

JOURNAL OF AFRICAN ARTS & CULTURE

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<https://jaac-sca.org>

ISSN 2637-3610

Volume 3 Issue 1

March 31, 2019

Multilingualism in Nigerian Hip Hop: A Potential source of Lexical Innovations and Emergence of Nigerian Youth Language and Sociolect

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Citation: Nwoko, C. N. (2019). Multilingualism in Nigerian hip-hop: A potential source of lexical innovations and emergence of Nigerian youth language and sociolect. *Journal of African Arts & Culture*, 3(1), 24-40.

Abstract



The overall purpose of this paper is to explore the linguistic contributions of hip-hop music to the Nigerian multilingual society. This objective is informed by what appears to be a stereotyped notion that hip-hop music is all about the use of profane and taboo language. In an attempt to prove such negative ideas about hip-hop wrong, such lead questions as what the linguistic resources that constitute this emergent sociolect in Nigeria are; their sources of vocabulary, vocabulary patterns as well as evidence of lexical innovations it has brought to Nigerian linguistic society are tackled. Employing Exploratory Interview theory and qualitative research approach aimed at collecting data to unravel these linguistic issues, the researcher interacts and elicits information from varied stakeholders in the hip-hop music. Qualitatively, the researcher visited the promoters and fans of hip-hop

in Sabon Gari area of Kano, Nigeria to ascertain orally the varied meanings in the lyrics. The music albums of the current top thirteen Nigerian hip-hop stars were studied as representative samples. It is concluded that besides being a huge source of lexical innovation and a vehicle for showcasing the nation's linguistic repertoire to the outside world, youth language in Nigerian hip-hop, now serves as a bridge that hybridises virtually all the languages spoken in Nigeria.

Keywords: sociolect, hip-hop, semantic shift, taboo, lexemes

Introduction

Hip-hop music has, become multicultural and as such has assumed a global phenomenon. Unarguably, it has become an entrenched inset and even a substrate of youth language across the globe. Hip-hop is no longer an exclusive preserve of the African Americans because according to Grixti (2006) young people in different parts of the world are consuming the same types of materials and the patterns of consumption are breeding a borderless youth culture. Given the current wave of the music in contemporary societies, it is believed that youth language is no more an immigrant language, and Castellis (1997) submits that it is no more a mere language of resistance but has shifted resistance to project identity.

On the above premise, our study dwells on the relationship between Nigerian hip-hop and youth language in Nigeria, how this brand of music has contributed to lexical innovation and instituted a language for a particular class of people. To unravel all these, the study appropriates qualitative research approach by engaging in interactions among the core and mainstream consumers of this popular brand of music and; the study of the lexical pattern of the music and features of its language in use. It, as well, examines and establishes the real features of this type of music.

Language change and emergence of new ways of speaking are signs of a living society where there is social competition and acknowledgement of social classes, with each class struggling to compare and assert itself via language. Linguists and sociologists like Bourdieu (as cited in Bourdieu, 1989) validate this argument by stating that

Language practices and activities reflect unequal power relations within a community. As soon as measures are taken to reinforce an official language, minor varieties and dialects lose their legitimacy and cannot help but constantly measure and compare themselves to the linguistic standard (pp.27-28).

This line of reasoning informs the evolution of hip-hop as well as youth language, which goes to 70s and 80s in North America because of immigration and influx of immigrants. At the time of its inception, it was built around a group who used resistance to authorities they considered their enemies and opposed them through their songs.

It was a brand of music for people whose social status was stigmatised, and for that, reason had to resort to whatever social and cultural symbols available, which included rebellion and resistance to project their identities and make their grievances known to the persecuting authorities (Castellis, 1997).

Nigerian hip-hop appeared to have been redefined in 1999 after its arrival in 80s and 90s with the music of such stars as Nelson Brown, Planteshun Boiz and Tony Tetuila. The contribution of the media in bringing to stardom such prominent hip-hoppers as Ruggedman, Eedris Abdulkareem, Weird MC, P-square, Twin-X, Young Paperboyz, amongst others, should not be glossed over. The reason is that their music, style of dress, haircut and manner of speaking currently dominate the social media and the airwaves. Between 2000 and 2003, Nigerian hip-hop was revolutionised; hence, it experienced a rebirth, with Ruggedman's 'Ehen' and Modenine's 'Elbow *Reom*' and his debut album Malcolm IX. In the main stream are the songs of Blaise, Eldee the Don, Overdose, Sauce kid, Free Style, Sasha, Gino, Jimmy Jah and Ikechukwu. But more notable with topical and contemporary messages that capture the generality of the youths are the music of Styl Plus, Davido, P-square, Flavour, Wizkid, 2Face, Timaya, Olamide, Kcee and the Harry. They were selected to feature and be the subject of analysis in this article due to the currency of their pieces and being the latest generation of Nigerian hip-hop so far.

