, each time he utters /s/ he means 'the next act,' unlike in other usages where /s/ literally means a letter in the alphabet. In other words, the sequential nature of the terms and expressions gives meaning to the Commander's utterance. This indicates that the Parade Commander implies the terms and expressions, and they differ from what he literally says.

The command terms and expressions implied, like the others used for the other parades, reflect the three acts described by Austin (1962) in making an utterance. These acts are the locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. He performs command locution by uttering the sibilant sound, /s/, at each point where the soldiers need to perform another act. This utterance of the commander is also recognised as being firm and assertive. Considering his position, his utterances (locution) are authoritative instructions (illocutionary act) that the troops obey (perlocutionary act) instantly.

The expressions feature some performative verbs. These include 'take,' (D1) and 'change,' (D3, D4). These performative verbs, though implied, spell out the acts the troops perform.

Moreover, the expressions represented by the sibilant sound, /s/, also reveal specific contextual meanings that arise from the context of use. This can be seen in 'Change arms!' (D3) and 'Change arms!' (D4).' The expression 'Change arms!' (D3, D4) have different meanings, even though they are the same. While the first means, 'Change the rifle from your right to left,' (D3), the second means, 'Change the rifle from your left to right,' (D4). The meaning relies on the sequence. These differ from the meaning of this expression beyond this context, which can be, 'Change the arms.'

In addition, there are conversational implicatures that arise from the implied expressions. When the commander utters /s/ the troops attach it to a particular expression, which also generates implicatures. For instance, the expressions, 'Change arms!' (D3) and 'Change arms!' (D4) generate the implicatures, 'Your concentration and synchronisation are assessed.' Also, the expression, 'Shoulder arm' (D2) generates the implicatures, 'You are about to perform some acts with your rifles.'

Additionally, there is a pragmatic relationship between the expressions, 'Shoulder arm' (D2), 'Change arms' (D3) 'Change arms' (D4) 'Trail arms' (D5) and 'For inspection; port arms.' (D6). These expressions indicate the different positions where the rifles should be placed by the troops. The specific contextual meanings of these expressions are 'Take the rifle to your shoulder level, by your right side' (D2) 'Change the rifle from your right to left,' (D3) 'Change the rifle from your left to right,' (D4) 'Place your rifle perpendicular to your body' ((D5) and 'Throw your rifle up, hold the guard and the rifle grip, then cock the rifle for inspection (D6). After the inspection, release the working part of the rifle.' These reflect the pragmatic positions required to perform further acts by the soldiers.

It is therefore noteworthy to mention that the features of this drill indicate that there is a shared background and shared meaning among the participants of this drill. One can say that there is a display of professionalism in this context. The troops understand the sibilant sound, each time the Parade Commander utters them. So, they perform the required acts. They understand the communicative intentions of the Commander and the communicative functions of the terms and expressions, and strive to achieve all. Hence, we can say that there is cooperation between the troops and the Commander. In other words, they obey Gricean Cooperative Principles (Grice, 1975). Though the sibilant sound, /s/, uttered to command this parade may be seen as scanty information, it is considered adequate and complete information in the context of this parade. The Commander makes the sound at the right time, and adequately. Also, the right acts are performed by the soldiers. Therefore, the commander's utterance is considered felicitous as the locution is produced correctly, the illocution meets the required conditions for its realisation, and the perlocution is effective, having produced the desired



results. Consequently, one can say that the participants obey Grice's (1975) conversational maxims and Austin's (1962) felicity conditions in this context.

**Table 2(A): Stylistic Analysis of Command Terms and Expressions for Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill**

**Event:** Drills Competition

**Context:** Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill Competition

S/N	Expression	Meaning	Stylistic Features	Stylistic Implication	Remarks
D1	/s/ Take up arms.	Pick up your rifle.	<b>Imperative</b> Exclamatory.  <b>Diction/Lexical Choice</b> Military jargon.  <b>Grammatical Status</b> Simple sentence.  <b>Tone/Rendition</b> Commanding. Imposing.  <b>Elliptical Structures</b> Ellipted subject.  <b>Repetition</b> Arm is repeated (D1, D6).	You are about to commence the arms drill.	Instructing. Ordering
D2	/s/ Shoulder arm.	Take the rifle to your shoulder level, by your right side.	<b>Imperative</b> Exclamatory.  <b>Diction/Lexical Choice</b>	Be ready to perform some acts with your rifles.	Instructing. Ordering.

