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LINGUISTIC STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE OF JUDE ABAGA'S AFRO HIP-HOP SONGS

Amodu Eneojoh Jonah and Mohammed Shamir

Abstract

This paper focuses on the Linguistic Stylistic Analysis of the Language of Jude Abaga's Afro Hip-hop Songs. Two of his songs were randomly selected while relying solely on the qualitative research design for presentation and analysis of data. The paper also anchors its analysis using The Linguistic Descriptive Approach advocated by Crystal and Davy (1969) which involves investigation of language at each linguistic level (phonological, lexical, grammatical and semantic levels) as its framework of analysis. The study finds out that stylistic features such as parallelism (assonance and alliteration), slang, African American accent, the incursion of indigenous Nigerian languages such as Pidgin, Yoruba and Hausa (localization), are predominantly used in the language of Nigerian Hip-hop. It also found out that Afro Hip-hop even though shares some linguistic stylistic features with Western or American Hip-hop in terms of language use, is to a considerable extent different especially when considering some of its unique African linguistic features. Also, with the presence of African American accent pervading the songs; there is a chain of influence from American or Western Hip-hop to Nigerian Hip-hop. Yet, this influence did not yield the artist or his listeners to imbibe the norms of western life or completely alienate from their cultural heritage. This is supported considering the use of numerous stylistic features responsible for the peculiarity of Afro or Nigerian Hip-hop.

Keywords: *Linguistics, Stylistics, Stylistic Features, Nigerian Hip-hop, Afro Hip-hop*

Introduction

Any work of art, be it a piece of music, a story, a picture, a painting, a spoken or written text is uniquely recognized or identified through style. Music and in particular Hip-hop is one of such art that requires the full use of style in its language use. Hip-hop as a genre of music denotatively refers to a type of modern dance-music with spoken words and a steady beat played on electronic instruments. Hip-hop in Nigeria or Nigerian Hip-hop as popularly called consists of Hip-hop songs composed, written, arranged, sung, promoted, and marketed in Nigeria for Nigerians. The composition of these songs involves the careful use of lexis which appropriately expresses the minds of the Hip-hop singers (Omoniyi, 2006).

Several writers and scholars have traced Hip-hop back to the early 1970s, when Black parties became common in New York City, particularly in Bronx, a community well known for its large African-American population. The term 'Hip-

hop' is often credited to Keith Cowboy, a rapper with the American singing group (the Furious Five) led by DJ Grandmaster Flash. It is believed that Cowboy created the term while teasing a friend who had then joined the United States Army by scat singing (e.g., making melodies with the voice similar to musical instruments) the words 'hip/hop/hip/hop' in a way that mimicked the rhythmic cadence of marching soldiers (Omoniyi, 2006). Keyes (2002) identifies four essential elements of Hip-hop culture: graffiti, break dancing, turntabling (or DJing) and rap. The most prominent of these in contemporary times is rap, which according to Sakar, Winer and Sakar (2005) is a musical form that includes an underlying beat often created by a specialized beatmaker. The performer speaks rhythmically and in rhyme, generally to the beat in order to exert some stylistic effects to the desired audience. One major feature of the language use in Hip-hop music that makes it acceptable in most parts of the world is the sense of freedom it facilitates through its expressive nature. It has few rules regarding language use, promotes originality, and artists can sing about almost anything using different linguistic elements of stylistic effects especially on how they feel about their world.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, Hip-hop has become a very popular brand of music which is heard practically in all parts of Nigeria and is both respected and appreciated by Nigerians both young and old. However, due to this growing popularity and acceptance of Hip-hop by Nigerians, it is often misconceived that the features of Hip-hop in terms of language use in Nigeria and that of Western or American Hip-hop are the same at both their linguistic as well as stylistic levels. This led to the speculation that the youth will be alienated from the traditional norms indigenous to their African heritage and imbibe the western way of life. This paper therefore, focuses on analyzing the linguistic stylistic features that are predominantly used in Jude Abaga's lyrics as well as investigate the possible chain of influence from western Hip-hop in the use of language in Jude Abaga's Afro Hip-hop songs. Based on observations above, this paper aims at finding probable answers to the problem raised as well as enriching academic knowledge and information on the subject matter. The questions this paper intends to investigate include:

1. What linguistic stylistic features are predominantly used in Jude Abaga's Afro Hip-hop songs?

2. How is the language use in Jude Abaga's Afro Hip-hop songs compared to the Western Hip-hop?
3. What linguistic stylistic features show possible chain of influence in the language of Western Hip-hop on Jude Abaga's Afro Hip-hop songs?

Biosketch of Jude Abaga and Hip-hop in Nigeria

Jude Abaga was born on the 4th of October, 1981 in Jos, Plateau State, He is better known by the stage name M. I. Abaga. He is a Nigerian Hip-hop recording artist whose music career was influenced by his parents Pastor and Mrs Abaga from Takum, Taraba State. M. I. as he is fondly called has over the years won several awards in his musical career including the MTV Africa Music Awards 2009 and a nomination in the Best International Act category at the BET Awards 2010. He rose to prominence in 2006 when his song "Crowd Mentality" became popular in his hometown of Jos. He is currently a music executive at Chocolate City and on 11th December 2008 released his critically acclaimed debut album; 'Talk about it' while in 2018 dropped his recent album titled 'Yung Denzel'.