Statement of the Problem

Drawing on some scholarly oeuvres on Nigerian hip-hop music, the general notion is that it is imbued with a meaningless language and a language of rebellion against constituted authorities. Abati (2009) is one of the representatives of such a school of thought. Secondly, some perceptions about this genre of music are that its messages are profane and suffused with taboo lexemes and words of resistance, its diction very detached and only inclusive. Previous works, including Eckert (2003), Macaulay (2005), to cite just few examples, bear out this observation. Besides profanity and rebellion, the author of this piece believes that there may be something in the songs that the audience and listeners of the music may find beneficial. Consequent upon these stereotypes, the writer of this piece strongly believes there are some lacunas that need to be filled in. Therefore, the present work finds it compelling to explore other sociolinguistically imperative aspects of this brand of music.

Objectives and Significance of the Study

The general aim of this article is to identify some linguistic resources inherent in Nigeria hip-hop and to explore certain positive contributions the music has made in recent times in a linguistically heterogeneous state of Nigeria. This is based on the assumption that this genre of music, as a channel of communication, could be a possible means of language change in society. Premised on this aim, the objectives of this study are to:

1. identify the linguistic expressions from the selected songs that constitute a new language or sociolect of specific social groups.
2. identify special meanings or semantic shifts generated by the music;
3. find out the sources of language of the music.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised in the course of the work to serve as a road map to the researcher and guide him within the purview of his research objectives:

1. What are the lexemes and expressions that make up the Nigerian hip-hop music as an emergent sociolect?
2. What special meaning do the lexemes generate?
3. What are their sources and lexifier languages?

Authorial Review of Related Literature

Some previous researches, including Eckert (2003), Macaulay (2005) and Abati (2009), to cite just few cases, took the course of launching a diatribe against hip-hop music. Their observation is that it is purely embedded in the use of political incorrect registers, which are directly or indirectly offensive to society. They also believe that the message in such music calls for resistance against constituted authorities. Abati (2009) displayed utter disdain for Nigerian hip-hop which he labels the source of the nation's identity crisis. One of his reasons is that the emergence of the music is responsible for truncating the name Nigeria to 'Naija' or 'Nija' or '9ja'. Nevertheless, his lampoon on Nigerian hip-hop cannot be said to have flatly negated the linguistic ingenuity in the youth song, for he eventually concedes that it is currently gaining international recognition and at the same time has become a source of new vocabulary.

A latter study on Nigerian youth music, carried out by Adedeji (2014) differed remarkably from Abati's earlier position. Through a different lens, Adedeji avers that using Nigerian languages as a medium of delivery of the songs that African identity and its linguistic independence are portrayed. Omoniyi (2009), Agbo (2009) and Gbogi (2016) whose studies dwelled on the language of Nigerian hip-hop whose strategy they identified as an epitome of language alternation or code switching also validate his findings.

What is believed to be a more balanced interrogation and representation of this youth music in Nigeria appears to be that of Adedun and Hammond (2018). They submit that Nigerian and Ghanaian hip-hop songs make both positive and negative impacts on society. Positively, they contribute to language development because they encourage multilingualism and promotion of indigenous languages side by side with foreign ones. This, however, does not rule out the promotion of individualism or self in the renditions. In an attempt to broaden the scope of the positive contributions and linguistic space of Nigerian hip-hop, this work makes a leap into certain linguistic and sociolinguistic resources the current select Nigerian hip-hops have so far exploited to prove its creativity. This is to make a statement that beyond some elements of political incorrectness found in the music; they showcase some levels of ingenuity, which are by no means fortuitously realised in the realm of linguistic creativity. On this account and in order to uphold the positive views about this youth music, this study affirms that Nigerian hip hop is not even simplistically about language alternation, but has become today a veritable tool for cementing and consolidating multilingualism. Besides, it promotes a kind of sociolect for the youths across the country.

