

Hip-hop lect in Nigeria

Adaorah Stellamaris Nweke

Abstract

The hip-hop music is popular among the youths in Nigeria today. As it is obvious, it has not only influenced the lifestyle of the youths, it has influenced their use of language. This study focuses on its influence on the language of the youths. The Labovian variation theory has driven the study. Twelve hip-hop tracks of four Nigerian hip-hop artistes have been selected. The lyrics of the tracks shows expressions which are found in the language of many Nigerian youths today: an indication of the emergence of a variety, which this study has identified as hip-hop lect. This variety characterized by lexical forms that English and the local languages based. However, there is evidence of innovative introductions which has been referred to in this study as onomatopoeic and aesthetic creations. The forms even though have no particular language identity are used to mean whatever the artistes have used them to mean. This is one quality of the lect that makes it flexible and equips with the capacity to grow words very productively.

Introduction

Hip-hop has earned for itself a hallowed literariness with its respect for language, forming a rhetorical move that privileges the artiste as a kind of author and rap lyric as the text of Hip-hop culture. This move has proven to attract literary criticism and analysis here and there. Perkins' statement on "Reading: Hip-hop Discourse in the Twenty-first Century" takes on a conviction model when he says "If we acknowledge hip-hop as always ready a verbally constructed space, both a spoken

performance and (un)written representation of the lyricist vision then the application of literary analysis to hip-hop and its fictions seems both appropriate and necessary” (8). Music is a form of multimodal discourse. Welser Kay and Machine Boez mention that it operates “sonically, verbally and virtually” (2). Jenkins in the same vein sees Hip – hop music as having same operational discourse when he says “Specifically Hip- hop music can be seen as operating as a discourse, and the different types of texts of rap music (lyrics, beats, music, videos, stylistic choices, and graphic choices on album covers which constitutes a kind of ‘discursive formation’ (1). Tricia Rose equally states that:

Hip-hop is a cultural form that attempts to negotiate the experiences of marginalisation brutally truncated opportunity, and oppression within the cultural imperatives of African-American and Caribbean history, identity, and community. It is the tension between the cultural fracture produced by post-industrial oppression and the binding ties of black cultural expressivity that sites the critical frame for the development of hip-hop (24).

From a liberal mind’s perspective, it is an ideal thing to do it right now because hip-hop has become part of our lives' reality. The lyrics of these artistes have thrived in our society. “Smallie”, “Shandy” “Dorobucci,” “Tongolo”, “Tush” “Baffs” “Baka”, “Runs”, “Collabo” “Alobam”, “Jonesser” etc. are with us here as words used in our expressions. Just to mention a few and recently Oxford’s latest dictionary incorporated some of these words for use. So I think we are going somewhere.

Language according to Bloch and Trager means “A system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group

cooperates” (5). Language is virtually used for everything in life. It is primarily used for communication and education. It is the code for administration and that of entertainment (comedy), politics which has to do with exacting of the motion language and power. Hall at the other hand defines it as “the institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral auditory arbitrary symbols” (58). By critical appraisal, looking at his own point of view, language should be seen as selected arbitrary symbols used by humans for the purpose of communication. The above scholars have some characteristics synonymous to the definitions tabled above such as human, a system, arbitrary symbols and communication. These characteristics have vividly elicited the part of a language which are aligning with human principles and needs for the act of communications as required in this study.

A Hip-hop Discourse is a language of the popular music that originated among the inner-city of the African-American youth in the 1970’s which was drawn on rap, funk, street sounds and fragments of phrases. This discourse is the ability to pick up phrases or rhymes of other performers or artistes re-appropriating them in a way that suits their artistry, twisting, turning or subverting phrase through inventing poetic and linguistic variation. Cecila Cutler affirms this when she says “Hip-hop language is a hot topic in academia and sociolinguists have been interested in terms of its grammar and vocabulary” (519). In Hip-hop style and rap music there have been a deep commitment to creating new words, blending and breaking limits. Hip-hop culture has a way of connoting defiance in its lyrics and to emphasize this, the performer’s apparently set out to bend and break “Standard Language” rule just to establish principles of making music. For instance, Olu Maintain’s titled his song “Phoneversation” instead of phone conversation. Phyno’s “Alobam”, Dbanj’s “The koko” Olamide’s “Badoo” etc. The hypothesis here are: what are the motivations behind