Hip-hop in Nigeria has been in the mainstream for more than a decade signifying the openness of the music scene to global influence as a result of trans-cultural flows. Hip-hop in Nigeria is sometimes called 'gbedu' or 'afro hip-hop' and its arrival dates back to the late eighties and early nineties. Nigerian Hip-hop made use of certain pre-existing forms of music like funk, disco, high life when it first arrived. Rap trio 'Emphasis' (a rap group) during this time, released their major hit 'big deal' which for the first time used pidgin indigenous in Nigeria in rap and represents a culmination of a decade of experiments of Nigerian artists combining rap with funk, disco and high life.

Hip-hop in Nigeria (Afro Hip-hop)

This part reviews key variables as it relates to the topic. The essence of this is to explore and provide a conceptual framework for discussion and analysis. The language of Hip-hop generally as outlined by Androutsopoulos and Scholz (2003), Androutsopoulos, (2007, 2009) has received scholarly interest from both a sociolinguistic and a literacy pedagogical perspective. Sociolinguistic studies of Hip-hop have mostly been interested in the relationship between Hip-hop language and African American English and the local appropriations of Hip-hop in various countries and regions outside the USA involving linguistic hybridity. As earlier

described in the introduction, a variant of Hip-hop language that has received global recognition and of particular interest for this paper due to its unique use of language is the Nigerian/Afro Hip-hop. The uniqueness of Afro Hip-hop lies in its language of delivery giving it a distinctive characteristic because the real ingenuity is revealed in the use of pidgin English blended nicely with Yorùbá, Igbo, Hausa or any other language to produce melodies just as nice as any of the foreign ones.

Scholars such as Adesioye (2009) have observed that music is a kind of tool towards the creation of an identity which in a way manifests the projection of Nigeria's Afro Hip-hop, that is the creation of a unique sound that is truly African in style and language of delivery. Hip-hop is being re-defined by Nigerian artists and taken back to Africa which has been credited as its origin. This is partly because many Nigerian artists have tried, unsuccessfully, to mimic the lyrics, beats and sounds of American Hip-hop. Some would rap in English, not necessarily the language they were most at ease with. Others would adopt fake American accents and use slangs that originated from America's inner cities but bore little resemblance to the reality of modern Nigerian life. Thus, Adesioye (2009) remarks that it is not surprising that [these] Nigerian urban artists soon found themselves ridiculed as poor imitators of American Hip-hop. Perhaps in reaction to this rejection and lack of patronage in the formative years when Nigeria's Hip-hop was still looking for acceptance while the culture was beclouded with rejection as being too foreign and incomprehensible; these propelled young Nigerian Hip-hop artists began to make a change of agenda by going back to their roots while engaging with their audience directly in the language they understand i.e. the Nigerian mother tongues, and appropriating elements from the existing popular music genres like jùjú, fújì or highlife.

Style, Stylistics and Linguistic Stylistics

Style generally is a way or manner of expressing one's thoughts. Style is also distinctive in the sense that the language used in some way is significant for the thematic design of any genre. This distinctive aspect of style is predicated upon the fact that from a variety of items of language, the language user chooses and arranges them, depending on the genre, form, theme, or the user's general disposition. Holman (1980) says that style is "the arrangement of words in a manner which at best expresses the individuality of the author, the idea and the intent in the author's mind". To Holman, the best style, for any given purpose, is that which most clearly approximates a perfect adaptation of one's language to one's ideas. Style is a

combination of two elements: the idea to be expressed and the individuality of the author

Stylistics on the other hand is an aspect of linguistics that studies language variation informed by certain factors. As Murana (2011) puts it, Stylistics is not limited to the study of written language but however, a study that is logical. Verdonk (2002) opines that Stylistics, the study of style in language, can be defined as the analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect. The field of Stylistics has received several definitions most of which relate the field to the scientific study of style. Amongst its major concern is the analysis of language use from the linguistic stylistic perspective or the literary stylistic perspective. Some scholars however may find the terms Literary Stylistics and Linguistic Stylistics confusing. Any such study that relies heavily on external correlates with none or just a smattering of attention to the 'rules guiding the operation of the language' can be regarded as literary Stylistics. The converse of this premise (i.e. a study that relies heavily on the rules guiding the operation of the language in the explication of a literary text) is what is regarded here as linguistic Stylistics. Stylistics requires the use of traditional levels of linguistic description such as sounds, form, structure and meaning. Thus, the investigation of the consistent appearance of certain structures, items and elements in speech or in a given text is one of the major concerns of Stylistics. A linguistic Stylistic study however, is concerned with the varieties of language and the exploration of some of the formal linguistic features which characterize them.