Materials and Methods

This study is largely based on qualitative approach through social interaction with the promoters and fans of Nigerian hip hop brand of music. In this research method, questions were asked to find out the varied meaning of certain non-English lexemes introduced in the music to facilitate interpretation of data. The population sample was primarily located in social centres in Sabon Gari area of Kano metropolis to make the findings more empirical. The researcher extended his search by using his research networks to elicit information through interviews with hip-hop artistes and fans involved in the study. The choice of Sabon Gari as the primary study location was necessitated by its social nature as an area that is heterogeneously populated, with social lives and activities. Its social nature is such that it is part of Kano City that accommodates drinking spree, clubs, hotels, and other entertainment and social centres, which are popularly known as 'joints'. Oral questions were asked selected persons found in places like secondary schools, higher institutions of learning, hotels, DJs and football viewing centers. The ages of respondents range between 18 and 35.

Thirteen popular Nigerian hip-hop songs were selected. They are popular and current in the sense that they occupy Nigeria airwaves, media space and social media now. They make up what is described as trendy youth music in the country. They are such pieces of music that are heard in social gatherings such as clubs, parties, award and child-naming ceremonies, send -offs, academic gatherings, political rallies, entertainment programmes on the television and radio, etc. This is to say that such selected songs are heard in almost all spheres of life in Nigerian society. They are so much the rave of the moment that even school children respond stylishly to their beats while walking in the street by shaking all parts of their bodies in response to the rhythm of the music and depending on the prevailing style. Commercial riders and drivers, like *Keke* (tricycle), taxi and bus drivers and conductors hardly do without them.

Data Presentation

Featured are the hip-hop songs that make up the source of data of this paper. Each piece of music is provided with its title and the name of the artist.

“AFTA D REGGAE, PLAY D BULES” --- by Harrysong

Afta d reggae, play d blues (the blues, the blues)

Mek you do as I do (I do I do).

Me I no get time for cock and Bull (a bull, a bull).

Enjoy yourself and get di groove (the groove, the groove).

Cuz even your Boo get e boo (aboo, a boo).

So com mek we pop Champaign o (abs aha)

PULL OVER—by Kcee

Reverse , baby ur pull over (ah baby ur pull over).

Show me ur particulars baby pull over (ah baby ur pull over).

Back baby ur pull over (um baby ur pull over).

Show me ur particulars baby pull over (ah baby ur pull over).

SKELEWU --- by Davido

All d boys demadance galala, all girls dema show shakara
(2x)

Laka dis lakadat, shake ur waist and ur ur -----

Skelewuskelelelele (4x)

DOROBUCHI --- by the Marvin Group

Dorobuchi, ehedorobuchi

U no we dorobuchi.

Doro fine pass any person wey see doro

Doro dribble any person wey try to mark doro

Doro fish any person weydoro fish doro.

SHOKI --- by Lil Kesh

Oya do di Shoki (ah Shoki, Shoki).

Oya baby Shoki (ah Shoki, Shoki)

Shoki ah Shoki. (3x)

MY WOMAN, MY EVERYTHING—by Patoranking

My woman, my everything. (3x) I go fit giv u anitin.

My woman o, my everything. (3x) I go fit buy u anitin.

GODWIN--- by Korede Bello

I don get alert, Godwin.

As ur market dey sell na Godwin.

Today wey be ur wedding day na Godwin.

Arm robbers rob but dem no see ur house na Godwin.

Everything I do (na Godwin o. 3x)

OGA TITUS--- by D'Prince

Oga Titus, things are very difficult.

U want to host world cup, wen account dey read minus.

U chop okpoho, spend ur money on top okpoho.

Now u don com deyteldem story.

U chop okpoho, spend ur money on top up okpoho

Now u don com turn to atutubegger o

Eheelelele o (u don com turn to atutu beggar o) 2x.

REDI DANCE ---by Oritse Femi

Oyaredi o redi.

Si moni ma baby o baby.

Jekashoki o shoki.

No tym to the formi o baby.

YAHOOZEE --- by Olu Maintain

Yahoozee, yahoozee, yahoozee 2x

Yahoo oo, yahoozee 2x

If I hammer, hammer, hammer

Pass me d dollar, dollar, dollar

Mofesi pass me the dollar e lowo

LIKE DAT— by Korede Bello

Why you gon' do like that?
Why you gon' Keep that thing from me?
Why gon' do like that
Why you gon' act like you don't know
Baby, don't do like that
Girl come feed me, don't be stingy
Why gon 'do like that?
No baby, don't like that, oh

WHEN MONEY NO DEY --- by Timaya

I say when money no dey
People dey carry me go
When money no dey
Everybody run away
I say when money no dey no nono
People dey use me dey play
When money no dey
Nobody look at my face

