

Language and Identity Construction on *Facebook* and *Nairaland* in Nigeria

**Abosede Bukola ALABI
LCU/PG/001508**

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Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

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Certification

This is to certify that this thesis was carried out by Abosede Bukola ALABI with Matriculation number LCU/PG/001508 in the Department of Language and Literature, Lead City University, Ibadan under my supervision.

**Dr. U. Davies
(Supervisor)**

Date

**Dr. U. Davies
(Head of Department)**

Date

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Almighty God.

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Acknowledgement

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Abstract

The representation or performance of identity has become a notorious feature of domestic online interactions. Previous linguistic studies have focused more on the linguistic and stylistic features of online communication, with little attention paid to the meta-representations of identities. Therefore, this study examined identity portrayal in Facebook and Nairaland interactions, with a view to analysing the factors that underly identity representations and the performative (illocutions) acts. Performativity theory by Judith Butler, supported by Herbert Blumer's model of symbolic interactionism and M.A.K Halliday's systemic functional linguistics served as the framework. The qualitative design was employed. Purposive sampling was used to select 100 post and comments, 50 from Facebook, and 50 from Nairaland, due to their vast followership. Data was subjected to pragmatic analysis. Five common factors conditioned identity representations in Facebook and Nairaland, namely, age, national, ethnicity/religion, gender and group aggression. Condescender, progressor, regressor, and leveler were identified as age-based identities. Gender conditioned chauvinist, welfarist, seducer, dependent/independent, and patronizer identities. Ethnicity and religion produced chauvinist, opportunist, and entitlement identities. Group aggression produced the solidarist, activist, revolutionist, compromiser, and encourager/circularist identities. The identity representations were projected by performatives acts, namely, performative verbs, descriptive adjectival with performative actions, nominal performatives, and modal – conditional performatives. Pragmatic markers, namely, reference, inference, metaphor, and metapragmatic acts played key roles in the performance or representation of the identities in Facebook and Nairaland interactions. The performative and pragmatic approach clarifies the intricacies of identity in interactions in digital spaces that is growingly polarised by contemporary political influence and tactics.

Keywords: Symbolic interactionism, Performative acts, Identity construction, Mediated discourse

Word Count: 250

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Language plays an important role in shaping individual identities and differentiating how a group is different from other groups. The role of language in human life cannot be over emphasised¹. Language is used in day-to-day communication because it makes communication possible between two or more parties. However, the effectiveness of communication depends on the ability of both parties to understand the language used. Failure to understand the language effectively may make individuals have the wrong understanding of the message. This is because certain words may have different meanings in different contexts. People usually identify themselves with a certain language. Various groups of people use a certain code that is only comprehensible, to people within the group.

Language shows the social status, gender and race of an individual. Language is a source of identity. People are different from each other and use language to portray their differences or similarities. Language and identity are two distinct but inextricably intertwined concepts¹. Language may help in uniting people who belong to a particular social group. Thus, there is a close relationship between language and identity. Every individual has a certain identity, which may not be static. Language mirrors the culture of every society and also reflects the social realities of every nation². Language is very central to identity. It is a means of constructing identity. Identity is the process of accepting or challenging positionings that engender recognitions or misrecognitions, it can also be seen as a process driven by a person's desire to be viewed or positioned in a particular way³.

Language is the vehicle through which people's culture is transmitted. It is an index of identity which serves as a repository of people's culture, industry and exploits. Language is

not used in a vacuum but in context. It is affected by social systems and it, in turn, affects social groups. The functions of language consist of communication, the expression of identity, plays, imaginative expressions, and emotional relations. Language is a guide to social reality. It is a powerful weapon that conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes. Language can be seen as an expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words. It is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group operates.

Different systems of communication constitute different languages; the degree of difference needed to establish a different language cannot be stated exactly. Two people do not speak the same way; hence, one is able to recognize the voices of friends over the telephone. Language serves as a medium for exchanging ideas, feelings, thoughts and a tool for achieving a social interaction among members of social group. Through language, important social information is conveyed in a social acceptable and organized manner⁴.

A scholar on the other hand submits that Language is a system of spoken, written, and signed symbols that humans use to communicate with each other in a given community⁵. This definition sees the communicative role of language used by human beings for the purpose of interaction. It is important to note that language is in essence a perfect means of expression among every known people. Language determines the world-view of a people Language can therefore be seen as a means by which people relate, interact and express their thoughts, feelings and ideas through written signs and symbols. Without the ability to communicate, we would not have the world today⁵. Language is a means by which all human interactions are carried out; it has the ability to mend relationships that helps in cultural uniformity, thereby facilitating interpersonal and cognitive communication.

A study views language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbol which carries a national meanings. This means that language consists of speech sounds based on the social agreement

or convention⁶. Language, can be describe as what is specific to human beings. Other members of the animal kingdom have the ability to communicate, through vocal noises, but the most important single feature characterising human language, against every known mode of animal communication, is its infinite productivity and creativity. Human beings cannot be stop when it comes to the area of communication; no area of experience is accepted as necessarily incommunicable, though it may be necessary to adapt one's language in order to cope with new discoveries or new modes of thought. However, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies have drawn attention to a range of other functions of language. Among these is the use of language to express an identity. Also, the social aspect of language are key elements in sociolinguistic phenomena. The two fields study shows how we communicate through language. Sociolinguistics remains more closely related to philosophies of communication, it is the study of language in relation to social factors. These factors include linguistic changes in region, class, dialect and gender. Sociolinguistic studies show how language is used in society and how individual trends affect the use of language in a given context. Psycholinguistics is a discipline merging psychology and linguistics, and is continuously moving closer to cognitive sciences, as it really still focuses on how language works in the brain, it also study how language is processed in the brain and how it involves the breaking down of language and communication. Language interacts with all aspect of human life in society, and it can be understood only if it is considered in relation to society. Language is the property of society and should be judged by society. Language may be seen on the one hand as a factor of conditioning an individual's view of his/her environment and on the other as reflecting the environment but conditioned by the society.

The use of language is very important to human life. Language is the thread that helps connect generations together by bridging gaps in age, culture and experience. It allows people to share their knowledge, values and belief with each and understand different perspective

more easily⁷. The functions which language differentiate in a society may also include the maintenance and manipulation of individual social relationships and networks, and various means of effecting social control. People have long recognised the force and significance of language. The construction of identity through the use of language involves both practice and ideology, phenomena that are not entirely separable from each other; nor can either be reduced to the other. It is necessary to note that whatever symbols used in any communication process have the ability to convey meaning. Language is mainly for human method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbol.

Every language has a distinct culture, ethnic, regional, national or international identity attached to it, which allows people who share the same linguistic background to bond together⁷. Language encodes the values and norms in a given society and also gives full expression to people's values and norms. It is necessary to note that human beings inhabit a broadly similar world, or they would be unable to translate from one language to another, but they do not all inhabit a world exactly the same in all particulars, and translation is not merely a matter of substituting different but equivalent labels for the contents of the same inventory.

Identities can be built through communicative actions. Identity can be seen as the bond that binds individuals to their societies so that they seek to build it and raise their status, by preserving the most important components of the nation represented in religion, language, dynasty, history, culture, as individuals organise the meanings of their lives and experiences around a central identity characterised by relative continuity through time and space⁸. Identity is a phenomenon which involves multifarious elements such as culture, religion, social behaviour and language. Identity is flexible and dynamic because it can change. Identity does change according to the context of who it is that they are with⁹. Identity is dynamic in nature, it is not static whereby individual is identified with just one trait, and people take up different

directions depending on their theme or means of discourse. Most time when we view people's conversations, identities can shift or change in the course of a conversation according to the different story lines.

Technology influences identity construction on social media¹⁰. It has to be recognised that technology has been incorporated into practically every aspect of human life, domesticated and made natural. Through new media and connectivity, the boundaries of 'here' and 'there' are blurred and it is this fluidity and unboundedness that mark this new social order. To participate fully in societies in which technology has become the critical factor in acquiring economic, cultural and social capital, individuals need to adopt a digital mind-set that operates with different assumptions and values. As knowledge becomes broader, more contextual and contestable, greater lateral thinking is needed to navigate through disciplines, genres, modalities and cultural specificities. The ability to assert identity becomes inextricably linked to being able to gain the attention of specific audiences and to use innovative communicative strategies. Young people recently navigate across multiple languages, cultures, semiotic resources and identities through their digital literacy practices¹¹. In a digitalised society, most young people's communication and social relations is conducted by means of smartphones and other digital tools¹². Digital resources create new arena for young people's identity construction and for their participation in different social and linguistic practices. Digital resources makes communication possible across national, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. People are physically or digitally present when they are online¹³. Online users consume and actively create texts by using multiple modalities and engaging with various audiences in a state of reflective co-construction. Hence, the adoption of new literacies becomes necessary to exercise agency and to participate in the digital world.

Technology in the twenty-first century has transformed the world in multiple, exciting and unanticipated ways. Facilitating the rapid flow of information, capital and services across

the globe, it has dramatically revolutionised the way we work, communicate and interact with one another. More affordable travel, mobile communication devices, social media and online connectivity have enabled new patterns of movement and forms of social participation. In this digitally connected world, people move fluidly across online and offline spaces, blurring the boundaries of time and space and transforming notions of public and private domains. The concept of space has become more embedded in people's imaginations, leading to new identifications, allegiances and relations. As technology continues to permeate all aspects of human life and transform the social order, it has impacted on language and identity in significant ways.

The digital revolution has transformed language by triggering an explosion of new vocabularies, genres and styles and by reshaping literacy practices. By developing a mode of communication where writing approximates speaking, instant messaging (IM) and texting have facilitated the production of new words and styles that bridge the interactive nature of speech and the documental capacity of writing¹⁴. The constant evolution of new media has also spurred the growth of multimodal affordances, enabling people to assemble texts that integrate language with visual, aural, gestural and spatial modes.

Social media technological features allow individuals to receive constant feedback loops that influence their self-concept and reflect on their identity construction while online¹⁵. Online users are not only able to produce and share texts with greater ease, but also get immediate feedback to remediate these texts, making people active creators in a society of reflexive co-construction. By transforming language, the digital also transforms identity. Weedon asserts language is 'the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity is constructed'. Identity is constituted in and through language and we use language to articulate ideas and to represent ourselves and our social relations. Drawing on Weedon, identity as 'the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relation is constructed across time

and space and how the person understands possibilities for the future'. Because a person's sense of self and relation to the world continuously shifts, identity is dynamic, multiple and even contradictory. As the digital provides multiple spaces where language is used in different ways, learners are able to move across online and offline realities with greater fluidity and perform multiple identities¹⁵.

Also, it is necessary to note that when people occupy online spaces they reconstruct language in ways that match the affordances and constraints of various digital platforms. Whether communication is synchronous or asynchronous, the limitations of space and the speed in which texts can be delivered have led to the evolution of linguistic structures that merge the written and the spoken. Digital media have enabled easy access to and use of multiple modalities. Social network structures that connect people from all over the globe have provided more opportunities for multilingual encounters and translingual practices, revitalising languages and asserting new identities¹⁵. Because of these new areas of socialisation that provide multiple opportunities for self-representation, identity itself has become more complex and fluid.

This research work focuses on how identity is expressed on Facebook and Nairaland in Nigeria where interaction take place between participants within a community which consists mainly of Nigerians who reside in different countries all over the world. It is necessary to note that environment plays a major role in the construction of identity. Through social media platform such as Facebook and Nairaland, online users are able to participate in a greater number of multilingual exchanges. While languages like English enjoy a high status and are widely used online, the accessibility and reach of digital media also enables the use of minority languages¹⁴. Digital media allows multilingual and cross-language relations. Online spaces have become important areas for the establishment of social identities. The shaping of identity online is characterised by playful and deliberate creative gathering. People can

showcase different identities as they select participants and anticipate comments and reactions, it brings about a dialectical relationship¹⁶. In the cyberspace in Nigeria platforms, such as Facebook, requiring authentic identifiers in the form of real names and affiliations, the performance of the self is based on already established social roles. When users update their status to express their thoughts, they offer a representation of the self, based on the online socialisation they have already experienced. Even the profile picture demonstrates an identity and invites other social meanings. On social media, through the process of tagging, Facebook friends are able to post pictures and links, and send messages to each other's wall, helps to contribute to the construction in online identity.

The issue of language and identity construction is more pronounced in today's digital age. A scholar commented on the nature of identity in the digital age as against what people do in the time past with respect to identity and he stated that 'whereas past generation seemingly handled identity formation and related problems and issues in a matter-of-fact way, new dimensions have been added to old problems¹⁷. Current happenings around the world have not only changed the process of identity formation, but have also included new dimensions to identity.

From the viewpoint above on identity, it can be seen that there is always a need for a relationship between people to enable them bring about an effective interaction. This study seeks to examine how identities in the selected excerpt from Facebook and Nairaland are constructed through language. The study also seeks to identify the identities that are constructed on Facebook and Nairaland. It specifically focuses on how people on Facebook and Nairaland uniquely construct their life experiences and use their discourses to indicate who they are.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Our identity is what makes us different from others. Identity is consciously or unconsciously shaped by the social group an individual identifies himself or herself with. A study was carried out on analysis of identity construction through positioning Acts in Nigerian Vice-presidential debate discourses¹⁸. The study revealed that in political debates, participants do not readily present their identities. They make use of some language structure that requires the analysis of the placing of self in certain positions for understanding. This study explore identity construction through positioning act strategies and the identities projected in the discourses practices by two vice presidential debate candidates in defining selves and other parties stance and group categorisation. The theoretical framework employed in study is Langenhove and Harre positioning theory.

Another study wrote an article on Identity and Alterity in TV Autobiographical Interviews of Argentinean Popular Artist's Discursive Strategies'¹⁹. This research investigates ways by which discourse is utilised to recover, symbolise and sort out a stretch of experience from the past into scenes and occasions that present the self, project a personal and social identity and, by contrast, establish alterity in discourse. Another study examines the case of an Iranian women's rights campaign page on facebook, "My Stealth Freedom", using an analysis of textual and visual content. The article examines how online campaign pages on facebook contribute to the formation of collective identity and the construction of a campaign narrative. Following the analysis, the authors discuss how photobiographic campaigns on social media users sharing personal photos and adjoining personal narratives in support of a cause- illustrate two affordances of social media for construction of collective identity: affordances for performance ,affordances for discourse contribute to the collective action framing process through sharing of grievances and collectively negotiating meaning²⁰. From the above discussions, it is evident that studies on how identities are constructed in discourse are available. Existing studies have focused on identity construction in Nigerian Vice-

presidential debate discourse and Identity in TV Autobiographical interviews of Argentinean popular Artist's Discursive Strategies, using Langenhove and Harre positioning theory but however, non of this scholar has used symbolic interactionism and performativity theory . Since the context of this study is different from those discussed above. However this work attempted to highlight how Nigerians can be identified on Facebook and Nairaland through their language use and the construction of identity and also to showcase the differences in the identities people create for themselves and those created for others.

1.3 Justification of the Study

The justification for the selection of Facebook and Nairaland is based on the availability of participants and data on the cyberspace and easy access of researcher to them.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the patterns of identity on Facebook and Nairaland and the forms of language for constructing such identities. The objectives are to:

- i. identify and categorise the forms of identity constructed on Facebook and Nairaland in Nigeria;
- ii. relate the constructed identities and the forms of language used to the context of discourse engagements in the two online communities; and
- iii. analyse the linguistic resources for constructing such identities in the selected excerpts.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the forms of identities constructed on Facebook and Nairaland in Nigeria?
2. What is the nexus between the constructed identities and the forms of language used in relation to the context of discourse engagements in the two online communities?
3. What are the linguistic resources for constructing identities in the selected excerpts?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research is important because it add to the existing knowledge on language and identity construction. This study is important because it provide sociolinguistic awareness to researchers and develop their understanding about their language which is an agent of their identity. This research workenable researchers to know ways by which individuals construct their identities through language. The study also help educators to understand the experiences of Nigerians on Facebook and Nairaland that has to do with language and identity. It also help learners and researchers that are working on identity construction.

1.7 Scope of the Study

Identity construction is not about self but also for others. This work is limited to identity of self. Our individual identity is determined by what others think of us. Identity consist of inner qualities and outer representation of self. It include individual's looks, personality, beliefs and fears.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

This research work was constrained by unavailability of funds required for extensive research of this magnitude.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

- 1. Communication:** Communication is used to see how a message is being formulated, sent through the two selected platforms, received and interpreted, including the giving of appropriate feedback.

2. **Cyberspace:** This is an electronic medium that is used to facilitate communication on Facebook and Nairaland. It is an environment resulting from the interaction of people, software and services on the internet by means of technology devices and networks connected to it.
3. **Facebook:** Facebook is a free social network that provide an online book of faces for people to connect with friends, family, work colleagues or people they don't know online and share information. Facebook allows users to share pictures, music, videos and articles.
4. **Identity:** This is to refer to how people on cyberspace form their self-concept.
5. **Identity Construction:** It is used to discover how people on Facebook and Nairaland develop a clear and unique view of themselves. It is also use to see how individuals express their identity online.
6. **IR (Identity Representation):** This is will be used to group the data according to the identity related factors; age, gender, religion/ethnicity/nationality and social status.
7. **Language:** Language is a means of communication. It is used by interactants on Facebook and Nairaland to express inner thoughts, emotions or feelings and enhance human interaction and peaceful co-existence.
8. **Multilingual:** This can be refers to show how Nigerians on Facebook and Nairaland use more than one language to communicate.
9. **Nairaland:** Nairaland is a place where Nigerians can talk to each other and identify each other by names but they never see. In nairaland, Nigerians meet to interact with each other via various interesting public discussions on every topic.
10. **Technology:** It is use to facilitates the rapid flow of information in the Cyberspace.

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Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter is concerned with The Review of existing studies on Language and Identity construction in the cyberspace in Nigeria. It also contains review of literature based on the following procedures:

- 2.1 Conceptual Review
- 2.2 Theoretical Framework
- 2.3. Review of Empirical Studies
- 2.4 Conceptual Model
- 2.5 Summary of Gap in Literature Reviewed

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 The Concept of Language

Language can be defined as the totality of the utterances that can be made in a speech community¹. The definition of language focusses on the utterances produced by all the community's people and overlooks writing. A Linguist also stresses form, not meaning, as the basis of languages¹. A scholar says language is the inherent capabilities of native speakers to understand and form grammatical sentences. A language is a system of conventionals, spoken or written which human beings use to communicate². This definition of language considers sentences as the basis of a language. Sentences maybe limited or unlimited and are made up of only minor components. According to another scholar, language does not exist for its own. It is one of the skills that is developed to achieve a shared communicative goals³. He points out that language is the best communication system of human beings by particular social groups.

Language carry histories, cultures, traditions and experiences of people who speak them⁴. The popular view of language was as a set of formal rules, or distinctive knowledge: langue and parole in the Saussure an approach and competence and performance in Chomskian approach⁵. But in the 1990s, researchers doubted the popular view of language as “an empty vehicle that conveys pre-existing meanings about the world” and they wondered about SLA theorists’ perspectives of the language learner’s relationship to the social world. The shift we’ve witnessed hence then have asserted that language is not a neutral medium for communication but rather a set of socially embedded practices.

Research interests in the relationship between identity and language learning underwent a shift in the epistemological paradigms utilized by many second language acquisition scholars and linguistic anthropologists. Questions on identity and language learning have taken up new research trajectories theoretically and empirically. For example, in his study of language and identity, a critique. A researcher, examines the interaction between language and social identities, and this interaction is multifaceted and renders myriads of ramifications⁶. Other scholar, argue that motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic directly affects people’s identity formation and can either facilitate or hinder attitudes towards learning⁷.

