



GOMBE SAVANNAH

JOURNAL OF
LANGUAGE, LITERATURE
& COMMUNICATION STUDIES
(GOSAJOLLCOS)



DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES
AND LINGUISTICS
GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY



Volume 7 | Number 1 | JUNE, 2026



Savannah Journal of Language, Literature and Communication Studies (SAJOLLCOS)

Vol. 7 No. 1: June, 2026 — ISSN: 2787-0286 & 2811-2261 (Online & Print)

**SAVANNAH JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND COMMUNICATION
STUDIES (SAJOLLCOS)**

**DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS,
GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY**



VOLUME 7 NO. 1, JUNE 2026

ISSN: ONLINE: 2811-2261, PRINT: 2787-0286

**A Publication of Department of Languages and Linguistics
Gombe State University, Gombe State.**

**Copyright © 2026 SAVANNAH JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND
COMMUNICATION STUDIES
(SAJOLLCOS) Gombe State University, Gombe State. Volume 7, No. 1 June, 2026.**



© Department of Languages and Linguistics, 2026
Gombe State University,
Tudun-wada Jauro Abare, Gombe -
Nigeria.

All rights reserved.

No part or whole of this Journal is allowed to be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, without prior permission of the Copyright owner.

ISSN: 2787-0286 Print & 2811-2261 Online

Printed in Nigeria @Six-Sweet Printers and Publishers

GSU, Gombe, Gombe State.

Phone No: +2348039511789

E-mail: alameenalaira@gmail.com

The Journal

Gombe Savannah Journal of Language, Literature and Communication Studies (GOSAJOLLCOS) is a peer-reviewed journal of the Department of English, Gombe State University. The journal is committed to the development of communication arts through researches in Language, Linguistics, Literature, Theatre Arts, Cultural Studies, Creative Arts, Media and Communication Studies. It has both print and online versions. The Editorial board hereby calls for thoroughly researched papers and articles on the subject areas already mentioned. Submissions of papers are accepted all year round but publication is expected to be done in May/June annually. All manuscripts should be accompanied with the sum of ten thousand (~~N~~**10,000**) naira only. On acceptance of any manuscript, contributors will pay the sum of twenty five thousand (25,000) naira only as publication fee.



Editorial Committee

Dr. Abubakar Mohammed Gombe
Dr. Leah I. Jalo
Dr. Fatima Shuaibu Gara
Fatima M. Gurama
Mohammad Abubakar Musa

Editor-in-chief
Editor
Member
Member
Editorial Secretary

Advisory Board

Professor Saleh Abdu

Department of English,
Federal University Kashere

Professor Emmanuel S. Dandaura

University

Department of Theatre and
Cultural Studies, Nasarawa State

Professor Muhammad Dahiru
State University

Department of Languages, Yobe

Professor A. S. Abdulsalam
Languages,

Department of Linguistics and Nigerian
University of Ilorin

Professor E. U. Ahidjo

Department of English, University of Jos

Professor Nahum Upah Butari

Department of English and Drama,
Kaduna State University

Professor Nesta Alu

Department of English, University of Jos

Editorial Policy

Savannah Journal of Languages, Literature and Communication Studies is Produced by the department of English and Literary Studies, Gombe State University, Gombe Nigeria. It invites scholarly and well researched articles on any topic related to language, literary and communication studies. Authors of article(s) should adhere to the following requirements:

- Manuscript(s) should be double spaced on A4 paper with 12 points, Times New Roman.
- Manuscript(s) length should not exceed 5000 words, including titles, references and/or notes.



- Abstract(s) should not be more than 250 words, followed by four to five keywords.
- Manuscript(s) sent to SAJOLLCOS must be original and previously unpublished.
- Manuscript(s) should adopt either the APA 7th edition or MLA 8th edition format
- Title(s) and subtitles should conform to the adopted referencing style.
- Manuscript(s) would be subjected to editing and peer reviews prior to acceptance and publication.
- Author(s) should provide a bio-data of not more than three sentences at the end of their paper stating their rank, affiliation, research interest and email address.
- All Manuscript(s) for consideration should be accompanied with non-refundable sum of ₦10,000.00 assessment fee.
- On acceptance of any manuscript, author(s) will pay the publication fee of ₦25,000.00
- Creative work publication fee of ₦5,000.00
- All editorial correspondences should be directed to:

The editor,

Savannah Journal of Language, Literary and Communication Studies, Department of Languages and Linguistics,
Gombe State University, Gombe.

Email: sajollicos@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.gombesavannahjournal.com>

For further enquiries, please contact: Editor-in-Chief

SAJOLLCOS, HOD's Office,

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Gombe State University, Gombe sajollicos@gsu.edu.ng,

C/o: amgombe2@gsu.edu.ng



LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Mustapha Ibrahim Garba, PhD

Department of English and Linguistics
Federal University Dutse, Jigawa
igmustaphasays@gmail.com
08065951233

Sakina Wada

Department of English and Linguistics
Federal University Dutse, Jigawa

Suku Hyellamada Kenan, PhD

Department of Languages and Linguistics,
Gombe State University,
hyellawilbe@gmail.com
08139668910

Aishatu Bello Umar

School of Secondary Education Languages,
Department of English Language, Federal
College of Education (Technical) Gombe
aishatubu@gmail.com
08036585813.