FADA FADA--- by Phyno

ChinekeNnaEmegokwenwaogbenyeEzeke
Everyday by day I just dey celebrate oh (eh)
Everything I do e just dey penetrate oh
I just want to say thank you Jehovah oh
See I'm living large i get Angels o for my gate oh
Never forget where I come from ne from ghetto (ehqa)
oh no nono
no nonononono (ah)
I just want to say o thank you Jehovah oh (eh)
Buru ekeneriwootutofadafadaeeeh (fadafadaeeeh) A
di kwam
Loyal oFadaFadaeeeh (FadaFadaeeeh)

Discussion

“Afta the Reggae Play the Blues” by Harrysong

The music is preponderant with sex items, which are euphemistically used. The expressions, *play the blues*, *get di groove* and *your boo* refer to sexual activities. No wonder in the language or dialects of youths in Nigeria today, one does not need to call sex by its real name before a young fellow understands what one means; it has acquired other euphemistic synonyms such as *groove* to refer to the female sex organ, *blues* for intercourse, *reggae* for dancing, drinking and frolicking. What is significant in the song is that with the use of such expressions in vogue in youth communication in our society, some English words have undergone semantic shift. That is, they have acquired another meaning different from their original ones in order to cater for the needs of several categories of people. They are the words youth prefer to hear among their peers because if one fails to use such words and expressions, one does not ‘belong’. The language of the music is an admixture of Pidgin and English Language; and this is a common feature of Nigerian youth language.

“Pull Over” By Kcee

Based on the methodology applied in this work, young people interviewed including local DJ's, informed us that *Pull Over* in this song refers to a girl or lady's behind or buttocks; *particulars* means her beauty, both in front and back while the word *reverse* means to turn and show the artist her buttocks. Therefore, on the lips of young people in Nigeria today could be the choice of the expression, *Pull over*. It may not be “turn”; it could as well be *Show me your particulars*. This attests to the belief that there are certain lexemes young people prefer to others, hence more comfortable using such to express themselves freely in a communicative encounter among their peers.

“Skelewu” by Davido

As one of the current and popular hip-hop music in the Nigerian airwaves, *Skelewu*, which is the title of the song emphasizes a particular style of dance and the dancer as well. Referring to the dancer of *Skelewu* music, *Skelewu* symbolises a pregnant dancer who betrays her biological condition, making her fans and spectators to believe that she is not pregnant. It is for this reason that she dances with so much vigour that she does not care if the extra pressure on the pregnancy could trigger off miscarriage. In the realm of Nigerian hip-hop, the music is a lampoon on such girls and ladies who tend to deceive unsuspecting men, therefore, “guys” have resorted to a new register *Skelewu* to refer to such dancers. In the interviews with some youths, it was gathered that *Skelewu* dance also means dancing to forget one's worries. In this sense, the pregnant lady is

not just dancing for pretense, but relieves herself of the burden of brooding over her unfortunate circumstance of unwanted pregnancy.

“Shoki” by Lil Kesh

The lexifier language of the song, no doubt, is Yoruba, which translates into *quickie* in the English Language, meaning *hard sex* or *quick sex* in its extended meaning. As part of youth’s sociolect and slang today, Nigerian youths see nothing wrong in the use of this lexeme in extended communication despite that it is a taboo word that socio-linguistically offends the sensibilities of the responsible adult Africans. This sociolinguistic implication could not be unconnected with the rationale for the ban of the music by the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). The song has even spread to so many African countries, with even children making use of the word in the presence of their parents. Therefore, at the mention of the word *Shoki* among adolescents and youths in Nigeria, and some African states, the minds of such listeners race to sex and quick sex.

“Ukwu” by Timaya

The word ‘Ukwu’ is an Igbo lexeme that literally stands for one’s waist but has become a slang word for *buttocks* or a lady’s *ass*, and its extended meaning to the youth group is a lady’s private part. The word has so gone viral in our society that even non-youths and the elderly have no difficulty in understanding the meaning of the lexeme once it is uttered. The artist, Timaya, is singing that the lady’s buttocks make him go crazy at the sight of them, especially when they shake while dancing or cat-walking.

“My Woman, My Everything” by Patoranking

In this piece of music, the artist demonstrates his love for women. He compares his love for women with that of food, which is an analogy that shows him as one who is always hungry for women the way he does for food. For this reason, he is ready to do anything for a woman in order to have her. The choice of lexical items and expressions in the song: ‘My Woman, My Everything, I go fit give u anitin’, at least attests to his unquenchable and insatiable desire for women in general.