Furthermore, linguistic anthropologists hold in common views that language is a form of social action. Urciuoli’s ethnography, *Exposing Prejudice: Puerto Rican Experiences of Language, Race, and Class*, argues that the “political economy” of language is evident in the ways Puerto Ricans in New York City’s Lower East Side experience, accept, or resist the judgments that they and others make about what constitutes “good” or “bad” language whether Spanish, English, or a mix both. A researcher’s findings on way of connecting the experience of language learners perceptions of its relevance to their lives through encouraging them to reflect on languages in their lives by developing their identity as language learners ⁸. They notes the importance of language in unequal social and learning

relations and the way these power relations both reflect and reinforce the differences in status. Identity is very relevant when it comes to language learning⁹. Pedagogical interventions aimed at changing pupils' identity-based motivations have been shown to lead to enhanced pupil motivation and higher academic outcomes¹⁰. A scholar used identity texts as a way of helping all students to heighten their awareness of linguistic diversity and linguistic repertoire¹¹. Some researcher also notes that there are important correlation between students' and self-ascribed identity in examination¹². A linguist viewed language as integral to identity, and as a central medium through which we think, define and present ourselves to others¹³.

2.1.1.1 Functions of Language

Language is a global phenomenon. It is a mark of identity and means of transmission of cultural heritage. Language is central to human communication. It is a system of signs and symbols through which a speech community communicates. Language is used in different contexts for different reasons. Language is powerful in that it expresses our identities through labels used by and on us, affects our credibility based on how we support our ideas, serves as a means of control, and performs actions when spoken by certain people in certain contexts. Language symbolises identities and are used to signal identities by those who speak them. People are also categorised by other people according to the language they speak. People belong to many social groups and have many social identities. The use of language to achieve these reasons constitutes its functions. In this section, the functions of language will be examined to show us that language is expressive, language is powerful, language is dynamic, language is rational.

2.1.1.1.2 Language is Expressive

When people communicate, it helps them meet various needs through their ability to express themselves. We use communication to describe things, people and ideas. It also helps us inform, persuade, and entertain others. It is also through our verbal expressions that our personal relations are formed⁴.

Language can be used to express our thoughts when we draw conclusions based on what we have experienced. In the perception process, this is similar to the interpretation step. (We take various observations and evaluate and interpret them to assign them meaning (a conclusion)) Language can be used to express feelings, we communicate over emotions. Expressing feelings is a different part of verbal communication, because there are many social norms about how, why, when, where, and to whom we express our emotions. Norms for emotional expression also vary based on nationality and other cultural identities and characteristics such as age and gender.

In order to express our emotions verbally, it is important to develop an emotional vocabulary. The more specific we can be when emotions, the less ambiguous our emotions will be for the person decoding our message. As we expand over emotional vocabulary, we are able to convey the intensity of the emotion were feeling whether it is mild, moderate, or intense. For example, happy is mild, delighted is moderate, and ecstatic is intense, ignored is mild, rejected is moderate and abandoned is intense⁵.

Now that so much communication is electronically mediated, it is necessary to know that individuals communicate emotions through the written word in an e-mail, text or instant message. Communication helps us meet various needs through our ability to express ourselves. In terms of instrumental needs, we use communication to ask questions that provide us with specific information. We also use communication to describe things, people, and ideas. It helps us to inform, persuade, and entertain others, which as we will learn later

are the three general purposes of public speaking. It is also through our verbal expressions that our personal relationships are formed. At its essence, language is expressive. Languages help us to communicate our observations, thoughts, feelings, and needs¹⁴.

2.1.1.1.3 Language is Powerful

A contemporary American philosopher wrote, “only if words are felt, bodily presences, like echoes or waterfalls, can we understand the power of spoken language to influence, alter, and transform the perceptual world”⁶.

This statement encapsulates many of the powerful features of languages, for instance, how language expresses over identities and performs actions. The power of language to express over identities varies depending on the origin of the label (self-chosen or other imposed) and the context. Individuals are usually comfortable with the language they use to describe their own identities but may have issues with the labels others place on them.

2.1.1.1.4 Language is Performative

Some language are actually more like an action than a packet of information, sayings ‘I promise,’ ‘I guarantee,’ or ‘I pledge,’ does not more than convey meaning: It communicates intent. Such utterances are called commissives, as they mean a speaker is committed to a certain course of action⁷. Performative language can also be a means of control, especially in legal context. Some language is actually more like an action than a packet of information. Saying, “I promise,” “I guarantee,” or “I pledge,” does more than convey meaning; it communicates intent. Such utterances are called commissives, as they mean a speaker is committed to a certain course of action. Of course, promises can be broken, and there can be consequences, but other verbal communication is granted official power that can guarantee action. The two simple words I do can mean that a person has agreed to an oath before taking a witness stand or assuming the presidency. It can also mean that two people are now bound

in a relationship recognized by the government and/or a religious community. These two words, if said in the right context and in front of the right person, such as a judge or a reverend, bring with them obligations that cannot be undone without additional steps and potential negative repercussions. In that sense, language is much more than “mere words.”

Performative language can also be a means of control, especially in legal contexts. In some cases, the language that makes our laws is intentionally vague. In courts all over the nation, the written language intersects with spoken language as lawyers advocate for particular interpretations of the written law. The utterances of judges and juries set precedents for interpretations that will then help decide future cases. Some language is deemed so powerful that it is regulated. Hate speech, which we will learn more about later, and slander, libel, and defamation are considered powerful enough to actually do damage to a person and have therefore been criminalized⁷.

2.1.1.1.5 Language is Dynamic

This means that language is limitless. Words can change meaning and language is productive. Aside from the endless structural possibilities, words change meaning. Language is dynamic in nature.

2.1.1.1.6 Expressing is used for Observations

Language is used to express observations; people report on the sensory information they are taking or have taken in. Eyewitness testimony is a good example of communicating observations. Witnesses are not supposed to make judgments or offer conclusions; they only communicate factual knowledge as they experienced it. For example, a witness could say, “I saw a white Mitsubishi Eclipse leaving my neighbour’s house at 10:30 pm.” When one is trying to make sense of an experience, expressing observations in a descriptive rather than evaluative way can lessen defensiveness, which facilitates competent communication¹⁴.

2.1.1.1.7 Expressing Thoughts

We use language to express our thoughts, we draw conclusions based on what we have experienced. In the perception process, this is similar to the interpretation step. We take various observations and evaluate and interpret them to assign them meaning (a conclusion). Whereas our observations are based on sensory information (what we saw, what we read, what we heard), thoughts are connected to our beliefs (what we think is true/false), attitudes (what we like and dislike), and values (what we think is right/wrong or good/bad). Jury members are expected to express thoughts based on reported observations to help reach a conclusion about someone's guilt or innocence. A juror might express the following thought: "The neighbour who saw the car leaving the night of the crime seemed credible. And the defendant seemed to have a shady past—I think she's trying to hide something." Sometimes people intentionally or unintentionally express thoughts as if they were feelings. For example, when people say, "I feel like you're too strict with your attendance policy," they aren't really expressing a feeling; they are expressing a judgment about the other person (a thought).

2.1.1.1.8 Expressing Feelings

Language is used to express feelings; when we communicate our emotions. Expressing feelings is a difficult part of verbal communication, because there are many social norms about how, why, when, where, and to whom we express our emotions. Norms for emotional expression also vary based on nationality and other cultural identities and characteristics such as age and gender. In terms of age, young children are typically freer to express positive and negative emotions in public. Gendered elements intersect with age as boys grow older and are socialized into a norm of emotional restraint. Although individual men vary in the degree to which they are emotionally expressive, there is still a prevailing social norm in many cultures

that encourages and even expects women to be more emotionally expressive than men. Expressing feelings is often the most difficult form of verbal expression.

Expressing feelings can be uncomfortable for those listening. Some people are generally not good at or comfortable with receiving and processing other people's feelings. Even those with good empathetic listening skills can be positively or negatively affected by others' emotions. Expressions of anger can be especially difficult to manage because they represent a threat to the face and self-esteem of others. Despite the fact that expressing feelings is more complicated than other forms of expression, emotion sharing is an important part of how we create social bonds and empathize with others, and it can be improved.

In order to express motions verbally, it is important that individuals develop an emotional vocabulary. The more specific we can be when we are verbally communicating our emotions, the less ambiguous our emotions will be for the person decoding our message. When people expand their emotional vocabulary, they are able to convey the intensity of the emotion they are feeling whether it is mild, moderate, or intense. For example, happy is mild, delighted is moderate, and ecstatic is intense; ignored is mild, rejected is moderate, and abandoned is intense.

When so much of people's communication is electronically mediated, they communicate emotions through the written word or emojis in an e-mail, text, or instant message. People may also still use pen and paper when sending someone a thank-you note, a birthday card, or a sympathy card. Communicating emotions through the written (or typed) word can have advantages such as time to compose your thoughts and convey the details of what you're feeling. There are also disadvantages in that important context and nonverbal communication can't be included. Things like facial expressions and tone of voice offer much insight into emotions that may not be expressed verbally. There is also a lack of immediate feedback.

Sometimes people respond immediately to a text or e-mail, but think about how frustrating it is when you text someone and they don't get back to you in a reasonable time. If you're in need of emotional support or want validation of an emotional message you just sent, waiting for a response could end up negatively affecting your emotional state¹⁴.

2.1.1.1.9 Expressing Needs

Individuals employ language to express their needs by communicating in an instrumental way to help us get things done. Since we almost always know our needs more than others do, it's important for us to be able to convey those needs to others. Expressing needs can help us get a project done at work or help us navigate the changes of a long-term romantic partnership. Not expressing needs can lead to feelings of abandonment, frustration, or resentment. For example, if one romantic partner expresses the following thought "I think we're moving too quickly in our relationship" but doesn't also express a need, the other person in the relationship doesn't have a guide for what to do in response to the expressed thought. Stating, "I need to spend some time with my friends this weekend. Would you mind if I went to meet them by myself?" would likely make the expression more effective. Be cautious of letting evaluations or judgments sneak into your expressions of need. Saying "I need you to stop suffocating me!" really expresses a thought-feeling mixture more than a need.

2.1.1.1.10 Language and Power

The contemporary American philosopher David Abram wrote, "Only if words are felt, bodily presences, like echoes or waterfalls, can we understand the power of spoken language to influence, alter, and transform the perceptual world". This statement encapsulates many of the powerful features of language. Language expresses our identities, affects our credibility, serves as a means of control, and performs actions.

2.1.1.1.11 Language is used to Express our Identities

We use Language to express who we are and contribute to the impressions that others make of us. People also use verbal communication strategically to create a desired impression. The power of language to express our identities varies depending on the origin of the label (self-chosen or other imposed) and the context. People are usually comfortable with the language they use to describe their own identities but may have issues with the labels others place on them. There are many examples of people who have taken a label that was imposed on them, one that usually has negative connotations, and intentionally used it in ways that counter previous meanings. Some country music singers and comedians have reclaimed the label redneck, using it as an identity marker they are proud of rather than a pejorative term. Other examples of people reclaiming identity labels is the “black is beautiful” movement of the 1960s that repositioned black as a positive identity marker for African Americans and the “queer” movement of the 1980s and ’90s that reclaimed queer as a positive identity marker for some gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. Even though some people embrace reclaimed words, they can still carry their negative connotations and might not be openly accepted by everyone.

2.1.1.1.12 Language Affects our Credibility

People make assumptions about their credibility based on how they speak and what they say. Even though we’ve learned that meaning is in people rather than words and that the rules that govern verbal communication, like rules of grammar, are arbitrary, these norms still mean something. People do not have to be a perfect grammarian to be perceived as credible. But individuals still have to support their ideas and explain the conclusions they make to be seen as competent. They have to use language clearly and be accountable for what you say in order to be seen as trustworthy. Using informal language and breaking social norms, enhance one’s credibility during a professional job interview. Politicians know that the way they speak affects their credibility, but they also know that using words that are too scientific or

academic can lead people to perceive them as "eggheads," which would hurt their credibility. Politicians and many others in leadership positions need to be able to use language to put people at ease, relate to others, and still appear confident and competent.

2.1.1.1.13 Language is a Means of Control

Control is a word that has negative connotations, but our use of it can either be positive, neutral, or negative. Communication can be used to reward and punish. Communication can be in form of positive reinforcement to praise someone. Communication can withhold or use in a critical, aggressive, or hurtful way as a form of negative reinforcement. Directives are utterances that try to get another person to do something. They can range from a rather polite ask or request to a more forceful command or insist. Context informs when and how we express directives and how people respond to them. Promises are often paired with directives in order to persuade people to comply, and those promises, whether implied or stated, should be kept in order to be an ethical communicator. It is necessary to note this in order to avoid arousing false expectations on the part of the other person.

Rather than verbal communication being directed at one person as a means of control, the way we talk creates overall climates of communication that may control many. Communication characterized by empathy, understanding, respect, and honesty creates open climates that lead to more collaboration and more information exchange. Verbal communication that is controlling, deceitful, and vague creates a closed climate in which people are less willing to communicate and less trusting.

2.1.1.1.14 Language and Entertainment

Language is also used for entertainment; word games have long been popular. Before Words with Friends there was Apples to Apples, Boggle, Scrabble, and crossword puzzles. Writers, poets, and comedians have built careers on their ability to have fun with language and in turn share that fun with others. The fun and frivolity of language becomes clear as teachers get half-hearted laughs from students when they make puns. Jay Leno has a whole bit where he shows the hilarious mistakes people unintentionally make when they employ language, and people vie to construct the longest palindromic sentence (a sentence that as the same letters backward and forward).

There are more than one hundred theories of humour, but none of them quite captures the complex and often contradictory nature of what we find funny. Humour is a complicated social phenomenon that is largely based on the relationship between language and meaning. Humour functions to liven up conversations, break the ice, and increase group cohesion. We also use humour to test our compatibility with others when a deep conversation about certain topics like politics or religion would be awkward. Humour can also be use to draw attention to people, and the reactions that they get from others feeds into our self-concept. People also use humour to disclose information about themselves that they might not feel comfortable revealing in a more straightforward way. Humour can also be used to express sexual interest or to cope with bad news or bad situations. People use encoding to decide how and when to use humour, and people use decoding to make sense of humorous communication. Things can go wrong in both of those processes.

2.1.1.1.15 Language is used for Socialization

Language is the key for socialization by bringing people together and maintaining relationships. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, the use of words like I, you, we, our, and us affect people's relationships. "We language" includes the words we, our, and us and

can be used to promote a feeling of inclusiveness. Example: "I appreciate it that we enjoy the same type of films." "I language" can be useful when expressing thoughts, needs, and feelings because it leads us to "own" our expressions and avoid the tendency to mistakenly attribute the cause of our thoughts, needs, and feelings to others. Communicating emotions using "I language" may also facilitate emotion sharing by not making our conversational partner feel at fault or defensive. For example, instead of saying, "You're making me crazy!" you could say, "I'm starting to feel really anxious because we can't make a decision about this." Conversely, "your language" can lead people to become defensive and feel attacked, which could be divisive and result in feelings of interpersonal separation.

2.1.1.1.16 Language is Rational

People use Language to maintain, initiate and terminate interpersonal relationships. The first few exchanges with a potential romantic partner or friend help us size the other person up and figure out if we want to pursue a relationship or not. We then use Language to remind others how we feel about them and to check in with them—engaging in relationship maintenance through language use. When negative feelings arrive and persist, or for many other reasons, we often use communication to end a relationship.

2.1.2 The Concept of Identity

The word identity stems from the latin word dem, which means Sameness. Identity can refer to an individual's own subjective sense of self, to personal classification 'markers' that appear as important, both to oneself and to others, and also to those markers that decline group memberships, identity focuses on the formation of "me", exploring how interpersonal interactions mold an individual's sense of self .It enables people to take an agentic approach towards their own development¹⁵. Identity is our main reference point that we organize and evaluate our relationships with the world, past, future, and other people.

Identity is a complex process in which humans develop a clear and unique view of themselves and of their identity (self-concept, personality development and values are all closely related to identity construction. People can identify with lots of different groups, like their gender, race, nationality or political party. Identity construction is a general term that refers to the social construction of identity based on self-concept, the incorporation of group perspective is the internalization of multiple identity status.

An identity is a set of meanings defining who one is in a role (e.g. Father, Plumber, and Students). In a group of social category (e.g. member of a church or voluntary association, an American, a female), or a unique individual (e.g., a highly moral person, an assertive person, an outgoing person. On the one hand, identities are constructed through interaction; on the other one, they are used as resources to shape interaction.

Language and Identity reflects in how individuals appreciate their identity. Identity is important because it makes people's inner and social world intelligible and manageable. It answers fundamental questions such as 'who am I?', 'who do I want to become?', and 'how do I act? Identity shows how individuals create particular self-meaning for themselves¹⁶. The sociolinguistic research mainly addresses this issue. Identity has received increasing interest in various areas of social interaction research, for example interactional pragmatics, interactional sociolinguistics, and ethnomethodology in general¹⁷. This aspect of language identity is the main fodder for critical literacy researchers and theorists. They believe that solidification of social bonds by use of language may pave the way for the ruling or mainstream group to use linguistic identity for inciting their ideology to a society for their majorly politically- or geographically-motivated objectives. Recent research works revealed that Iranian English teachers are likely to face challenges that negatively influence their identity due to multiple sociocultural factors¹⁸.

It is necessary to demarcate two different processes accordingly: the formation of identity by individuals themselves according to their wishes and will or the unconscious creation of identity by the mainstream power¹⁹. Non-solidarity linguistic manifestations denote detachment and reserve, while solidarity manifestations mean affinity and rapport. In other words, to speak of someone's social identity is to speak, at the very least, of what attaches them in virtue of their membership of a category²⁰. For example, graduates from the same class, members of a family and players of a football team use a linguistic variety to identify themselves as intimate. This argument is corroborated by the proponents of speech accommodation theory maintaining that speakers shift and modify their speech in different situations, which require these changes. Identity is constructed not ready²¹. The socio-constructionist theory views identity as constructed in light of contextual idiosyncrasies. Identity is dynamic and multifaceted and it can be affected by different factors such as belief context experience and personal attributes²².

Youths position themselves through identity choices they make. They engage in social racial and categories to redefine their identity²³. One of the prime examples of situational identity is the formation of language teacher identity. Authors employ a duo ethnographic research method on how their encounter with world Englishes and English as a lingual franca have impacted their identities as a native speaker and non-native speaker teacher of English²⁴. A person's identity can be represented through their language use and it can also be influenced by the social groups they are in social factors that contribute to someone's identity are region, gender, age, occupation, class and ethnicity.

2.1.3 Types of Identity

2.1.3.1 Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is based on the culture individuals belong to. There are modern questions of culture that are transferred into questions of identity. Historical culture also influences individual identity, and as with modern cultural identity, individuals may pick and choose aspects of cultural identity. Scholars of language use culture to stand for language, ethnicity and traditions²⁵. There are many different sets of behaviors, values, beliefs, and patterns of thinking around us. Within any geographic location, both the dominant culture and various co-cultures exist.

Culture has to do with system of values, beliefs, attitudes, ability to being able to adapt to sociocultural context and ways of thinking held by the people who are in power in a society²⁶. However, co-cultures also exist side by side with the dominant culture and are comprised of smaller numbers of less powerful people who hold common values, attitudes, beliefs, and orientations that differ from those of the dominant culture. The cultures people belong to are based on factors like race, gender, and social class, and they form part of our identity.