Hannatu Joseph Bega

Department of Modern Languages,
College of Education Billiri.
hannatujosephbega@gmail.com

Ibrahim Garba Nayaya (Baba)

National Teachers' Institute, Kaduna.
ibrahimba182@gmail.com
+2347066366586/ +2348125351694

Danlami Bala Gwammaja, PhD

Aminu Kano College of Islamic and Legal
Studies, Kano
danlamigwammaja@gmail.com
08020605148

Musa Ahmad Sani

Department of Arts Education, Faculty of
Education, Kaduna State University
musa.ahmad@kasu.edu.ng
08035562885

Abdullahi Dahiru Umar, PhD

Department of English and Literature,
Federal University Gusau
dumar@fugusau.edu.ng
08065726292

AbdulAzeez Lawal, PhD

Department of English and French, Umaru
Musa Yar'adua University, P. M. B. 2218,
Katsina
abdulazeez.lawal@umyu.edu.ng

Abdulrahman Idris Abdulwaheed, PhD

Department of English and Literary
Studies, Faculty of Arts, Yobe State
University, Damaturu
Email: iabdulrahman2255@gmail.com
08037041081

Hamidou Bappa, PhD

Department of English Language and
Literatures of English Expression, Higher
Teachers' Training College Maroua,
University of Maroua, P.O. BOX 55 Maroua,
Cameroon
Email: hamidoubappa@gmail.com
Tel: 696551858

Theodore Bebey, PhD

Department of English Language and
Literatures of English Expression, Higher
Teachers' Training College Maroua,
University of Maroua, P.O. BOX 55 Maroua,
Cameroon
Bebeylawane@yahoo.fr
/bebeytheodore20@gmail.com

Abdurrazak Abubakar

Department of English Language, Federal
College of Education (Technical) Bichi,
P.M.B. 3473 Kano State, Nigeria
abubakarabdulrazak296@gmail.com
07036051705



Sani Isma'il Abubakar

Department of English Language, Federal
College of Education (Technical) Bichi,
P.M.B. 3473 Kano State, Nigeria
ismailsania@gmail.com
07064891033

Malata Andrew Zakayo, PhD

Department of Languages and Linguistics,
Gombe State University,
zakayomalataandrew@gmail.com
08027326216

Ismail Bala

.....

Abubakar Mohammed Gombe, PhD

Department of Languages and
Linguistics, Gombe State University
08060839578
amgombe2@gsu.edu.ng

John O, Udeigwe Ph.D

Department Of English
Language/Literature
Abia State University – Uturu
jo.udeigwe@abiastateuniversity.edu.ng
08146142122

Shamsuddeen Ismaila

Department of Hausa, Shehu Shagari
College of Education, Sakkwato
Shamsuddeenismail83@gmail.com

Mshelbwala Comfort Usman

Department of English and Literary
Studies, Federal University of Kashere,
Gombe State, Nigeria
08067131647
comfortbwala01@gmail.com,

Shehu Yahuza Abbas

Department of General Studies, Isa
Mustapha Agwai 1 Polytechnic,
Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria
abbassshehuyahuza@gmail.com /
Phone: 07030573795 / 08125163443,

Shema'u Abubakar Umar

shemauari@gmail.com / Phone:
08035965496
Department of General Studies, Isa
Mustapha Agwai 1 Polytechnic,
Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Ibrahim Muhammed Ogah

ogahibrahim075@gmail.com / Phone:
07067169460
Department of General Studies, Isa
Mustapha Agwai 1 Polytechnic, Lafia,
Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Sani Saidu

Department of English and Literary
Studies, Yobe State University
sani002saidu@gmail.com
08061353634

Umar Amos Hadiya

Department of Languages and
Communication, Federal Polytechnic
Mubi
umardamos@gmail.com
08034846180

Abdullahi Usman Garko

Department of Languages and
Linguistics, Gombe State University
augarko@gsu.edu.ng



Angela Butack

Department of Languages and
Linguistics, Gombe State University

Fatima Ibrahim Usman

Dept of Languages and Linguistics
Gombe State University
+234 7041726084
phartimaribrahim@gmail.com

Tarr, Mathias

Department of Languages, Nigerian
Defiance Academy, Kaduna
08034641925
tarrmathias@yahoo.com

Fatima, Inuwa S. Gara, PhD

Department of Languages and
Linguistics, Gombe State University
08039199933
fatigara2@gmail.com

Apasi Marizukot Ahuoyiza

Department of English and Literary
Studies, Bayero University, Kano

Adamu Idris, PhD

Department of English and Literary
Studies, Bayero University, Kano
aidris@buk.eng.edu.ng

Ibrahim Sofiyat Temitope

Department of English and Literary
Studies, Bayero University, Kano



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION A: Language & Literature

A Conceptual Metaphor Analysis of Selected Proverbs in Aliyu Kamal's Silence and a Smile

Mustapha Ibrahim Garba, PhD & Sakina Wada **1-15**

Repositioning Reading through Multimodality in English Language Teaching

Suku Hyellamada Kenan, PhD, Aishatu Bello Umar & Hannatu Joseph Bega **16-30**

Dislocation and Renegotiation: Postcolonial Belonging in Cry, the Beloved Country, Paradise, Bird Summons, and Wahala

Musa Ahmad Sani & Abdullahi Dahiru Umar, PhD **31-41**

Reconfiguring Belief: Religion, Culture, and Displacement in Postcolonial and Diasporic Fiction

