

Identity Construction as Global Discourse in Musical Tracks of Akeeb Kareem and Burna Boy

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Abstract

Identity construction, that is, the shaping of values, beliefs and practices influenced by the cultural system of certain society and individual has been a hot-bed ideological issue of universal concern for years. Sizeable amount of research interests on racial discrimination exist from the rather narrow end of literary criticism. A systematized scrutiny of musical artistic expression of identity construction for meaningful symbolic behaviour is, therefore, necessary in the bid to examine the discourse interpretative tools of the linguistic elements and symbolic representations of identity construction in the musical orientations of Akeeb Kareem and Burna Boy. Fairclough's social model of CDA is deployed for the musical excerpts that were descriptively annotated in Systemic Functional Grammatical terms. Findings revealed echoes of black's negotiations, grammar of pronominal references, strategic reinforcement through pidginized discourse marker, concept of superior race, projecting racial discriminations and metaphors of symbolic representation. These, amongst others, serve as lexical and discursive elements of identity construction in the selected musical tracks. Identity is constructed by language, and musical artistes, representing their various psycho-social groups, establish their identity by how they choose to use language in interactions and experiences. It is axiomatic that the English, along with its pidgin variety, has become a global lingual franca for different purposes in private and public spaces in the Nigerian second language (L²) situations. Such provisions not only facilitate policy formulation for rewarding nation building enterprises but are also useful in the field of applied English linguistics emphasising musical cum identity discourses.

Key words:

Introduction

From time immemorial, there has been a shoal of important front-burner issues that have always been socially engaging in the process of nation building, and in the global affairs. From varied background and perspectives, such social issues and the modes of their presentation have, variously, caught the attention of linguists and analysts specially as made available in the musical contraptions in which musical artists do their social gardening. The social commentaries usually run by the artists become platforms that present the kinds of social discourses whose subjects then cut across every facet of, not only the Nigerian life, but also topics of global interest. In this regard, a systematic scrutiny that focuses on explication of the use of English as an example of social discourse in the Nigerian musical genres is required. This work, therefore, as a sociolinguistic aspect of approach to discourse, is an attempt at analyzing the use of English as vehicle for thoughts in the presentation of subjects of varied social backgrounds (Nwankwo, 2020). It is an attempt at subjecting Akeeb Kareem's (Black man or *Baba dudu*) and Burna Boy's brands of music to dispassionate scrutiny to examine especially their critical linguistic traits.

Studying sociolinguistics as typified in African artistic genres presents an opportunity to examine how (the English) language use in the domain of musical discourse represents a fundamental expression of social correction for national and, or global development. The salient question is: how does an artist find the shape and the expression for his social and ideological thoughts, perceptions, sentiments and values that he believes should characterise his real world as he strives to relieve himself of this burden of social commitment to social considerations and social correction? Appropriate strategic language use that constitutes important aspect of Musical Discourse is fundamental in this regard. It, therefore, becomes our responsibility, as analysts, to investigate, identify, describe and explicate, in functional and critical terms, the complex linguistic choices and their structures used in such discourse of ideology and social considerations. This is to the end that Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), is a qualitative analytical approach for critically describing, interpreting, and explaining the ways in which music, being a mode of communicative behaviour, becomes tool for controlling social happenings.

Background to the study

The basic and incontestable fact is that music, as African knowledge system and life-streaming instrument, is comprised of social activities that do not exist without the use of language. This reflects in the fact that the social discourses, in fact, consist of linguistic, discourse and communicative properties that guarantee a set of shared values and basic consensus on what is said and the 'unsaid said'. Our line of thought in this study therefore, finds expression in Threadgold (1986:44) and Oduola (2017:1) that

Acts of communication are seen in terms of social discourse which maintain and regulate social activities and defines state and power relations. As such they are parts of and a metaphor for the social and belief systems of a given culture.