Cultural identities are based on socially constructed categories that teach us a way of being, and include expectations for social behavior, ways of acting, and norms. The ways of being and the social expectations for behavior within cultural identities can and do change over time. For example, think of how ways of being and acting have changed for African. Our social identities are derived from the social groups that we belong to, both voluntarily and involuntarily, such as a sports team, art club, band, or family.

Personal identities include the components of self that are primarily intrapersonal and connected to our life experiences. For example, you may consider yourself a puzzle lover or identify as a fan of hip-hop music. Our social identities are the components of self that are derived from involvement in social groups with which we are interpersonally committed.

Social identity has to do with social category into which one falls and feels to belong defines who one is in that category²⁷. Social identities differ from personal identities because they are externally organized through membership. For example, we may derive aspects of our social identity from our family or from a community of sports team fans. Our membership may be voluntary (such as being a member of a sports team) or involuntary (family). There are innumerable options for personal and social identities. While our personal identity choices express who we are, our social identities align us with particular groups. Through our social identities, we make statements about who we are and who we are not.

Personal identities may change often as people have new experiences and develop new interests and hobbies. Social identities do not change as often because they take more time to develop, as you must become interpersonally invested. For example, if an interest in online video games leads someone to become a member of a MMORPG, or a massively multiplayer online role-playing game community, that personal identity has led to a social identity that is now interpersonal and more entrenched.

Culture is defined as a set of learned behaviors, values, beliefs, and patterns of thinking that we learn as we grow and develop. However, as we know from our own experiences and observations, there are many different sets of behaviors, values, beliefs, and patterns of thinking around us. Within any geographic location, both the dominant culture and various co-cultures exist. However, cultures also “exist side by side with the dominant culture and are comprised of smaller numbers of less powerful people who hold common values, attitudes, beliefs, and orientations that differ from those of the dominant culture”. The cultures we belong to are based on factors like race, gender, and social class, and they form part of our identity. Cultural identities are based on socially constructed categories that teach us a way of being, and include expectations for social behavior, ways of acting, and norms. Social identity of individuals is an individual’s identity that is derived from his or her knowledge of

membership in an online social group. It is been seen as the perception of oneself that is who I am, what one is or a self-image²⁸. The ways of being and the social expectations for behavior within cultural identities can and do change over time. For example, think of how ways of being and acting have changed for African Americans since the civil rights movement or norms of behavior for women today versus 50-years ago.

These common ways of being and acting, and norms within a cultural identity group are expressed through communication. In order to be accepted as a member of a cultural group, members must be acculturated, essentially learning and using a code that other group members will be able to recognize. A code is a socially-constructed, historically transmitted system of rules, beliefs, and premises pertaining to communicative behavior. Basically, communication codes tell us how to behave and interact with others, and tell us what is considered 'normal' and acceptable behavior.

We are acculturated into our various cultural identities and learn communication codes in obvious and less obvious ways. We may have a parent or friend tell us what it means to be a man or a woman. We may also unconsciously consume messages from popular culture that offer representations of gender. Because cultural identities are learned via communication, they are also socially constructed. Social constructionism is a view that argues the self is formed through our interactions with others and in relationship to social, cultural, and political contexts.

2.1.3.2 Professional Identity

Professional identity is the identification with a profession, exhibited by an aligning of roles, responsibilities, values, standards as accepted by different profession. It has to do with how

people perceive their identity at work²⁹. It also consists of the individual's alignment of roles, responsibilities, values, and ethical standards to be consistent with practices accepted by their specific profession. In business, professional identity is the professional self-concept that is founded upon attributes, values, and experiences. A professional identity is developed when there is a philosophy that is manifested in a distinct corporate culture – the corporate personality. In business professional identity a person must have certain types of skills that sometimes require formal training or education.

Career development encompasses the total dimensions of psychological, sociological, educational, physical, economic, and chance that alter a person's career practice across the lifespan. Career development also refers to the practices from a company or organization that enhance someone's career or encourages them to make practical career choices.

Training is a form of identity setting, since it not only affects knowledge but also affects a team member's self-concept. On the other hand, knowledge of the position introduces a new path of less effort to the trainee, which prolongs the effects of training and promotes a stronger self-concept. Other forms of identity setting in an organization include Business Cards, Specific Benefits by Role, and Task Forwarding. How individuals view themselves and their identity at work is very important²⁹.

2.1.3.3 Ethnic and National Identity

Ethnicity has to do with number of people living together, company, body of men. An ethnic identity is an identification with a certain ethnicity, usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry. Ethnic identity can improve well-being among marginalized ethnoracial groups who experience racism and discrimination³⁰. Recognition by others as a distinct ethnic group is often a contributing factor to developing this identity. Ethnic groups are also often united by common cultural, behavioural, linguistic, ritualistic, or religious traits.

Ethnicity refers to the cultural origins of your family. Your ethnicity may influence the morals, cultural traditions, food, and religion you practice. While often linked to race (for example, most ethnic Kenyans are also black), ethnicity refers to the culture of a group of people whereas race refers to physical characteristics. Examples of ethnicities include Native American, Hispanic, and Pacific Islander.

Processes that result in the emergence of such identification are summarized as ethno genesis. Various cultural studies and social theory investigate the question of cultural and ethnic identities. Cultural identity adheres to location, gender, race, history, nationality, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and ethnicity. National identity is an ethical and philosophical concept where all humans are divided into groups called nations. Members of a "nation" share a common identity and usually a common origin, in the sense of ancestry, parentage, or descent. Ethnicity helps to demonstrate possible benefits of a globalized identity for marginalized groups³⁰.

2.1.3.4 Religious Identity

A religious identity is the set of beliefs and practices generally held by an individual, involving adherence to codified beliefs and rituals and study of ancestral or cultural traditions, writings, history, mythology, and faith and mystical experience. Religious identity refers to the personal practices related to communal faith along with rituals and communication stemming from such conviction. Religious identity is in relation with an individual engaging in his or her religion³¹.

Religion is a social identity that refers to someone's belief in a higher power (one or more Gods). Religious identity can lead to trauma because of someone's identity³². Religious people may also identify with the ethos of an organized religious group such as Catholics, Anglicans, Protestants, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and Hindus. Traditionally, belonging to a

religious social group may have increased people's social capital and allowed them access to benefits such as jobs (e.g. jobs obtained through connections at Church) or even exposed them to biases (such as discrimination against Jewish people in the mid-20th Century). It is necessary to note that, there are some specific religious identity that are likely to suffer epistemic injustices³³. The Parable of the Lost Sheep is one of the parables of Jesus, it is about a shepherd who leaves his flock of ninety-nine sheep in order to find the one which is lost. The parable of the lost sheep is an example of the rediscovery of identity their aim is to lay bare the nature of the divine response to the recovery of the lost, the lost sheep represents a lost human being.

Christian meditation is a specific form of personality formation, though often used only by certain practitioners to describe various forms of prayer and the process of knowing the contemplation of God.

In Western culture, personal and secular identity are deeply influenced by the formation of Christianity, throughout history, various Western thinkers who contributed to the development of European identity were influenced by classical cultures and incorporated elements of Greek culture as well as Jewish culture, leading to some movements such as Philhellenism and Philosemitism.

2.1.3.5 Gender Identity

In sociology, gender identity describes the gender with which a person identifies (i.e., whether one perceives oneself to be a man, a woman, outside of the gender binary), but can also be used to refer to the gender that other people attribute to the individual on the basis of what they know from gender role indications (social behaviour, clothing, hairstyle, etc.). Gender identity may be affected by a variety of social structures, including the person's ethnic

group, employment status, religion or irreligion, and family. Gender is represented by a dichotomous variable with possible responses of woman /man or female/male³⁴.

When we first meet a new born baby, we ask whether it's a boy or a girl. Gender is very important in organizing our social lives and our interpersonal relationships. Many parents consciously or unconsciously "code" their newborns in gendered ways based on our society's associations of pink clothing and accessories with girls and blue with boys. While it's obvious to most people that colours aren't gendered, they take on new meaning when we assign gendered characteristics of masculinity and femininity to them. Just like race, gender is a socially constructed category. One may have noticed that use of the word gender instead of sex. Sex is based on biological characteristics, including external genitalia, internal sex organs, chromosomes, and hormones. While the biological characteristics between men and women are obviously different, it's the meaning we create and attach to those characteristics that makes them significant. The cultural differences in how that significance is ascribed are proof that "our way of doing things" is arbitrary. For example, cross-cultural research has found that boys and girls in most cultures show both aggressive and nurturing tendencies, but cultures vary in terms of how they encourage these characteristics between genders. Gender is associated with certain variables such as attitudes, behaviours and health³⁵. In a group in Africa, young boys are responsible for taking care of babies and are encouraged to be nurturing. This example shows that although we think gender is a natural, normal, stable way of classifying things, it is actually not.

Gender is an identity based on internalized cultural notions of masculinity and femininity that is constructed through communication and interaction. There are two important parts of this definition to unpack. First, internalized notions of gender based on socializing institutions, which helps us form what we think it means to be male or female. For example, when we think of a man, what characteristics come to mind to describe him? What do men like to do?

How does a man behave? Think of a female. Gender is ‘culturally and historically specific, internally contradictory, and amiable to change³⁶. What characteristics describe the normal female, what they like to do, and how do they behave? Socialization and internalization of societal norms for gender differences accounts for much more of our perceived differences than do innate or natural differences between genders. Gender is a non essential category which instead is repeatedly performed based on societal norms³⁷.

Gender norms may be explicitly stated—for example, a mother may say to her son, “Boys don’t play with dolls”—or they may be more implicit, with girls being encouraged to pursue historically feminine professions like teaching or nursing without others actually stating the expectation. Second, we attempt to construct that gendered identity through our interactions with others, which is our gender performance. If we identify as female and want others to perceive us as female, we will attempt to behave and communicate as we think a female is supposed to. For example, if your identity as female you may communicate this identity nonverbally by wearing dresses and make-up. Gender refers to a person’s identification as male and female. Gender attributes (masculine and feminine) are socially constructed and often ascribed to people based upon their sex at birth.

Recently, the characterization of gender has been hotly disputed with many cultural theorists seeing it as a cultural rather than physical characteristic. This began with the acknowledgment of the separation of the biological concept of sex-at-birth from stereotypes of gender. Thus, today, gender is seen as a fluid rather than binary concept. Old tropes of masculine and feminine are challenged by today’s youths who are increasingly finding ways to challenge historical gender norms.

2.1.3.6 Race Identity

Race has to do with the distinct genetic features of a person, most commonly (but not only) identifiable by skin color. While we often define race by colors (white, black), the diversity of possible skin colors within a racial group and the increasing amounts of blended families means this characterization is increasingly difficult. Race has been one of the primary social identity characterizations throughout history and has led to serious discrimination, and even genocide, based on racial prejudice (racism). Race can be related to culture, origin, ancestry, social similarity, religion and identity. Race include physical characteristics, and ethnicity, social groping and imposed categorization. Race is social construction³⁸. Advocates of the idea of social construction of race highlight that these categorizations and prejudices are arbitrary and culturally-defined.

2.1.3.7 Age Identity

Age is one of the core social identities that will change throughout one's life. At each life's stage, people will pass through a range of prejudices and privileges based on their age.

Young people often face prejudice due to the stereotype that they are naive and incompetent, middle-aged people are no longer welcome in some youth settings, and elderly people often face difficulties in getting jobs because of a perception that they are no longer in their prime. Older adults reported older perception of ageing³⁹.

It is necessary to note that each generation also has its own group identity that follows them through life. Gen Z, for example (Born from 1997 onward), are known for their love of social media and a perception that they are highly conscious of environmental issues.

This perception may follow Gen Z through their lives as it was a defining feature of their generation when they were youths.

2.1.4 Context

Context is "a frame that surrounds the event and provides resources for its appropriate interpretation". It is thus a relative concept, only definable with respect to some focal event within a frame, not independently of that frame⁴⁰.

Traditionally, in sociolinguistics, contexts were defined in terms of objective social variables, such as those of class, gender, age or race. These variables contribute to individual's contextual linguistic diversity⁴¹. More recently, contexts tend to be defined in terms of the social identity being construed and displayed in text and talk by language users. Influenced by space.

The influence of context parameters on language use or discourse is usually studied in terms of language variation, style or register. The basic assumption here is that language users adapt the properties of their language use (such as intonation, lexical choice, syntax, and other aspects of formulation) to the current communicative situation. In this sense, language use or discourse may be called more or less 'appropriate' in a given context. Language users receive linguistic input from learning settings⁴².

The context definition in communication refers to the factors that work together to determine the meaning of a message. When conversations take place, context works to interpret parts of the message. Context in language is what surrounds a word or piece of text. In order to understand what words mean, we have to know something about the situation where they are used. In print, a word, phrase or sentence has other text around it.

2.1.5 Identity and Sociocultural Construct

Identities are performed. One of the most compelling contemporary views of identity is as a performance. Sociologist's article, 'Doing gender', describes how we are assigned a gender category at birth. This categorization is determined by the appearance of our sexual organs.

From identity theory approaches, identity value and contextual factors has it own role in affecting identity conflict dynamics⁴³.

From there, we can perceive what gender means in social contexts (e.g., our family, the school playground, our community) and practice 'doing gender' within this framework. A philosopher's groundbreaking book, *Gender Trouble*, emphasizes the ways our gender performances are embodied acts that are repeated throughout our lives. For example, women might speak at a higher pitch than what is naturally comfortable to sound more 'feminine'. Socio-cultural contexts in which interaction take place can shape individual's attitude and behavior⁴⁴.

Seeing identity as a performance also allows us to understand how people in different contexts may 'do' gender, race, or class in various ways. For example, research has shown how women fit in, survive, and gain power in organizations and politics by putting on stereotypical displays of masculinity. People of color can also perform whiteness by constraining and suppressing 'ethnic' styles of dress, hair, and speech. They would usually do this at job interviews or rental application meetings to try and avoid racial discrimination.

The essentialist view of identity can make us fixated on individuals. So if we talk about sexism, people assume we're blaming men. An American author, however, would remind us that "patriarchy has no gender". Sexism is not something that only men do. It's a set of historically and culturally ingrained practices grounded in our social belief that men and masculinity are superior to women and femininity. Challenging gender inequality is not about rounding up the so-called 'sexists', but changing our shared meanings about gender difference. Identity values differ in terms of salience and centrality, they can influence how individuals experience the severity of the identity class⁴⁴.

Similarly, a race scholar points out the limiting ways we love to measure racism by counting the number of racists. He reminds us that “racism produces racists, not the other way around, and it can exist without them. Seeing gender and other identity categories as social constructs means we can recognize their fragility, silliness, and impermanence. These categories can affect identity conflicts and help people to understand which identity and values should be put on hold or prioritized⁴⁵.

It also means people can playfully experiment with redefining identities in ways that are truly just and inclusive. Identity is a product of the society, interactions, influence, and practices while for others, it is biological or rather primordial. At the very basic, identity is an essential personal characteristic as it encompasses the membership to different groups, including religion, gender, and ethnicity, the traits people show and what others ascribe to them. Identity locates people in the social world and influences all their actions, thoughts, and feelings.

In reality, however, the identities are socially constructed. The way in which people were born only constitutes a part of whom they are. Muslim African -Americans identify themselves as Muslims not because of their innate characteristics, but their religious affiliation with Islam. Individuals develop their sense of identity through socialization processes when they interact and learn different cultural practices and norms. Sociological theories confirm that identity is indeed a social construct. Social expectations and circumstance create our identity.

An American academic speaks about the trap of essentialism. Identity can be viewed as intrapersonal process, people’s experience of identity can be shaped by the surrounding environment and by human interactions⁴⁶. In this view, all things are considered to have a form or an essence and that these elements make up the "thing" without which it would not

exist. Essentialism affirms that individuals pose fixed traits and that variations among the societal group members are secondary. In ethnicity, essentialism asserts that minority groups have unchanging attributes. As a result of these characteristics and historical function, the minorities have limited opportunities of bringing social change or causing social re-organization. Thus, he debunks this conception by affirming identity is not socially constructed.

Identity is social construct that many have mistaken for something an individual is born with. There are many aspects of identity that one can inherit like gene's that can drive a certain type of character and certain aspects of identity a person can adopt and build for themselves. However, the most part of one's identity is consistent of what the person wants and adopts for themselves and what the society/the people around him/her choose to give him/her. Identity is a said to not remain unchanged once established. It is a fluid concept and is constantly changing. Identity is a social construct which means that it is not something that as individuals are born with, however we create for ourselves as we grown in order for us and the people around us to understand us better. Identity can be situational.

2.1.6 Social Media Discourse

Social media can be seen as one of the technological developments that provides convenience for humans to communicate and socialize. Social media can also be described as a discursive system that embodies social issues. In social media discourse, participants negotiate a common meaning through dialogue and interpretation. Social Media Discourse is a discursive system in which social issues are enacted through textual discourse. This is an operative on social media through structural features that tend to dialogue in their fields rather than traditional websites. This kind of dialogue exchange enables discourse actions such as building relationships, developing social situations and power imbalances that potentially

affect or catalyse social issues. Social movements, cyber bullying and online sexual predations on social issues are influenced or initiated by discourse within social media structures. Some factors influence identity construction online in blogs, such as action types, visual, enumerative, narrative, and self-labelling practices and different forms of internet language⁴⁷. Social media has led to the empowerment of textual discourse among social media participants.

The discourse found online, and especially in the social networks (the blog, for instance, resembles to a greater extent a journal, with borrowed discursive genres adapted to the digital environment) exists only in that context, so that one cannot consider the discourse by itself, such as unique, singular and definitive publications. A researcher studied 108 undergraduate students in Canada and found that satisfaction along with attitude and perceived impact on learning had direct effects on intention to continue using blogs to learn⁴⁸. Think only about a post on Instagram (obviously beside the pertaining photo): “watching the sky...” tag one or more people. How could this text be correctly interpreted/received outside the network in which it exists, outside the “support”? A scholar studied 230 twitter and sina weibo users, a Chinese micro-blogging, and found the effects of both satisfaction and habit on their continuance intention⁴⁹. People’s discussions can only be understood in the network of relations and signs, techno signs the discourse is inscribed into. Social media is found in every area of life. Social media platforms have become indispensable in today’s communications. It is use to share the article that has many benefits that reach many people and spread information faster⁵⁰. Scientist use social media platforms to debate ideals, share real-time information, and spread their research⁵¹.

Social networks users interact for an average of 2.4 hours a day on social media⁵². Many publishers, such as SAGE, taylor-francis group, and public library of science provide much information to their readers by their altmetrics evaluating system⁵³. In social networks more

than in any other discursive environments, there is no statement by itself that might be extracted and analysed by itself. From this perspective, the decontextualized statement could be a theoretical and methodological nonsense, because it does not correspond to the reality of a statement produced or interpreted within the reality of the socio-digital exchanges. Social media has now emerged as a new platform for discourses such as socio-political issues. This platform provides easier and faster accessibility of information to people⁵⁴.

2.1.7 Language and Identity: Gender

Language and gender identity are closely related. Gender variation in speech is common in various societies. In the contemporary world, women and men communicate using different forms of language. Gender relates to sex or gender identity of people. Gender identity is individual's sense of a woman or man⁵⁵. Differences in the social status of men and women are the main factors that contribute the difference in speech. Social issues of power and subordination between men and women usually lead to difference in speech between the two genders. Most societies require women to more polite speech than men. The society usually sanctions the use of profanity or obscenity by women. In such societies, women have a subordinate role and their social freedom is less than that of men. In addition, women may have a greater insecurity, uncertainty, and lack of confidence.