Abdullahi Dahiru Umar, PhD & AbdulAzeez Lawal, PhD **42-54**

An Exploration Of Stylistic and Literary Devices In Tess Onwueme's The Broken Calabash

Abdulrahman Idris Abdulwaheed, PhD & Sani Saidu **55-74**

Borrowing and Code-Switching among Hausa-English Speakers in the North Eastern Nigeria: A phonological analysis

Hamidou Bappa, PhD & Theodore Bebey, PhD **75-89**

Disillusionment and Commitment: a Reader – Reception Study of Elma Shaw's Redemption Road

Abdurrazak Abubakar & Sani Isma'il Abubakar **90-103**

Contextual Use of English in Nigerian Motivational Discourse: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Speeches

Aishatu Bello Umar & Malata Andrew Zakayo, PhD **104-113**

English Language In Nigeria, Past, Present And The Future: a Concerned Issue

John O, Udeigwe Ph.D **114-124**

The Interface between Morphosyntax, Language Development and Its Sustainability: A Case Study of Bura Verbal Group

Mshelbwala Comfort Usman **125-143**



Digital Folklore And Nation-Building: Repurposing Indigenous Verbal Arts For
Cultivating Civic Realignment And Social Stability Among Nigerian Youths

Shehu Yahuza Abbas & Shema'u Abubakar Umar

144-159

Algorithmic Reclamation: Digital Resources As Structural Instruments For
Countering Linguistic Imperialism Among Indigenous Language Teachers

Shehu Yahuza Abbas & Ibrahim Muhammed Ogah

160-173

Bi-Implication and Negative Markers in Atiku Abubakar's 2023 Presidential
Declaration Speech

Sani Saidu & Umar Amos Hadiya

174-196

Comparative Analysis of English and Tangle Fricative Phonemes for Pedagogical
Implications to the Tangle English Speakers

Malata Andrew Zakayo, PhD & Angela Butack

197-224

Writing the Posthuman: Artificial Intelligence, Literature, and the Metaphysics of
Relation in the Digital Age

Tarr, Mathias & Fatima, Inuwa S. Gara, PhD

225-233

A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in Selected
Episodes of *Jenifa's Diary*

Apasi Marizukot Ahuoyiza & Adamu Idris, PhD

234-248

A Linguistic Analysis of Language Evolution in Digital Communication

Ibrahim Sofiyat Temitope & Adamu Idris, PhD

249-269

SECTION B:

Gudunmawar Turawa Da Manazarta 'Yan Kasa Ga Ayyukan Al'Adun Hausawa Daga
1965 Zuwa Yau

Ibrahim Garba Nayaya (Baba) & Danlami Bala Gwammaja, PhD

270-287

Ashe Kunya Ba a Ido Kadai Take Ba: Sake Bitar Fulaku Ga Fulanin Zamani Da Suka
Yi Kaka Gida a Kasar Hausa

**Abdullahi Usman Garko, Abubakar Mohammed Gombe, PhD &
Shamsuddeen Ismaila**

288-295



SECTION C: Creative Writing

Poems for *Gombe Savannah: Journal of Language, Literature and Communication Studies*

Ismail Bala

296-300

Under the Mango Tree

Fatima Ibrahim Usman

301-303



A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in Selected Episodes of *Jenifa's Diary*

Apasi Marizukot Ahuoyiza

Department of English and Literary Studies, Bayero University, Kano

Adamu Idris, PhD

Department of English and Literary Studies, Bayero University, Kano

aidris@buk.eng.edu.ng

Abstract

This study investigates the use of code-switching and code-mixing in selected episodes of Jenifa's Diary, a popular Nigerian television series. The study is anchored on Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 1973) as its theoretical framework. A qualitative research design with content analysis as the methodological approach was employed. Four episodes were purposively selected from Seasons 1, 2, 3, and 4, representing diverse sociolinguistic contexts: educational settings, business environments, cultural events, and corporate workplaces. Dialogues exhibiting significant instances of code-switching and code-mixing were transcribed and analyzed systematically. The findings reveal that the series consistently deploys five linguistic codes Standard English, Nigerian Pidgin, Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa, with each serving distinct sociolinguistic functions. Code-switching and code-mixing were found to be pervasive, systematic, and strategically employed rather than random or deficient. Indigenous languages function to signal ethnic identity, express emotional depth, create humor, build solidarity across ethnic boundaries, and negotiate power dynamics. The study deduces that multilingual practices in Jenifa's Diary are sophisticated communicative resources that reflect authentic Nigerian sociolinguistic reality, with Nigerian Pidgin serving as a neutral lingua franca and indigenous languages maintaining cultural authenticity within an increasingly globalized context. The research concludes that code-switching and code-mixing are purposeful practices, serving vital social, cultural, and narrative functions, and that popular media like Jenifa's Diary both reflects and shapes language attitudes and practices in contemporary Nigerian society. The study contributes to sociolinguistic scholarship by establishing Nigerian television as a valuable site for analyzing multilingual practices and challenging deficit perspectives on code-switching and code-mixing.