Discourse simply refers to a unit of language that is longer than a single sentence. It simply refers to the way conversation flows. Music is, therefore, to be accepted as a social platform with associated socio-cultural subject-matters in which language use constitutes a type of discourse. This study thus presents a critical examination of a social discourse of identity construction which has largely become a subject-matter of global interest. To properly underscore the peculiarly overriding ideological loads in pursuit, selected musical tracks of *Akeeb Kareem (Baba-dudu)* translated as Blackman) and the younger contemporary, *Damini Ebunoluwa Ogulu* whose stage name is 'Burna boy' are to be assessed for exemplifications

Identity and identity constructions

Since identity is generally denoted as the qualities, personality-looks and expression that make an individual as a person or a society as unique group, this study sets to explicate identity construction as the shaping of one's values, beliefs and practices simply influenced by the cultural system of one's society and individual beliefs. Our thought of such construction is, therefore, fixed the ideational metafunction that explains the way identity is presented in grammatical terms following Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG).

Akeeb Kareem, for instance, in his music, addresses issues and themes that not only touch on black identity but also such that tend to view all races as members of the global family. It is certain, therefore, that individuals develop their own

identity influenced by the immediate society around them; and this bears their personal conviction that forces the moulding or creation of identity that is unique to them.

Statement of the problem

Music, general, has over the years, pulled an overwhelming amount of intellectual or research interest from the rather narrow end of musicologists', linguists', and 'literary critics (Irele, 2001:9; Omibiyi, 1994:2-3; Akpan Ebong, 1986; Olorunyomi, 2005). For instance, most studies in the Nigerian clime have thrived so much on Fela Kuti's musical contraption basically consequent upon the ever growing interest in the concept of 'Felasophy'. Such lop-sidedness has left a serious gap in the consideration of ideological readings of musical orientations of other equally talented African and, or Nigerian musical artistes. This study thus addresses the social agenda of identity construction and the associated subject-matters of colour and racial discrimination as well as oppressive tendencies in governance.

The study is, indeed, an attempt to explicate Akeeb Kareem's (Blackman) and Burner Boy's musical genres as tools designed to engage human affairs, and as socio-cultural and political instruments whose permanent force and contents have been highly engaging in ideological and, therefore, critical discourses.

Aim and objectives

Music generally, has been described an indispensable tool in the achievement of many pursuits - social, political, cultural, religious and economic endeavours (Osele and Obiesie, 2019). Studying it on critical platforms where such matters of grave concern are discussed is consequently necessary especially at a "millennial century" when the world has become a global village. This study thus aims at a systematized scrutiny of meaningful symbolic behaviour in musical mode, viewing communication linguistically to realise the specified critical and ideological functions contained therein. This aim shall be achieved through the following specific objectives:

- i. To identify the linguistic elements and the symbolic representations of identity construction in Akeeb Kareem's and Burna Boy's musical orientations;

- ii. To explain and discuss the discourse interpretative tools of identity construction in Akeeb Kareem's and Burna Boy's musical orientations;
- iii. To facilitate policy formulation for rewarding nation building enterprises based on the usefulness of Applied English linguistics emphasising musical cum identity discourses with global implications.

Our main preoccupation is providing acceptable answers the salient question of how the micro and macro relevance explicated for identity construction in the selected musical orientations with an analyse that bear socio-cultural implications in global terms.

This is with a view to studying the music beyond the discographies by a careful examination of the linguistic and, or discursive resources and patterns that have functional use in musical lines. Such critical discourse study is capable of an understanding of careful and productive use of language that enables us to see our selected artists' corrective passion and commitment to building a strong and proactive societal values nationally and on a global platform.

Significance of the study

It is practically true that the burdens of modernity have had so much effect on the use of the English language beginning from the immediate past millennium. Such effects necessitate researching into ideological discourses that project an authoritative control of social structures in the social world in linguistic terms. This study thus becomes avenue for adapting ventures of the discourse about how the social world is, and, or ought to be organized by the means of careful examination of the syntactic patterns and other communicative nuances that have functional use in speech identities. Musical art performances are, therefore, surveyed as forms of socio-cultural discourse which presents limitless social, ideological and pedagogical implications.

