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# Understanding the Utterances of NDA Cadets: A Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis

Abstract: *The official language of the Indian Armed Forces is English. Otherwise Hindi connects the officers and personnel from the different parts of India. As the cultural ethos of (wo) men-in-uniform is quite different from that of the civilian community, the dialect of their language repertoire also varies. The language of the Armed Forces, which is an abounding site for a sociolinguistic investigation, has received little attention from linguistic studies. In the present paper, I have tried to analyze the 'utterances' of the cadets of National Defence Academy [NDA], Khadakwasla, Pune (India). Based on the data collected during April 2004 to Oct 2007, the study explores the nature of cadets' use of language on the campus. The cadets' language, popularly known as the 'NDA lingo' at the Academy, exhibits a typical linguistic behavior of the Armed Forces. The register of the NDA lingo– marked by the economy of language, deviation from the general conversational practices, code-mixing, word blending and clipping, etc.,– reflects the cadets' way of life: their regimental lives, the relationship between senior and junior cadets, their socio-psychological make-up, play with language, management of time, etc. Largely derived from English and partly from Hindi, the NDA lingo is slightly unintelligible to outsiders. The First Term cadets take almost four to five months to acquire a pragmatic competence of the lingo.*

Key words: *cadets, NDA lingo, Armed Forces register, semantics, code-mixing.*

**1.** Any human activity across time and space involves a system of communication. Anthropologists and sociolinguists have been studying the communication patterns of different human groups, cultures, organizations, professions, workplaces, so on and so forth across the world. The works of Hymes (1964), Fishman (1971), Gumperz and Dell Hymes (1972), Labov (1972), Tanner (1990), Bolton (1992) and the likes are some of the classic examples of sociolinguistic investigations of language use and communication of different settings, and are valuable contributions to the ethnography of communication. They provide themselves as models for the analysis of linguistic and visual communication. Though a lot of work has been done to investigate the language of different professions and organizations, the communication system and the language use in the Armed Forces has received little attention, especially in India.

The Indian Armed Forces, one of the biggest and strongest in the present world order, offers a solid data for a sociolinguistic research. The cultural ethos of the Armed Forces,

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often defined in dialectical relation to the civil life, is marked by a sense of 'camaraderie' and 'discipline'. Operating through the hierarchical and regimental structures, the Forces function in stressful situations in order to accomplish certain tasks at any cost, even at the risk of their life. Here getting things done is far more important than anything else. Everything works through a mechanism of particular order. Hence, the hierarchical way of 'passing orders' and the 'regimental attitude' demand a different (body) language and even different 'intonation'. The language of the Armed Forces– Army, Navy and Air Force, far from the civilian world– has evolved its own register over a period of time. It is the language of 'command' and 'order', not the language of 'politeness' (Leech, 1983). Any attempt to study either the communication patterns or the language of the Indian Armed Forces would be an ambitious task, and it demands a larger project. However, as a beginning, a humble effort is made in the present paper to investigate a variety of language used by the cadets at the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Pune, India. The Academy, popularly known as NDA in India, is a premier institute of the Indian Armed Forces. It may be taken as a representative case study of the language use in the Indian Armed Forces.

The NDA, the cradle of military leadership, is a feeder institute. It trains young boys for the Indian Armed Forces— Army, Navy and Air Force. Sprawled across more than 8000 acres of area, the NDA, far from the madding city (Pune), is a place of its own. The Academy can be studied as a Total Institution as it exhibits most of the characteristic features Erving Goffman discusses while theorizing the total institutions. Like any other total institution, the NDA is a place "where a large number of like-situated individuals (cadets), cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed life, formally administered round of life" (Goffman, xiii). Further, more than other characteristic features of Total Institution, the institutional lingo the total institutions develop (Goffman, 53) is important for our purpose here. As in any other total institution, the cadets, as 'inmates' at the Academy, have developed over a period of time their own lingo that is typical of the language of the Armed Forces. It is popularly known as the NDA lingo. The lingo is a set of colloquial used commonly by the NDA cadets; they might continue to use it even when they go to their respective finishing academies and during their service as officers. Having its own identity, the NDA lingo seems to be quite unintelligible to the outsiders. An attempt has been made in the following pages to analyze the lingo from a semantic and pragmatic point of view. However, before we proceed further, it is worthwhile to have a cursory view of the training at the NDA, which serves as a backdrop for the cadets' lingo.