Review of Related Previous Studies

This segment reviews works on the stylistic analysis of language use in Afro Hip-hop. It is important however to note that very few applied linguists have studied discursive practices in relation to the language of Hip-hop songs. From this point, Fenn and Perullo (2000) looked at choices of language in Hip-hop music in Tanzania and Malawi, two neighboring East African nations. They note that rap music is carried out in the two major languages in Tanzania, Swahili and English. While English rap borrows heavily from American Hip-hop discourse, with such themes as parties and friends, Swahili rap focuses on issues pertinent to Tanzanians, like AIDS, drug use, corruption, unemployment and immigration from the country. The historical process that allowed Swahili to be the most widely spoken language in Tanzania, and English to be the dominant political and economic language, created a unique environment for Hip-hop culture to develop. Though Swahili dominates the

country's Hip-hop scene, English continues to play a significant role in rap. The scholars (Fenn and Perullo 2000) observe that Tanzanian Hip-hop musicians mediate between English and Swahili, relying on both languages to construct a unique landscape for their music. Thus, this paper unlike Fenn and Perullo's centers on the artistic use of language in Nigerian Hip-hop and extends to not only how the language is used but also analyzing the stylistic features created and used in lyrics of Nigerian Hip-hop songs.

Another research by Omojola (2006) on popular music in Western Nigeria: theme, style and patronage system reveals that the domination of the Nigerian popular music by Nigerians has impacted the music industry in numerous ways by transforming the content, style and appeal of the music; the genre evolved out of a relative state of obscurity to occupy international market space. In transforming the content of the music, Nigerian Hip-hop artists innovatively adapted Hip-hop performance to align with local contexts and social realities along with appropriating multiple local languages to convey their messages. Omojola (2006) indicates that the practitioners of Hip-hop in Nigeria did not discard the global stylistic elements of Hip-hop in the process of localizing the music. For Omojola, the Nigerian artists combined the artistic style of Afro-American percussion with local content in order to provide a somewhat hybridized musical genre. In any case, the phenomenon of multilingualism in Nigerian Hip-hop appears to be a marketing strategy to either reach or unify the numerous audiences who are of different ethnic extractions, or to attempt to break the apparent language barriers experienced by other ethnic or regional popular genres such as those sung in only one language. Irrespective of the diverse stylistic motives of the artists in adopting multilingual lyrics, the phenomenon appears to be imaginative on the part of the artists. Even though Omojola's focus shares some similarities with the focus of this paper, this paper tends to dig deep into the actual use of language in Nigerian Hip-hop; explores specifically the linguistic stylistic features in the language as well as uncover how different Nigerian Hip-hop is to Western Hip-hop.

In 2009, a linguistic study of Nigerian musical artists by Agbo, he observes that the skillful use of code-switching by Hip-hop artists to enhance the aesthetic and rhetorical qualities of their music is demonstrated vividly. Agbo reveals that these language-alternation patterns involve major Nigerian languages and English. The artists' use of language(s) interacts with elements of the lyrical structure itself (lines, rhymes and stanzas) which he says enhance the musical quality of the artists' work. Agbo observes that code-switching by Nigerian artists also has other connotations:

It is perceived as a marker of the artists' linguistic identities and preferences. Agbo's study succeeds in giving this present research an insight to some of the features present in the use of language of Afro Hip-hop songs. In comparison, the concern of this paper goes beyond revealing these features to include establishing the peculiarity of Nigerian Hip-hop and as well investigate the chain of influence of western Hip-hop to Nigerian Hip-hop.

From the studies reviewed, it is important to note that the language of Hip-hop music and culture have always been about individual and communal expression and not necessarily concerned with 'proper' use of language. The use of language in Hip-hop songs/lyrics will however, help a listener or viewer (regardless of where they are) to hear and understand the social, political, economic and often religious situation in which the artist dwells. In the same vein, Hip-hoppers in Nigeria tend to use extensive code-switching and mixing in their language use when compared to their western counterparts. It is clear that because the expression of thoughts in Hip-hop is so personal, it tends to be grounded in local or regional syntax, dialect, slang, vernacular and other literary tools for communication which are all linked to the language in use.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on the linguistic stylistic model provided by Crystal and Davy (1969). Thus, the linguistic descriptive approach is used in analyzing the extracted data in order to account effectively for the aim and objectives of the study. The Linguistic Descriptive Approach advocated by Crystal and Davy (1969) involves investigation of language at each linguistic level. The approach which seems more satisfactory in realizing the general aims of stylistic analysis involves taking the object of study-a particular piece of language, or text-and discussing it in terms of a number of interrelated levels of description. At each level, the analysis involves studying one aspect of the way in which language is organized: these may include Phonological, Graphological, Grammatical, Lexical and the Semantic levels (Crystal & Davy, 1969). In this regard Crystal and Davy asserts that:

...the process of stylistic analysis we are recommending is therefore one in which ordered selection and comment are carried out within parallel frameworks, one stylistic, the other linguistic. The stylistic framework contains the dimensions of description and their sub-classification; the linguistic framework contains the levels of analysis and their sub-

classification. There are two distinct places where stylistic decisions enter into the analysis: at the beginning, when they may be used intuitively, as the motivation for selecting a text and a set of linguistic features to talk about; and at the end, when the aim is to formalize intuitions by establishing the entire range of linguistic correlates, and by pointing to the pattern which is felt to be there. The process should enable statements to be made about the range of varieties which exist within a language, and thus provide a basis for comparing languages from a stylistic point of view....