Justification of the study

It is obvious that a social discourse is so termed because it contains social messages for humans' interactions in terms of social commentaries that form its basis. This study thus attempts to account for the discursive and

linguistic elements evolving syntactic and speech act patterning that generates discourse, semantic and pragmatic meaning relevant in the context of identity constructions that is capable of evolving a better world. This way, the lexical, grammatical, cohesive, semantic and discursive patterns as well as establish dialogic rhetoric that contribute to the organizational structures of the selected musical tracks are examined for their insight into the language use in identity construction process. Apart from the gains of scrutinising some important discourse issues and theories of global orientation, the uncovering of the ideological loads provides linguistic template for students of, especially, English in second language situations like Nigeria.

Music, discourse and identity question: views and reports in the literature

It is clear that studies in identity constructions naturally project the ideological thrust behind the text and to discuss the critical reflections on the social system. The present study, therefore, aims to assign human values and promote satisfaction of both material and non-material needs through musical arts, with the intention to cover all aspects of discursive elements that permit viewing language communicatively or viewing communication linguistically. Thus, in studying identity construction in Akeeb Kareem's and Burna Boy's musical genres, a number of features are common to discourse analysis and pragmatics shall be examined. These include speech acts, context, inference, presupposition and implicature. Precisely, in discourse analysis as in pragmatics, we are concerned with what people using language are doing, and accounting for the linguistic features in the discourse as the means employed in what they are doing. They are, however, not necessarily the same but these common features precisely are responsible for the thin line between them while the thin line accounts for their close interrelatedness (Oduola, 2017: 5).

Identity and the concept of contextual dynamism

The notion of *identity* has been described as a slippery one, often used but rarely defined, varying from one discipline to another, and an on-going subject of academic endeavor; just is also

observed critically that “some people ... tend to reserve the term 'identity' for a sense of self that is relatively continuous and 'fixed' over time”. Ivanic (1998) writes that though *identity* is a useful term, since it is the everyday word for people's sense of who they are, it is “misleadingly singular” (1998:11). She continues:

The plural word 'identities' is sometimes better, because it captures the idea of people identifying simultaneously with a variety of social groups. One or more of these identities may be foregrounded at different times; they are sometimes contradictory, sometimes interrelated: people's diverse identities constitute the richness and dilemmas of their sense of self (1998:11).

The question is: where do identities come from? Ivanic notes that social constructionists see identity as “the result of affiliation to particular beliefs and possibilities which are available to them in their social context” (1998:12). It is, however, discovered in the literature that this is not a question of determinism: these beliefs and possibilities can be resisted. Thus, identity can similarly be conceptualised as a series of *choices* one continually makes about oneself and one's lifestyle. The current study of identity construction, therefore, seeks to view it as a process, rather than a state or set of personal attributes. Hence, our choices of songs that have national and global ideological implications.

Music as weaponised instrument for social activism

Music can express anti-establishment or protest themes including anti-war songs and so on. We can portray Akeeb Kareem as an activist that used music as a powerful weapon. He was definitely against policies that were made to make life uncomfortable for citizens he spoke about bad governance in every way possible in his songs. Burna boy, in his most recent album '**African Giant**', sang a song titled '**20 10 20**' this song portrayed the end sars protest that took place in Nigeria. The people were having a peaceful protest but because the government saw that the protest was becoming stronger they decided to massacre innocent protesters on the 20th of October 2020. The government denied it and the citizens could not speak up but Burna Boy became a voice for the

Nigerian citizens. These musicians have thus used the English language to construct identity, standing in the gap.

Theoretical framework

The Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) is the guiding linguistic theory in this research as we dwell on its provisions that favour the study of language and society with the knowledge of other disciplines like pragmatics, sociology and cultural studies (Halliday, 1985a). Berry (1977:1) summarizes the SFG's position as follows:

Systemic linguistics view language as a form of behavior which is functional, as something we do with a purpose, or more often in fact with more than one purpose... which is related to the social situation in which it occurs...in particular setting.

Besides, SFG, by its very nature, the theory has facilities that can conveniently accommodate the discourse analysis, pragmatics, and critical discourse analysis that are of instrumentation to our musical discourse exploration.