Differences in the social status of men and women are the main factors that contribute to the difference in speech. Our gender identity always determines our gender⁵⁶. Social issues of power and subordination between men and women usually lead to difference in speech between the two genders. It is necessary to note that language informs us of how people think, variations in the use of gender in language such as referring to the objects as male or female, might account for parallel differences in attitudes about gender equality. Gender can be seen

as a dimension of identity, both in terms of how gender identities are performed by speakers themselves and in terms of how genders is represented in texts.

Before explaining the concept in this section, however, it is important to explain what is meant by 'gender'. Gender has to do with cultural norms about what roles and identities are considered to be appropriate for women or men that is whether something is feminine or masculine. It also has to do with how/ways which gender identities are culturally represented. The concept of femininity, for example which may refer to a person's appearance or their personality: They may wear soft, pastel colours in their clothing or make up and they may be caring, polite or nurturing in their behaviour. All those features are learnt as a result of a person's socialisation as a female, they are often taken to be essential qualities account of women's and men's language is typically heralded as the beginning of scholarly work into differentiating linguistic styles on the basis of gender, and is widely referred to as the deficit approach.

Approaches based on difference argued that women's style of communication was not deficient, but simply different. Women's speech styles were claimed to be valuable and effective for conversation in ways that 'men's language' was not. Gender is a composite of socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and/or attributes that a given society may consider appropriate for people of an assigned sex. Gender identity, like gender, refers to an individual's personal sense of being female, male, both, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. Gender identity may or may not correspond to the sex assumed or assigned at birth. Meanwhile, gender expression refers to how a person presents their gender. This can include their clothing, mannerisms, pronouns, and names.

Work on miscommunication in ethnically diverse cultures by arguing that men and women interact differently due to their socialisation into distinct gender subcultures. Approaches

based on dominance, on the other hand, continued to argue that language perpetuated asymmetrical gender relations. Instead of seeing women's language as lacking, however, men's speech styles were seen to be problematic. For example, through an analysis of interruptions and overlaps in spoken interaction in mixed-sex talk, it was concluded that women's speaking rights were on a par with children.

In order to make generalizable claims, Contemporary research into language and gender identity often concerns speakers' use of indexical relationships between linguistic features and cultural ideas about gender in order to perform their identity as a woman or a man. A range of gender identities is now considered but, partly as a result of the fact that women's issues were at the forefront of feminist linguistics from the 1970s onwards, research was largely focused on women's identities until when a linguist edited collection on language and masculinity brought men's identities firmly into focus. Typically, studies of language and masculinity have shown that men's identities are constructed via the reproduction of stereotypes and ideologies that are specific to men rather than women, and that index hegemonic, heteronormative masculinity, our gender identity can also be determined by the gender we are socially positioned or classed as⁵⁶.

Research into how women's identities are produced can also highlight how social inequalities are perpetuated, such as by looking at public and political contexts. Much emphasis in this area has been placed on examining the language of women in leadership or professional roles that have traditionally been seen as suited to men. For example, shows how female managers using language which indexes assertiveness or power – attributes which would classify most male managers as successful – tend to be negatively evaluated; by failing to conform to gendered norms surrounding their speech, they are often judged to be 'scary' or domineering. In this sense, research into language and gender can reveal much about the ways in which women are prevented from being successful as leaders.

Despite demonstrating that it is possible for women to have success in what is culturally perceived to be 'men's work', studies such as these also demonstrate that traditional expectations of femininity do not match cultural ideas of success, professionalism or authority. This work reveals broader ideologies of gender normativity and Linguists carried out a series of conversation analysis of men's and women's speech. Their findings concluded that there are typical speech characteristics for each gender. Women during conversation talk too much, are more polite, hesitant, complain or nag, ask questions, support each other and more cooperative while men swear more, avoid emotions, insult each other, competitive in conversation, dominate conversation, speak with authority, give more commands, interrupt more, have demeaning names for women, talk about sports, talk about women and machines in the same way. People are being ascribed gender on the basis of gender identities people express or which people are presumed to have⁵⁷.

Linguist's findings align with typical gender stereotypes. People may alter how they speak to avoid language that encourages stereotypical judgements based on gender.

2.1.8 Language and Identity: Race

Ethnicity and nationalism have become so visible in our societies that it is impossible to ignore them. Language plays a crucial role in the construction of ethnic identity. Language is mean through which we identify ourselves and in turn identified others⁵⁸.

Language plays a crucial role in the construction and maintenance of ethnic identity. The ethnicity has a more striking relationship to language than other social factors such as gender, age, or social class. The construction of race and ethnicity varies greatly across communities, as well as across and within individuals. Researchers generally agree that both race and ethnicity are socially constructed categories. Sociolinguistic research on ethnically diverse linguistic communities has identified a number of linguistic resources available to speakers

for use in constructing ethnic identities, including the following: a heritage language, specific sociolinguistic features, code-switching, suprasegmental features, discourse features and language use, and using a borrowed variety. Ways in which we communicate define our identities⁵⁹.

Influenced by the etymology of the word, traditionally, ethnic groups have been viewed as internally consistent with clearly defined boundaries delineated by language, culture, heredity and other attributes. Language determines how speakers perceive world around them⁵⁹.

Although the meanings of ethnicity and ethnic groups may appear clear and unambiguously reflecting an "objective" self-evident social reality, they are in fact complex and emotionally charged concepts. Ethnicity is a characteristic that can only be attributed to others. How individual explore their racial group membership, leads to interpersonal benefits⁶⁰.

2.1.9 Language and Identity: Social Status

Social identity is influenced by various factors, factors such as the historical, cultural and religious beliefs of the society, community or family where one is brought up.

Language is an important aspect of human beings that helps in shaping the identity of an individual or a certain group of people. People from a particular region or community are able to identify persons from another different community based on the uniqueness of their language dialect or accent. When a person speaks their mother tongue, other people can easily know the specific nationality or cultural background. They are therefore able to identify them as different. This way, language shapes a person's or community's identity, especially where people are interacting in a mainstream culture and/or a standard language.

Social identity has to do with individual's self-concept in social groups. In other words, social identity is a person's sense of who they are based on their group interactions. A typical example of social identity is social hierarchy; a person may form part of low class, middle

class and high class society. Based on new social and political theories upper class consist of the most wealthy group in society, the middle class includes people who are considered working class while the lower class are those employed in low-paying wage jobs with little economic security⁶¹. Through the use of language individuals are able establish and maintain their social group membership. Moreover, language has the ability to either bind or separate social groups. This result to a phenomenon called the minimal group paradigm. It is an experiment to show how people who are put in random groups will often start to feel and show that they are superior. A person's identity contributes to their prediction of behaviour through constructs such as social norms, self-efficacy, perceived behavioural control and values⁶².

2.1.10 Language and Identity: Age

The social factors that can affect a person's language and identity include Region, Age, Gender, Occupation, Class, and Ethnicity. Teenagers may use some or all of these features to place themselves in the group identity of 'teenager'.

Teenagers who don't want to be defined by the stereotype of teenager will often choose not to use these features in their language. It is necessary to note that teenagers' speech is linked by an informal register and the most common topic of conversation is relationships. Taboo language is part of the vernacular. They also tend to use dialect and slang often when speaking. Informal lexical choices are often linked by common themes or topics.

Age is one of the dimensions on which we construct identities for ourselves and others. Communication plays important role in influencing understandings and self-presentations with regard to age. Age identities are considerably more malleable. Gender category distinctions remain relatively impermeable over time, and the boundaries between such groups remain fairly rigid and clear for most people especially people who are

transsexual/trans-gendered. In contrast, age group memberships change with time and divisions between age groups are highly negotiable. As a result, they are perhaps more open to social construction, this provides opportunity to study the communicative practices that people employ to manage their age identities. Older people do not necessarily consider themselves old and chronological age is no longer the only useful indicator for defining old age⁶³. Based on the old age identity, advances in longevity, health aging, and technological innovation have made today's elderly become a generation that actively contributes to society and the family⁶⁴. Negative age stereotypes and prejudicial attitudes are also common. Despite the fact that most of us will hope to get old, many young and old people hold negative views of older adulthood. Hence, age presents unique opportunities and points of interest for identity scholars. It is also necessary to note that age identities are also shaped by media presentations.

Age identity shows amazing predictive power in different domains. In recent years, the influence of age identity on work place performance has received much attention in the field of psychology⁶⁵. Teenagers' language features tend to come as standard, are constantly evolving. Adolescents will also most likely be able to recognize that older generations and children younger use language forms that are different to the ones they use. This shows an example of how language use changes across different age groups in society. Adolescents make up a key cohort when tracking language use across different ages, and there are many distinct features often present in adolescent speech that may be less frequent in other groups.

Recent research reveals how age identity has influence in different spheres of life, age identity influences the ability to act or perform in different domain of behaviours⁶⁶. It is necessary to note that features like frequent slang, colloquial word choices or non-standard forms of English, taboo words and dialect words would be a lot less common in younger and older age groups than in adolescence. Teenagers also use language to create and support a

sense of social identity that will inevitably change as new experiences, hobbies, and friendship groups circulate. In many ways, non-standard forms of language provide more freedom for expression than standard morphological patterns. Age is a prominent aspect of an individual's identity and replace other types of identity, such as gender, religion and ethnicity. It is important to note that older individuals explore ethnic-related identity less than younger people.

2.1.11 Nigerian Pidgin

Pidgin is a language derived from a mixture of several languages, as a means of communication among people of different mutually unintelligible linguistic backgrounds⁶⁷. Nigerian Pidgin is an English-based contact language. Like most Pidgins, Nigerian Pidgin has a superstrate, English, and many substrate languages, that is, the local Nigerian languages. Most of the vocabulary of Nigerian Pidgin is from English, with additional contributions to the word stock from the local languages and also Portuguese. Nigerian Pidgin is estimated to be spoken by more than half of the Nigerian population and it is also the language with the highest number of speakers in Nigeria.

Nigerian Pidgin is commonly used in informal conversations. Nigerian Pidgin has no status as an official language⁶⁸. A scholar suggests, however, that the idea that half of the Nigerian population is fluent in Nigerian Pidgin, as asserted by a linguist, should be treated with caution. The linguist's reason being that Nigerian Pidgin is not used in the north at the same level as it is used in other parts of the country, given that Hausa is a major lingua franca in the north and serves the same function that Nigerian Pidgin serves in the south. The people in the North might not be fluent speakers of Nigerian Pidgin, but a good number of Hausas are speakers of Nigerian Pidgin. There have been different avenues like trading, university education, National Youth Service, etc. through which Nigerian Pidgin has been introduced in different parts of the north. The main language in Nigerian military barracks is Nigerian

Pidgin and the northerners are well represented in the military. It will not be an overgeneralization to say that almost every English speaker in Nigeria speaks or understands Nigerian Pidgin to some degree, in Nigeria those of low social class are mostly speakers of Nigerian pidgin⁶⁹.

Nigerian Pidgin, unlike English is not acquired through formal education and has no standardized orthography. Until rather recently, it was accorded a low prestige in Nigeria and relegated to the less educated. It is now increasingly used also by and among educated people, for example in tertiary institutions. Nigerian Pidgin has also creolized to a first language in some minority groups in Nigeria.

Nigerian Pidgin is mostly an informal language used primarily in informal settings like markets, among friends, office colleagues, etc. In Nigerian tertiary institutions, Nigerian Pidgin is the speakers' language of identity. English is used in the classroom, while Nigerian Pidgin and English compete in other interactional settings. Nigerian Pidgin is also widely used in the military barracks. The language is widely used in these places because of the conglomeration of individuals from different regions of the nation. Nigerian Pidgin English and English are widespread *linguae francae* in Nigeria where more than 300 languages are spoken. Nigerian pidgin is use in digital environments. In online communities pidgin speaking users are prevalent. The use of pidgin has been impacted by the rise of networked communication⁷⁰.

The origins of Nigerian Pidgin English lie historically in trade contact between the British and local people in the seventeenth century. It is part of a continuum of English Pidgins and Creoles spoken other West-African countries such as Cameroon, Sierra Leone and Ghana. In recent years, Nigerian Pidgin English development has been particularly evident in the big cities and ports in the south of Nigeria, where it is used among people belonging to different ethnic groups; the use of Nigerian Pidgin English is strictly linked to the urbanization process.

In the past the use of Nigerian Pidgin English was linked to non-educated people and perceived by the educated ones with negative attitude. Nowadays the use of Nigerian Pidgin English is more widespread even among educated people and perceived as more Nigerian than English. Indeed, using Nigerian Pidgin English is increasingly popular among young people, many writers, politicians and musicians. The fact that it is not attached to any ethnic group makes it a very good candidate as an official lingua franca in the Federation. The use of Nigerian Pidgin English can also function, in some contexts, as an act of identity when speakers need to stress their 'Nigerianness', as opposed to their ethnic group identity. In other words, Nigerian Pidgin English can express a belonging to Nigeria, which English, the language of the ex-colonial power, cannot. This is very similar to other multiethnic postcolonial situations. Compare the linguistic situation of Mauritius Islands where English and French are the official languages, but they coexist with other very powerful community languages (Chinese, Hindi, Urdu, etc.) and Mauritian French Creole. The latter, although lacking official status, is the only language which can express a neutral Mauritian identity.

No official status has been granted to Nigerian Pidgin English in Nigeria, although some Nigerians have suggested that it would be a good candidate for national language status, since it retains the above-mentioned characteristics of solidarity and neutrality. However, Nigerian Pidgin English is not yet sufficiently well-developed to fulfill all the duties of a national language. There is no standard orthography, little or no written use, and above all no active movement favoring its development and propagation. One of the obstacles to standardization is the perception of Nigerian Pidgin English as a variety of English, rather than a separate language; Nigerians often refer to Nigerian Pidgin English as 'broken English

Nigeria is one huge and complex multilingual community with several different languages used within the public and private social space from city to city in Nigeria. This has made it possible for several different lingua francas to exist across Nigeria. But in the last twenty or

thirty years, Naijá has become one of the most important, most widely spread, and perhaps the most ethnically neutral lingua franca used in the country today.

Current estimates show that around 5 million people speak Naijá as first language while over 75 million people use it as a second language in Nigeria and in Nigerian Diaspora communities in Europe, America and other parts of the world.

Although English is still remains the country's official language and the language of education in Nigeria, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba prominently feature as regional languages in the northern, eastern and western parts of the country respectively. But Naijá is not just endemic to the Niger Delta area alone, it is also widely spoken in many of the country's big cities, tertiary institutions, police and military formations and the Sabon-gari areas of northern Nigeria.

Though the language is still often stereotypically described as 'Pidgin English' or 'Broken English', it is accepted by most people as a very useful language for public enlightenment campaigns, radio and television programs, inter-ethnic communication, commercial advertising, sitcoms, stand-up comedies, popular music, religious music and for conducting common everyday business transactions in many parts of the country.

While the status of the language has improved tremendously as a language that can be used for serious purposes, only a small body of literature exists in the language. There are ongoing efforts among local linguists and writers to see that this aspect of the language is developed, especially since 2009 when the Naijá Langwej Akedemi (NLA) proposed a harmonized orthography for writing the language and adopted Naijá as the name for the language that was hitherto known as Nigerian Pidgin.

Recently, a number of linguists and writers have proposed Naijá as the best candidate for resolving the national language and national identity question in Nigeria.

During the European quest for new markets and raw materials in the 17th Century, many Portuguese missionaries and traders arrived on the shores of Jamaica and West and Central African countries like: Sierra Leone, Cameroon and Nigeria were largely visited by the missionaries. For trade and religious purposes with no language in common they created a form of communication with bases from the European language, giving birth to most African languages: such as Creole, Pidgin, and Patois. These languages came to serve the linguistic need there, by giving birth to the Cameroon Camfranglais (mixture of French and English) spoken by the youth today.

NPE is regarded as a bastardization of the English language used by the non-literates, though it is highly spoken in Nigeria by every individual starting from an early age. In the country, both the literates, such as the president, campaigning politicians, lawyers, doctors, and non-literates speak and understand pidgin, though it is mostly used in informal situations and English is used for official purposes and the medium of education. NPE is the most widely spoken language as it is not a native language of any tribe in Nigeria but the only language everyone understands and regards as the easiest form of interaction amongst the population.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria has three major languages namely: Igbo in the (East), Yoruba in the (South) and Hausa in the (North) having English as the official language alongside other 500 different spoken dialects. Indeed, NPE is considered as a bastardized language as it is yet to have a standard written form. University in Nigeria, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, department of English and Drama are now offering it as a course and many struggles are being put up for NPE to be considered Nigeria's official language as it is highly used by the masses, high school students, postgraduates and undergraduates, politicians and business people.

NPE is not only spoken in Nigeria, it is widely used by the diasporic communities in America, England, and Canada. In addition, a large group of the Nigerian community in Luxembourg use Pidgin as a means of communication, these diasporic communities use pidgin among themselves as a means to feel at home. NPE varies in written and spoken form depending on which part of the country the speaker is from, as the language is spoken differently in each state of the country. Each State tends to add words from their dialect into Pidgin making it more interesting for the ears and understood by everyone. Nigerian Pidgin English remains the only language that unifies the 186 million population. Nigerian Pidgin English could be regarded as a marker of identity. In Nigerian cyberspace, Nigeria pidgin is the speaker's language of identity.

2.1.12 Codemixing/ Code Switching

2.1.12.1 Code Switching

Code-switching is a dynamic approach to identify people can use Code-switching to express and create different meanings and ideologies, as well as different identities. Speakers can choose various codes in their linguistic repertoires to do these things.

Code-Switching, is a linguistic process where speakers alternate between two languages, a linguistic behavior that is exhibited by bilingual speakers with different levels of proficiency in either language. It is usually defined as the 'juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems'¹⁹. The codes/languages discussed in this study are Arabic and English. The variety of Arabic that the participants speak is not the Modern Standard Arabic, but the colloquial Arabic of Libya and Syria.

According to a linguist, bilinguals mainly and unconsciously switch between two codes in order to make a communicative effect that is dependent on the sum of the structural units of the two switched codes¹⁹. Codeswitching can also be a verbal contextualisation cue by which

interactants construct and negotiate meanings and identities. For instance, Code Switching is almost exclusively produced in peer group interactions and is utilised as an in-group identity marker, often indicative of certain ideologies and experiences that a particular group members share.

Code-Switching and Code-Mixing are processes for those who speak more than one language or more than one dialect. They are powerful strategies that require metalinguistic skills. Often, speakers who use two languages together are described as “confused” or “they don’t know either language well.” Alternating between two or more languages or language varieties/dialects in the context of a single conversation. Using elements of more than one language when conversing in a manner that is consistent with the syntax, morphology, and phonology of each language or dialect.

2.1.12.2 Code-Mixing

Truth be told, many people use the terms Code-Switching and Code-Mixing interchangeably. Some linguists, however, make a distinction in which Code Mixing refers to the hybridization of two languages and Code-Switching refers to the movement from one language to another. Code-mixing is the mixing of two or more languages or language varieties in speech. Code mixing can also be refers to the use of languages for consistent transfer of linguistic units from one language into another, and by such a language mixture developing a new restricted or not so restricted code of linguistic interaction⁷¹.

2.1.13 Nairaland and Facebook

2.1.13.1 Facebook

Mark Zuckerberg, 23, founded Facebook while studying psychology at Harvard University. A keen computer programmer, Mr Zuckerberg had already developed a number of social-

networking websites for fellow students, including Course match, which allowed users to view people taking their degree, and Face mash, where you could rate people's attractiveness.

In February 2004 Mr Zuckerberg launched "The facebook", as it was originally known; the name taken from the sheets of paper distributed to freshmen, profiling students and staff. Within 24 hours, 1,200 Harvard students had signed up, and after one month, over half of the undergraduate population had a profile.