Keywords: Code-mixing, Code-switching, Communication Accommodation Theory, Multilingualism, Nigerian Pidgin



1. Introduction

The relationship between language and society is deeply interwoven, with each shaping and redefining the other over time. Sociolinguistics, as a discipline, rests on this very foundation, examining how language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a symbol of identity, cultural heritage, and social belonging. Language is a vehicle for transmitting knowledge, values, and traditions across generations. It is also a dynamic system that adapts to social change. In multilingual societies, the interaction of languages often gives rise to new communicative patterns that both challenge and enrich linguistic landscape. Nigeria, with its linguistic diversity of over 500 indigenous languages (Blench, 2012) alongside English as the official language, provides a fertile ground for such studies. English, inherited from colonial history, serves as the primary medium for education, governance, and inter-ethnic communication, but it does not exist in isolation. The daily reality of Nigerians is characterized by constant interaction between English and indigenous languages, creating hybrid communicative forms that reflect the country's unique sociolinguistic environment. This

interplay of languages sets the stage for code-switching and code-mixing, two practices that have become integral to Nigerian discourse both in formal and informal settings.

Code-switching involves alternating between languages depending on context, while code-mixing integrates elements of different languages within the same utterance. It should be acknowledged, however, that many sociolinguists do not draw a firm boundary between the two phenomena, often treating code-switching and code-mixing as overlapping or even interchangeable terms (Gumperz, 1982; Myers-Scotton, 2002); the distinction maintained in this study is adopted primarily for descriptive and analytical clarity. Both have become increasingly prominent in Nigeria. These practices are not arbitrary; rather, they reveal underlying social dynamics, identities, and power relations. For instance, speakers may switch to English in professional or educational contexts to signal competence, prestige, or authority, while reverting to indigenous languages to express intimacy, solidarity, or cultural pride. Code-mixing allows for a more fluid and spontaneous expression of meaning, particularly among urban youth who navigate



multiple linguistic repertoires daily. Far from being a sign of confusion or deficiency, these practices highlight the speaker's linguistic creativity and adaptability. Scholars such as Romaine (1992) and Wardhaugh (2012) have shown that code-switching and code-mixing are deliberate and purposeful, reflecting speakers' ability to navigate complex social situations. In the Nigerian context, these practices are especially evident in media, music, and film, where language becomes both a storytelling device and a marker of authenticity. By examining these practices, researchers gain insights into how Nigerians negotiate identity, culture, and modernity through language.

A striking example of these sociolinguistic phenomena is found in the popular Nigerian television series *Jenifa's Diary*. Created by Funke Akindele, the show follows the life of Jenifa, a village girl navigating life in Lagos. Her unique blend of "corrupted" English and Yoruba has become a cultural phenomenon. Jenifa's speech, though often ridiculed, has resonated strongly with audiences, particularly among Nigerian youths, who imitate her style in everyday conversation (Anozie, 2017). The success of the series demonstrates how media can shape linguistic trends and influence perceptions of language use in society. Through its

humorous yet realistic depiction of language contact, *Jenifa's Diary* mirrors the lived linguistic experiences of many Nigerians, in which switching between English, indigenous languages, and hybrid forms is not only common but also socially meaningful. The show underscores the role of language in constructing identity, negotiating social status, and bridging cultural gaps. Studying such a phenomenon is crucial, as it not only expands scholarly understanding of code-switching and code-mixing in Nigeria but also reveals the ways in which media reflects and amplifies everyday linguistic practices. This research, therefore, situates itself at the intersection of language, society, and media, highlighting how popular culture provides a lens through which the complexities of multilingualism can be understood.

1.1 Synopsis of *Jenifa's Diary*

Jenifa's Diary is a long-running Nigerian television comedy created by, and starring, the multiple award-winning actress and filmmaker Funke Akindele. The series follows the life of Suliya, popularly nicknamed "Jenifa," a poorly educated young woman from a village who relocates to Lagos in pursuit of a university education and a better life. Jenifa's repeated attempts to fit into the sophisticated, English-speaking world of her more

privileged peers are enacted largely through language: her idiosyncratic blend of malapropisms, Yoruba-inflected English, and Nigerian Pidgin. Across its many seasons, the series has followed Jenifa's evolving fortunes, from student to businesswoman, and later to salon owner and mother, bringing her into contact with a wide range of characters from different ethnic, educational, and social backgrounds. It is this diversity of settings and characters, spanning educational institutions, corporate offices, salons, markets, and family homes, that generates the rich, everyday instances of code-switching and code-mixing examined in this study.

2. Literature Review

The phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing have attracted sustained scholarly attention within sociolinguistics for several decades. Gumperz (1982) provided one of the earliest and most influential accounts, describing code-switching as a conversational strategy through which bilingual speakers signal shifts in context, footing, and interpersonal meaning within a single interaction. Building on this interactional perspective, Myers-Scotton (2002) proposed a more structural account through the Matrix Language Frame model,

which explains how a dominant, or matrix, language supplies the grammatical frame into which elements from an embedded language are inserted, thereby accounting for the internal patterning of mixed utterances. Romaine (1992) and Wardhaugh (2012), in turn, situate both phenomena within the broader study of bilingualism, arguing that they are systematic and rule-governed rather than evidence of imperfect language learning or linguistic deficiency. Holmes (2001) and Fishman (1972) similarly emphasise that language choice in multilingual settings is closely tied to social domain, relationship, and topic, so that switching between codes is best understood as a socially meaningful act rather than a random occurrence. Kuntze (2000) extends this line of argument by demonstrating, through sociolinguistic data on bilingual communities, that code-switching has implications for how bilingual competence itself is theorised, further reinforcing the view that mixed-language speech reflects sophisticated linguistic control rather than confusion.