Crystal and Davy argue that the central requirement of a linguistic stylistic study is to provide a single clear technique of description with which to cope with any piece of language. They further opine that:

...the central requirement of any linguistically oriented approach to the classification of stylistic effect is that it should provide a single, clear technique of description which will allow the student to cope with any piece of language he wants to study....

On the above basis however, the analysis involved in this paper is done using four different linguistic levels which are the phonological level, the lexical level, grammatical and semantic levels.

Method of Data Collection

This paper analyses lyrics of two songs (anoti and monkey) written and composed by the Nigerian Hip-hop artist Jude Abaga (M.I. Abaga). The sampling technique used for this paper is the simple random sampling of probability sampling procedure. Thus, the internet was used to collate the audio recordings of the two songs and lyrics. Data were also extracted from the audio CD recordings of the artist's five musical works and then compared with that from the internet for proper validation using the observation method. The observation used here lies in form of listening to the songs and taking note of the required data. Unstructured interview is also carried out which aimed at revealing data not rendered through observation. The data gathered from the internet and audio CDs are further explained in a qualitative manner.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The first work on the analysis is taken from Jude Abaga's 2008 album "Talk about it" and the two songs selected are 'Anoti'.

Analysis of Anoti

Phonological Level

At the phonological level, there are stylistic features such as repetition, assonance and alliteration. Repetition in this song is seen as a feature that involves repeating a word or a syllable; this is evident for instance in the first line of the chorus where the first phrase is repeated again i.e., they call they call... and also in the chorus ...anoti, anoti elele. Ehn? Tiye, tiye, tiye lele ti Anoti, anoti elele Ehn? Nana titi, nana titi. The stylistic effect purportedly derived in the use of this form of repetition at the beginning of the song is for emphasis, it is anticipated to capture the attention of listeners to the intended message. Other areas of repetition include repeating the last syllable of ...incredible, lyrically impeccable in the second line and brand in the first, second and third lines of verse one; thus, creating a rhyming pattern to add juice to the melody of the song.

Assonance is also another feature that reflects in the song. This feature is evident in the 12th line down to the 17th line of verse one where the vowel /? / appears rhythmically in the last word of each sentence i.e. ...koko, loco, ...soko, ...morocco, ...shoko, ...yo. The stylistic effect anticipated from the consistent use of this feature lies in its ability to enable the play of words and syllables with the same vowel sound. It also seems to make it easier for listeners to mimic the lines and show how intelligent the artist is when playing with words.

Alliteration as observed here is a stylistic feature that adds more rhyme to the selected words in a song by using the same consonant either at the beginning, middle and end of the words. Its use in this song creates a musical effect that draws attention to the words that alliterate. An example is clearly seen in line 10 to 14 of verse two where the sound /k/ is used to show a lyrical play of words that rhyme i.e. ...I got the magic, static, I got the chrome automatic, so systematic, erratic, flow so melodic, erotic, chronic, so supersonic, bionic. Another example can also be seen in the last three lines of verse two where words ending with the nasal velar consonant sound / ?/ are used to create a repeated flow of the sound. This stylistic effect contributes to the artist's popularity.

Lexical Level

The lexical level looks at stylistic features in whole words. Unlike the phonological level that analyses language at the sound level, the lexical level brings forth text and extracts its stylistic features thus showing usage and relevance to purpose. These features include slang and acronyms. For example, the slang terms used in the song includes ...jam, ...koko, ...loko, ...soko, smoke. Some of these terms have their origins rooted in our indigenous languages especially Yoruba i.e. “koko” and “soko”. The first is used to refer to something or someone which is regarded highly and appreciated due to its importance and swag whereas the second is assumed to be gotten from the Yoruba word “Sokoto” which means pants. Since Afro Hip-hop partly serves as a voice of the street, the artist tries as much to establish the street in him by including these street slangs. In turn, listeners and lovers of his songs are susceptible to easily see him as street inclined. Another stylistic effect anticipated from the use of these slang words is identity. Their use is clearly anticipated to give listeners the clue of where the artist is from and who he chose as his target audience. Another lexical feature of Stylistics found in this song is the use of initialism. For example, the stage name of the artist himself M.I. is a combination of two initials from two different words “Mr. Incredible” used in the first line of the chorus, first line in verse one, verse two and other places in the song. Another initial used in the song includes 'J-town'. “J” is an acronym used to represent the word 'Jos'. Jos is the name of the capital city of Plateau State where the artist grew up. It is usually a tradition in Hip-hop for artists to create nicknames or rather slang codes for their beloved cities in order to express their absolute love and link their identity to such cities especially when they are proud of such. The stylistic effect anticipated in the use of 'J town' in the song expresses more than just a name of a city; it represents the artist's beloved home to the world, revealing his ethnic identity as well as advertising the city to the world. Abbreviations are also present in the lyrics which includes U.S, MIC, MP, MT, MC, 2G. One of the effects anticipated from using these devices in the lyric/song is to show how versatile the artist is as well as his creativity. It also shows elements of ingenuity to the African or rather Nigerian slang or code. Another stylistic significance of the use of abbreviation is to show where the artist had travelled or been to in the past.