“Godwin” by Korede Bello

This song has gained so much currency and popularity today that it is heard in almost social clubs in Nigeria. One particular song is so unique that even the young and old enjoy it. Although more youths, as revealed in the interview, responded to it, our interaction also revealed that the elderly also play the music. The diction is one thing

that is particularly appealing in the music. The choice of words connects almost all spheres of life because the lexemes in the song are more of open class or content words, particularly in the nominal class, naming almost everything one does, achieves and gets. The meaning extension of the song is that any successes one records in life have to be attributed and ascribed to God, the Almighty. This is evident in the first and last lines of the song. In the first line, the popular and household word *alert* is mentioned. It is one word in Nigerian linguistic context everyone uses and loves to hear because *alert* implies one is richer by some amount of money that has just entered one's bank account, which is shown by the sound of the incoming text message on one's handset. The last line says, *everything I do na Godwin* which implies the totality of what one achieves or has in life is attributed to one's Maker.

"Oga Titus" by D'Prince

"Oga Titus" is a hip-hop music in Nigeria that contrasts with so many others in that there is a serious message in it. It condemns spendthrift attitude or squander-mania, but encourages frugality. In sum, the message in the lyric is that the songwriter reminds the audience of tomorrow; that is, to save for the rainy day, especially at a difficult time like this (recession period). He berates and decries the present living condition of his addressee, *Oga Titus*, who now faces hard times and poverty that have reduced him to a beggar. The reason is that at the time he should have spent wisely, he, instead, indulged in *Okpoho* or *squander-mania* --- a message to all to learn from the failure of this infamous character, called *Oga Titus*.

"Ada Ada" by Flavour

The second line of the lyric makes it very popular today as it has become a popular Nigerian pidgin: *better soup namoni kill am* which means any good and attractive thing one is looking for, with patience and perseverance, one can achieve it. This is likened to *Ada*, the character in the song, whom the artist describes her beauty as unrivalled, who is endowed everywhere, *front and back* in popular Nigerian English parlance and *everywhere*, she possess it. The table 1 represents the major linguistic expressions in the songs, their source languages, meanings and the names of the artists.

The Selected Hip-Hops as a Source of Lexical Innovation and Emergent Sociolect

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that certain lexemes in the hip-hop songs whose lexifier language is English generate special meanings other than the English meanings. This agrees with the principle of semantic shift where a lexeme acquires a new meaning

in a particular context. It is in this regard that Blommfield (1933) labelled semantic shift or progression as a word usage whose modern meaning is radically different from the original usage. In the context of the songs studied, it is evidently clear that so many lexemes whose lexifier language is English have constituted a new meaning and hence a sociolect and a new lect for the emergent youth group in Nigeria. The following words exemplify this proposition: *pullover, reverse, alert, Godwin, testimony, better soup, anitin*, etc. Therefore, these words, as identified in this study, among others, makeup the new sociolect of this category of Nigerians. The lexemes have become part of the lect of this generation. A sociolect does not emerge just for its sake but arises to cater for varied solidarity and communication functions in a society.

Table 1
Identification of the sources of lexemes and expressions.

| S/N | Lexemes/ Expressions | Song Title | Lexifier language | Meaning | Song Artist |
|-----|--|------------------------------|---|---|--------------|
| 1. | Play d blues | After D Reggae, play d blues | English | Upon clubbing or partying, the dancers go to a quiet place for sex. | Harrysong |
| 2. | Your boo | After d reggae, play d blues | Slang | Sexual activities | Harrysong |
| 3. | Pull over | Pull over | English | A girl or lady's buttocks | Kcee |
| 4. | Particulars | Pull over | English | A girl or lady's buttocks | Kcee |
| 5. | Reverse | Pull over | English | To turn her buttocks | Kcee |
| 6. | Skelewu | Skelewu | Nigerian slang | A style of dance for a pregnant woman who behaves as if she is not. | Davidoo |
| 7. | Shoki | Shoki | Yoruba | Quickie or quick sex | Likesh |
| 8. | Ukwu | Ukwu | Igbo | A lady's buttocks | Timaya |
| 9. | Anitin | My woman, my everything | Pidgin | Readiness to sacrifice anything for a woman | Patoraking |
| 10. | Get alert | Godwin | English | Money text message | Korede Bello |
| 11. | Godwin | Godwin | English | Attributing successes to God | Korede Bello |
| 12. | Okpoho | Oga Titus | | Irrelevance | D'Prince |
| 13. | Better soup namoni kill am o | Ada Ada | Nigeria pidgin | To secure a good and attractive thing, money is required | Flavour |
| 14. | Na my testimony | Testimony | English | Thanksgiving to God for providing him with money | P-Square |
| 15. | Chineke nnaemewok wanwaogben yeezeke... fadafada | Fada-fada | A blend of Igbo and Nigerian pidgin English | Thanksgiving and praises to God | Phyno |