the lexical formations found in their songs? Is it intelligible or structurally authentic? Is it grammatical or is it a phase of expression that is transient? Is it a language in place for use or a made easy language for local identities? Or does it serve as a verse or a rhythm to suit the environment of the song or music?

Notwithstanding, the varieties of English language and that of the Nigerian version coupled with pidgin English and the indigenous languages seem to be responsible for this emergence. One of these varieties is found particularly in the entertainment industry, especially in the Hip-hop music industry where every Hip-hop artiste has a lect that is accrued to him or her. For instance these lects are neither English nor Nigerian Pidgin but it seems to be neologism or rather slang formulations from Nigerian indigenous languages taken to the streets and the youths communicate with them. These artistes are modelers of these lects. They popularize, neologize and invent these words for wider communications. They also have stage performance lect where they engage in what could be called “lect-battle”. Another instance, if D’banj were to be on stage for a performance, he will first say “all the kokolects and the mamalets in the house make some noise” this is a way of him making an introduction to the stage for his performance and he uses it to control the crowd too. Olamide will say “skibo orobo skiboo” in return the fans will reply “Yeba Oshe”. Tuface is known for “Nothing dey happen” etc.

Over the years now, this form of expression has emerged from the Nigerian youths spinning off from hip-hop culture, and this is also in the streets and in other suburbs. Hip-hop in Nigeria has its own brand which is quite unique and it has witnessed tremendous change and improvement. It has proceeded or practically trended from a folk song to afro-beats/afro juju, high life, fuji, then rap before it becomes hip-hop for this present generation. Hip-hop in Nigeria is a combination of styles which has thrived on hybridity. According to Perkins Williams, he

mentions that “Based on all previous musical forms [fusing] the verbal and performance vernacular to an expanded rhythmic base”. His comments on lects, states that “it is an underlying characteristic relying on creating a groove which rests on a broad and diverse urban street-conscious culture. This culture extends to the fusion of indigenous language in the hip-hop songs” (16).

Through this avenue young people now engage in local as well as global discourses to project their experiences, views and frustrations regarding unpalatable socio-economic conditions in their everyday lives. While using various devices such as indigenous language (or slang), they develop lect, like a slang, an appropriation from local cultures to appeal to home grown cultural sensibilities. This eventually is carried by youths in the society like a language of the now. The ‘lect’ here, attracts the use of lexical formations with the use of indigenous language to replace place the lexis or a word register found in the Standard English.

The Nigerian hip-hop music landscape has musical styles such as highlife and fuji, thereby domesticating the genre and awakening a language consciousness. By language consciousness in Nigeria hip-hop, it implies a generic fashion in lyrics, a flavour from our indigenous languages.

This study seeks to account for discourses as seen in some of the Nigerian Hip-hop songs and how it has deviated from the norm. More particularly, defining these discourses, finding their meanings and motivations behind the use of these lects for rendition and communications in their songs. This study will be more like a denotation of meaning of these discourses found in their songs. In addition, this work will help the reader know the meaning as well as the definitions of these discourses especially when they are seen in the lyrics of subsequent songs from Nigerian Hip-hop artistes. It will also account for wider communications in the Nigerian English language.

Hip-hop language culture in Nigeria

The life of Hip-hop is right on the streets of Lagos, where a man can refer to a fellow man as “Ogbeni”. This is a lect made possible by an artiste known as DJ Double Kay featuring Yung Effissy in his song “Are You There” (Ogbeni) released on September 18, 2020. The street of Lagos has this name tagged to mean someone who is lacking understanding or stereotyped, lacking the agility of mind or some judgment. Either disjointed or lacking wittiness. In Yoruba “ogbeni” means “Mr Man” but it is right now urbanized to mean someone who is lacking understanding or mental sense. The Danfo drivers and bus - conductors in Lagos use it all the time especially when they are addressing their passengers who they are displeased with or who refuse to pay the full fare. Reekadoo Banks in his song titled “Happy Yourself” mentions that its lexis in Yoruba seem to have been lost except for the urban or English connotation.