Our preference for SFG is informed not only by its openness to social realities but also by the fact that other theories, by their operations, are found encapsulated in it. Essentially in the present connection, we intend to exploit the grammar's descriptive framework with an extremely large interlocking network of options that mirrors the internal organisation of the language of musical artistry to reveal the relationship between music and the social functions that they serve.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and its life-streaming enterprise

The term 'discourse' no doubt, has referred to diverse things via different viewpoints. This is based on the inevitability of the interdisciplinary trend of discourse analysis. Associated with a number of disciplines, this field of study is currently experiencing a rapid development. Scholars of linguistic studies, philosophical studies, cognitive science and so on, all have performed systematic research on this issue. Since inception, it is reported that the assimilation of research findings of various disciplines, for one thing, has continuously brought about cross-disciplinary and theoretical

approaches to discourse analysis; for another, it has, indeed, blazed a new trail for such a novel subject (Mc Cathy, 1994). The basic question, in traditional term, is: what is discourse analysis. To project an answer, we must capture what discourse is for clarity of thought.

"Life is a flow of discourse", that is, language functioning in one of the many contexts that together make up a culture. This applies to language use even in ordinary days' activities of life is everything you do is likely to start with discourse. The point of interest is that life is made up of discourse and of the extra ordinary range of context in which people engage in communication, musical discourse, for instance. Discourse analysis is, therefore, the field which indicates the various demands on language as made or faced by Language learners and users. It is a mode of organizing knowledge, ideas, or experience that is rooted in language and its concrete contexts. With the current enterprise of identity construction context, using the instrumentation of Nigerian musical genres, it, therefore, seems convenient to comprehend discourse analysis is the interfacing discipline which explains, how various utterances following one after the other relate to one another to create meaning or facilitate interpretation.

According to Agesin (2012), discourse generally refers to any meaningful sign, speech or writing that is of social interaction. His perspective is gotten from Bloomeart (2005) who submits that 'discourse refers to any meaningful symbolic behaviour in social interaction or any modes'. It is, therefore, our interest to see discourse analysis as a system that gives room for the explanation of text in order to create meaning and aid interpretation. For us, we simply a job of going a whole hog to give interpretation of the musical utterances credited to our selected artistes as text producers.

Context and social diagnostics in musical discourse

Understanding the nature of social power and dominance gives the kind of insight required to formulate ideas and their production via discourse; what is assumed in the end are properties of relations between groups, that is, social power (van Dijk, 1993; Fairclough, 1985). Simply put, CDA aims at making transparent the connection between discourse practices, social practices and

social structures, the connection that might be opaque to the lay person. This study of musical tracks and musical contraptions from Akeeb Kareem and Burna boy thus reveal the cognitive missing link to show how societal structure influences discourse structures and how societal structures are in turn, enacted, instituted, legitimated, confirmed or challenged by musical texts and talks. In precise term, Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) is combined with critical discourse analytical approach to achieve these. The critical interest in our study, therefore, presents discourse as looking at the form and purpose of language in conversations beyond its surface grammatical meanings.

Generational Differences between Akeeb Kareem and Burna Boy

A generation can be loosely related to an identifiable group that shares demographic criteria of birth years, age, location and significant life events or experiences at critical developmental stages. Musical tastes, for instance, change with the times as new genres regularly appear. Each emerging generation is open to the popular music of its day and especially drawn to music that plays to that generation and defines itself as that generation's sound. As that generation ages, it tends to maintain its preference for the music of its youth.

Six generational cohorts are identified in this work: the Veterans (1925-1942); the Boomers (1943-1960); the Hopers (1961-1981); the Busters (1982-2002) the Millennials (2003-2019) and the Transitional (2020- ?). The thrust is that music, across ages, is present in people's lives. This work thus looks at peculiar musical cultures the Baby Boomers' of Akeeb Kareem and the Millennials' of Burna boy and how the artistes respond to the identity-related challenges of their times.

Methodology

The mere fact of socio-cultural, political and ideological leaning of this research imposes the kind of design that makes qualitative content analysis necessary. This thus helps in proper identification of various discourse issues and themes laid out for easy classification and variety of commentaries from the perspective of a critical discourse analyst. The design also enables us to

explicate linguistic elements that merge with the discursive ones in the selected musical tracks with which the artistes are able to construct and project their identity doctrines.