Within the Nigerian context specifically, a growing body of scholarship has examined how these global theoretical insights apply to the country's uniquely multilingual environment. Oloruntoba-Oju (1999) was among the earlier scholars to

document the pervasiveness of code-switching and code-mixing in Nigerian English, showing how speakers routinely blend English with indigenous languages in both spoken and written discourse. Adetuyi and Jegede (2016) extended this line of inquiry to the educational domain, finding that code-mixing and code-switching among secondary school students carry implications for the teaching and learning of the English language, while also functioning as markers of peer identity and informal solidarity. Onwe (2022) and Udoeye (2018) similarly explore bilingualism and code-mixing in contemporary Nigerian discourse, arguing that such practices are now a defining feature of everyday Nigerian communication across generations and social classes rather than a phenomenon confined to a particular group. Tanimu and Suleiman (2023), focusing on market discourse, further demonstrate that code-switching patterns in commercial settings are shaped by the practical need to negotiate, persuade, and build rapport across ethnic and linguistic boundaries, with Nigerian Pidgin frequently emerging as a neutral, unifying code. Taken together, these studies establish that code-switching and code-mixing in Nigeria are widespread, socially patterned, and closely tied to

identity, education, and commerce.

A smaller but directly relevant strand of research has examined how Nigerian popular media, and *Jenifa's Diary* in particular, represents and popularises these multilingual practices. Anozie (2017) analyses the relationship between language, identity, and popular culture in the series, arguing that *Jenifa's* distinctive speech style, though frequently ridiculed, has been embraced by audiences as an authentic reflection of Nigerian linguistic realities and has itself gone on to influence everyday speech among young Nigerians. Oriloye (2018), examining linguistic creativity in Nigerian comedy more broadly, situates *Jenifa's Diary* within a tradition of comedic media that exploits multilingualism for humour while simultaneously validating non-standard varieties as legitimate and expressive resources. These media-focused studies suggest that popular television does not merely mirror existing patterns of code-switching and code-mixing but actively participates in shaping public attitudes towards multilingual speech.

While this body of literature confirms that code-switching and code-mixing are well-established features of Nigerian sociolinguistic life, and that *Jenifa's Diary* has already

attracted some scholarly attention, existing studies on the series have tended to focus on its use of language for comedic effect or identity construction in general terms, without a systematic, episode-based analysis of the specific linguistic codes deployed, the contexts that trigger switching, and the social functions these switches serve. This study addresses that gap by undertaking a close, purposively sampled analysis of four episodes of *Jenifa's Diary*, drawing on Communication Accommodation Theory to account for the social motivations behind the patterns of code-switching and code-mixing observed.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored primarily on Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), developed by Howard Giles and his colleagues. Initially introduced as Speech Accommodation Theory in 1973, CAT provides a robust sociolinguistic lens for understanding the motivations and social consequences of linguistic adjustments in interaction. The theory posits that individuals dynamically modify their speech styles including language choice, accent, dialect, and paralinguistic features to reduce or emphasize social distances between themselves and their interlocutors. This framework is exceptionally

pertinent for analyzing the strategic use of code-switching and code-mixing in a multilingual media text like *Jenifa's Diary*, as these phenomena are quintessential examples of linguistic accommodation in action.

CAT has since been developed and applied by a range of scholars beyond Giles's original formulation. Gallois, Gasiorek, Giles, and Soliz (2016) extend the theory by integrating insights from intergroup communication and identity research, showing how accommodation operates not only between individuals but also between social groups with differing degrees of power and status. Adams, Miles, Dunbar, and Giles (2018) demonstrate the theory's continued relevance to newer, text-based communication contexts, finding that accommodation strategies such as convergence in text messaging correlate with liking, power, and relational closeness between interlocutors. Soliz, Thorson, and Rittenour (2009) apply CAT to family communication, showing that accommodation and non-accommodation strategies shape satisfaction and identity salience within multiracial and multi-ethnic families, while Rittenour et al. (2018) similarly use the framework to examine how non-accommodation strategies contribute to communicative estrangement. Hordila-

Vatamanescu and Pana (2010) further extend CAT into online and virtual communities, illustrating the theory's adaptability across both face-to-face and mediated communication. Despite this breadth of application, CAT has attracted some criticism: scholars note that the theory can be difficult to operationalise empirically, since convergence and divergence are not always easy to measure objectively in naturally occurring discourse, and that its emphasis on individual speaker motivation can understate the influence of broader structural and institutional factors on language choice. Nevertheless, its flexibility and cross-contextual applicability, from everyday conversation to text messaging, family interaction, and online communities, make it a particularly suitable framework for analysing the socially motivated language switching evident in *Jenifa's Diary*.

3. Methodology

The research employs a qualitative approach with content analysis as the main methodological approach. Data were collected from selected scenes from the television comedy series, *Jenifa's Diary*. The scenes were carefully reviewed, and dialogues exhibiting significant instances of code-switching and code-mixing

were transcribed. The focus was on scenes that depict social and cultural interactions, relationships between different ethnic groups, and varied use. A qualitative approach is most appropriate for this research as it allows for an in-depth, descriptive analysis of language use within its natural context, focusing on the nuances of dialogue, character interaction, and the social functions of linguistic choices.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents excerpts of naturally occurring dialogue drawn from the four purposively selected episodes of *Jenifa's Diary*, organised sequentially as Extracts 1 to 4. Each extract is preceded by a brief contextual description of the scene and followed by an analysis that identifies the specific instances of code-switching and code-mixing present, interprets their sociolinguistic function, and relates them to the Communication Accommodation Theory framework adopted for this study.