## 2. NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY: A BACKGROUND

The present NDA, the tri-services institute, was started as the Joint Services Wing at Clement Town, Dehra Dun in January 1949. Later in 1954, it was shifted to Khadakwasla, Pune, with its new identity as the National Defence Academy (Raina, 1997). Thus, the twice-born military establishment, perhaps the first of its kind in the world, trains the cadets who join after their +2 through all India selection procedure conducted by the **U**nion **P**ublic **S**ervice **C**ommission and the **S**ervice **S**election **B**oard, for the Indian Armed Forces. The



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product of the NDA, popularly known as 'Ex-NDA', is a sort of 'brand' name in the Indian Armed Forces.

The organizational structure of the Academy is that of a typical military establishment. It is not so useful to give an account of all units of the establishment at the NDA, except two particular branches required for our purpose here: they are Training Branch and Education Branch. The Training Branch coordinates the physical and the professional training of the cadets under the ATT (Army Training Team), NTT (Naval Training Team), AFTT (Air Force Training Team) and PTT (Physical Training Team). The physical training and academic training go hand in hand. The academic instruction is imparted to the cadets in the Education Branch for their graduate courses such as B.A., B.Sc. and B.Sc. (Computer Science). There are about twelve departments which include studies in Basic Sciences, Basic Engineering, Social Sciences and Languages (see Gundur 2010). Each department, normally headed by a Professor who is a civilian academic, is staffed by both civilian academic officers and service officers. The Service Officers in Education Branch are by and large from the Education Corps. Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, approves the syllabus designed from time to time by the respective departments at the Academy and awards degrees to the cadets passing out at the end of each term.

The aim of training proposed at the Academy since the beginning has been to provide each cadet with education of a university standard, high standard of physical fitness and, above all, good citizenship qualities (Raina: 07).What is important to notice here is that the cadets undergo a rigorous and tough training curriculum. Their daily schedule is so hectic and tight that they are left physically exhausted and mentally hassled at the end of the day. The biggest challenge for the cadets is the 'time management', which determines their stay at the Academy. The regimentation of the environment puts the junior cadets under the mental strain. It is generally said at the Academy that 'coming to NDA is a culture shock'. First Term cadets take almost four to five months to understand the ways of the Academy; to cope with the demands made upon them by the training curriculum. Once they join, they are not allowed to visit their homes till they complete six months. The cadets are housed in 15 squadrons (Sqns), each named as 'A' for Alpha Sqn, 'B' for Bravo Sqn, 'C' for Charlie Sqn, and so on till 'O' for Oscar Sqn, where they are baptized to militarism through a hierarchy– the senior cadets controlling the juniors. The cadets interact with each other using their lingo in their respective squadrons, on the physical training field, in the corridors of their academic classrooms, while dinning in the mess and so on. Their lingo operates at various levels in their power relationship. The following sections of this article present the transcription, classification and semantic-pragmatic explanation of the NDA lingo.

## 3. THE PRESENT RESEARCH

### 3.1. HYPOTHESIS:

The present study proposes that the speech patterns of the Armed Forces as Total Institutions vary from the general speech patterns. As a case in point the NDA lingo,



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markedly different from the general Indian English speech pattern, exhibits a typical linguistic behaviour of the Indian military speech community. The register of the NDA lingo, having its own distinguishing phonetics, syntax, semantics and pragmatics, reflects the cadets' way of life; their regimental lives, the relationship between senior and junior cadets, their socio-psychological make-up, play with language, management of time, etc. The lingo is not only a means of communication but also an expression of their creativity.

## 3.2. METHODOLOGY:

The data was collected from the ethnographic field work; my direct interaction with the cadets in the classrooms and also from the oral interviews with them during my stay at the Academy when I was working as Assistant Professor in the Department of English, during April 2004 to October 2007. My tenure as a 'Cadet-Counsellor' helped me to gain access to the data and generate some insights in this respect. Though there is a phonetic variation in the lingo, what and how the speech community of cadets mean when they use their utterances is quite interesting. Hence, the analysis of the NDA lingo as a means of communication is confined to a semantic and pragmatic interpretation. The items (utterances) classified for the presentation here sometimes overlap. The corpus of the data presented in the paper is not complete in itself; all the utterances are not included here as it is still an on going research, and it does not include the final research findings also. However, to the best of my knowledge, no work has been done on the cadets' lingo so far. The present study seems to be the first of its kind.