The network was promptly extended to other Boston universities, the Ivy League and eventually all US universities. It became Facebook.com in August 2005 after the address was purchased for \$200,000. US high schools could sign up from September 2005, then it began to spread worldwide, reaching UK universities the following month.

As of September 2006, the network was extended beyond educational institutions to anyone with a registered email address. The site remains free to join, and makes a profit through advertising revenue. Yahoo and Google are among companies which have expressed interest in a buy-out, with rumoured figures of around \$2bn (£975m) being discussed. Mr. Zuckerberg has so far refused to sell.

The site's features have continued to develop during 2007. Users can now give gifts to friends, post free classified advertisements and even develop their own applications - graffiti and Scrabble are particularly popular. Recently, the company announced that the number of registered users had reached 30 million, making it the largest social-networking site with an education focus.

Lately, there were rumours that Prince William had registered, but it was later revealed to be a mere impostor. The MP David Miliband, the radio DJ Jo Whiley, the actor Orlando Bloom, the artist Tracey Emin and the founder of Wikipedia, Jimmy Wales, are among confirmed high-profile members. It is necessary to note that sometimes, officials banned a flash-mob-

style water fight in Hyde Park, organised through Facebook, due to public safety fears. And there was further controversy at Oxford as students became aware that university authorities were checking their Facebook profiles.

The legal case against Facebook dates back to September 2004, when Divya Narendra, and the brothers Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss, who founded the social-networking site Connect U, accused Mr. Zuckerberg of copying their ideas and coding. Mr. Zuckerberg had worked as a computer programmer for them when they were all at Harvard before Facebook was created. The case was dismissed due to a technicality in March 2007 but without a ruling⁷⁶.

Facebook is a website which allows users, who sign-up for free profiles, to connect with friends, work colleagues or people they don't know, online. It allows users to share pictures, music, videos, and articles, as well as their own thoughts and opinions with however many people they like. Users send "friend requests" to people who they may – or may not – know. Facebook has over 1 billion users once accepted, the two profiles are connected with both users able to see whatever the other person posts. "Facebookers" can post almost anything to their "timeline", a snapshot of what is happening in their social circle at any given time, and can also enter private chat with other friends who are online.

People with profiles list information about themselves. Whether it be what they work at, where they are studying, ages, or other personal details, many users post lots of information which is easily accessible to their friends and others. On top of this, users can "like" other pages which interest them. For example, a Liverpool FC supporter can follow the club by linking up with its Facebook page. There, the user can post comments and receive club updates, pictures etc.

For young people, who have grown up with technology, Facebook was once the most popular website there is. However, many teens are migrating to other social networking sites such as Instagram (which is owned by Facebook) and Snapchat. Those who still use it, use it for social networking. Young people are natural born multi-taskers, so using Facebook, as with any social networking website, is almost second nature to many teens. Social networking websites allow young people to experiment with who they are. They are popular because teens can find their own, uninhibited voice online which they can share with friends. Some teens feel they can express themselves easier online when compared to the real world because perhaps they feel the virtual world is more secure.

Teenagers love Facebook because they can personalize their profile. In much the same way that other generations may have plastered their bedroom walls with posters of their favourite bands or soccer teams, young people now take part in personalising their own space online with pictures, music, videos, and comments. The site has made communicating much easier too. Rather than picking up the telephone to ring your friend's house, teens can instantly and directly communicate with their friends on Facebook. Even email, another relatively new technology, is of secondary importance to teens who use Facebook to do the majority of their communicating.

However, despite its popularity, there are also many risks for Facebook's younger users.

UPDATE: Under the new E.U General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Ireland has now set the Digital Age of Consent to 16 years old. This means young people under the age of 16 in Ireland are not allowed to access this platform.

Here, Webwise outlines some of the main issues which parents have concerns about:

Privacy: Teens can sometimes forget that what is posted on Facebook is essentially a form of publishing and, unless profiles are set to private, anyone can view the information. Often, teens post too much personal information online like photos or phone numbers.

Predators: While rare, there have been instances where predators and other unscrupulous individuals have targeted young people on Facebook. Due to its nature, the site can be easily accessed and is full of personal information.

Cyber bullying: Facebook provides bullies with a new and fertile battlefield where they can inflict maximum damage on their target through repeated use of nasty messages and other means. There are numerous stories of hijacked profiles or serious instances of cyberbullying which have led to suffering for victims.

Meeting Contacts: Many parents fear that young people will meet face-to-face with people they first met online. With this there are obvious risks. Some young people will take online contacts at face value, but unfortunately, not everybody is genuine.

Content: Sometimes, there can be content on Facebook which is unsuitable for young people and will upset them. Because of Facebook's popularity, there are a lot of older users and often children can be exposed to things parents would prefer they were not.

Facebook gives people power over what they share, who they share it with, the content they see and experience, and who can contact them. Facebook is powered by an algorithm that is able to learn each user's preferences and interests. Then, the algorithm displays content like images, status updates, and videos posted by friends and businesses that the user might be interested in. Facebook is a website which allows users, who sign-up for free profiles, to connect with friends, work colleagues or people they don't know, online. It allows users to share pictures, music, videos, and articles, as well as their own thoughts and opinions with however many people they like.

Facebook is a social networking site that makes it easy for people to connect and share with family and friends online. Originally designed for college students, Facebook was created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg while he was enrolled at Harvard University. By 2006, anyone over the age of 13 with a valid email address could join Facebook. Today, Facebook is the world's largest social network, with more than 1 billion users worldwide. What makes Facebook unique is the ability to connect and share with the people you care about at the same time.

For many, having a Facebook account is now an expected part of being online, much like having your own email address. And because Facebook is so popular, other websites have worked to integrate Facebook. This means you can use a single Facebook account to sign in to different services across the Web.

Facebook allows users to send messages and post status updates to keep in touch with friends and family. Users can also share different types of content, like photos and links. But sharing something on Facebook is a bit different from other types of online communication. Unlike email or instant messaging, which are relatively private, the things you share on Facebook are more public, which means they'll usually be seen by many other people.

While Facebook offers privacy tools to help people limit who can see the things they share, it's important to understand that Facebook is designed to be more open and social than traditional communication tools.

2.1.13.2 Nairaland: An Online Community

Nairaland is an online forum that is created by Seun Osawa in March, 2005. It is targeted mainly at Nigerians, particularly those residing in Nigeria. Nairaland currency has over 1,361,552 registered members in May 2015. According to a company that tracks web traffic, Nairaland is ranked as the 7th most visited website in Nigeria (by registered members) and

the most visited indigenous website in Nigeria ⁷². Nairaland had 9,307,145 unique visitors from 22,855,315 visits and 84,870,233 page views in September, 2014. Also, Nairaland has many unregistered users as registration is only necessary for starting a thread or discussion line⁷³.

Unregistered users however, can read and comment on existing threads but cannot start a thread. This allows participants to join a discussion thread that appeals to them most, thereby helping people with similar appeals to engage in debates as it regards to that topic. These topics range from politics to romance.

According to a company, registered and unregistered visitors to Nairaland spend over 10 minutes in the community daily with daily page views of about 8.05 minutes per visitor⁷². By viewing this webpage that long and spending over 10 minutes in the site despite the difficulty of accessing the internet in Nigeria, shows that Nairalanders arguably engage with this site very well. Also, with visitors who visited Nairaland likely to visit a news and media page (newspapers and E-zines) show that Nairalanders are mainly information seeking people and such person will likely engage in critical debate.

Engagement Variable Score (%)

Bounce Rate 9

Daily Page views per visitor 8:05 Minutes (2.54)

Daily Time on Site per visitor 10:14 Minutes (19)

Audience Interest News and Media

As Nigerians have a high mobile take-up rate, having a mobile interface encourages adoption of a site. Nairaland is one such site. It is necessary to note that what highlights Nairaland from other websites is its ease of use, inviting user interface and user friendliness. These

features make it easier particularly for people with low end mobile internet enabled phones (mobile phones that are not smartphones) to participate in the debate.

Also, Nairaland allows members and visitors to participate in debates with nicknames or anonymous status to protect their identity and any form of trace and harassment. This helps participants to engage in meaningful debate that is devoid of name calling and other religious and ethnic sentiments. The anonymous status helps to protect participants from any form of scrutiny or harm from the government and people.

2.1.13.2.1 Nairaland and the Public Sphere

The public sphere is created through mediated discussions, among people who had been previously excluded, and the ideas that are presented in these discussions are considered on the basis of their merit.

With regard to the first criterion, Nairaland is a forum dedicated to the discussion of political news and related issues in Nigeria. Nairaland is a public space because it enables Nairalanders to discuss matters of concern to them. In Nairaland, participants can reply to each other, commenting on the discussion thread. It is publicly available and discussions that take place in Nairaland are accessible to people with different interest, ethnicity, religion and gender.

Public sphere allows new discussants. Public spheres often allow for new, previously excluded discussants. For an E-community to be an online public sphere, such community will allow for new members particularly those who were previously excluded. Nairaland satisfy the second criterion. Due to the fact that Nairaland is an online public space, people who were previously excluded from discussing their local politics because of geography, ethnicity and even religion are now included.

It is often necessary to note that ideas are to be judged by merit and not by the standing of the speaker. Online communities must be judged and that these comments be judged on their own merit. Without a moderation system, an online community is not a public sphere. There is a team that helps Osewa to moderate debates.

However, Nairalanders engage in debate not necessarily because of the status or popularity of the person that started the thread, rather because of the value the thread added to their online experience. In Nairaland, it is difficult to maintain a reputation because discussants are largely anonymous.

Also, in Nairaland, participants' identities are anonymous. This helps to protect Nairalanders from physical or virtual harm. This sense of safety helps participants to engage sincerely in debates. This satisfies a researcher's sincerity normative condition of the public sphere⁷⁴. Another researcher, argues that social media (the internet) is facing an economic antagonism between users' interest in data protection and corporations' interest in user data's commodification and corporate secrecy⁷⁵.

Furthermore, Nairalanders' anonymity helps to protect them from political antagonism. He posits that on political level of social media (the internet), there is an antagonism between civil society's interest to hold the powerful accountable and protect communications from powerful institutions access on the one side and on the other power holders' interest to keep power structures secret and to criminalize the leaking of any data about them⁷⁵. With an anonymous identity, Nairalanders are not scared of their safety when leaking data or engaging in political debate. Civil society is facing an antagonism between networked protest communication that creates political public spheres online and offline and the particularistic corporate and state control of social media (the internet) that limits, feudalizes and colonizes the public spheres⁷⁵.

There is no state control of Nairaland. Although, its founder, Seun Osawa is motivated by profit as he seeks for advertisement, it will be difficult if not impossible for the founder or his corporate allies to reproduce dominant ideology in Nairaland as debates in Nairaland are championed by Nairalanders.

Nairaland meets the four criteria for an online public sphere. Nairaland is a space of discourse; it opens a space for a wide range of Nigerians to come together and discuss many issues particularly, political issues, judged by the merit of such issues or debate thread. Finally, Nairaland's use of Nigerian English (pidgin) makes it easier for all strata of the Nigerian society –the rich, the poor, educated and the not so educated to participate in the debate.

The embrace of Nairaland by Nigerians is helped by repressive regimes and corporate conspiracy. Nigerians were starved of means of contributing in the polity via open debate as repressive regimes hindered Nigerians from participating in debates. However, the advent of ICTs has given Nigerians the chance to participate in governance through online forums such as Nairaland. It provides Nigerians with a gateway of engaging in public sphere. Also, the features of Nairaland are consistent with online public sphere.

Nairalanders discuss issues, express opinions, attack views, and support others. Nairaland encourages participants to engage sincerely in debates by allowing the participants to use anonymous identities, it allows for discursive equality by giving everyone, registered or otherwise the chance to participate in the debate. This is important as Nairaland is a public space of discourse. Also, as an open space for everyone, new discussants are allowed into Nairaland as it is just a 'click' away. Some of the participants in Nairaland might be those who were previously excluded from the public sphere and, issues discussed are often political in nature. Although Nairaland has topic from other areas of human life, the political debates

attract more debaters and attention as ideas are judged by merit and not by the standing of the debater.

Although most dialogue in Nairaland may appear not to be synchronous enough like a face-to-face dialogue, however, Nairaland, just like other internet platforms, provides opportunities for greater thought and comprehensive reflection on matters that concern Nairalanders.

2.1.14 Online Identity

Online identity can also be referred to as internet identity or internet persona, is a social identity that an Internet user establishes in online communities and websites. It may also be an actively constructed presentation of oneself. Although some people choose to use their real names online, some Internet users prefer to be anonymous, identifying themselves by means of pseudonyms, which reveal varying amounts of personally identifiable information.

An online identity may even be determined by a user's relationship to a certain social group they are a part of online. Some can be deceptive about their identity.

In some online contexts, including Internet forums, online chats, and massively multiplayer online role-playing games, users can represent themselves visually by choosing an avatar, an icon-sized graphic image. Avatars are one-way users express their online identity⁷⁷. Through interaction with other users, an established online identity acquires a reputation, which enables other users to decide whether the identity is worthy of trust. Online identities are associated with users through authentication, which typically requires registration and logging in. Some websites also use the user's IP address or tracking cookies to identify users.

The tremendous development of the Internet enables people to present themselves freely. Some people may reconstruct their identity on the Internet to build an online identity that is partly or even completely different from their real identity in the offline world.

Online identity refers to “a configuration of the defining characteristics of a person in the online space”⁷⁸. Online identities can be define as the combination of characteristics that help to define a person in cyberspace, thereby, makes him or her different from other online users⁷⁹. The rapid development of information technology has provided people with various tools to create their online identity and present themselves.

It is suggested that an individual’s identity in the online world may be different from his or her offline identity⁷⁸.An individual’s offline identity is constrained by his or her corporal body and the physical situations ⁸⁰. Factors (e.g., race, age, and gender) that affect an individual’s offline identity are usually beyond his or her control⁸¹.However, in the online world, people can construct and present their online identity selectively⁸².In this case, the virtual identity that an individual build online is not necessarily tied to his or her offline identity ⁸³. An individual can use different digital means to create an identity that he or she wishes to express online ⁷⁸.

The phenomenon that people build an online identity that is partly or even completely different from their real identity by hiding or faking certain characteristics is defined as online identity reconstruction ⁸⁴. It should be noted that an individual’s identity is “fluid” rather than “static.” It is socially constructed in a given context ⁸⁵. Individuals often present themselves differently in different situations. Online identity reconstruction is different from online identity construction. Identity construction is a complex process in which people develop self-definition ⁸⁶. It is usually related to personal attributes and social roles ⁸⁷. For example, a teacher constructs his or her identity as a teacher researcher by participating in teacher education programs software engineering students build up their professional identity through training ⁸⁸.

The studies about identity construction online mainly focus on how individuals build their self-image online⁸⁹. For example, adolescents create their online identity with the disclosure of intimate information and the use of various web-based resources. People use different profile photos to present themselves, utilize various photographic and textual material to construct an alcohol-identity, and edit the messages carefully in online interactions. Prior studies about online identity reconstruction paid more emphasis on the factors that make people online and offline identities different, such as strategic self-presentation, deceptive self-presentation, or false self- presentation ⁹⁰. For example, an unattractive girl may reconstruct her identity online by posting edited photos that make her look more attractive. Some people also regard online identity reconstruction as a way to explore their identity⁹¹.For instance, adolescents may pretend to be someone else online to try different aspects of their possible identity^{92,93}. Existing research has examined the associations between online identity reconstruction and various factors, such as well-being:

On the Internet, physical cues are absent. People cannot physically see or hear each other which increases the perceived distance between people and the audiences. In addition, people's online identity is usually determined by the information they disclose to others. The physical detachment from audiences and the control on self-presentation makes it easier to hide or fake personal characteristics⁹⁴.

In online profiles, people can share their basic personal information (such as gender, age, education, etc.), describe their preferences (e.g., people they are interested in), list their own interests (such as hobbies and favorite movies), and so on. In addition to profiles, people can also present themselves through other features on social network platforms, such as updating their status and sharing photos. Given that users can decide what information to disclose, the construction of identity on social network platforms is flexible ⁹⁵. This means that identity

construction becomes possible because people can design and create their own online identity. People can hide or even alter their identity if they want.

Previous research suggested that, on Facebook, individuals tended to build an online identity that is more socially desirable than their offline identity to make themselves appear more popular. Given that individuals are able to construct their online identity based on their own ideas, their identity on social network platforms could be partly, or even completely, different from their existing identity in the offline world. The online environment also provides opportunities for online identity experiment, which refers to the tendency to pretend to be someone else in the online world. In comparison to offline contexts, online texts are less limited by time and geographical distance, creating more opportunities for identity exploration⁹⁶.

In online contexts, people perceive increased disconnectedness from offline contexts and lower levels of surveillance. Therefore, young people tend to feel that there is less adult supervision online, which enables them to experiment with new values, ideas, and behaviors to a greater extent.

When engaging in strategic self-presentation or identity experiment, individuals intentionally build an online identity that is different from their offline identity to some extent. Therefore, they are actually engaging in online identity construction. However, online identity construction is more complex than strategic self-presentation and online identity experiment.

When presenting themselves strategically, people are still telling the truth, but mainly highlighting positive facts or exaggerating the truth on purpose. However, in online identity construction, people are no longer limited to the truth. They may stretch the truth, hide personal information, or even tell lies. In addition, the motivations for online identity construction are more complicated. The primary motivation for strategic self-presentation is

to build a positive public image. For online identity experiment, individuals mainly want to talk and behave freely to explore the reactions of others⁹⁷.

When engaging in online identity construction, people are seeking the benefits brought about by the constructed identity, which is more than a positive image or the freedom to talk and behave. Some people try to pursue positive outcomes of online identity reconstruction, such as the fulfillment of vanity needs and access to new social networks⁹⁸. Some people construct their identity to avoid negative outcomes.

2.1.15 Identity in Real World and Cyberspace

Identity is defined as, "the state or fact of remaining the same one, as under varying aspects or conditions"¹⁰³. There are many claims made about the nature of identity in cyberspace. Such claims about the Internet is that you can act or express your personal opinions as another, without anybody knowing your real identity. It is necessary to note that being another identity can be very controversial and constructive at the same time. These types of aspects of People changing themselves can be seen in online environments which can be over-abused and perceived as a way to express yourself and ideas.

People have many different experiences using the Internet. There are many claims and beliefs about "America Online", or "AOL". An example of an online experience is an article written by a scholar "You Make Me Feel Like A Virtual Woman" is based on this author's first use of the Internet¹⁰⁴. He is a male heterosexual who uses another identity when he communicates in cyberspace. His other persona is a virtual woman. When he first signed on to AOL, he did not plan on changing his identity. He was just uninterested with the chat, lobby, and public rooms that were available. He searched in member rooms that sounded more exciting, such as, "Le Chateau Dungeon" and "M 4 M", and soon realized that they were male-oriented rooms filled with homosexuals. He did not have a problem with homosexuals and he very much

respected them, but because of this incident, he decided to change his identity to a woman named "Ms Terious." He met many women by learning that all he had to do was be "intelligent, open, attentive and empathetic because gender differences really didn't matter"⁹⁸. Yet, the Internet can be constructive in many ways if you benefit from it, such as learning to gain and express your ideas. The Cyberspace can be seen as something to have fun and express one's personal thoughts and opinions. Individuals can enjoy it as well if they would just give it a chance and make their first time online an interesting one, and not such a negative experience.