Now, the young, old and aged talk Hip-hop and the life of Hip-hop culture is right in the streets of Lagos where every young chap will wear a cap engraved “Badoo” like Olamide and have dread-lock or sporting cork-hair like Phyno. Then do a dance newly introduced by these Hip-hop artistes in the wedding party or the church. They also have dances that are accrued to them. Most dances you see people do were not self-inspired but had been founded by some of these popular Hip-hop artistes. The dances have names and it is tagged along side with the artiste who has brought it to the air waves. For instance, Gala has been the first dance trend made popular by Daddy Showkey in his song “Fire Fire” followed by “Suo” in Melon and Mountain Black song known as “Danfo Drivers”. “Alanta” by a group known as Artquake. “Yahoozee” by Olu maintain. “Azonto” introduced in Nigeria by Wizkid but had its traditions with the Ghanaian singer ODG, “Etigi” by Iyanya, “Skelewu” by Davido, “Alingo” by P’square, “Shoki” by three artistes, namely: Dre San LilKesh and Orezi but LilKesh is best known

for the dance. “Sekem” by MC Galaxy. “Shakiti Bobo” by Olamide, “Shaku-shaku” by Mr Real and Slim Case, Zanku by Zlantan Ibile and the count continues. These dances are everywhere in the Nigerian society. The content or message in a song heralded by style which indigenous languages dare the trend of convention as seen here in Terry G’s “Apako Master” it says:

samboya boya mama ma – oh baby
 no go leave me or I give up 2x
 omogorekelewa ma bora solylomo
 tohshanomotohpupa, come nearer
 kinsangarewasaregbewa kin sangaree
 koba, baby babygy. Baby nor go leave
 mego, uuhahnahn, my lady my babygy
 tell me why yodo me so? I go die
 ohh (ebelebe) baby come here make I tell you.
 I love you so and I place no one above you
 My sherikokoohhh I love you, I love
 Uuh (mamama) kanzimzkanzimakanzimakanzima.

The above lines could be considered as a typical example of hip-hop lect in Nigerian music and it is simply showcasing the hybridity of languages in play in presentation of their musical ideologies. This lect is neither English nor Nigerian Pidgin English but it seems to be coinages or slang formulations from the indigenous languages taken to the streets and the youths communicate with them. Though to a lay man, it doesn’t make any semantic distinction but to the musical artiste, it is everything in communication as far as hip-hop lect and its musical discourse is concerned. This might probably be tilting towards a new variety of Nigerian English. In a recent observation, an Anthropologist Causey urges caution in applying the concept of hybridity to material culture because of

its assumptions that the off-spring is supposedly ‘stronger, healthier, or more ‘effective’ (430 - 431). The Nigerian hip-hop seems to be made with these ‘lects’ and it has sort of spiced up hip-hop in Nigeria making it more interesting. Okafor posits that “music, like any work of art, is imbued with a particular ideology from very beginning [because] art is message and that message is to influence behaviour” (92). It is pertinent to note that no art exists only for its own sake but often, it is a medium to convey social messages and ideologies. The Nigerian hip-hop genre seem to have gone beyond hedonism (an ethical system that evaluates the pursuit of pleasure) or the portrayal of affluence as widely perceived but also a birth of new lect/language which in contemporary Africa, it has become a powerful force for education among the Nigerian youths, a mechanism for information and social connectivism. Nigerian hip-hop has elements that are probably adapted from the local cultural tradition which is heavily influenced by indigenous languages. Drawing example from the above lyrics, it has grown to become a common culture among Nigerian youths. Raymond submits that “culture is ordinary... There is not a special class, or group of men, who are involved in the creation of meanings and values, either in a general sense or a specific art and belief... the idea of a common element to the culture [is] its community” (34).