## 3.3. TRANSCRIPTION OF THE LINGO: SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

The NDA lingo is predominantly a mixture of English words and Indian words. The utterances in English are presented in their conventional orthography while the non-English words, mostly Hindi words, are indicated in italics and are transcribed. The system adopted for the transcription is slightly modified from the International Phonetic Alphabet symbols. Minimal changes are made in the notations so that it is accessible to most readers.

## 3.4. RESULTS

### 3.4.1. NDA as a microcosm of India.

Cadets from all over India, along with foreign cadets from a few friendly countries such as Bhutan, are trained at the Academy. Perhaps no other institute has such a pan Indian



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representation as the NDA has. (It can be an ideal place to research Indian English). This heterogeneity necessitates the cadet community, at times, to address each other with their respective state-identities. There are a few utterances related to some state-identities. They come from the following nomenclature:

**Tant** */tāŋt* / Maharashtrian.

**Tambi** /tambi/ Tamilian. In Tamil it means younger brother.

**Gulti** **/***gulṭi*/ Teluguwala (Andrite; cadet from Andra Pradesh). The spellings of the word *ṭelagu* are reversed with a slight modification.

**Mallu** **/***mallu*/ Keralite (from Kerala State). It is a short form of Malayali; Malayalam is the state language of Kerala. This utterance is not just typical of the NDA lingo. Generally, it can be found in other settings also in India.

**Chinki** /*ciŋki*/ Cadets from Northeast States such as Manipur, Assam, Nagaland, etc, are called so. The racial features of the Northeast cadets are quite different especially, their eyes; Chinki refers to their small eyes.

**Gujju** /*gujju*/ Gujarati. Gujarati is the state language of Gujarat. It is situated in the western part of the country.

**Nawab** **/**nawāb**/** Lucknowi. It refers to the cadets from Lucknow. Unlike other nomenclatures, this does not refer to the *state-identity* but to the *place-identity*. Lucknow is a place historically known for Nawabas and their *tehajeeb* (tradition). The cadets from Lucknow speak a Hindi which is considered superior to other dialects of Hindi.

**Bango**/*bango*/ refers to the cadets from West Bengal. Bengali is the state language of West Bengal.

Only some states have their representativeness in this type of nomenclature. For example, the cadets from Karnataka, a South Indian state, have no such nomenclature. It depends upon the ratio of the cadets from their respective states and their historical role at the Academy.

### 3.4.2. ACRONYMS and INITIALISMS:

Many acronyms are part of the NDA lingo. The use of acronyms is a common characteristic feature of the language of the Armed Forces. But at the NDA it is quite different in its nature. It is not a replication of the language of the Indian Armed Forces, but is typical of the NDA lingo.

**ML** Moral Lecture

**JLT** Just Like That



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**LIC** Locked in Cabin. The cabin is a separate room for each cadet to stay in the squadron. 'Locked in cabin' is a pun on ***L**ife **I**nsurance **C**orporation*.

**DLTGH** Days Left To Go Home. It is a very popular utterance among the cadets. The cadets count down the days for their vacation to go home. Ask any cadet, "How many DLTGH"? He will tell the exact number. An instructor (teacher) at the Academy, as a counterpart of the DLTGH, has coined the acronym **DLTGC** "Days Left To Get Rid of Cadets".

**DWL** Disgusted With Life

**BMW** Bare Minimum Work

**FL** Foreign Language/Fake Liberty

**JAT** **J**ust **A**void **T**hem. It refers to anybody they want to avoid. When a cadet says referring to another cadet, "He is a JAT", it means he is a person to be avoided. It also connotes to the cadets from the *Jāt* community. Along with Sikhs (popularly known as *Khālsas*), the *Jāts* are made fun of (with a positive spirit) as block heads. When a cadet says, "He is a JAT", it means many things– he is a person to be avoided; he belongs to the *Jāt* community; nothing goes into his head; he is a strong man who makes a good warrior, etc. The *Jāts* are known for fighting. The meaning depends on the tone and the context.

**NRB** Non-Resident Bihari. It refers to the cadets born to Bihari parents but brought up elsewhere in India. It is a pun on NRI (Non-Resident Indians).