Since the language of Hip-hop is generally spoken, it is definitely bound to have many contractions either at the word level or at the sentence level. The first instance is found in line four of the intro where the artist uses ...cmon... for the phrase “come on”. Others include cant, don't, I'm, let's for cannot, do not, I am, let us

respectively. This clearly indicates that contraction sometimes could be to guarantee and sustain the flow in the song or to also show swag.

Grammatical Level

This level analyses the song in terms of the language used, stylistic features embedded in the sentences as well as the intended effect of such. The first feature is localization; it is a feature that introduces the use of indigenous languages in the song. Thus, among its stylistic effects is to identify with the target audience. For instance, the chorus as shown below is in the Yoruba language whereas the verses are done using African American English and pidgin with features of code switching and mixing.

Anoti, anoti elele. Ehn?
Tiye, tiye, tiye lele ti
Anoti, anoti elele Ehn?
Nana titi, nana titi

Instances of code mixing are found in the outro ...J. Town wa feel e Ha! Lagos wa feel e Ha! London wa feel e Ha! U.S wa feel e Ha and code switching in

It's Chocolate City
Ehn, ohun ni yen
Séti ri gbo?
Awon eleyi
Anoti, ohun ni won
Aleti, ohun ni idan won

Instances of AAE usage are evident in both verse one and two i.e in line 7 down to the last line of verse two

..But you ain't got groove
You ain't got what it takes to make the club move
I got the magic, static
I got the chrome automatic
So systematic, erratic
Flow so melodic, erotic, chronic
So supersonic, bionic
You can get on it

Flow in a bar nigga English broken
Lyrically smoking
Nigeria's Hip-hop talking
You got to be joking

Cultural identity, acknowledgment of target audience and also living up to the stage name are some of the stylistic effects associated with the multilingual nature of this song. Another feature having much significance in Afro Hip-hop is the use of metaphors. Metaphor draws a subtle comparison between two dissimilar things. It is used in Hip-hop to create images that appeal to the imaginations of the audience more potently than literal language. In other words, the artist uses metaphors to create pictures of ideas which potentially linger in the mind more than mere words. A clear example is found in line four of verse two ...It's that incredible mister, the cardiac arrester.... Here, the artist is describing himself and his music having the same impact on his listeners as that of a cardiac attack. The interpretation of the metaphor goes beyond its literal sense to show how explosive and good he is with his kind of music. A similar example is also found in line eighteen of verse one where the artist said ...feel my vocal, along this local instrumental focal point to drive you mental. These metaphorical expressions do not only intensify the points made by the artist but also make them vivid as they are drawn from familiar concepts to describe the less familiar tenor.

Rhetorical questions are often used in Hip-hop songs in order to indulge the listener's attention to a fact in the song. Sentences such as ...seti ri gbo? ...anoti anoti elele, ehn?... are instances of the use of rhetorical questions in Afro Hip-hop songs. In the same way, some of the sentences subconsciously undergo the syntactic process of ellipsis which involves the omission of a grammatically required word or phrase that can be inferred. Examples include line twelve of verse one down to line fourteen i.e. ...let me be the koko, drive you loko, rocks you from koko to soko which if represented in writing will read for instance – let me be the koko thatwill drive you loko and rock you from koko to soko. These features stylistically demonstrate the lyrical prowess of the artist which in turn have his listeners believing he is really good in the rap game.

Semantic Level

This level explores stylistic features and their meaning in sentences, phrases and clauses and even in words. In other words, this linguistic level analyzes the

meaning of words as used in an utterance and or sentence for a desired stylistic effect. In Anoti, phrases such as ...brand new jam connotes a new song that is highly rated. The word "jam" in Hip-hop is used to refer to a song especially a rap song. Other instances include ...let me be the koko; in the song, it means let me be the talk of the town, the main attraction...from koko to soko i.e. from being dope to being extra dope-so to say. ...lyrically smoking; since the word 'hot' in Hip-hop can be used to show the degree of how important and exquisite something is, 'smoking' then is used here to connote the same meaning as hot. The possible difference between the two is in the preference of the word smoking since majority of Hip-hop artists patronize the habit of smoking and as such whoever smokes is considered a dope guy. Related to this is another instance in line seventeen ...You don't feel my vibe, you gon feel my smoke yo

The above words and phrases are mostly understood by the youth and by implication, the artist places himself in the same level of understanding as his listeners who understand his flow. It also makes this class of people accept him as their own as well as show his geo-linguistic identity to the outside world as anticipated.