Literally, skiboorobo skibo, skiboreha ba! Iranu Abasha (lines 3 and 9) has no linguistic denotation except for the Hip-hop artiste who has employed the culture to express a particular identity, a Nigerian identity. Tope Omoniyi states this about the Nigerian Hip-hop style when he submits this after analyzing the lyrics of a Nigerian Hip-hop artiste known as 2-shortz in his 2005 album “Nnaa-men”, he says “you no fit yarn fone pass American, so I choose to do am Naija style representing a number of identity related claims. First it asserts both

complementary and optionality of fone and Naija style...” (113).

In the lexicon of the Nigerian Pidgin, it is “fone” or “phoneeh” instead of “phonetics” which means the prestigious standard of native English varieties especially British and American varieties. These varieties are often used to describe the highly educated or native speaker. It is invariably used to approximate performance of non-speaker. Another significant factor responsible for the use of Hip-hoplect is the post-colonial dimension entailed by varieties of English and it frames the discussion of this discourse.

Conceptual framework

According to Finocchiaro, human language is “a system of arbitrary vocal symbols that permit all people in a given culture or other people who have learned the system of that culture, to use it in human communication” (98). In the course of aligning into this cultural identity Omoniyi brands it in two forms, “first the “construct” which advocates multiple narratives of origin, underlying the contemporary mutation of local and global in the formation of a new identity; a relationship of asymmetry and mutuality. The second, is “contrast”, it constructs a single narrative of origin and one dominant source of dispersal Hip-hop facilitated by globalization” (114).

Language is also considered as a “set of acquired knowledge system that is built up through the touch of social environment. Every language is corresponding with a given culture and it is part of the culture. To a great extent, the structures, patterns and meaning of any language are influenced and restricted by a specified cultural concept. Therefore, the same words or expressions may not mean the same thing to different people, which may lead to misunderstandings. As such language cannot but serve and reflect culture needs” (1). The need for these cultural concepts are wielded into cultural

identity when it comes to a particular speech community who are identified by a particular language and culture, since culture is learned and transferred. It is also easy to say that a particular people's language is somewhat difficult and ambiguous but it incorporates their culture and their way of living. The society is all about the culture and its language which is incorporated in the domain of sociolinguistics "language and society".

Sociolinguistics primarily explores language in relation to society. This means that it is concerned with language as used for communications amongst different social groups of people in different social situations. According to Janet Holmes, she defines sociolinguistics as 'the study that is concerned with the relationship between language and the context in which it is used. In other words, it studies the relationship between language and society. It explains why people speak differently in different social contexts' (16). She also sees sociolinguistics as a relationship between man and its very context which is the society. Sociolinguistics has been labelled as the descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society including cultural norm, expectations, and context on the way language is used and the effects of language on the society. Richard Hudson a sociolinguist argues this when he says "the subject of sociolinguistics overlaps with that of linguistics since speech is a social behaviour and to study it without reference to society would be like studying courtship behaviour of one partner to that of the other" (58). However, Nikolas Coupland and Adam Jaworski applaud sociolinguistics when they posit that sociolinguistics focuses on "the study of language in its social context and the study of social life through linguistics" (1). This is where this study has been situated.

The discourse of Hi-hop lect can only happen in the context of its social implicature of the lyrics used in these songs and their meanings in discourse. These lects as being used by the Nigerian artistes have social linguistic connotations as well as

lexico-semantic implicature which shall be seen in these data presented in this study. Notwithstanding an aspect of variation, lexical variation will be incorporated to this study as a conceptual framework to give this study a better fronting. It is obvious that the difference between dialects are the different lexical items used in different varieties. For example, a lift in British English is called an elevator in American English. In Nigeria “crase” is the variety for crazy in British English. According to Schilling-Estes she states that “Lexical variation is found not only across different countries or continents that share the same language but also within continents or countries” (320).