**ACC** **A**cademy **C**adet **C**aptain. This is the highest rank among the cadet appointments. ACC is the top among the hierarchical chain of the cadet leadership. Funnily, in the NDA lingo it is modified as Academy **Category** Captain. Category here refers to the one who is medically unfit. A cadet who frequently becomes medically unfit is called ACC in the corpus of the cadets' lingo.

**IAF** **I**nternal **A**ssessment **F**ailures, otherwise it is normally Indian Air Force.

**PONGO** Permanently On Ground (Army). The Navy and Air Force cadets consider themselves as having the privilege of serving on water and in air. The army cadets have to operate from the ground in their profession. Hence, they are called 'pongos'.

What we find in these acronyms and initialisms is a play with the language, analogical creation and pun. The cadets derive pleasure from such language play. *LIC* being the acronym of *Life Insurance Corporation* is used to denote the cadets, some times, being ***L**ocked **I**n their **C**abin* for some funny reasons. When Cadet X says, "Cadet Y is LIC", it means that Cadet Y is locked in the cabin in his squadron. Likewise, *NRB* (Non-Resident Bihari) is played with *NRI* (Non-Resident Indians).



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### 3.4.3. CODE-MIXING:

Code-mixing is quite common in the NDA lingo, especially the mixing of Hindi and English words and phrases. It is natural because the percentage of the cadets coming from the Hindi speaking belt is more than that of the percentage of the cadets hailing from the non-Hindi speaking parts of India; 27% from Uttar Pradesh, 17% from both Uttaranchal and Delhi (*Indian Express* Nov 21, 2006). Following are some examples of the code-mixing:

- "Don't *māro fāta*": refers to making tall claims, or telling lies. It means 'don't make tall claims'.
- "Eat fast eat *ārām se*": senior cadets tell this to juniors in the cadets' mess. Here they only mean fast, not *ārām se* (slowly). They must make juniors eat fast because of the paucity of time.
- "*d*$^{h}$ *āb* slap": slap emphasized. *d*$^{h}$ *āb* in Hindi means 'forcefully'.
- "You will *b*$^{h}$ *āgo* like anything": *b*$^{h}$ *āgo* means run. For e.g., Senior Cdt says to Junior Cdt: "You do this thing otherwise you will *b*$^{h}$ *āgo* (run) like anything". It means I will take you to the task (punishment) in such a way that you will run away from here.
- "I will *bajāvo* you all": means "I will punish you all". *bajāvo* in Hindi means beat; for example, 'beating the drum'.
- "Don't *māro* smart act": It means 'don't be too smart'. *māro* in Hindi means beat.
- "*joś* type": enthusiastic.
- "Don't take *paŋgā*": means "Don't take chance/risk". *paŋgā* in Hindi means unnecessary involvement, taking risk; It is quite common in the Forces.

### 3.4.4. SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC DEVIATIONS:

The meanings of some utterances deviate from the normal usage and in certain cases the intention of the speaker is not clear to the outsiders and newcomers. Following are a few examples;

- Cdt X – "My bike is flat." It means the bicycle is punctured. The cadets are allowed to use only bicycles to move from one place to another on the campus.
- Cdt X: "First termer, getting ideas?" It is a senior cadet's typical way of telling the First Term cadet, when he does something unexpected or he comes forward with his own ideas. There is a common notion in the Forces that thinking is not a privilege of the juniors. Some believe that a thinking chap makes a poor soldier.



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- The word 'liberty' has a different connotation here. It means permission to go outside the campus: For e.g., Cdt X: "We have got liberty today." It means on a particular day, especially Sunday, they are allowed to go out of the campus. Sometimes, they take a proper permission to go on liberty. Some times they fake it and go out. That is known as FL (Fake Liberty). This is an analogical creation based on Foreign Language; the cadets study one of the foreign languages– French, German, Russian, Sinhala, etc., in the department of Foreign Language.

- "Mid-term-mood". This is a phrase the cadets use to denote the relaxation time. Each term at the NDA consists of approximately six months. Each term will have a short break of about three or four days. This is called Mid-term Break. During this break cadets hardly have any rigid training. There will be no punishments, and they relax. Apart from the Midterm Break, some times, when the training is on there will be no punishments to the juniors in the squadrons, if their performance is good in competitions such as sports, drill, cross-country run, etc. During such times also they get relaxation and certain privileges. The mood of their respective squadrons is as free and relaxed as it is usually during the Mid-term Break. Such times are described as 'Mid-term-mood'. Mostly, the phrase refers to the 'less-regimental time' when they do not have punishments.