With these, and for for a naturalistic study of language the data are extracted from tracks in selected albums of the legendary Akeeb Kareem, the contemporary Burna boy, taking from '*Àrà me è rírí*' (Wonders shall never cease), Call me

Blackman, *Àboṣṣe e Cùbà* (the return from Cuba),

Peace all over the world, Unification, *African giant*, 20. 10. 20, *Monsters you created*, and from Burna Boy provide us excerpts for our analysis. These choices, once again, are informed by the desire to see how certain discourse themes of social and identity implications cut across musical genres and generations.

Most of the data that come in Yoruba are transcribed, translated into English, carefully sorted out and broken into manageable analysable unit to give allowance for easy description and commentaries.

We thus have a research of critical discourse enterprises, examining the ethical theories concerning human agency, action, and relationship, as well as evaluation of social constructions that have negatively polarised the global citizens along the colour or racial dichotomy.

Analysis and discussion

In the attempt to provide an alternative thinking to socio-cultural, socio-political, colour and racial agenda that define the world, the analysis utilises the elements of critique, description, and construction to assess the acutely dichotomised world of power imbalance by exploring the kind of influence that language has in revealing how negotiations and construction of identity in social contexts are made by the means of musical artistic expressions.

Identity construction and echoes of black's negotiations

The question that is paramount is what is identity; and how is it expressed by the persons or

groups concerned within a social setting? It is clear that such concept as identity belongs to the realm of developmental and personality psychology, a cognitive self-structure which describes how people seek answers to the question "Who am I or who are we in the scheme of things?" Our effort, therefore, is to endeavour to present this theoretic construct that developed within the field of psychology as a phenomenon explicable in the field of applied linguistics. The following tracks - **AKB 13, AKB 14, AKB 15** is presented for textual analysis:

AKB 13 Call me black man and I would love it
Abeg, call me black man I would love it (2x)
Call me black man, I'll be happy
Abeg, call me black man I would love it (2x)
Although I am black

AKB 14

Abba! Eehee/chorus: Eehee (5x)
Call me black man I would love it (2x)
Although as black as I am, the
blood in my vein is not black
As black as I am, the brain in my
skull is not black

AKB 15

As black as I am in complexion,
I am not of black inclinations
Call me black man I would love it

Abeg, call me black man, I'll be happy
The texts displayed above are the expression of Akeeb Kareem's loyalty to his essence dictated by the colour of his skin. It is a position that unflinchingly accepts the common destiny which the black man has had attached to himself based upon his pigmentation. Thus, we have the ideological load that is well packaged as the musical artiste becomes a representation of the prided 'beauty that is in black'. The following analysis instantiates the points:

¹Call me black man, I would love it (setting a premise)

²Although black as I am, (adverbial) the blood in my vein is not black

³As black as I am, the brain in my skull is not black

⁴As black as I am in complexion, I am not of

black inclinations

⁵Abeg, call me black man, I'll be happy

Identity construction and the building blocks of clause structure grammar

The track opens with an imperative sentence of compound structure // - clause// in which a comma is used to replace an additive that justifies our analysis of the first line as one with a compound structure. This // - clause// clause structure is strategically deployed for setting the premise that serves as groundwork for the conclusion arrived at in the subsequent three clause structures.

Identity construction and the grammar of pronominal references

Conversely, the second line, [Although black as I am, (adverbial) the blood in my vein is not black], for instance, is in the // β complex clause structure//. The use of clauses of unequal status strategically signals lack of coherence in the thoughts of the participants. Thus, it becomes the analyst's professional responsibility to uncover the undercurrent ideology of invoking on a powerfully sentimental idea of black world and life.