The Internet allows many opportunities for exploration of identity and has displayed personal social exploration to fulfill their curiosity. Young people develop a sense of full presence online, living in them semiotically as they make cultural and personal sense of their participation. The shaping of an identity plays a vital role in the online world especially in having sustained online presence within any particular online-group. Online opens the potential for young people to take risks and to explore all aspects of one's identity.

The anonymity that the medium provides have a powerful, disinhibiting impact on behavior and it allows young people a unique opportunity for self-expression. The involvement in online identity play is similar to participation in psychodrama. This ties in with the idea of the game as a means through which experience is formulated. The identity game helps to bring about psychological maturity. It is achieved by being able to develop different facets of the identity and experiencing variable progress between different identities⁹⁰.

The youth, can and do take on second identities to protect their offline from their online identity. Young people allow themselves to behave in ways different from offline life, to express formerly unexplored aspects of their personalities, much as they do when wearing masks at a masquerade ball. Good technology does not inhibit one's lifestyle, but enhances it.

Being responsible with technology use will be vital to maintaining oneself and making sure that the future generations aware of monitoring themselves⁹¹.

A scholar argues that without coherence, the identity spins off in all directions and that multiplicity can exist only between personalities that can communicate among themselves. A scholar states the fragmentation of the individual obstructs the development of the resilient online identity¹⁰⁶. Ultimately, one can create multiple versions of oneself; different versions of identity can be altered to particular audience. For some young people these fragmentary social faces are merged into an emotional sense of a single identity. One is able to express more online than one says offline.

2.1.16 Visual Construction of Identity

Visual construction of identity can be refers to as visual impression and self –promotion of users of social network sites. It has to do with choice of usernames, languages and profile pictures especially on the facebook profile of users. Online identity and visual impression are constructed based on social connection and popularity. Users of social media especially facebook include pictures, nickname and information that represent their real identities and ideal-self as their online identities. The construction of visual identity enables users on cyberspace to represent the real changes and advances, thus reinforcing their real identity

2.1.17 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis started in the mid–1980s as a new direction in the work of Fairclough and van Dijk, Wodak. It began, at a meeting in Amsterdam with presentations by van Dijk, Fairclough, Wodak, Kress, and van Leeuwen.

Critical discourse analysis has moved beyond critical linguistics by adopting a much more fully interdisciplinary approach. Critical discourse analysis did not only studied texts and transcripts of talk, but also their contexts, whether by historical or ethnographic methods.

Some scholars developed methods of visual analysis that were strongly inspired by Halliday's systemic-functional linguistics and shows how these methods can be employed for critical discourse analysis. For instance, a linguist revealed how 'visual racism' is realized not just by the most obvious racist stereotypes, but also through subtler methods. The members of some social groups, for instance, are never personalized, never depicted as individuals with unique characteristics⁹².

Critical discourse analysis is a methodological approach to the study of language. It has moved towards more explicit dialogue between social theory and practice, richer contextualization, greater interdisciplinarity and greater attention to the multimodality of discourse.

Critical discourse analysis approach explicitly or implicitly attempt to make links between micro-, meso-, and macroscale social phenomena, mapping discourse analyses across these scales correspondingly. A scholar conceptualized these scales as a three-dimensional model consisting of discursive events (micro), discursive practices (meso), and social structures (macro). He suggested that critical discourse analysis research should shift between descriptive, interpretive, and explanatory stages, each bolstered by oscillating between different scales of analysis. At the micro level of discursive events, researchers analyze texts or other forms of discourse to provide rich description (typically taking account of content, structure, grammar, vocabulary, intertextuality, and rhetorical or literary devices). At the meso level of discursive practice, analysts examine the processes underlying discursive production, dissemination, and assimilation, and interpret the discourse in relation to this contextual understanding. The macro level of social structures requires an understanding of the broader social context (including implicit and explicit rules, norms, or mores governing discourse and society). Macro level analysis likewise necessitates the reintegration of insights gleaned through the micro- and meso scale investigations to explain the relationship between

discourse, ideology, and the socio material world. This form of analytical process is arguably, the analyst must shift between descriptive, interpretative, and explanatory activities at micro-, meso-, and macroscales of analysis in order to produce a robust explanations of discursive phenomena.

Critical discourse analysis can be use in language to analyse data from a decidedly critical stance. These analyses help to examine the discourse. Critical discourse analysis examines the main discourses in the society. It encourages researchers to ask questions like: if we are determined by social discourse, what determines the discourse? What rules, codes, and ideologies dictate the way we engage in discourse -that is, how we speak, behave, interact, and perceive? If discourse refers to a particular view of an event, who creates that view

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This section contains the review of the three theoretical framework that were used in this study. Symbolic Interactionism, Performativity and systemic functional linguistics are the approaches adopted for the analysis of this work. One significant dimension of sociolinguistic research is the investigation of the impact of social norms and roles on linguistic identity. Accordingly, sociolinguists are interested in the interactions between the identity of the speaker and the social context within which the speaking happens⁹⁸.

Language is the reflection of identities people adopt as a result of their membership in the different groups characterized by their race, ethnicity, gender and social class. How people use a variety of languages leads to their social identity identification. People may greet differently, request differently or use their speech intonation differently and these varieties are reflections of their identity. Speakers define their positions with other individuals by using a specific linguistic variety that conveys more than what is said. Linguistic variation is not merely originated from various geographical territories. People may use a variety of

language to show multiple group allegiances. This inclination exists because using that linguistic variety is a sign of detaching yourself from the groups that do not speak that way.

2.2.1 Judith Butler's Performativity Theory

Performativity is the power of language to effect change in the world: language does not simply describe the world but may instead (or also) function as a form of social action. The concept of performative language was first described by the philosopher John L. Austin who posited that there was a difference between constative language, which describes the world and can be evaluated as true or false, and performative language, which does something in the world. For Austin, performative language included speech acts such as promising, swearing, betting, and performing a marriage ceremony. For instance, the utterance, "I do"—said under the right circumstances by the right speakers with the right intentions—transforms the utterer from being unmarried to being married⁹⁷.

Austin posited a number of felicity conditions that must be met in order for such utterances to function performatively. Other scholars have taken up these basic insights to explore the various ways in which language can do things in the world. Most notably, a linguist developed the concept of performativity to describe how gender is constructed. She argued that gender is an ongoing and socially constructed process, which proceeds through a continuous series of performative acts, from, for example, the utterance of "It's a boy!" on through a person's lifetime. Performativity, then, is the process of subject formation, which creates that which it purports to describe and occurs through linguistic means, as well as via other social practices.

The concept of performativity has been richly explored in anthropological studies of gender and sexuality. Some Scholars have also used the concept of performative action and performativity very productively, looking at how rituals work performatively to have effects

on the world⁹². Other types of performances have been also analyzed from a performative viewpoint. Anthropologists and other scholars studying economies had also considered economic performativity, or how the practices of economists and other financial experts are not simply descriptive of their subject but also serve to shape it. Not surprisingly, given the concept's initial conceptualization as linguistic in nature, linguistic anthropologists in particular have found the concept analytically useful⁷⁵. A number of challenges and issues have characterized scholarly debates about performative language and performativity. These include the role of actors' intentions and issues of agency, the importance of context, the repeated versus spontaneous nature of performative action, and the effects of social roles and distributions of power across participants.

Performativity is the concept that language can function as a form of social action and have the effect of change. The concept has multiple applications in diverse fields such as anthropology, social and cultural geography, economics, gender studies (social construction of gender), law, linguistics, performance studies, history, management studies and philosophy. The concept is first described by philosopher of language John L. Austin when he referred to a specific capacity: the capacity of speech and communication to act or to consummate an action. Austin differentiated this from constative language, which he defined as descriptive language that can be "evaluated as true or false". Common examples of performative language are making promises, betting, performing a wedding ceremony, an umpire calling a strike, or a judge pronouncing a verdict⁹¹.

Influenced by Austin, philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler argued that gender is socially constructed through commonplace speech acts and nonverbal communication that are performative, in that they serve to define and maintain identities. This view of performativity reverses the idea that a person's identity is the source of their secondary actions (speech, gestures). Instead, it views actions, behaviors, and gestures as both the result of an

individual's identity as well as a source that contributes to the formation of one's identity which is continuously being redefined through speech acts and symbolic communication. This view was also influenced by philosophers such as Michel Foucault and Louis Althusser. Performativity is the concept that language can function as a form of social action and have the effect of change. The concept has multiple applications in diverse fields such as anthropology, social and cultural geography, economics, gender studies (social construction of gender), law, linguistics, performance studies, history, management studies and philosophy. The concept is first described by philosopher of language John L. Austin when he referred to a specific capacity: the capacity of speech and communication to act or to consummate an action. Austin differentiated this from constative language, which he defined as descriptive language that can be "evaluated as true or false". Common examples of performative language are making promises, betting, performing a wedding ceremony, an umpire calling a strike, or a judge pronouncing a verdict.

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2.2.2 Hebert Bulmer's Symbolic Interactionism Theory

Symbolic interactionism is arguably one of the primary theoretical traditions in the discipline of sociology ⁹². According to the interactionists, the foundation of symbolic interactionism is

the manner in which the individual is connected to the social structure and the possible interplay between the individual and others. The interactionist perspective maintains that human beings engage in social action on the basis of meanings acquired from social sources, including their own experience. These meanings are both learned from others and to some extent shaped or reshaped by those using the symbols. As humans learn and use symbols and develop meanings for objects in their social contexts, they develop a “mind” that is both reflecting and reflexive.

A Sociologist made a great breakthrough in understanding the basic properties of human social interaction. A crucial concept of this sociologists is the self. The self and the mind are dialectically related to one another; neither can exist without the other. Thus, one cannot take oneself as an object (think about oneself) without a mind, and one cannot have a mind, have a conversation with oneself, without a self. Basic to the self is reflexivity, or the ability to put ourselves in others’ places, humans are both actors and reactors and the human sense of “self” is a product and process, as the self is simultaneously shaped by the larger society.

In addition to providing discussions of many elements about the relationship between the society and the individual, the sociologist articulates the origins and actions of the self. He argues that the self is comprised of two components which allow for both dialectical and reflexive processes. According to a sociologist, the part of the self that takes the attitudes of others is termed the “me”⁹². However, we can never predict exactly how their responses may play out. We have a general feel for the way in which interactions take place. Yet, it remains possible for someone to react in an unexpected manner.

This reaction to a stimuli arising during interaction is the “I” and is made possible because of the “me”. As a sociologist’s statement, “we are never totally aware of the I, with the result that we sometimes surprise ourselves with our actions”⁹². Given the sociologist dichotomous

approach to the architecture of the self, it is not surprising that two rather distinct views of symbolic interactionism have developed over the past decades: one emphasizes aspects and consequences of the “I”, the other emphasizes aspects and consequences of the “me”. These two views of symbolic interactionism are often referred to, respectively, as the Chicago school and the Iowa school of symbolic interaction theory. The central figure and major exponent of Chicago school is a sociologist, who coined the label “symbolic interactionism”⁹¹. According to another sociologist, symbolic interactionism turned into a full-fledged dynamic sociology⁹⁵. In his writings, Blumer championed a position and a methodology that emphasized the processes associated with a sociologist⁹³. In his view, his picture of the human being as an actor differs radically from the conception of man that dominates current psychological and social science. He simply meant that the human being is an object to himself. The human being may perceive himself, have conceptions of himself, communicate with himself, and act toward himself. Meanwhile, such self-interaction takes the form of making indications to himself and meeting these indications by making further indications.

As mentioned, Blumer and his followers pay special attention to how humans interpret and define actions of their own and others. The focus of Chicago school interaction theory is on the reflecting, creative, acting self, which is constantly apprehending meaning for objects in the environment while simultaneously altering those meanings in service of larger issues of the self. For Blumer, it is not possible to study the structure of a society through the use of variables because this would imply a relationship of causation, which would be impossible since anything is capable of being instantly redefined.

Therefore, fixed social variables are impossible to measure, and any attempts to explain human social behavior with such constructions are unproductive. In addition, a scholar tackles characters of symbolic interactionism and presents his understandings which are most valuable guidelines: Whatever SI may be to my readers, for me it was not and is not today a

theory in the sense of a body of thought providing substantive generalizations or abstracted propositions about some social activity⁹⁴. There are no substantive predictions or explanations to which it confidently leads. In fact.... “The Methodological Position of Symbolic Interactionism”, Blumer refers to SI as he choose to call it a “perspective” or a “way of seeing,” both terms central to the writings of another and major influence. Four aspects of this symbolic interactionist “way of seeing” seem significant in my thinking and in my work: meaning; interaction, emergence, and situatedness; language and symbolism; and the humanistic thrust⁹⁴.

In sum, Blumer and those who follow in his disciplinary footsteps are primarily attuned to the actions and consequences of a sociologist’s symbolic interactionism⁹¹. Throughout the development of the discipline of sociology, the Chicago school has dominated the analysis and understanding on interactionist theory by most sociologists. Yet developing parallel to this view was another version of the theory, the Iowa school which placed more emphasis on the ways in which features of the social structure influence and shape common meanings.

2.2.2.1 The Nature of Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism rests in the last analysis on three simple premises. The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. Such things include everything that the human being may note in his world physical objects, such as trees or chairs; other human beings, such as a mother or a store clerk; categories of human beings, such as friends or enemies; institutions, as a school or a government; guiding ideals, such as individual independence or honesty; activities of others, such as their commands or requests; and such situations as an individual encounter in his daily life. The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these

meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters. Three fundamental premises. It would seem that few scholars would see anything wrong with the first premise—that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings which these things have for them. Yet, oddly enough, this simple view is ignored or played down in practically all of the thought and work in contemporary social science and psychological science.

Meaning is either taken for granted and thus pushed aside as unimportant or it is regarded as a mere neutral link between the factors responsible for human behavior and this behavior as the product of such factors⁹⁵. This can be seen clearly in the predominant posture of psychological and social science today. Common to both of these fields is the tendency to treat human behavior as the product of various factors that play upon human beings; concern is with the behavior and with the factors regarded as producing them. Thus, psychologists turn to such factors as stimuli, attitudes, conscious or unconscious motives, various kinds of psychological inputs, perception and cognition, and various features of personal organization to account for given forms or instances of human conduct.

In a similar fashion, sociologists rely on such factors as social position, status demands, social roles, cultural prescriptions, norms and values, social pressures, and group affiliation to provide such explanations. In both such typical psychological and sociological explanations, the meanings of things for the human beings who are acting are either bypassed or swallowed up in the factors used to account for their behavior. If one declares that the given kinds of behavior are the result of the particular factors regarded as producing them, there is no need to concern oneself with the meaning of the things toward which human beings act; one merely identifies the initiating factors and the resulting behavior. Or one may, if pressed, seek to accommodate the element of meaning by lodging it in the initiating factors or by regarding

it as a neutral link intervening between the initiating factors and the behavior they are alleged to produce⁹⁵.

In the first of these latter cases the meaning disappears by being merged into the initiating or causative factors; in the second case meaning becomes a mere transmission link that can be ignored in favor of the initiating factors. The position of symbolic interactionism, in contrast, is that the meanings that things have for human beings are central in their own right. To ignore the meaning of the things toward which people act is seen as falsifying the behavior under study. To bypass the meaning in favor of factors alleged to produce the behavior is seen as a grievous neglect of the role of meaning in the formation of behavior.

The simple premise that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meaning of such things is much too simple in itself to differentiate symbolic interactionism—there are several other approaches that share this premise. A major line of difference between them and symbolic interactionism is set by the second premise, which refers to the source of meaning. There are two well-known traditional ways of accounting for the origin of meaning. One of them is to regard meaning as being intrinsic to the thing that has it, as being a natural part of the objective makeup of the thing.

Thus, Symbolic interactionism views meaning as having a different source than those held by the two dominant views just considered. It does not regard meaning as emanating from the intrinsic makeup of the thing that has meaning, nor does it see meaning as arising through a coalescence of psychological elements in the person. Instead, it sees meaning as arising in the process of interaction between people. The meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing. Their actions operate to define the thing for the person⁹⁵.

Thus, symbolic interactionism sees meanings as social products, as creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact. This point of view gives symbolic interactionism a very distinctive position, with profound implications that will be discussed later. It is necessary to see that meanings play their part in action through a process of self-interaction. The main variant of symbolic interactionism was developed by Blumer at the University of Chicago in the ⁹⁴.

Symbolic interactionism can be seen to be useful for understanding the construction of gender and sexuality. 'Doing gender' set the stage for social constructionist research on gender and sexuality. The concept of 'doing gender' demonstrates the socially constructed nature of masculinity and femininity as developing out of repeated, patterned interaction and socialization processes. The authors contend that gender emerges through interaction, directly contradicting the normative perspective of gender as an innate state of being or individual quality¹⁰⁰.

The treatment of gender displays by demonstrating the salience of gender in interaction as a master status. According to an author, individuals are constantly assessed for their gender performances in both interactional and institutional contexts; thus, 'doing gender' is unavoidable because sex category membership is attached to the allocation of power and resources across various social institutions. His social constructionist approach to gender and sex hugely impacted sociology as well as gender and feminist studies⁹⁵.

Blumer's symbolic interactionism centers on processes actors use to constantly create and recreate experiences from one interaction to the next. For Blumer, symbolic interactionism was simply 'the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings' ⁹⁶. In his view, social institutions exist only as individuals interact; society is not a structure but rather a continuing process where agency and indeterminateness of action

is emphasized¹⁰⁰. Treating society as structured, patterned, or stable is a reification because society, like individual actors' interactions and experiences with one another, is constantly in flux. Blumer's symbolic interactionism conceives social institutions as 'social habits' that occur within specific situations that are common to those involved in the situation. For Blumer, meanings are inter subjective and perceived, and constantly reinterpreted among individuals. There are no meanings inherent in the people or objects which an actor confronts – actors rather place meanings upon such entities which are perceived as unique⁹³. Behavior is simply an actor's idiosyncratic way of reacting to an interpretation of a situation. It is therefore not to be examined or predicted from antecedent knowledge about how actors generally respond to given situations. This is impossible since each encounter is different from others (and therefore unique). Understanding social behavior requires an interpretive perspective that examines how behavior is changing, unpredictable, and unique to each and every social encounter.

Blumer's theoretical contention was that human behavioral patterns must be studied in forms of action, and that human group life should be studied in terms of what the participants do together in units⁹⁴. Blumer's orientation toward social phenomena centers on the notion of independent action: human society is distinctive because of the capacity of each member to act independently.

2.2.3 Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics is an approach to language that was developed by M.A.K. Halliday in the U.K. The approach is now being used particularly in language education for the purpose of discourse analysis. Systemic functional linguistics is aligned with Sociology because it explores how language is used in social contexts to achieve particular goals. In terms of data, it looks at the discourses we produce (whether spoken or written), and the

contexts of the production of these texts. Because it is concerned with language use, systemic functional linguistics places higher importance on language function than on language structure⁹⁷.

It is necessary to note that Systemic grammar, focuses on the paradigm: systemic grammars basically set out the choices available in a particular language context. The grammar also describes the possible sequences of elements that could be produce. A systemic approach allows a researcher to focus on meaningful choices in language (e.g., active vs. passive) without needing to think of the particular structure that realises it. A basic assumption of SFG is that “meaning implies choice”: if there is no alternative but to do something, then it is not meaningful. The reverse is also believed to be true: if there is a choice in any context, then that choice is meaningful. For instance, lexically we have a choice between “fag” and “cigarette”. The use of the first however is meaningful in that it marks the situation as informal, and may say something about the socio-cultural background of the speaker.