- A senior cadet to a junior: "Try shaking?" When the junior cadet stands in *sāvad* $^{h}$*ān* (standing posture) before the senior cadet, the junior is not suppose to 'shake' his body. 'Try shaking' is a warning to the junior; if he shakes his posture, he will be punished severely.

- Cdt X: "Cleared bathroom?" It means, has the listener taken bath?

- "Sergeant Type." It means anything that is done for the sake of doing. It is based on the Sergeant appointment at the Academy. A few cadets of the IV term are appointed as Sergeants. It is an appointment with little power to control the juniors. Hence, it is considered an appointment for the sake of an appointment. If a cadet describes any event or person as the sergeant type, it means the event or the person is of no consequence.

- 'Sort out' – to punish somebody.

- 'An out-standing player' – an extra player in any game; a player who is outside the game.

- When a senior cadet says simply, "heights", it means, "You (especially a junior) are crossing the limits."

### 3.4.5. METAPHORS AND UTTERANCES/WORDS/PHRASES FORMED THROUGH BLENDING:

The NDA lingo is marked by new words and new expressions based on the existing vocabulary; the cadets form words and phrases through **blending** (combining two or more words), **derivation** (prefixes and suffixes) and **metaphors**, which make meaning in their own communicative context.



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**Cream Rolling** It is a type of punishment, which includes forward and backward rolling. The shape of the action involved here resembles that of the cream.

**put-in-type** It refers to a hard working cadet who puts in his efforts.

**diprove** It is used to mean the opposite of 'improve'. The performance of some cadets when they join the Academy will be up to the mark but later as they go to the next terms it goes down. This is called *diprovement*.

**Super-non-techi** It refers to a cadet who studies Hindi in place of any other foreign language, like French or German. It is the reversal of 'Super Techie'. The cadets who study in B. Sc. B. Sc (Computer Science) and B.A. are respectively called 'Techies', 'Super-techies' and 'Non-techies'. 'Super-techies' are considered superior to 'Techies' (B.SC) and 'Non-techies' (B.A.). Here 'Super-non-techi' is used ironically to refer to the cadets who learn Hindi.

*pāpā* **squadron** It refers to the Military Hospital (M H). A squadron, where they stay, is a hard zone for them; a place where the junior cadets are punished by the seniors. This usually does not happen in MH (Military Hospital). *pāpā* in Indian languages means father. MH is as homely as their fathers' place. They stay at the military hospital when they are physically injured or when they fall sick.

**Habibullah** */habibulāh/* It is a proper name of the auditorium at the NDA named after its first commandant Maj. Gen. Habibullah. The following conversation explains how cadets use this word:

Cdt X (senior): Habibullaha today? What time?

Cdt Y(junior): Yes Sir, 1830 hrs.

It means Cdt X is asking, "is there a function at Habibullah hall today?"

**bike up** It is a type of punishment where the cadet under punishment has to lift his bicycle and stand until he is asked, "bike down". 'Bike' here stands for the bicycle.

**Ashoka clearance** There is a pillar called 'Ashoka' at the Academy where thecadets assemble for their punishments.

**launch pad** If a single cadet makes a mistake, at times, the whole group he is associated with gets punished. The cadet who is responsible for that punishment is called a launching pad.

## 3.4.6. UTTERANCES FORMED THROUGH CLIPPING:

These are often single utterances characterised by a slight phonetic and morphemic clipping. They can be considered as phonetic and morphemic abbreviations.

**Goali** Goalkeeper.



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**Squadi** Squadron Commander, an officer of Major Rank who is in-charge of a squadron.

**Batti** Battalion Commander. There are four battalions at the Academy and each battalion consists of four squadrons, except the last one (No 4 Battalion) which has three squadrons. The officer of Colonel Rank will be in-charge of each battalion.

**Comm** Commandant, the head of the Academy, is of Lt. General Rank.

**Undi** It refers to a junior cadet who is **under** the supervision of a senior cadet, especially the First Term cadet who studies **under** the guidance of the Third Term cadet. The first termer is called 'undi'.

**Navlā** a naval cadet.

**Assit Adju** Assistant Adjutant. Adjutant is an officer in-charge of discipline at the Academy and has the right to give punishments. A junior officer who assists him is called Assistant Adjutant.