Extract 1: Season 3, Episode 10

episode centers on cultural events and traditional practices, providing a rich context for identity-driven language alternation. The selected scenes showcase how Jenifa and her manager discuss everyday work

situations, traditional Nigerian cuisine, spiritual matters, and contemporary social commentary, all of which trigger strategic language choices that reflect cultural identity and social positioning.

a1. Jenifa: "..... You know that driver, he no know he work, **he just dey do like soldier weydey watch person for back olorunyani** (he sleeps easily)"

a2. Manager: ".... Is this porridge?"

b. Jenifa: "**eh Asorolunokpo ne ani** (yes, it was cooked with palm oil)"

c. Jenifa: "**Haa! Afisiburkuleleyi o** (her case is more spiritual) they use it to do this girl o"

d. Jenifa: "Haa! This woman, if she see sacrifice **Orika meta eboeleyi meta** (I'm sure she can eat sacrifice prepared to appease the gods) she will eat it"

Jenifa: "**daddy omo boys eh, they are yehubaje**, they just make person laugh, they go pay them millions"

Analysis: In this extract, Jenifa's utterances are built on a Nigerian Pidgin/Yoruba matrix into which vivid idiomatic expressions such as "dey watch person for back olorunyani" and "Afisiburkuleleyi" are inserted, exemplifying Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame model in

that the grammatical base of the utterance remains Pidgin-Yoruba even as meaning is layered through code-mixing. The Manager's brief English interjection ("Is this porridge?") illustrates a momentary shift to a more formal register appropriate to a workplace enquiry, after which Jenifa reverts to Pidgin and Yoruba to explain and joke about the situation, signalling solidarity and shared cultural understanding with her interlocutor rather than social distance. Read through the lens of Communication Accommodation Theory, Jenifa's persistent use of indigenous codes even in a nominally professional exchange can be interpreted as divergence from the Manager's more neutral register, asserting her own cultural identity and levity rather than converging towards workplace formality.

Extract 2: Season 4, Episode 5

This episode portrays power dynamics and language use in a corporate salon environment, featuring inter-ethnic interactions among colleagues and clients. The professional yet informal setting of a salon provides a unique sociolinguistic space where business transactions intersect with personal relationships, creating opportunities for strategic language negotiation across ethnic boundaries.



a. Jenifa: "Elu reni ko run gba don yo (you like food too much) your mouth is expressway"

b. Adaku: "Hey! Jenny Nwanem (Jenny my sister) I am happy to see you"

c. Jenifa: "Ko tososukaturitaulosawun (with this heavy load you call hair)"

d. Jenifa: "for this salon umuwa ga o (things are happening in this salon)"

e. John: "Ah! Jenny baby, better pikin, Kedukeyi mere? (How are you)"

Analysis: This extract shows a dense mixture of Yoruba, Igbo, and Pidgin within a single commercial setting. Jenifa's Yoruba-inflected teasing ("Elu reni ko run gba don yo") is met by Adaku's warm Igbo greeting ("Jenny Nwanem"), illustrating convergence across ethnic lines as both speakers draw on each other's linguistic repertoires to build rapport within a shared business relationship. John's greeting, which blends Pidgin ("better pikin") with an Igbo phrase ("Kedukeyi mere?"), further demonstrates how, in an inter-ethnic commercial space, speakers strategically mix codes to signal friendliness and inclusion rather than to assert a single ethnic identity. These patterns are consistent with Myers-Scotton's Markedness

Model, whereby the unmarked, expected choice in this convivial salon setting is a flexible, mixed code that accommodates the linguistic backgrounds of all present.

Extract 3: Season 1, Episode 4

This episode is set in an educational environment, characterized by high-density code-switching and code-mixing among students and young adults from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The interactions occur in informal social spaces within or around the school setting, where peer relationships and youth identity formation create a linguistically dynamic environment. The extract showcases how young Nigerians navigate multilingual interactions in contexts where ethnic diversity, friendship bonding, and social positioning intersect. The extract features Jide and his friends, alongside Jenifa, Chioma, and Amina, as they interact within and around the school setting.

Jide's friend: "Asampete(fine girl) how are you?"

Jide's friend: "Nnecall Jide for me now"

Jide's friend: "It is a mistake Okwaya(right)"

Jenifa: Jenny, motijiya (I have suffered)



Jenifa: "Look at you, **Kore danujor** (excuse me)"

Jide's friend: "**NneAbegey** (pretty girl please)"

Jenifa: "you thirst water you **de dogiragira**"

Jenifa: "**Omo Igbo**, I'm warning you"

Jenifa: "**Fimilejare** (leave me alone) what is it?"