Systemic functional linguistics takes a “functional” orientation on several levels. In general, it means that a focus on what language does is more important than looking at how it does it (its structure). Some of the ways in which a functional approach is realized are: 1. Function labels for syntactic elements: Grammar is organized not only in terms of classes of units, but also in terms of functions (Subject, Actor, etc.) 2. In SFG, each utterance is assigned a speech function (similar to speech act labels in other approaches), e.g., giving information (statement), demanding information (question), demanding action (order) or offering action (offer, promise, etc.).

Systemic linguistics is a functionalist approach to language, that explicitly attempts to combine purely structural information with overtly social factors in a single integrated description. Functional linguistics holds that: Language use is functional. Its function is to

make meanings. These meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged'

In Systemic Functional Grammar the notion of choice is fundamental. Paradigmatic relations are regarded as primary, and this is captured descriptively by organizing the basic components of the grammar in interrelated systems of features representing 'the meaning potential of a language.' A language is viewed as a 'system of systems,' and the linguist's task is to specify the choices involved in the process of instantiating this meaning potential in actual 'texts' through the resources available for expression in the language. Syntagmatic relations are viewed as derived from systems by means of realization statements, which for each feature specify the formal and structural consequences of selecting that particular feature. The term 'choice' is typically used for features and their selection, and systems are said to display 'choice relations'⁹⁷. Choice relations are posited not only at the level of individual categories such as definiteness, tense and number but also at higher levels of text planning (as in, e.g., the grammar of speech functions). Context concerns the Field (what is going on), Tenor (the social roles and relationships between the participants), and the Mode (aspects of the channel of communication, e.g., monologic/dialogic, spoken/written, +/- visual-contact, etc.)

Systemic semantics includes what is usually called 'pragmatics'. Semantics is divided into three components: The Lexico-Grammar concerns the syntactic organisation of words into utterances. Even here, a functional approach is taken, involving analysis of the utterance in terms of roles such as Actor, Agent/Medium, Theme, Mood, etc. Central to SFG is the use of 'system networks', an inheritance network used to represent the choices present in making an utterance. The 'choices' in this network are called 'features'. e.g., a simplified lexico-grammatical network. The choices on each stratum are constrained by those on others. Thus the decision to use a nominal-group (= noun-phrase), rather than a clause, to express a

semantic 'process' will be determined by both the textual structure of the text as a whole, and also by the social context. Each feature is also associated with the structural consequences of that choice, e.g., the feature 'finite' might have realisations: +Subject; +Finite; Subject: [nominal-group]; Finite: [finite-verb], meaning a Subject and Finite element are required, the Subject is filled by a nominal group, and the Finite by a finite-verb. Further selections in the clause network will more tightly constrain the fillers of these roles, and specify the presence, fillers, and ordering of these elements⁹⁷.

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

This section reviews relevant works that are already in existence on language and identity construction.

Studies have examined various works on Identity. Some scholars studies 'Naming as a marker of identity on Nairaland'. This paper was of the opinion that 'A name can say a lot about an individual and that names are very important in every culture of the world as it is by one's name that he or she is first known and identified. This paper investigates naming as a crucial instrument of expressing different forms of identity. The data used for the analysis was drawn from Nairaland, a discussion forum dominated by Nigerians at home and abroad. By drawing insights from different socio-linguistics works by selecting extracts purposively from the forum, the data were presented and analysed. The analysis showed that while personal names were used by discussants to indicate religious and ethnic identity, pseudonyms and diminutives were used on the forum as strategic means of expressing and linking up global youth culture. The study concluded naming is the most important marker of identity⁹⁶.

Another scholar also examined language and identity among Iranian immigrants in Israel. This paper examines patterns of language maintenance and use-standard Persian as well as dozens of dialects spoken by Jews in provincial towns among three generations of Israel

residents of Iranian origin. Issues of identity, acculturation, and the immigration experience were explored through a language prism as well as in light of Israel's assimilatory policy, was predominantly one of 'Hebrew-only'. The sample included 145 participants from three generations who took part in the qualitative study. Central themes that emerged from the content analysis included close links between immigrants from Tehran and those from provincial cities, as well as gender differences. Findings are discussed in light of the relationship between official policy and language maintenance, social and personal implications of language loss, and suggestions from future language policies towards immigrants⁹⁷.

A research work on "Language and Identity: Multilingual Immigrant learners in South Africa" was carried out by some researchers. This study helps educators understand experiences of immigrant students in South Africa that relate to language and identity by comparing such experiences across three different school settings: an urban school with a high (Black) immigrant and indigenous population, a former Indian school with a high (Black) immigrant and indigenous population, a former Indian school, and a former white school. This study makes visible the immigrant learner experience in multilingual settings in which xenophobic conditions arise. The findings reveal similarities as well as differences in individual identity construction and negotiation and its vital connection to language. The implications of this study point to a call for policy, practice, and research to take into account multilingual immigrants learners as well as need to attend to the social construction of the identities⁹⁸.

A scholar also did a qualitative study by examining Chinese returnee scholars' language practices in teaching and research and their identity construction during their early career years. Using interviews and drawing upon poststructuralist identity theory, it examines the adaptations of twelve Chinese bilingual returnee scholars to new academic communities in

English language departments, their teaching and publishing language choices, and their identity construction throughout this process. The findings showed these scholars constructed their professional identities through negotiating English as a teaching language in ways interwoven with students' needs, institutional policies, and their past experiences. The Chinese returnee scholars were found to be "rootless" in terms of possessing inadequate social and cultural capital locally, resulting in limited collaboration and difficulties developing sufficiently robust language competency to publish bilingually. Some scholars, however, employed accumulated capital to exercise agency in bringing about changes in their new academic environments. Implications for bilingual returnee scholars and university policymakers are discussed⁹⁷.

There is also another research on the discursive construction of identity through interaction on social media in a Chinese NGO". The data was got from an "on-going online discussion on We Chat, China's fastest growing social networking site". The analysis focused on instrumental, digital, phatic and analogous aspects of the posts. The data revealed signs about the connections between individuals from an on-going perspective e.g. which members are regarded as experts or leaders in certain issues etc. they showed that their exchanges revealed their group identity and the influence it has on members⁹⁹.

Another researcher also, conducted a research on discursive construction of national identity in South Korean advertisements. He argued that in countries like Turkey, South Korea, Taiwan, Mexico, Brazil, and others, the reality of fast financial development has created societies subject to and in the meantime estranged from globalization powers. Four magazines were used as data for this study Sisa Journal, Hangyarae, weekly economist and Monthly Joongang. From the data, 5 major cultural discursive strategies used were identified: collective/family value (we-ness or one-ness), reconciliation/equality (between generations, between classes, etc.), nationalism/patriotism, high context culture, and postmodern

consumer culture articulated by Koreanness. It was shown also that Koreans rely more on non-verbal representations than its verbal counterpart¹⁰⁰.

From the literature, it is evident that a wide range of studies on how identities are constructed in discourses are available. However, studies that tried to provide insight into how Nigerians on nairaland and facebook construct their identities in their discourses are not common. Since the socio-cultural context of these cyberspaces is different from those captured in the studies reviewed above, this study attempts to identify the languages that are used in Nigeria cyberspace.

A researcher investigates Trans-culturalism and identity in cyberspace: A critical analysis of President Buhari's Facebook updates, the researcher was on the opinion that the emergence of information and communication technology has overcome decades of restrictions in global communication. The social media in particular has resulted in hybridity of culture within the virtual sphere. This research within the framework of computer mediated discourse analysis and insights from Kraidy's model of critical trans-culturalism draws particular attention to transcultural practices within the digital sphere. It examines the discursive practices in Muhamadu Buhari's Facebook posts during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. The Study adopted ethnography to examine 100 updates posted within a four-month period. The social media is a strong platform for interplay of cultural practices. Communication within platform creates a hybrid identity that avails individuals the opportunity to see themselves and act in the light of other cultures. The virtual sphere, if properly harnessed, is a strong tool for transmission of political, educational and cultural contents⁹⁹.

A researcher, examine the Use of Interactive Media in Identity Construction by Female Undergraduates in a Nigerian University. The scholar was on the note that the world has become a global village with the aid of the internet whose attributes and capabilities are

constantly surpassing all other sources of information that existed before it. The internet facilitates accessibility and availability. Distance in communication has evaporated, making interpersonal and group communication across continents possible and easy. However, a more outstanding use is recorded in its interactive segment. These interactive media come in the forms such as Chat rooms, Facebook, and Email. The research work examines the uses of the internet interactive media by a selected group of Nigerian female undergraduates in identity construction. Results show sample population prefer and use the Facebook for internet interactions due to its affordances. The e-mail and chat room media followed closely in order of preference. The findings support the uses and gratification theory which holds that people manipulate the media for self-gratification¹⁰¹.

Another scholar, investigates Identity Construction in Learning English Academic Writing in a Japanese University. This research, investigates the influences on the construction of writer identity by Japanese university students in Japan learning English academic writing, with consideration given to what selves they exhibit in their writing, and how much those selves were shaped by their learning experiences in a required writing course. A total of sixteen students and their four teachers participated in the study, involving an analysis of students' written texts, supported by monthly student and teacher interviews and classroom observations. The text analysis was done using possibilities of selfhood as the main framework, operationalizing Appraisal framework for identifying the different selves. Findings showed that the strongest influences on identity construction were from instructors' expectations, while personal beliefs also contributed. The findings also showed that students were more likely to meet writing task expectations where instructors had more reasonable requirements in terms of voice¹⁰².

A researcher carried out a research work on Exploring Advanced English Learner's Multilingual Identity Construction from Multiple Perspectives in this work, the researcher

explores advanced English learners' multilingual identity construction from various perspectives synthesizing two traditions: research into L2 learners' identity construction and traditional SLA research into individual differences. The study of English as a lingua franca along with dynamic systems theory comprise the further theoretical frameworks. Despite the dominance of qualitative data, the relatively large number of the participants (N=42) allowed the scholar to present and discuss some numerical data on trends and frequencies, thus making the dissertation a mixed methods study.

The dissertation is also classroom research and action research, since the study was conducted in a classroom, and the teacher and the researcher conducting the study are one and the same person. The participants of this study were 42 English majors studying at the Institute of English Studies, University of Pécs, Hungary who attended three Listening and Speaking Skills II courses the researcher taught in the spring semester of the 2014/2015 academic year. The data collection instruments included a structured speaking task (a structured interview recorded by students), a structured writing task, and a questionnaire on individual differences comprising open-ended questions. The datasets of oral and written texts allowed the triangulation of data. To analyse the data, the researcher performed qualitative content analysis to detect emerging themes, which was an iterative process characteristic of such research. Having detected emerging themes, he counted frequencies to complement and support the qualitative results.

The findings confirmed that L2 learners respond emotionally to L2 learning and make SLA an embodied experience. The findings also pointed out that learners utilize their L2 to create subjective meanings in the L2 as well as to create an inwardly generated multilingual identity reflecting their desire for self-fulfilment via the L2. Their identity construction drawing on their imagination and their real-life experiences reflects their identification with other L2 speakers. Based on these findings, he coined the term of the language learner's imagined L2

habitus. The data also revealed that the participants are shifting to using English as a lingua franca, and the emerging themes led him to revisiting Yashima's concept of international posture from the perspective of identity research¹⁰³. Finally, when investigating the students' individual differences drawing on traditional SLA research and identity research, he came to realise that both identity construction and individual differences are best viewed as a complex dynamic system, in which horizontally and vertically interacting individual differences constitute the levels of the system, and the changing behaviour of these levels shape the learner's identity construction as system-level behaviour. Furthermore, the system also interacts with other systems (that is other L2 speakers) as well as with contextual factor¹⁰⁰.

A scholar studied, Identity in the Cyberspace: The Social Construction of Identity through on-Line Virtual Interactions. This paper has to do with the recent theoretical advances on the dialogical construction of self, applied into a particular interactive educational 3D virtual world. This study analysed how identities are built and maintained in this type of not-immersive cyberspace, where the 3D interactive environment is completely generated by the computer, planned, and built by a community of learners and practice. During the on-line connections, users are personified by an "Avatar1" and through it they can walk, fly, look around the virtual world, build and manipulate the 3D objects, perform virtual actions, and chat with other users. The assignment given to the community is to construct an educational world, called "Euroland". A selected sample of excerpts from the textual chats generated while visual interactions are taking place is analysed, supported by related screen-photos, using the ethnographic method Geertz, Duranti, the analysis shows how identities are built in such environment through social interaction and dialogical processes. It is concluded that cyber identities seem to be highly congruent to the development of the recent psychology that considers identities as multiple in their conceptualization, "voiced", and "positioned"¹⁰⁴.

The Dynamics of Identity Construction Among Ethnic Groups in Benue State, Nigeria was done by another scholar, she was on the opinion that, Identity construction and reconstruction, since the colonial times, has been a recurrent trend among ethnic groups in contemporary Benue State, Nigeria. Violent contestations have resulted from these reconstructions that led to loss of lives and properties. Understanding the dynamics of identity construction is critical to understanding the recurrence of violent contestations in Benue State. While a plethora of information exists on these contestations, there is dearth of data on the dynamics of identity construction in the State. This study, therefore examined how social thought and significant other-groups influence the dynamics of identity construction among the ethnic groups in Benue State. The research adopted Berger and Luckman's constructionist theory¹⁰⁴. Descriptive and exploratory designs were adopted and respondents were purposely selected. Fifty in Depth Interviews (IDIs) were held with gatekeepers among Tiv (10), Idoma (10), Igede (10), Etulo (10) and the Jukun (10) ethnic groups in their major traditional towns of Gboko, Otukpo, Oju, Adi respectively, to elicit information on social thought and significant other-group relations in identity construction. Ten Key Informant Interviews, 2 per ethnic group were conducted with individuals aged 60 years and above to provide information on identity construction in historical perspective. Also, 20 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held to elicit information on identity construction in contemporary times as well as the social relations of identity construction. Different FGDs were held for males and females ages 18-39 and < 40 years. Archival research and 5 case studies of individuals, who were 18 years old at the time of the 1950-60s Tiv protests, were used to examine identity construction in historical perspective. Data generated were subjected to content analyses. The Tiv and Idoma were the significant other-groups whose perceptions and attitudes influenced the reconstruction of identity of other ethnic groups of Etulo, Jukun and Igede. Their designation

as significant to other groups was based on population, recognition by the State as the 'majority' and the creation of the Tiv and Idoma traditional ruler ship institution.

The significant other-groups constructed their social thought identities based on their dominance and control of State resources while the other ethnic groups constructed their social thought as 'enslaved' and 'dominated' with a desire for change. The other ethnic groups of Etulo and Jukun reconstructed their identity as distinct from the Tiv. The Igede reconstructed their identity as distinct from the Idoma. Hence the Etulo, Jukun and Igede created social thought to emphasise and reify their distinctiveness. The Tiv and Idoma had a disparaging identity construction with regards to the 'minorities. Identity construction was spearheaded by charismatic individuals and groups who had a vision for the liberation of their ethnic groups. Spearheads with varying characteristics emerged as the need for new identities arose. Ethnic groups used identity construction to attract development from the State through facilitators and the creation of sociocultural organisations to mobilise for community development. Government should ensure equitable distribution of resources and empower 'minority groups'¹⁰⁴.

Another scholar did a Discourse Analysis of Zuckerberg's Pragmatic Identities' Construction based on Adaptation Theory. The researcher is on the note that People construct different pragmatic identities in everyday talk and the process of building identities usually adapts to the context. To be specific, entrepreneurs represents himself and the company when uttering to the outside society and the construction of entrepreneur's identity is related to the company's image. They are inclined to use intertextuality resources to build connection with the potential audience. The author analyzed an entrepreneur's speech discourse to describe what pragmatic identities are constructed and how does the construction adapt to the speaking context. To answer these questions, the author conducted a discourse analysis to illustrate relationship between the language use and physical, social and mental world based on

Adaptation Theory. The results presented that the entrepreneur builds various master identities, interpersonal identities, and personal identities with intertextuality language resources to adjust to the speaking context. This study suggested that entrepreneurs are supposed to improve the skill of manipulating their discourse strategies to build close connection with potential listener¹⁰⁵.

A scholar studied how Filipinos in New Zealand construct their identity as diasporic subjects when they talk about their lives on Internet-based social media platforms. Examining how individuals work out their identity is a crucial task in contemporary times, in which some people consider as complex and networked but also, insecure and unstable. Filipino diaspora and identity form a situation that demonstrates the intricate practice of managing the steady impact of decentering and insecurity in a globalized world¹⁰⁶. The researcher is on the opinion that, migrants are in a state of liminality, a transitional period where they do not fully belong to either the former or new status. The ubiquity of Internet-based media in everyday life plays an important role in expressing migrant identities. New media act as the stage of performances of their lives, their sense of self, national belonging, and attachment. Two cases of personal social media were the focus in the study –Amy’s Facebook profile and Ka Uro’s blog. State-produced texts were also examined as sites of official discourses on Filipino migrants.

The research adopted online ethnography, the researcher drew data from the multimodal ‘texts’ in these online platforms and interviews of the persons who authored them. His investigation is ultimately an exercise in interpretation¹⁰⁷. He assumes a stance that takes language as a site of struggle for control over meanings and ways we constitute action. The analysis is discursive and critical, in approach. In accounting for the richness of the semiotic resources that the Internet offers and the conflicting relations of power in both the migrant situation and new media participation, He deploy the principles of critical discourse analysis,

multimodality and discourse as recontextualization of social practice. Analysis of the data reveals that social media function as online archives for making memories keeping the family in the Philippines posted about life in New Zealand or documenting migrant life for posterity. At the same time, the participants also perform migrant identity and the quality of their migrant lives through these media formats. They do so by 'place-making' in which the idealization of the new home represents their successful immigrant journey. The discursive maneuverings in their social media writings enact both the dismantling and building of boundaries in their identities. Triggered by specific instances, migrant identity is constructed strategically as hybrid, binary, or 'essentially' Filipino. Connection to national roots is undoubtedly evident. Personal discourses unveil a national consciousness. Amy and Ka Uro carry the Philippine nation on their backs by performing the 'good' qualities of being Filipino or by taking concrete action to 'assemble' the best kinds of Filipinos in New Zealand to 'rebuild' a better Philippines. Finally, the cases demonstrate that the potential for agency new media writing possesses resides in 'recoupling' the author with the text and making experiences less transparent. Using social media necessitates 'writing', and writing necessitates contemplating the ordinary. Seeing the self from an unfamiliar angle leads to rethinking one's position in a complex network of social relations¹⁰⁸.

2.4 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model of this research work is sociolinguistic and sociocultural models. The variables of social identities such as age, gender, ethnicity, social status and religion constitute the variables for the research work. Theoretical Background sociolinguistics and sociocultural model. Through analyses of linguistic variations, sociolinguistics is concerned with the effects of societal factors on linguistic behaviour. One significant dimension of sociolinguistic research is the investigation of the impact of social norms and roles on linguistic identity¹⁰⁹.

Accordingly, sociolinguists are interested in the interactions between the identity of the speaker and the social context within which the speaking happens¹⁰⁸. The pioneer of sociolinguistic studies conducted a series of studies regarding the confluence of American vernacular and social identity¹¹². His conclusion was that divergent use of language is the reflection of identities people adopt as a result of their membership in the different groups characterized by their race, ethnicity, gender and social class. How people use a variety of languages leads to their social identity identification. People may greet differently, request differently or use their speech intonation differently and these varieties are reflections of their identity. Speakers define their positions with other individuals by using a specific linguistic variety that shows more than what is said.