**shago**/shamer It refers to one who shams.

**Ulti** It is a modification of the word 'ultimate'. It is used to describe anything that is ultimate just as 'senti' for being sentimental.

## 3.5. DISCUSSION:

The aim of the paper was to undertake a semantic and pragmatic analysis of the cadets' use of language at the National Defence Academy (India). Unlike other campuses of universities or colleges in India, the NDA is a place of its own– military establishment having different aims and objectives, a different way of functioning and a different ethos. The cadets from different parts of India have created a sort of linguistic repertoire of their own to suit their communicative needs, which is popularly known at the Academy as the 'NDA lingo'. Largely derived from English and partly from Hindi, the lingo is incomprehensible to outsiders. The First term cadets take almost six months to understand its nuances. But the unintelligibility of the NDA lingo may not be as much as The Royal Marine Commando slang of the United Kingdom is. As Nigel Foster in his *The Making of Royal Marine Commando* (1993) records, "Part of the mystique of the Royal Marines possibly derives from the fact that they speak a different language. It sounds like English; it even sounds frustratingly familiar– but is, nonetheless, totally incomprehensible to ninety per cent of the population in Britain, and only adds to the confusion when Royal goes abroad" (202). However, an Ex-NDA does not face this problem in communication when he goes outside.

Language gives an identity to its user. The NDA lingo is a distinctive identity of the products of the NDA. In the Indian Armed Forces one can easily make out an Ex-NDA officer on the basis of his (body) language. His language, the language of command, is often telegraphic, and affects his communication even when he proposes to a girl.



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As Muriel Saville-Troike in her *The Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction* (1989) writes that the communicative strategies in a group "are most commonly used to establish, maintain, or manipulate relationships" (50), the utterances discussed above, which take place between senior cadets and junior cadets, reflect the role-relationships among the cadets– the way seniors handle juniors. The system works in such a way that it is the responsibility of the seniors to control the juniors, discipline them and initiate them into the idiom of regimentation. Hence, many utterances are related to punishment.

Michel Foucault (1977) in his *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison*, shows how the bodies and minds were subjected to strict regimes, and rendered docile so that there be discipline and order. From this point of view the Armed Forces, as Foucault mentions, is the best example, along with educational institutes and prisons. The disciplining of the cadets' body at the NDA is ensured through various tactics, and the language, the NDA lingo, acts as a powerful medium; it controls the behavior of the junior cadets.

Language serves a particular purpose. The purpose here is to communicate urgently. Hence, there is a lot of reductionism in their language. The lingo is characterized by linguistic blending, clipping and abbreviations; the cadets often use telegraphic sentences. In a pyramidal structure of interaction like the one in the Armed Forces, the language becomes cryptic. More than that the cadets are tired and run short of time. The biggest challenge for them is to manage time. An editorial of the NDA journal reads thus, "At NDA, cadets have a very tight schedule, broken down to the minute. Leisure is an occasional episode called liberty" (Missal, 2006). This demands 'short-cut' even in their use of language. Further, the system does not believe in verbosity. Each query of a senior expects exact and brief information, not an elaboration. What is important to notice about the lingo is that it is not only a means of their urgency of communication but also an expression of their creativity. They play with their language by using puns and metaphors, and through analogical creation.

Each profession has its own 'pragmatics' of communication. For e.g., the pragmatics of advertisement is 'persuasiveness' (see, Leech, 1966); it is the language of selling things. Similarly, the core of the NDA lingo is 'command' and 'control'. Its vocabulary is different, its phonetics and intonation, aimed at creating a sort of fear in the juniors in order to control them, are different. Hence, its pragmatics is all about "keeping everything under control".

## 4. CONCLUSION

In fine, the register of the NDA lingo, marked by the economy of language, code-mixing, and deviations from the normal phonetic, morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic usages, and more importantly, the play with words, reflects the cadets' way of life– hierarchy, regimentation, time management, urgency of communication, creativity, pleasure and so on. All said and done, the question is, why has the cadet community created such a lingo? The answer to this question is as difficult as answering the question– why have humans invented language? Yet we can say that 'lingo' or language is a result of human necessity and human creativity. Hence, the pragmatics of "pragmatics" is that what



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counts is not only the 'use of language in context' but also human behaviour, beliefs, space and time.

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not purport to reflect any official opinion or position of the National Defence Academy, India.

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