The artiste joyfully takes the text consumers on a pilgrimage that relishes the value of the blacks' self-estimations. This points out the refusal to be judged by the colour of the skin but by the content of character; and that anything else is something less, which is therefore, unacceptable. Here, in presenting his argument, Akeeb Kareem simply becomes the symbolic representation of the 'black world' as he, deploying the grammar of pronominal references appropriately, is able to construct 'identity with a positive face' for the blacks. **Precisely, personal pronoun is used carefully both in the accusative and nominative form not only to assumes the role of 'vantage participant' with the 'self-concept' that contains a 'self-meaning' or 'self-definition' but also to see anyone or group with opposing views as 'others'.**

Pidginized discourse marker for strategic reinforcement

The inclusion of the pidginized expression **Abeg** is, in semantic term, reiteration

by which the point of interest is emphasised. Akeeb Kareem deploys this reinforcement strategy using the potent tool of Nigerian specialised lingua franca – pidgin, to positively oppose the constructed identity that indicates the moral jail in which the black man seems 'permanently' confined.

5//Abeg, call me black man, I'll be happy//

The pidginized discourse marker 'Abeg' stands as an additional material introduced with semantic intention to:

- (i) reiterate his appreciation of his pigmentation
- (ii) support the relish for his racial and cultural essence
- (iii) affirm his rejection of the contrary 'others'.

This way, the ideological force of language use is seen in the 'vehimence' that is carried by the

pidginized discourse marker, 'Abeg'.

With respect to the use of the nation's specialised lingua franca, pidgin, unlike Akeeb Kareem who merely makes an intermittent use of this language variation for the expression of his themes and motifs, Burna boy of the *millennial generation* is apparently at home with the 'broken tongue' of the barrack's language as the sole means of communicating his own variety of identity construction as visible in the following extract from '**20.10.20**':

**Shey you never hear
About the things wey happen there
Abi your eye never clear
Mankind so wicked
Let's talk about my government
Open your mind and your ears
Wetin happen
Shey na jazz o
Make my people suffer suffer
All their nyanshes don dey open
Everything don scatter scatter
Twentieth of October 2020
You carry army go kill many youth for Lekki
Na so water o, water runaway my eye
Nothing you go talk wey go justify the case of
their murder
The Chief of Staff, the commander**

And the army wey carry order

The texts displayed above is part of the artiste's own peculiar representation of his generation in giving the voice against the dastard killing of Twentieth of October 2020 at Leki Toll Gate during famous '#End Sars' protest. Delivered in 'Fela-like' kind of pidgin with the modern type of rapping, Burnaboy is able to create 'distance' between the Nigerian youths and the government. The following excerpts are laid out for further description of critical discourse functions of certain discourse forms deployed: **Mankind so wicked**

Let's talk about my government

Nothing you go talk

wey go justify the case of their murder

The Chief of Staff, the commander

And the army wey carry out order

The last three lines are made to rhyme with deliberate use of the words: 'murder', 'commander' and 'order' in that order. The word 'commander' is given the medial occurrence to expose and distinguish the 'real perpetrator' from the 'criminal agency' of the heinous crime. This way, Burna boy is able to ideologically establish 'dichotomy' that constructs the identity of 'criminal' and 'murderer' for the Nigerian government and the army as against that of 'innocence' for the Nigerian youths. More textual evidences are hereby presented below:

The money wey you thief yapa for your azza

You don turn our graduates to common beggars

All the book them go no matter

'Cause you no go get job if you no know Godfather

Racial discriminations and the concept of superior race

Pursuing further his worldview of a world free of the parochial concept of superior race, the Blackman in Àbòdé e cùbà, that is, 'the return from cuba' presents a 'travelogue', a description of his travel, given in the form of narrative similar to what obtains in Robert Byron's *The Road to Oxiana*. This is a discourse strategy used by this travel singer to relay the exhilarating touring experience that was free from any form racial discrimination as visible in **AKC 2, AKC 3, and AKC 6** laid out hereunder:

AKC 2

I, black man toured Cuba to earn fame

I, black man toured America to earn honour

Both the blacks and the whites- together we dined

Both the blacks and the whites- together we wine

I, black man toured Cuba, and have great things to show

AKC 3

Fidel Castro, we are indeed grateful

I toured Cuba to behold the company of the whole universe

The Canadians were fully present at the momentous day

momentous day

Both the blacks and the whites- together we dined

Both the blacks and the whites- together we wine

There was no racial discrimina-na-na-na-tion

We all stayed, glued together as one

AKC 6

At the 11th, 12th, youth...conference of Arts and Culture

I, singing so well to win countless number of award

I was declared the father of all musical artists

I upheld the glory of my father's land at Cuba

From the musical texts displayed above, we have a sequence of depiction of the world shrinking into a global village at the occasion of the '11th, 12th, youth...conference of Arts and Culture' where all delegates related as united global citizens in spite of the skin colour, the expressions:

Both the blacks and the whites- together we dined

Both the blacks and the whites- together we wine

Confirm the ideological strangulation of the detested racial discrimination. The constriction and compression used for the obstruction of the dangerous circulation of racial discrimination are found in the beautiful combination of 'head-rhyme', 'end-rhymes', 'alliterations', 'consonance' and 'assonance' found in the two lines. The following explications suffice: Head-rhyme is found in the word 'both' used to begin the two lines. End-rhyme is found with words 'dined' and 'wined'.

Assonance is found in the repetition of vowel number 14 /ai/ in 'white' /wait/; 'dined' /daind/ and 'wined' /waind/. Alliterations are found in such words as 'both' and 'black', 'white' and 'we' as the same set of consonant sounds are found in the same musical line. The main point is that the artist shows professionalism, showing that sounds can contribute to the total meaning of identity construction in the musical tracks

This way, language, for Akeeb Kareem, becomes a revealing instrument of the momentous Cuban tour in which he was able to behold the company of the whole universe as one God's great big family

Metaphors of symbolic representation

Ara Me Riri, translated as 'wonders shall never seize' is a musical track with which the poetic personae addresses some sorts of perceived internal colonisation that undermines and degrades his dignity and person. It is a form of protest that is heavily congested with series of metaphors of symbolic representation. Take, for instance, the proverbial expression:

// **β complex clause structure**//

///the dog/ that is on a stealing mission /at the king's courtyard/ becomes/ Ògún ritual game///
this is a statement in alpha-beta clause of complex structure that carries the load of insult that the recipient would have to cope with and to which he refuses to be docile. The NP clause structure in the above text shows how functional categories of material and relational processes combine with proverbial or figurative expressions in the construction of identities for various participants in the musical text as we can see in the following analyses:

/the dog/ that is on a stealing mission/ is **an actor**, metaphor for an individual with vile affections of insult, assault, harassment of ethnic domination. This is on the basis of the categorisation of material process in terms of: **what did X do?**

/'Ògún ritual game/' is in **the identifying mode** of the relational process as the expression stands as **identifier** for the **identified**, that is, the **NP-actor** in the clause complex while 'becomes', that is, the verbal element in the clause structure guides the link between the identified and the identifier. Such link enables the societal identification in relation to the construction of the identity of social outcast

who does not deserve to live. Moreover, the construction of identities is strengthened by *the 'circumstantial details'* in **/at the king's courtyard/** which provide some very specific information on the extent of the effrontery.

Lexical interpretation of identity construction elements

Still in pursuit of identity constructions, the following texts can find explanation in terms of the link between the source and target domains:

I, that am known for my white horse to rule and reign in the world of pleasure. That a commoner, riding on ass, should go in to sexually harass my mother! I wouldn't accept

From the text displayed above, there is the deployment of certain lexical items that, interpreted in semantic terms, involve a lot of intricacies that fix them as cognitive tools that convey experiential perception which coalesce in 'symbolic representations'. Such items are perceived as metaphors. This point could be illustrated as follows: **white horse**: is understood in the context of 'royalty', 'dignity' and 'social elegance' that is associated with western education. **ass**: is interpreted in the context of 'degradation', 'debasement' and 'social contempt' that have long bore the rule especially in Nigerian, the most populous black nation in the sub-Saharan.

my mother: is comprehended in the context of self-significance, self-dignifying and self-pride.