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			<p>Military jargon.</p> <p><b>Grammatical Status</b> Simple sentence.</p> <p><b>Tone/Rendition</b> Commanding. Imposing.</p> <p><b>Elliptical Structures</b> Ellipted subject.</p> <p><b>Repetition</b> Arm is repeated (D1 – D6).</p>		
D3	/s/ Change arms.	Change the rifle from your right to left.	<p><b>Imperative</b> Exclamatory.</p> <p><b>Diction/Lexical Choice</b> Military jargon.</p> <p><b>Grammatical Status</b> Simple sentence.</p> <p><b>Tone/Rendition</b> Commanding. Imposing.</p> <p><b>Elliptical Structures</b> Ellipted subject.</p> <p><b>Repetition</b></p>	Synchronise your acts.	Instructing. Ordering.

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			Arm is repeated (D1 – D6).		
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**Table 2 (B):** Stylistic Analysis of Command Terms and Expressions for Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill

**Event:** Drills Competition

**Context:** Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill Competition

S/N	Expression	Meaning	Stylistic Features	Stylistic Implication	Remarks
D4	/s/ Change arms.	Change the rifle from your left to right.	<b>Imperative</b> Exclamatory.  <b>Diction/Lexical Choice</b> Military jargon.  <b>Grammatical Status</b> Simple sentence.  <b>Tone/Rendition</b> Commanding. Imposing.  <b>Elliptical Structures</b> Ellipted subject.  <b>Repetition</b> Arm is repeated (D1 – D6).	Synchronise your acts.	Instructing. Ordering.
D5	/s/ Trail arms.	Place your rifle perpendicular to your body.	<b>Imperative</b> Exclamatory.	You will hold your rifles for a long time.	Instructing. Ordering.

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			<p><b>Diction/Lexical Choice</b> Military jargon.</p> <p><b>Grammatical Status</b> Simple sentence.</p> <p><b>Tone/Rendition</b> Commanding Imposing.</p> <p><b>Elliptical Structures</b> Ellipted subject.</p> <p><b>Repetition</b> Arm is repeated (D1 – D6).</p>		
D6	/s/ For inspection; port arms.	Throw your rifle up, hold the guard and the rifle grip, then cock the rifle for inspection. After the inspection release the working part of the rifle.	<p><b>Imperative</b> Exclamatory.</p> <p><b>Diction/Lexical Choice</b> Military jargon.</p> <p><b>Grammatical Status</b> Compound sentence.</p>	You will be inspected.	Instructing. Ordering.

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			<b>Tone/Rendition</b> Commanding. Imposing.  <b>Elliptical Structures</b> Ellipted subject.  <b>Repetition</b> Arm is repeated (D1- D6).		
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## 5. Discussion

The command terms and expressions in Table 2 (A and B) were used for the drills competition at Bonny Cantonment, 81 Division Nigerian Army, on the 6th of November 2013. The terms and expressions used in this context are dissimilar to other terms and expressions used for the other types of parades or drills in the Nigerian Army because they are not uttered. The stylistic implication of the term 'Silent,' in the title emphasises that these terms and expressions are not uttered. These command terms and expressions exhibit distinctive stylistic features as they are not uttered by the Parade Commander. He uses the sibilant sound, /s/, to command the drill. In other words, the sibilant sound represents all the command terms expressions. For instance, the following expressions are represented by the sibilant sound, /s/, 'Shoulder arm!' (D2) 'Trail arms!' (D5) 'For inspection; port arms!' (D6). One can say, therefore, that this style reflects the use of sound symbolism by the Commander to command this drill. This is a peculiar style, and it is context specific as it is only used for this drill.