Another instance at the semantic level is the phrase ...Nigeria's Hip-hop talking; here the artist is referring to himself as an icon of what African Hip-hop is, in other words, he is the definition of afro Hip-hop. One important stylistic effect of the phrase is the pride, self-acclamation and self-affirmation of the artist's undisputed rivalry as number one in the afro Hip-hop world. Yet, the phrase is a figure of speech which personifies Nigeria's Hip-hop as having the human quality of talking. Another figure of speech used is 'simile' which is found in line five of verse two where the artist mention ...flow like twista....

Analysis of Monkey

Phonological Level

The form of repetition at this level is mostly occurring on syllables of a word, the word itself or repetition of a whole phrase. An instance of this is found in the whole chorus of the song. Thus:

Dem be dey, dem be dey, dem be dey
Dem be dey, dem be dey look me like monkey o...ewo
Dem no know, dem no know, dem no know, dem no know
Dem dem no know, dem no know, i dey look them like

banana
na na na na...

The repetition involved in the chorus is likely for rhythmic purposes only as it creates a suitable melody that can easily be mimicked by listeners of the music. Other forms of repetition are evident in line four, five and six of verse two i.e. ...and now you can't tell me ish, you expected me to be perishing, but i am doing well, no embellishing. The function played by this form of repetition is for rhythmic purposes so as to create a smooth flow of words in the song. Another example of this form of repetition is evident in the last line of the chorus i. ... i dey look them like banana...na na na na.... Another form of syllabic repetition at this level is clearly presented in line five down to line eight of the first verse where the artist repeatedly used the syllable – cal and other syllables that are similar to it in order to create a rhyming pattern i.e.

...I'll screw them like principal
With my musical,
cuz my weapon eh, isn't physical
It's not analog, it's not digital
It's not ping-dical, it's BB-lical

It is also noted that some words that appear in the sentences where the syllabic repetition takes place are also assimilated thereby undergoing a derivational process which in turn makes these words lose their denotative meanings. For example, adding the suffix – dical and – lical to 'ping' and 'BB' creates new whole words whose meanings are not clear. Obviously, the artist is not bothered about creating correct grammatical words but rather in repeating rhymed pattern. This also adds weight to the assertion that the language of Afro Hip-hop does not always follow the rules of grammar.

It is important to mention that even though the song is dominantly sung using pidgin and AAE; the accent used all through the song is of the African American accent even where some of the sentences are in pidgin. The reason for this as observed is in the artist's desire to have his style of Afro Hip-hop closely related to American Hip-hop. However, the intro takes a different turn where Nigerian English, AAE and pidgin are used; the accent used there is Nigerian even where some of the expressions are AAE sentences i.e. ...you gonna make it, no matter what they do to you, you gonnarise like a phoenix from the fire.... In as much as

Afro Hip-hop artists try to be influenced by American Hip-hop or even copy some of their features, the pressure and influence from their mother tongue and the Nigerian English accent will definitely reflect in their use of language thereby exposing their true Nigerian identity.

Lexical Level

Slang has been the consistent feature found throughout the analysis. Slang adds flavor to the music genre as well as serve as a form of identification of the artist with a particular peer group who creates and uses these words. For example, the slang word “naija” has been used in the song to represent the name of the country (Nigeria). Today, the word is widely accepted both in the music industry as well as the youth language representing a unique feature of creativity in the language of Afro Hip-hop. The slang “ish” is also used to refer to something done or said as used in line thirteen of verse three. Its origin is possibly traced to AAE which is obvious considering the artist's frequent use of the African American English in his songs. Sometimes, the words created and used in Nigerian Hip-hop carry little or no meaning as the artists are mostly only concerned with creating and using them for rhyming purpose especially if they are preceded or in the middle of a rhyming pattern. For example, ...pingdical and ...BBlical. Another feature is the use of slogans which represents a popular saying with a humorous effect. For example, the phrase ...all of you that are sharing blood is a comment made by Nigeria's first lady of the Goodluck Jonathan's administration that has gain popularity due to its grammatical nature and is now used by the artist to create humour in the song. Other features however are acronym and contraction. Examples of contraction includes ...naija there's God found in line nine of verse one, ...I've been disrespected and ...see you wasn't right. Thus, since the language of Hip-hop is usually spoken, elements of contraction are definitely going to be numerous.

Repetition at the word level is also observed which is done especially in pidgin. For example, line thirteen of verse one ...see before before, you no free your guy... the word 'before' is borrowed from English and reduplicated in pidgin in order to show emphasis in the intended message. It is often a tradition for Nigerian pidgin to reduplicate a word in order to show emphasis or degree at which the word is emphasized. It is therefore observed that when there is need for an Afro Hip-hop artist to show or use these features, he immediately switches to pidgin since English does not give room for such reduplication.