It is interesting to comment that those marked words have become part of the vocabulary pool of this social group in the state. Again, the elderly have also taken interest in some of these. For instance, in work places, in spite of one's age, one hears one's colleague asking one whether he has received "an alert". In other words, it is one of the social registers that have today permeated the Nigerian society since the release of the hip-hop songs. It is one register that once mentioned, the hearer understands the new and contextual meaning. The linguistic function of a sociolect, which Lewandoski (2010) identified as a variety or lect which is thought of as being related to its speakers' social background rather than geographical background does not agree with the linguistic function of the Nigerian hip-hop sociolect because it is now something that, more often, cuts across ethnic and geographical backgrounds and divides in the country.

An observation from the selected songs and their meanings reveals special meanings attributed to them. The meanings are special in the sense that they do not conform to the denotational, ordinary or general English and vernacular meanings. Therefore, the category of meaning observed in the music agrees with that of semantic shift.

The introduction of new vocabulary into the multilingual Nigerian society through hip-hop music, which is part of lexical innovation, is a desirable exercise despite that some of them appear to be taboo and profane to the larger society. However, Barber, Beal and Shaw (2009) opine that linguistic and cultural changes are sought for because society from time to time needs new words to express new concepts. Morales and Aldana (2010), (as cited in Romaine, 2013) share this idea, and in justifying the emergence of sociolect in society, state that sociolects are created because of the inability of the Standard English to express certain things.

It could be argued against Morales and Aldana's (2010) (as cited in Romaine, 2013) submission that sociolects are as a result of the inability of standard English to express certain things because there are quite some words in the songs which Standard English can capture their meanings vividly but the artists still prefer other linguistic medium. Such include *Ukwu*, *Okpoho*, *anitin* and *better soup*. The reason could be to sound detached and deviate from the societal norm, which is one of the hallmarks of hip-hop artists and youths. This may be the reason why Kerswill (2013) observes that the new way of using language by artists may be seen as a new dialect. Therefore, as a mark of semantic shift, these new ways of using words make them to acquire new meanings, which are even welcome to all age groups. Instances include the Pidgin English *anitin*, which in this context acquires a new meaning: 'readiness to sacrifice anything for a lady'; *to get alert*: a text message that has to do with money in one's bank account. Others include *reverse*: which now is imbued with a metaphorical meaning of 'a lady, turning

her buttocks for a man's view' and *particulars* which acquires the metaphorical meaning of 'a lady's beauty'.

The etymology of the lexemes shows that they have lexifier languages of which English is one, as exemplified by *play blues, pullover, particulars, get alert, Godwin, your boo, na my testimony, anitin, and better soup na moni kill am*. On this account, it could be deduced that most of the lexemes in Nigerian hip-hop are relexified from English while others have their source languages from any of the Nigerian languages. Relexification, being one major process these lexemes undergo, is an indication that Nigerian hip-hop sociolect embraces linguistic hospitality, for it accommodates linguistic items from other languages to enrich its vocabulary. Other languages it accommodates include some Nigerian languages. There is, also, evidence of language alternation. Sometimes, the artists' code-switch and code-mix between a local language and English, as evidenced in Phyno's *Fada Fada* and between a vernacular and a slang.

Conclusion

From the songs interrogated, it could be concluded that Nigerian hip-hop music carves out its sociolect by conforming to the principles of linguistic hospitality. This is because the lexemes are more of the open class items, which show openness to words and expressions from other local languages. This brand of music by Nigerian youths has contributed to the linguistic repertoire of multiethnic and multilingual Nigeria by introducing lexical coinages that are heard across the country today.

The songs have demonstrated an imaginative and creative means of word formation, and above all, as a means of expanding the vocabulary of Nigerian languages. Given the emergence of these songs, a linguistic niche of another genre that attracts scholarship has been carved. It has contributed in hybridising all the languages spoken in Nigeria, including pidgin. This is to say that Nigerian hip-hop has contributed in enhancing and easing communication in a plurilingual Nigerian society. That is, it has simplified the lingua franca for the interlocutors in such a way that one no longer requires the knowledge of the Standard English to understand the message in the music.

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