Lexical variation does reflect on regional, social or contextual differences in the ways that a particular language is being used. All aspects of variation in language which includes phonemes, morphemes, syntactic structures and meanings are subject to variation. Variation in language use among speakers or groups of speakers may happen in pronunciation (accent), word choice (lexicon) or preferences for a particular pattern of grammar or grammatical use. It has also been discovered that variation, lexical variation has been the vehicle for language change. This literally has made it a particular concern in sociolinguistics. This may be why Trask postulates that “In sociolinguistics a variety can also be seen as a lect. It is a specific form of a language or language cluster. This may include languages, dialects, accents, register, styles or other sociolinguistic variation, as well as the standard variety itself” (15). If there is a language variation, there is an experience witnessed in the inflection of words. The variants of ‘buttocks’ from the Standard English lens in Nigerian English as seen with the Nigerian Hip-hop artistes had transcended from ‘Baka’ (Terry G’s “Ginger your swagger”), ‘Buddy’ (Wande Coal’s “Buddy Call”), ‘Loda’ (D’Banj’s “Feeling the Nigga”), ‘Bum Bum’ (Timaya’s “Bum Bum”), ‘Bombay’ by(Wizkid’s

“Bombay” ft Phyno) and the count continues, these names are also seen in contemporary and contextual discourses.

Theoretical framework

Lexical field theory

Lexical field theory or word-field theory was introduced on March 12, 1931 by the German linguist Jost Trier. He argued that words acquire their meaning through their relationship with other words that is within the same word-field. Trier’s theory assumes that lexical fields are easily definable as close sets with no overlapping meanings or gaps. In his postulation, the term lexical field is defined as words that are related on the semantic level whose meanings delimit one another. Essentially stating that the meaning of a word can only be fully determined in contrast with the semantic field it stands in, using a diachronic approach. This meant the change of meaning of other words within a lexical field would cause change to the meaning of other words within that field as well. Trier stated that members with lexical fields encompass wholly conceptual and/or objective domains without any overlap resulting in the delimitation of the boundaries with a lexical field. A lexical field theory deals with words, their shapes, construction and forms. It is the relation of words based on similar formations which creates a lexical web that ideally shares some linguistic origins. This formulates the basis on why such lexemes are put together if they share structure and form. Lexicology of words can be seen as such an instance. This bases the argument that words are grouped similarly due to their cultural and geographical origin and these are essentially forming the lexical field theory.

Trier emphasized that mutual demarcation of words would lead to decisive answers regarding their exact values, words should not be looked at in a singular capacity rather should be judged by their relationship to other words that are semantically

related. According to Trier words acquire their meanings through the relationship they share with other words within the field. The sense of one word narrows the sense or meaning of the other word within the field, together forming a mosaic. If one word undergoes a semantic change. It alters the whole of the lexical field. Trier's Theory suggests that lexical fields are easily definable close sets with no overlapping or gaps as previously mentioned. Trier's Lexical Field Theory heavily utilizes sense relation, as lexical items contrast one another. His contrast helps to define the meaning of items. These relations take the form in syntagmatic form, although Trier's lexical field theory uses more synonyms, hyponymy and antonyms.

In the Labovian theory of linguistic variation or language change, William Labov is the pioneer variationist who initiated the quantitative approach to the analysis of linguistic variation in the sixties and the paradigm which has continued to thrive with further modifications and expansions. He stresses on "the existence of "community grammar" in the sense of a community of speakers. For example, English speakers in New York City, 1966 Swahili speakers in Mombassa and Russel's 1982 English speakers in Belfast share the same underlying grammar in the same sense" (31). What distinguishes these speakers is their different production of criteria or diagnostic linguistic variables (usually phonological). This differential production is amenable to quantitative analysis and also sensitive to various kinds of social categories by virtue of the frequency of occurrence of particular variable features in their speech as constrained by different social contexts. He evaluates that speakers are categorized in terms of socio-economic indices such as income, age, occupation such classes as lower, middle and upper and variations of these categorizations being also sensitive to ethnic, sex, geographical and generational differences. Such differences correlate more or less neatly with these classificatory distinctions and the tacit knowledge of a

functionally competent member of a speech community. Labovian social structure may be referred to as solidarity-based and relies extensively on the concept of social network. Speakers are distinguished not necessarily by socio-economic characteristics but by density of interaction and shared values and beliefs. It is on this basis that the proponents of the social network approach resorted to exploring network relationships and the possible connections of these to linguistic variation.