Grammatical level

At this level, the play of words is featured with Nigerian English, AAE, some indigenous Nigerian languages, code-switching, code-mixing and pidgin with each feature having a role or purpose of effectiveness to the listeners as well as users of this language of Hip-hop. In order to define his identity, the artist started his sentence using Nigerian English i.e. ...this song is just for you people... This obviously sets out the genre of music listeners are about to listen to and as well appease to the listening pleasure of the target audience who are particularly speakers of Nigerian English. Code-mixing follows in the second line i.e All of you wey think, you know, people try to bring you down and also in Yo, Madam na only you waka come. In the extract, Nigerian English is code-mixed with the pidgin word “weh” which replaces “who” in English while in the second, the AAE word “yo” is code-mixed with the pidgin slogan “Madam na only you waka come”. African American English is also represented in different lines in the song; for instance, in the intro ...You gonna make it, no matter what they do to you, you gonna rise like a phoenix from the fire, you get it too, Yea... and in the fourteenth and seventeenth line of verse two i.e. ...aint no stopping me and So convertible, ain't no topping me. In instances of pidgin however, the chorus itself is sung using pidgin as is in the extract above. More instances of pidgin are found in the first line of verse one i.e. Madam na only you waka come. Others are Dem dey look me like vagabond, but I say hin no matter; see before before, you know free your guy; I don pass them, i don elevate; If you send me leg, them i break am; or I jump am but i must make am. It is important to mention that the fusion of this Englishes combined with pidgin and other Nigerian languages show the language dynamism of Afro Hip-hop as well as the curling of targeted audience from regions where these languages are spoken.

Rhetorical questions are not left out as they are devices that frequently add flavor and indulge listeners' attention to the punch lines. For instance, verse two line seven uses a rhetorical question in order to introduce a popular Hip-hop name created by the Hip-hop icon Micheal Jackson i.e. ...you denied me? Ask Billie Jean....demonstrates the artist's alignment, association and interest in some iconic American Hip-hop treasures and also to tap from the icon's love of his songs by the people to the artist himself.

Semantic Level

At the semantic level, the sentence ...if you send me leg, den I break am or I jump am but I must make am clearly carries a meaning different from its mere literal sense. Thus, the artist is sending an implied and or coded message to his haters of his determination to becoming successful despite their ill threats. Certain figures of speech such as simile and metaphor are reflected in the song so as to make it more poetic. The first instance is found in line ten of the intro i.e. ...you gonna rise like a phoenix from the fire.... In line seven of verse three however, the sentence ...what I've been through, like my left thumb... and in the chorus ...dem be dey look me like vagabond, ...I dey look dem like banana..., dem b dey look me like monkey oh ewo... are all examples of simile. These last two examples of simile are aesthetics which are of Nigerian origin popularly expressed to mean “while they think they are clever; they are unaware that I am cleverer than them and they are just dumb”. Sometimes meanings of words are over extended to cover certain aspects which does not relate to the conceptual meaning of the word or its features. In line fifteen of the first verse, the word 'ping' is used to mean dragging someone down to his down fall i.e. ...you can't ping me down.... The word as used in the sentence serves a new meaning from its accustomed meaning which is a term used in blackberry messenger by a user to get the attention of another user. This extended meaning clearly shows the liberty at the disposal of Afro Hip-hop artists to stylistically create and or add more functions to words.

General Discussion

The investigation carried out in this paper primarily involves the linguistic stylistic analysis of the language of Jude Abaga's Afro Hip-hop songs reveals a series of ground breaking features. The analysis which was done based on Crystal and Davy's 1969 model of linguistic description of spoken language has taken into account the linguistic stylistic variables featured in the language of Nigerian Hip-hop. The analysis carried out was based on the phonological level, lexical, grammatical as well as the semantic level.

From the analysis, it was observed that the dominant linguistic features of stylistic importance that are predominantly used in Hip-hop songs in Nigeria at the phonological level include parallelism and the African American accent. Parallelism involves assonance and alliteration which are mostly added to give a rhythmic effect to the songs and also give them a more poetic sense. Examples of this is evident in the 12th line down to the 17th line of verse one of the song “Anoti” where the vowel /ə/ appears rhythmically in the last word of each sentence i.e.