It is, therefore, to the artist's consternation that a commoner, a vile person, riding on common **ass** to spite his heritage, this is an absurdity; it's unthinkable, preposterous and, therefore, unacceptable. The foregoing analysis thus makes it clear that most source domains do not just apply to one target concept but several.

Similarly, in the following track called '**African giant**', Burna boy, despite his deep-seated critical inclinations towards mis-governance that is the order of the day, is yet able to construct positive identity for the youth, recognising them as African Giants that should not be taken for granted:

**Tell 'em Africa we don dare
So here comes the African Giant
Many, many people don't try ah
But you can't test the African Giant**

To him, therefore, African Giant can be so daring, taking on the world. The foregoing presentation has a direct link with the *'innuendo'* he prefers to cast on the government's administrative irresponsibility by which the Nigerian youths are reduced to antisocial beings in the track titled – 'The Monster You created':

**We are the monsters you made
I bet they thought it was cool
Probably thought we was fools
When we would break all the rules
And skip them classes in school**

This did not go without leaving some strokes of *'lampoon'* on the vestiges of colonial mentality constructing the identity of *'falsehood'* that characterises or is associated with Western education:

**What the white man dem teaching
dem European teachings in my African school
So fuck dem classes in school
Fuck Mungo Park and the fools
That said they found river Niger
They've been lying to you
Ain't no denying the truth
See what I'm tryin' to do
Is draw the line for the mothers cryin'
we're dying as youths**

The historical allusion to 'Mungo Park', the acclaimed explorer or discoverer of the famous River Niger is a rejoinder aspersions on the imposition of inaccurate facts of history. Thus, Burna boy seems to align with the anti-western postcolonial Schools.

Summary of Findings

The potency of language as a psycho-social phenomenon which human being uses, not only to understand his immediate and remote environment, but also to construct identity in terms of his responses or reactions to how he is perceived and his perceptions of others. In the process, various linguistic categories and structures, lexical and non-lexical items as well as sound patterns and literary tropes have been found explainable, revealing language as instrument for the discourse of identity construction. These have been exemplified from selected musical tracks of Akeeb

and Burna boy of *'boomers'* and *'millennial'* generations.

Our analysis has, therefore, proved that:

- (i) Music is a universal instrument useful, not only pleasing the mind, but also for making contributions to social and organic growth.
- (ii) Musical discourse analysis, as unique platform for exposing certain linguistic structures and their discursive elements that have psycho-social and ideological bearing especially within the confine of the English linguistics.
- (iii) It is possible to analyse musical contents using the grammatical resources made available by the socially powerful Systemic Functional Grammatical orientation. Such possibility is permitted by its contextual potential.
- (iv) Such kind of grammar that operates with theory of context has assisted us, as analysts, to generate from our musical data, various contexts. These range from cultural, social, political to inter-generational contexts.
- (v) These various contexts are, as matters of fact, comprehensible within the overriding ideological contexts. This is consequent upon the fact that all the other contexts are projected for their ideological implications.

By implication, the symbolic representations of identity construction have been sufficiently located in the discursive elements that are anchored on certain linguistic categories and structures in the musical orientations of Akeeb Kareem and Burna Boy. Our first objective is thus realised.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, the bottom-line of our critical discourse exploration is that language influences how negotiations and construction of identity in social contexts. This study has, therefore, exemplified musical artistic expressions consisting of the linguistic and discursive elements with which Akeeb Kareem and Burna boy construct various identities as their own modes of

social response for social correction. The point of interest is that when musical artistes as language users sing, they construct and reconstruct their identity. They, with the identity, relate to the social world purely by the means of linguistic construct. They, like all other language users, try to gain access to social groups. They make the negotiation of their identities occur in every social context.

In precise term, identity is constructed by language, and musical artistes, representing their various psycho-social groups, establish their identity by how they choose to use language in interactions and experiences.

From the analysis done in this study, it is practically true that the English language, along with its pidgin variety, has become a global *lingual franca*. Different users, especially in the second language (L²) situations like Nigeria, use it for different purposes in private and public spaces. We, therefore, have findings and conclusion whose provisions not only facilitate policy formulation for rewarding nation building enterprises but are also useful in the field of applied English linguistics.

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