Labov and his colleagues isolated five problems which are embedding, transition, actuation, constraints and evaluation - in the study of linguistic change (cf. Weinreich, Igbor and Herzeg, 1968; Labov, 1972a). The embedding problem, considered from the perspective of the quantitative paradigm, for instance, is to discern the continuous matrix of social and linguistic behaviour in which linguistic change is carried out. The dynamic model also links variability and linguistic change. Illustrations with Bickerton, the Guyanese language Ndukwe notes that ‘it is a series of ‘lect’ each internally consistent but each also representing a step towards the grammar of a more standard variety of English. The outcome is a polylectal continuum representing change in progress” (44). Also when looking at Le page’s model, it equally draws attention to unpredictability of the individual’s linguistic behaviour and the individual being perceived as an active and creative agent when he says “change then is an intrinsic part of the process of everyday use of language. The individual’s language behaviour change in accordance with the demands of his everyday interaction as determined also by the social context” (44).

Data presentation and analysis

This study has identified hip-hop lect forms and associated them with their evident standard forms as implicit and explicit in the context of the lyrics of tracks selected from the works of four Nigerian Hip-hop artistes namely: Burna Boy's “Twice as Tall”,

“Wonderful” and “ African Giant”. Wizkid’s “Essence”, “Mood” and “Energy”. Davido’s “Assurance”, “Electricity” and “Stand Strong ”. Phyno’s “Connect”, “So Far So Good” and “Financial Woman”. It also focuses attention on the variants from the standard and the meanings. These data will be presented with the use of tables.

Source text	Standard English form	Hip-hop Lect form	Meaning
Burna Boy’s <i>Twice as tall</i>	Have to	Haffi (Line 18)	To hold or maintain as a possession, privilege or entitlement
	Never	Niafer (Line 27)	At no time, not under any condition
	Meet up	Level up (Line12)	Get to an expected target
	System	Vizzla (Line 49)	Group of body organs or group of related natural objects or forces
Burna Boy’s <i>On the row</i>	Stare	Televisi on your body (Line 7)	To watch in lost.

	Try and	Tryna (Line 43)	To make attempt at something
Burna Boy's Wonderful	Voodoo	Jazz (Line 25)	A person who deals in spell and necromancy. A sorcerer's spell.
P'Square's Collabo	Collaboration	Collabo (Line 384)	It is a collaboration, "the act of working jointly.
	Luck-charm	Eminado (Line 392)	"Eminado" is a word coined by Don-Jazzy and it means a charm tied at the arm those days to win a wrestling tournament the standard lexical form is "luck".
	Orgasm	Molato (Line 395)	The climax of sexual excitement, characterized by intensely pleasurable feelings centred in the genitals

			especially in female experienced as an accompaniment to ejaculation
	Pretense	Form (Lines 417)	To pretend.
Wizkid's <i>Essence</i>	Kill	Kpai lines (Line 33)	To put an end to or to cause the death of a person, animal or things.
	Girl	Gyal (Line 39)	A female child
	Can	Fi (Line 44)	Could/Can
Wizkid's <i>Mood</i>	Cool	Cooli (Line 3)	Cooling the body. To calm me down.
	Cool	Sempe (Line 9)	To calm down
	Slowly	Jeje (Line 10)	To take it slow, it can mean gently

	Hermit	Solo (Line 15)	A loner always doing things alone without the help of others. Stays alone too
	Television	Telly (Line 6)	An electronic system for transmitting images with sounds.
	Fun	Flex (Line 43)	‘Flexing’ is an urban slang meaning to show off used by Hip-hop artistes and ghetto boys. It also means enjoyment or catching fun.
	Useless	Shaku (Line 53)	Worthless, rubbish and unimportant.
Davido’s Assurance	Bigger	Biggie (Line 4)	Biggie attributes to something that’s a bit larger than the usual.