...koko, ...loco, ...soko, ...morocco, ...shoko, ...yo. Parallelism as a stylistic feature does not only add flavour to Afro Hip-hop songs but as well gives room to the artist to emphasize his points in a poetic manner. On the listeners however, it is anticipated that parallelism helps the artist to capture the attention of his listeners towards the intended theme of the songs. Another stylistic effect of parallelism is for rhyming purposes as it eases the smooth flow of words in the songs and thus making them easier to learn by listeners. Another example is also clearly seen in line 10 to 14 of verse two where the sound /k/ is used to show a lyrical play of words that rhyme i.e. ...I got the magic, static, I got the chrome automatic, so systematic, erratic, flow so melodic, erotic, chronic, so supersonic, bionic. Another feature at the lexical level that adds humour to the language of Afro Hip-hop is in the use of onomatopoeic words. The use of onomatopoeic words even though is sometimes mocking in nature adds humour and creates laughter bringing in the street language to Afro Hip-hop as well as having listeners believe the artist's street inclination. The analysis also reveals that rhetorical questions are often employed in order to involve the listeners actively into understanding the lyrics of the song as well as indulging their acknowledgement and approval to some of the issues raised in the Afro Hip-hop songs. Pervertious statements and words of vulgar are also occasionally included in the language of Afro Hip-hop which as anticipated is used to make the artist look hardcore, fearless and bad. Being bad in the Hip-hop language does not relate to any negative connotation, instead it represents brevity, swag and fly on the side of the artist and also whose attributes are given to their songs.

It is also observed that the use of the African American accent while uttering words or sentences of AAE origin or pidgin or any African language is predominant in the language of Nigerian Hip-hop. This stylistic feature as observed is anticipated to bring in the American or Western Hip-hop flavor in the language used in Afro Hip-hop. It is further anticipated that the presence of African American accent enables the artist to align closely with American or Western Hip-hop. Other features that are predominantly used in Afro Hip-hop as identified in the analysis include slang, slogans, localization and clipping. These features reveal the creative nature embedded in the language of Afro Hip-hop. The localization process from the analysis reveals the multilingual nature of the language of Afro Hip-hop as it enables its artists to stylishly use these features to create new words which eventually gain acceptance and usage by listeners of Afro Hip-hop. The effect drawn from these features is anticipated to show how versatile Afro Hip-hop artists are as well as their creativity in language use. As anticipated, it also shows elements

of ingenuity to the African or rather Nigerian slang or code. These slangy expressions are anticipated to add flavor to Afro Hip-hop songs as well as serve as a form of identification of an artist with a particular peer group who create and use these expressions. In essence, creativity and identity are the end result of involving these features in the language of Afro Hip-hop as they yet signify lyrical prowess of the artists as well as identifying and or categorizing their songs to the Nigerian context.

Humour is yet another effect observed from the use of these features especially when it involves onomatopoeic words or slogans while the use of clipping as observed makes the flow of words smooth and rhythmical making Afro Hip-hop songs easier to learn and mimic by listeners. Figures of speech such as metaphor, simile, personification and hyperbole are also found in almost all the songs analysed which as anticipated tend to add an even more poetic sense in the language used in the lyrics.

Several features from the analysis especially at the grammatical level reveal the peculiarities that distinguish Nigerian Hip-hop to other forms of Hip-hop particularly Western Hip-hop in the area of language use. Thus, the multilingual nature of the language of Nigerian Hip-hop as observed is one unique feature found only in the language of Afro Hip-hop where artistes code-switch and code-mix between AAE, Yoruba, Hausa and pidgin in order to show how rich and versatile the language of Afro Hip-hop is as well as their familiarity to these languages. Thus, the anticipated effect derived from the usage of this peculiar feature is in the artist's ability to identify with his listeners who are predominantly Nigerians or lovers of the Nigerian version of Hip-hop.

The use of initials or abbreviations is also evident as they are used to replace explicit words. This feature is also common in most Western or American Hip-hop songs as a means of controlling the use of vulgar and other explicit terms prohibited for use by music regulating bodies. Clipping is yet another feature found in the language of Afro Hip-hop and Western Hip-hop generally. Its use results in creativity and eases the flow of words in a song. A near universal example of clipping is the word 'because' which if clipped becomes 'cuz'. The reason obviously is because clipping the word 'because' to 'cuz' makes the flow of words smooth and rhythmical and since the language of Hip-hop is usually spoken, it has become a Hip-hop tradition to almost always substitute 'because' for 'cuz'. Similarly, since the language of Afro Hip-hop and Hip-hop generally is spoken, it is bound to have

several elements of contraction. Contraction as observed eases the flow of words in an Afro Hip-hop song and this is obviously attributed to its spoken nature. This feature according to the analysis leads to the conclusion that Afro Hip-hop and Western or American Hip-hop are indeed similar in some ways as far as their language use is concerned or in other words, it revealed the anticipated influence from American Hip-hop to Nigerian or Afro Hip-hop.

Conclusion

The analysis from this study has clearly elaborated on the significance and influence of Western Hip-hop on the language of Afro Hip-hop. In as much as the two varieties of Hip-hop share some linguistic stylistic features together, they also differ considering some other linguistic stylistic features specific to each of them. The reason for these differences in language use as anticipated is attributed to the regional life experiences as well as the multilingual proficiency of Afro Hip-hop artistes.

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Jonah Eneojoh Amodu (PhD) is an Associate Professor with the Department of English, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. He teaches and researches Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics and Applied English Linguistics.
Email: amodujonah@yahoo.co.uk

Mohammed Shamir holds an M. A. English degree from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He is also a lecturer with the Department of English at the Federal College of Education, Zaria.