Jenifa: "**Chioma Paddy me** (my buddy) how is you"

Chioma: "I dey oh, **ebinpawa** (we are hungry)"

Jenifa: "Amina, **aboki mi** (my good friend)"

Analysis: Among the youthful characters in this extract, code-mixing is dense and rapid, with Yoruba terms of endearment ("Asampete," "Fimilejare") and Igbo expressions ("Nne," "Okwaya," "ebinpawa") embedded within English and Pidgin utterances. Jenifa's address to Chioma ("Paddy me") and to Amina ("aboki mi," a Hausa term for friend) illustrates how young Nigerians deploy multiple indigenous languages within a single peer group to affirm friendship and shared identity across ethnic lines, regardless of any single speaker's own ethnic background. This pattern supports the view of Adetuyi and Jegede (2016) that code-mixing

among young people functions primarily as a marker of peer solidarity and informal group identity rather than as a marker of formal linguistic competence.

Extract 4: Season 2, Episode 7

This episode depicts interactions between Jenifa, a Yoruba-Pidgin speaking salon owner, and her predominantly Yoruba clientele, in a business context, specifically focusing on salon services and customer-client relationships. The professional business setting creates a unique sociolinguistic space where economic transactions intersect with cultural identity performance and inter-ethnic negotiation. The extracts demonstrate how language choice in commercial contexts reflects power dynamics, customer service strategies, and cultural authenticity.

a. Jenifa: "**Oma sio** (what a pity)"

b. Jenifa: "**Oyibo Loso Toyo** (you speak English too much) Where the money?"

c. Jenifa: "**Ini lesiObirin** (Hair is the beauty of a woman)"

d. Customer: "**omoyorubanomimohodi so yorubadadani** (I am a Yoruba woman and I understand it very well)"

Analysis: The customer's assertion in Yoruba, "omo yoruba nomimohodi so yorubadadani" (I

am a Yoruba woman and I understand it very well), functions as an explicit claim to shared ethnic and linguistic identity with Jenifa, prompting a shift towards Yoruba as the unmarked code for the remainder of the transaction. Jenifa's mixed Yoruba-English utterances elsewhere in the extract ("Oyibo Loso Toyo... Where the money?") show a strategic movement between languages to combine cultural rapport-building with the pragmatic business function of requesting payment. Taken together, the four extracts demonstrate that code-switching and code-mixing in *Jenifa's Diary* are neither random nor deficient but are systematically deployed to negotiate identity, solidarity, authority, and commercial transactions across a range of everyday Nigerian social contexts.

5. Discussion

This section discusses the findings from the four selected episodes of *Jenifa's Diary* in relation to the study's objectives. The aim is to show how the patterns of code-switching and code-mixing observed in the data help the study achieve its objectives.

The first objective sought to identify the languages and language varieties (including standard forms, pidgin, and regional dialects) used in the series. The analysis of the four

episodes showed a consistent use of English, Nigerian Pidgin, Yoruba, Igbo, and occasionally Hausa. This confirms earlier studies such as Holmes (2001), Fishman (1972), and Oloruntoba-Oju (1999) who argue that multilingual communities naturally alternate between languages depending on context and relationships. As seen in the episodes, Jenifa and other characters switch between these languages to talk about food, culture, emotions, work, business, and friendships. This supports Adetuyi and Jegede (2016), who observe that language choice reflects identity and the social realities of speakers. Therefore, the findings align with literature showing that multilingual speakers draw from all their linguistic resources to navigate everyday situations.

The second objective focused on the extent of code-switching and code-mixing in the series. All four episodes show very high use of both practices. Characters combine languages within single sentences (intra-sentential mixing) and across turns (inter-sentential switching). This is consistent with the views of Udoeye (2018), Myers-Scotton (2002), and Onwe (2022), who explain that mixing languages is not a sign of confusion but a demonstration of linguistic competence. The detailed examples from the data such as Jenifa inserting Yoruba

cultural expressions into English/Pidgin or characters switching languages when teasing, joking, or expressing emotions reflect the highly systematic nature of code-mixing described in the Matrix Language Frame model. The findings also support Gumperz's (1982) idea that switching languages is often used to mark emotion, emphasis, or identity, especially when discussing cultural or spiritual matters as seen in Extract 1, Season 3, Episode 10.

The third objective examined how indigenous Nigerian languages are used in the series and their role in the narrative. Across all the episodes, Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa were used to signal identity, cultural pride, humor, solidarity, and emotional depth. In business and professional settings, indigenous languages were used to build rapport with customers or colleagues, which supports the theoretical framework. For example, characters converged toward one another's languages to reduce social distance, while divergence was used to assert identity or authority. This aligns with Gallois et al. (2016), who explains that language accommodation helps manage power and social relationships. The frequent use of Yoruba by Jenifa when discussing cultural beliefs, beauty practices, or emotional issues also supports Oriloye (2018) and Anozie (2017),

who found that Jenifa's Diary intentionally uses indigenous language to construct character identity and reflect real Nigerian sociolinguistic behaviour.

The findings across the four episodes further show that Nigerian Pidgin acts as a neutral meeting point, supporting claims by scholars such as Tanimu and Suleiman (2023) that Pidgin bridges communication gaps in diverse social environments. English, however, mostly provides the formal or professional tone, confirming earlier observations by Romaine (1992) and Wardhaugh (2012) that language choice can indicate social status, education, or authority. Overall, the findings from this discussion strongly support the arguments in the reviewed literature: multilingual communication in Nigeria is purposeful, creative, and socially meaningful. The series reflects real-life Nigerian sociolinguistic behaviour by using language mixing to express identity, negotiate relationships, manage social distance, and maintain cultural authenticity. Thus, the study's objectives were fully achieved, and the analysis confirms that Jenifa's Diary is a true sociolinguistic representation of Nigerian multilingual life.

6. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that *Jenifa's Diary* serves as a rich sociolinguistic text that authentically reflects and strategically deploys the multilingual communication patterns characteristic of contemporary urban Nigeria. The study confirms that multilingual repertoire functions as the communicative norm in Nigerian urban contexts. The study discovers that code-switching and code-mixing in *Jenifa's Diary* are systematic, purposeful linguistic practices that reflect the complex sociolinguistic dynamics of multilingual Nigeria. Language functions not merely as a communication tool but as a complex social resource for identity negotiation, relationship management, cultural preservation, and creative expression. The series demonstrates how Nigerian speakers skillfully navigate multiple linguistic codes to accomplish diverse social, cultural, and communicative goals, positioning multilingualism as a valuable asset rather than a deficiency. Furthermore, this research establishes the theoretical relevance of Communication Accommodation Theory for understanding language choice in Nigerian contexts. The consistent patterns of convergence and divergence observed in the data confirm that

Nigerian speakers are highly attuned to the social meanings and relational implications of their linguistic choices, strategically adjusting their speech to manage social distance, assert identity, and negotiate power dynamics. Finally, this study contributes to understanding media as a significant site of sociolinguistic practice and language ideology construction. Popular television series like *Jenifa's Diary* do not merely reflect existing language use patterns but actively participate in shaping language attitudes, normalizing multilingual practices, and influencing how audiences, particularly youth, use and perceive language mixing. The widespread imitation of *Jenifa's* linguistic style among Nigerian youth demonstrates the powerful influence of media on language trends and the legitimization of non-standard varieties. By analyzing scripted media discourse, this study bridges the gap between spontaneous conversation studies and mediated communication research, establishing popular media as a crucial yet underexplored domain for sociolinguistic inquiry in multilingual contexts.



References

- Adams, A., Miles, J., Dunbar, N. E., & Giles, H. (2018). Communication Accommodation in Text Messages: Exploring Liking, Power, and Sex as Predictors of Textisms. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 158(4), 474–490.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.2017.1421895>
- Adetuyi, C. A., & Jegede, O. O. (2016). Code-Mixing and Code-Switching in Nigerian Secondary Schools: Implications for Learning English Language. *British Journal of English Linguistics*, 4(3), 33–42.
- Anozie, C. (2017). Language, Identity and Popular Culture in Nigeria: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Jenifer's Diary. *Journal of Nigerian Languages and Culture*, 19(2), 45–59.
- Blench, R. (2012). *An Atlas of Nigerian Languages* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Kay Williamson Educational Foundation.
- Fishman, J. A. (1972). *The Sociology of Language*. Newbury House.
- Gallois, C., Gasiorek, J., Giles, H., & Soliz, J. (2016). Communication Accommodation Theory: Integrations and New Framework Developments. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Communication Accommodation Theory: Negotiating Personal Relationships and Social Identities Across Contexts* (Pp. 192-210). Cambridge University Press.
- Giles, H. (1973). Accent mobility: A model and some data. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 15(2), 87–105.
- Gumperz, J. J. (1982). *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes, J. (2001). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (2nd ed.). Longman.
- Hordila - Vatamanescu, E.-M., & Pana, A.-D. (2010). The Application of the Communication Accommodation Theory to Virtual Communities: A Preliminary Research on the Online Identities. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 5(4), 279–290.
- Kuntze, M. (2000). Code-switching in Sociolinguistic Studies: Implications for Bilingualism. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 4(3), 275–292. 55



- Myers-Scotton, C. (2002). *Contact Linguistics: Bilingual Encounters and Grammatical Outcomes*. Oxford University Press.
- Oloruntoba-Oju, T. (1999). Code-switching and code mixing in Nigerian English. In *Multilingualism, Minority Languages and Language Policy in Nigeria* (pp.89–104). Mosuro Publishers.
- Onwe, D. E. (2022). Bilingualism and Code-mixing in Contemporary Nigerian Discourse. *International Journal of Language Studies*, 16(4), 112–130.
- Oriloye, D. (2018). Linguistic Creativity in Nigerian Comedy: A Study of *Jenifa's Diary*. *Journal of Popular Culture Studies*, 8(2), 78–92.
- Rittenour, C., Kromka, S., Pitts, S., Thorwart, M., Vickers, J., & Whyte, K. (2018). *Communication Surrounding Estrangement: Stereotypes, Attitudes, and (Non)-Accommodation Strategies*. *Behavioral Sciences* (2076-328X), 8(10), 96. <https://doi.org/10.3390/Bs8100096>
- Romaine, S. (1992). *Bilingualism* (2nd Ed.). Blackwell.
- Soliz, J., Thorson, A. R., & Rittenour, C. E. (2009). Communicative Correlates of Satisfaction, Family Identity, and Group Salience in Multiracial/Ethnic Families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71(4), 819–832.
- Tanimu, H., & Suleiman, A. (2023). Code-switching Patterns in Nigerian Market Discourse. *Nigerian Journal of Linguistics*, 25(1), 45–67.
- Udoeye, C. C. (2018). *Code-mixing and Code-switching in Nigerian English*. University of Nigeria Press.