The expressions are organised in a sequential order. The Parade Commander and the soldiers in the drill competition understand this sequence that the meaning relies on. So, the Commander only makes the sibilant sound, /s/ to indicate the next action which should be performed. The following expressions, for instance, are presented in a sequence, 'Take up arms!' (D1) 'Shoulder arm!' (D2) 'Change arms!' (D3) 'Change arms!' (D4) 'Trail arms!' (D5). In uttering the sibilant sound, /s/, the Commander indicates that the soldiers should perform the following acts sequentially, 'Pick up your rifle' (D1) Take the rifle to your shoulder level, by your right side (D2) 'Change the rifle from your right to left,' (D3) 'Change the rifle from your left to right,' (D4) and 'Place your rifle perpendicular to your body,' (D5). It is observed that though the expression, 'Change arms!' (D3, D4) is used twice, the Commander and the soldiers understand that different acts should be performed. Hence, in the first, 'Change arms!' (D3) they perform the act, 'Change the rifle from your right to left,' while in the second one, they perform another act, 'Change the rifle from your left to right.' In other words, just by mentioning the sibilant sound, /s/, after an act, the soldiers know the next act to perform. This is a prominent style of this drill which is not seen in other types of parades.

Besides these, the command of this drill evidently exhibits the use of repetition. Firstly, the sibilant sound, /s/, is repeated from the beginning to the end. In other words, without this repetition, the Commander cannot command this drill. Secondly, it is observed that the expressions represented by the sibilant sound, /s/, also manifest the use of repetition. For instance, the term 'arms,' is repeated (D1, D3, D4, D5, D6). This is used in this context to reinforce information.

In addition, the sibilant sound, /s/, used to command this drill is simple. Likewise, most of the terms and expressions represented by the sibilant sound reflect the simple sentence structure. Some examples are, 'Take up arms!' (D1) 'Change arms!' (D3) and 'Trail arms!' (D5). This allows easy comprehension.

Moreso, the represented terms and expressions reflect the use of military jargon. This can be seen in the following expressions, 'Shoulder arm!' (D2) and 'For inspection; port arms!' (D6).

These are peculiar usages of the Nigerian Army. The meaning of these expressions as used in this context are restricted to the formal language use of the Nigerian Army for parades or drills.

The stylistic implications of the command terms and expressions represented with the sibilant sound, /s/, mirror the Nigerian Army context of parade or drills. Some examples are, 'Take up arms!' (D1) 'Shoulder arms!' (D2) and 'Change arms!' (D3 and D4) with the stylistic implications, 'You are about to commence the arms drill,' (D1) 'Be ready to perform some acts with your rifles,' (D2) and 'Synchronise your acts,' (D3 and D4). These stylistic implications reflect the meaning potentials obtainable in the context of the Nigerian Army parade or drills. In other words, the expressions may have other stylistic implications beyond this context.

### 5.1 Findings

- 1) The pragmatic inclinations of the command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill comprise, implied performatives represented by the sibilant sound /s/, conversational implicatures that arise from the implied terms and expressions, pragmatic relationships of the terms and expressions, and specific contextual meanings that arise from the context of use.
- 2) The performative importance of the command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill is that the terms and expressions are used to exercise power over the troops, while the communicative essence is to achieve immediate actions, a perfect drill, and other Nigerian Army objectives.
- 3) The stylistic features of the command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill reflect the use of military jargon, sound symbolism and sequential command terms and expressions for the command of this drill.
- 4) The stylistic implication is that the command terms and expressions used for the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill is that the terms and expressions rely on their sequential nature for meaning and orderliness.

### 6. Conclusion

The study concludes that the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill command terms and expressions are used to command the troops to achieve a perfect drill. The terms and expressions are contextual and meaningful, though implied. Their usage reveals a peculiar style of the Army, which uses sound symbolism and sequence to achieve meaning and orderliness in a drill. While the sibilant sound, /s/, is used to command the drill, the meaning of the terms and expressions is derived from their formal sequence. Hence, the use of the Nigerian Army Arms, Silent and Sentry Drill command terms and expressions aids orderliness and reveals the regimental nature of the military.

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I declare that I have no conflicts of interest related to this study. I have no personal or financial relationships with other people that could inappropriately influence this paper.

### **About the Author**

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