	Bold	Liver (Line 13)	Self-morale/motivation. Usually means confidence
	Penis	Cassava (Line 15)	It is used to refer to big penis.
	Alcohol	Shekpe (Line 49)	Alcohol that's too dirty or strong.
	Money	Pepper (Line 53)	Also referred to as mula or dough
Davido's <i>Electricity</i>	Worst	Baddest (Line 2)	A bad or terrible person. The worst of it all.
	Money	Mula (Line 36)	A legal tender.
Davido's <i>Stand strong</i>	Poke-nosing	Chookin ' (Lines 7)	Getting into other people's affair.

	Hibiscus flower	Zobo	Sweet drink
Phyno's Connect	Collateral	Colat (Line 2)	A property such as securities pledged by a borrower to protect the interest of the leader.
	Connection	Connect (Line 5)	A high established communications, standards and strata.
	No issues/problems	Enwelo (Line 12)	A slang to mean no problem but it implies that there's a serious consequence for your actions.
	Cheating	Irim (Line 26)	To deceive or cheat someone.
	Successful	Hammer (Line 36)	To make it in life. To become successful.

	Phonetics	Phoneh (Line 81)	British or American Accent when speaking English Language.
	Class/States man	Connee (Line 114)	It means someone with a high social profile or status
Phyno's <i>So far so good</i>	Right?	Shee (Line 40)	Validating the known facts or truth
Phyno's <i>Financial woman</i>	Loss	Shorting (Line 26)	An instance of losing
	Cheerful	Jolly jolly (Line 50)	A happy person, encounter or fellowship.
	Insecure	Okolopi (Line 69)	A bad state, in a secluded area.

As the table shows, Nigerian hip-hop artistes have used certain expressions in place of the standard forms in the English language thereby influencing the emergence of the variety which this study has referred to as hip-hop lect. This variety now

describes the hip-hop community mainly populated by the teeming youths of Nigeria. The expansion and modification of the Standard English forms in this community is radical and the hip-hop lect is being strengthened within the country and even beyond the shores of the country as a result of the international recognition the hip-hop artistes have achieved.

Moreover, it could be seen that the derivation of the hip-hop lect forms is driven by English and the local languages. The English based forms are violated by irregular pronunciation, semantic misrepresentation and symbolic designation as it could be seen in ‘penis’ as ‘cassava’. The forms that are local languages based are translations of the English forms in the local languages. Here, Igbo and Yoruba are productive and the evident reason being the tribal leanings of the selected artistes. Beside the language based hip-hop lect forms such as ‘enwelo’, ‘irim, etc from Igbo, and ‘shee’ ‘jeje’ etc from Yoruba, there are onomatopoeic and aesthetic creations such as P’Square’s ‘eminado’ and ‘molato’, Burna Boy’s ‘vizzla’, Phyno’s ‘okolopi’, etc

Conclusions

It is quite noticeable from this study that the Nigerian hip-hop lect is a variety that has emerged from hip-hop music. It is popular among the youths who are well-known to patronize hip-hop music. And as has been mentioned it has potential for across the world spread as result of the recognition the hip-hop artistes are achieving internationally.

The linguistic characterization of this lect are based on the interaction between English and the local languages. However, there is evidence of innovative introductions which has been referred to here as onomatopoeic and aesthetic creations. The forms even though have no particular language identity are used to mean whatever the artistes have used them to mean. This is

one quality of the lect that makes it flexible and equips with the capacity to grow words very productively.

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Adaorah Stellamaris Nweke is a lecturer in the Department of English & Literature, Nnamdi azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State Nigeria