Linguistic variation is not merely originated from various geographical territories. People may use a variety of language to show multiple group allegiances. This inclination exists because using that linguistic variety is a sign of detaching yourself from the groups that do not speak that way¹¹². This phenomenon is what a scholar has called “ethno national solidarity”: speakers construct and develop their linguistic identities by informed selection of the proper language varieties¹¹⁰. The speakers’ identity is revealed by the use of similar verbal and nonverbal communicative acts. A speech community then is formed, which is a large group of people with a shared repertoire of verbal communication habits. Furthermore, single individuals’ language variety (also called idiolect), is not detached from the variety of a language used by a community or group (also called dialect)¹¹¹. A crucial point here is that the mechanism of the relationships between idiolect and dialect is variable and is majorly unconscious¹¹². The use of two code for communication can help to make clearer explanation from language people used. Sometimes, individual speakers maintain dual identities by use of two linguistic varieties to communicate in double speech communities. It is not true in any sense to conclude that social identity is the sum of every single individual’s identities. In

other words, both intra and inter linguistic identity may change in different ways through time. Within the speech community, speakers continuously adjust their identities

2.5 Summary of Gap in Literature Reviewed

It was shown in the literature review that studies have been carried on language and identity construction. Some scholars' studied "naming as a marker of identity, on this study it was observed that personal names were used on Nairaland by discussants to indicate religions and ethnic identity. Another study also looked at language and identity among Iranian immigrants in Israel.

Review on language and identity construction indicates that identity is not static but a context specific-construct and also how people use language in different social settings to showcase different identities. Although several works have been done towards language and identity construction, much ground is still needed to cover. Empirical studies have been done on language and identity construction and are also reviewed as it shared relevance to the researcher's works. The literature reviewed were related to the present study in one way or the other, none of the study so far did language and identity construction on Facebook and Nairaland in Nigeria. The present study used description survey research design and the present work will comprise the entire population of everyone on Facebook and Nairaland. Sampling techniques, include multi-stage purposive and random sampling were utilize in the study.

From the reviewed literature, it is evident that studies on how identities are constructed in discourse are available. However, the purpose of this study is to explore Nigerian identity expression in a digital environment and how identity is formulated and expressed on Facebook and Nairaland in Nigeria with the use of language.

And for the purpose of this work also, Identity Representation as IR, Identity Related Factor(s) as IRF, Facebook as FB, Nairaland as NL, Discourse Issues as (DI).

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Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research design for this study is descriptive survey of quantitative approach. The broad reasons for this research design, is due to the nature of the data and mode of circulation.

In terms of analysis, qualitative design helps in discussing, conditions and factors underlying comments on Facebook and Nairaland, as well as the conditions or reasons for constructing identities in the first place. By so doing, the qualitative design makes it possible to identify causes of actions, that is identity causes, and the discourse issues that surround them.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this study consists of users of Facebook and Nairaland. People who are selected for this study are at periods when things that define their experience are centered of making and keeping friends, getting married, celebration of birthdays or other socio-cultural activities, among other factors which continue to shape their perspectives about gender, age, social status, ethnicity, among other factors that affect the subjective representation of identity.

Unlike Facebook, Nairaland is not largely a mixed social media community. In this case, interactants on this platform, judging from their responses, which may align or misalign with represented identity about an issue, localises the group, that is, identifies their macro identity, with respect to the age group. In other words, interactants on nairaland tends to identify with their demography when issues are raised.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

One hundred posts were randomly chosen from Facebook and Nairaland. Hence, using the quota technique, percentage values of 50% for Facebook data and 50% for Nairaland were set as the parameter to determine excerpts (comments) selected. The implication of this is that for every variable, 50 Facebook and 50 Nairaland posts or comments constitute the data. The multi-stage sampling techniques using Facebook and Nairaland was employed for the collection of data. Two conditions that was used as parameters to determine the selection. First, the desire to use subjective responses that are not limited by word count. Both

Facebook and Nairaland platforms do not have limitations with respect to word counts, which allows for highly subjective write-ups or narratives, offering a vast array of discourse features and strategies in the construction of identity. Second, the mode of initiating threads and circulating them to attract responses by followers. Both Facebook and Nairaland groups were chosen for this study, share peculiar features, in terms of the issues initiated, and the manner of responses. For data selection, the stratified and quota sampling techniques was used in different strands. First, the stratified sampling technique was deploy to group the data into discourse issues and variables of social identities represented. The underlying factors for the representation of identity, age, gender, ethnicity and religion, and social status, were used as search parameters to locate the data in the two media platforms.

The quota technique was applied to the selection of the data, based on frequencies of occurrences of the variables of identity in both platforms.

3.4 Description of Research Instruments

In the course of carry out this research work, screenshot application was the major research instrument used. Information communication technology (ICT) also constitutes another instrument for data sourcing and analysis. Social media communication thrives in the existence of the internet, which is also relied on to connect to the social media handles to access the data, using two browser applications, google chrome (version 108.0.) and edge (Version 108.0.). The data was obtained by using the screenshot application, which is enabled on the windows 10 version of the computer operating system, on which the Microsoft word application is installed for analysis of the data. The analysis is superintended by two approaches/theories, put together as analytical instrument, in alignment with this section. These are stated below.

The theoretical instrument or framework is a blend of the performativity theory, symbolic interactionism and systemic functional linguistics. The performativity theory was used in this study to account for the representation of social actions. This is because identity labeling or representation relies mostly on repeated forms of social actions. Major tools in this theory that are influential to this study are locutions and illocutions, particularly in the ways that they serve as strategies for the construction of identity in the social media platforms. Symbolic interactionism is tied to the conversations. The theory accounts for meaning as part of social interaction. Lastly, the systemic functional linguistics is a theory of language that describe how language makes meaning in context. The implication of blending these theories in this study is to align with the view that social identity is a construct of both social actions and interactions, and social media communication is dominated by both factors. They are the tools or variables of language in the social media community.

3.5 Validity of the Research Instrument

The researcher relied on the screenshot application and Information Communication Technology (ICT) as the major instrument for data sourcing. These instrument were validated through careful study of the application in the course of the research.

3.6. Reliability of the Research Instrument

The research can depend confidently on the information collected through the Information Communication Technology (ICT) and descriptive Survey method. To ensure that instrument is reliable it was viewed by experts in the field of Information Technology and Language for scrutiny.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

This researcher used screenshot method to access the posts and comments of acquaintances on randomly selected individual's wall. The comments and posts on the Facebook walls and

Nairaland pages was screen-captured, using computer system and application. These were collated and stored in the computer drive, with backup on an external drive, and a writeable storage disk.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

For the purpose of reiteration, the analytical method is designed to ensure the realization of the Three objectives set for this study, which include, to identify the identities represented in Facebook and Nairaland posts and comments, to examine the locutions and illocutions of the representations of identity in the posts, to analyze the discourse strategies and features of the representations, and to examine the lexicosemantic resources underscoring the locutionary and illocutionary acts underscoring the representations of identity in Facebook and Nairaland interactions. Therefore, the analysis is conducted using the discourse approach, but with a mixture of the top-down and bottom-up analytical methods¹. The first process is, hypothetically, characterising and grouping the identity representations (IR) in the data according to the identity related factor(s) (IRF); four: age, gender, religion/ethnicity/nationality, and social status, will be use as determiners in this study. Hypothetically, for age, four (4) IRs are identified: condescender, progressor/regressor, experiencer and decider; gender has six (6) IRs: Pervert, chauvinist, care-giver, labourer, worker/dependent, seductor; for religion/ethnicity/nationality, six (6) IRs are identified: opportunist, chauvinist, pessimist, optimist and nationalist; for social status, four (4) IRs are represented: chauvinist, opportunist, reciprocal and libralist. The IRFs are topicalised as the main sections of the outline for the analytical chapter, while the IRs are identified and analysed as the subtitles in each of the sections.

The locutions (LAs), illocutions (IAs) and lexicosemantic resources (LRs) underlying each of the IRs are discussed in a bottom-up manner. This analytical process is repeated concurrently

for each of the IRs in order to properly link all LAs, IAs and LR, for clear and easy identification. The LAs used to interrogate the LR range from directness to indirectness, plausible claims, factual referencing, and illustrative claims. The LR, on the other hand, interrogate the lexical items in the texts. The third layer (process) of analysis is the examination of the discourse issues (DI) surrounding the IRs. These are analysed principally by the IAs. The implication is that every DI is projected by one or more IRs. Consequently, the DIs generate illocutionary forces (IFs) that are summarily transferred to the labeling of Identity, otherwise termed as I.

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Endnote

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Chapter Four

Results and Discussion of Findings

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data collected during the field survey.

4.1 Presentation of Data

This chapter presents the data for the analysis of this study and the data represent to answer the question of:

- i. What are the forms of identities constructed on Facebook and Nairaland in Nigeria?
- ii. What is the nexus between the constructed identities and the forms of language used in relation to the context of discourse engagement in the two online communities?
- iii. What are the linguistic resources for constructing identities in the selected excerpts?

Presentation of data and discussion of findings are presented below:

4.2 Presentation of Research Questions

4.2.1 Research Question One: What are the forms of identities constructed on Facebook and Nairaland in Nigeria?

This research question focuses on the forms of identities that are constructed on Facebook and Nairaland. The identities that were constructed on Facebook and Nairaland discourses in Nigeria are age, gender, national, ethnicity or religion and group aggression.

Identity Representations (IRs) of Age in FB and NL Posts

Age constitutes one of the heterogenous factors that condition or underly the representation of identity in communicative encounters. The identity representations (IRs) conditioned by age in the posts and comments of NL and FB users are, mostly, in four dimensions, namely condescender, progressor, regressor, and leveler.

4.2.1.1 The Condescender Identity

Interactants in social media discourse account for condescension as a factor of age. The changes inevitable to people constitute part of their conversations on the platforms and

indicate how they respond to the changes around them. The condescension is necessitated or attributed to age.

But kindly indulge me for a bit, I do design's of military defense items, a touch of chaos an environment of work, for me stability is something I cherish, hence why I like lady's within my **age** range, I'm 30 so a lady of 32 who's reasonable will do, I believe during the course of the relationship we will outline our fantasies and explorations, **if love relationship means anything is putting the other person's interest**

Plate 4.1: Nairaland post 001

Source¹

In the excerpt above, age is portrayed the condescender at three levels. First, the speaker identifies 'chaos' and 'work' as bidirectional factors that are attributed to the age and trajectory of humans that elicit the performative act of condescension, which is portrayed by the verb 'cherish'. This act is used to balance the feeling of chaos and work, which are naturally inconvenient for people to cope with. Balance, which is what 'stability' signifies is used as a synonym for condescension. At the second level, the trajectories of human relationship, especially love relationship. This is represented as a matter of condescension because the two parties that come into the relationship have performative acts associated with different 'fantasies' and 'explorations.' Hence, there is need for condescension for both parties. Discrepancies in terms of age is another condition for condescension in matters of relationship. The performative verb, 'like', shows preference, while there is inference in the structural process, 'age range', indicating that the speaker is thirty years old.

Gender specificity is also represented in the repetition of 'lady', indicating that the speaker is a male. In most cases, in love and marital relationships, males are often older than women. However, in this case, the man is willing to condescend to having a relationship with a 'lady' who is two years older than he is. The latter part of the excerpt presents another instance of

condescension. The performative acts, ‘means’ and ‘putting’ are used to signify the extent to which sacrifice is needed for mutual existence or satisfaction. Sacrifice here, which is represented by ‘interest’, implies condescending to doing what will please each other.

Until I settled down with what I have and made up my mind to make something great out of what I have. When life gives you lemons, making lemonade is a proverbial phrase used to encourage optimism and a positive can-do attitude in the face of adversity or misfortune. Lemons suggest sourness or difficulty in life; making lemonade is turning them into something positive or desirable.

Plate 4.2: Facebook post 001

Source¹

The speaker in the above excerpt pushes the argument that as one grows, one would find out that what one gets is not commensurate with what one needs. Therefore, to live with such reality, one needs to condescend to accept what one has. The mood adjunct ‘until’ is used to create a dichotomy between times, which is a feature of age or growth. The basis for condescension in the excerpt is time; in other words, as time elapses and the speaker could not attain or get what they wanted, they accept the new reality, that is what is on hand. Performative markers of condescension in the excerpt are ‘settled down,’ ‘make’ and ‘turning’. The deontic modal and modulated verb ‘can-do’ define obligation. It is also performative in the sense that it propels the speaker to make good of their present situation, considering that going back to what was needed was no longer possible. Structural, the excerpt is sequenced from the denotative to metaphoric and to the connotative, with collocative balance. In the denotative sense, ‘what I have’ collocates with ‘lemon’, and the performative act of ‘making lemonade’, which is metaphoric. On the other hand, ‘making lemonade’ is connected to the performative act of ‘to make something good’, which the entire act of condescension connotes. At the latter part of the plate, the speaker posits the

implication of condescending, using the adjectives ‘sourness’ and ‘difficulty’. This means that it is a hard thing to give up one’s choice or preference for what one has to just accept. However, the speaker suggests that condescension can become ‘positive’ and ‘desirable, if one decides to make ‘good’ out of it.

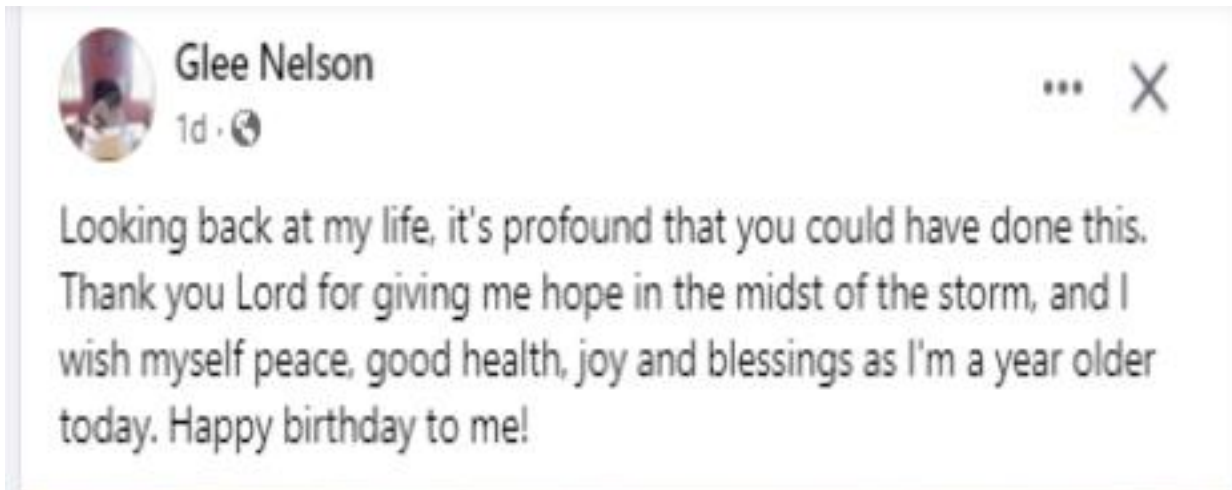


Plate 4.3: Facebook post 002

Source²

The above excerpt is an example of religious identity which is Christianity marked by the statement ‘Thank you Lord’. The exact above portrays condescension as a reminiscence, using performing acts that indicate recollection and introspection of times. Two times are indicative, namely the past and the present. The past is brought to the discourse by the performative of recollection, ‘looking back’. This establishes the inference that the past times is significant in the trajectory of the speaker. But the clue of the past ‘life’ is signified in the following sentence. The prepositional phrase, ‘in the midst of the storm’ indicates that the speaker has had an unpleasant situation that required condescension. the identity of condescender is structured in the compound sentence, using parallel nouns, ‘hope’, ‘peace’, ‘health’, ‘joy’ and ‘blessings’, while the performative act signifying condescension is ‘wish’, which is indexed to ‘hope’. The implication of this is to posit that hoping and wishing are

condescending and coping strategies when things are not what one expects as one grows older.

If na by resemble you know how many unknown brothers and sisters you go potentially get out there?

A man of 27years no suppose dey still pursue child support upandan na. If him don survive without him dad till 27yrs of **age** then him obviously no need the dad, if the dad no want am. He should sort himself out and face him front, not be chasing unverified papa wey no send am.

Plate 4.4: Nairaland post 002

Source¹

Trans: *A 27-years old man is not supposed to be on child support again, since he had survived that long without a father. If his father does not want him, then he should take care of himself, move on, and stop chasing a father who does not care about him.*

The excerpt above showcases national identity through the use of pidgin. Age is also considered as an indispensable condition for condescension, treating it as a performative concessional act. It is important to mention that social media are platforms for informal communication and different codes. In this case, the speaker has used the local Warri pidgin, marked with the slang, *wey no send am*, which implies unconcern, and marks the reason for condescension. The excerpt posits that age is premediated by growth, which must be progressive. For instance, a 27years old has grown from childhood to adulthood; thus, must not behave like a child. The speaker also ties condescension to survival, using the standard performative, and 'survive'. Survival itself is also a coping strategy that is connected to growing up. The speaker also used standard structures to mark survival and condescension. Among these are the adverb, 'obviously', the performative, 'sort out'. There are also non-

standard or piginised structures marking condescension, in this case, moving on. These include the performatives, ‘face front’, and ‘no send’. There is structural balance, in the text, created by the use of standard and piginised pronouns, ‘him’, and ‘am’, respectively.

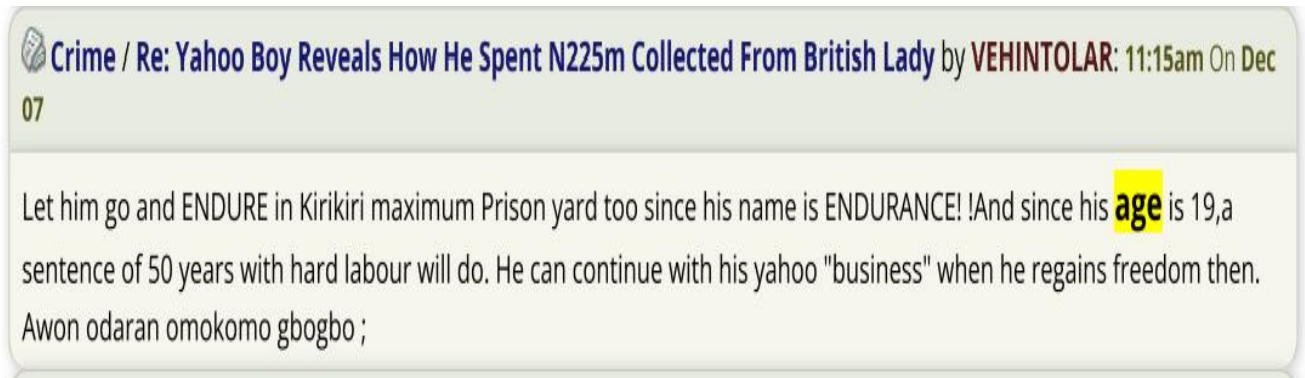


Plate 4.5: Nairaland post 003

Source³

Ethnic identity is portrayed in the above excerpt through code switching into Yoruba language by the use of ‘awon odaran omokomo gbogbo’. The speaker in the above excerpt structurally foregrounds the performative act of condescension. Drawing further attention to it, the condescender identity is personified, using the act of naming ‘endurance’. It is also capitalised for the purpose of emphasis. Performative acts enacting causes and effect are seen in the plate. The act of going, for instance, signify cause, which is coopted from the criminal act or offence that the referent has done, while the performative, ‘endure’ signifies the consequence, which is tantamount to condescending and suffering the consequence of the action. What the speaker implies in the excerpt is that people must take responsibility of their actions, whether good or bad. The speaker attributes condescension and punishment to the factor of age; if one is old enough to commit a crime, then one is old enough to suffer the consequence of the crime. In other words, condescension should not be a spontaneous action; it must be planned with every endeavour.

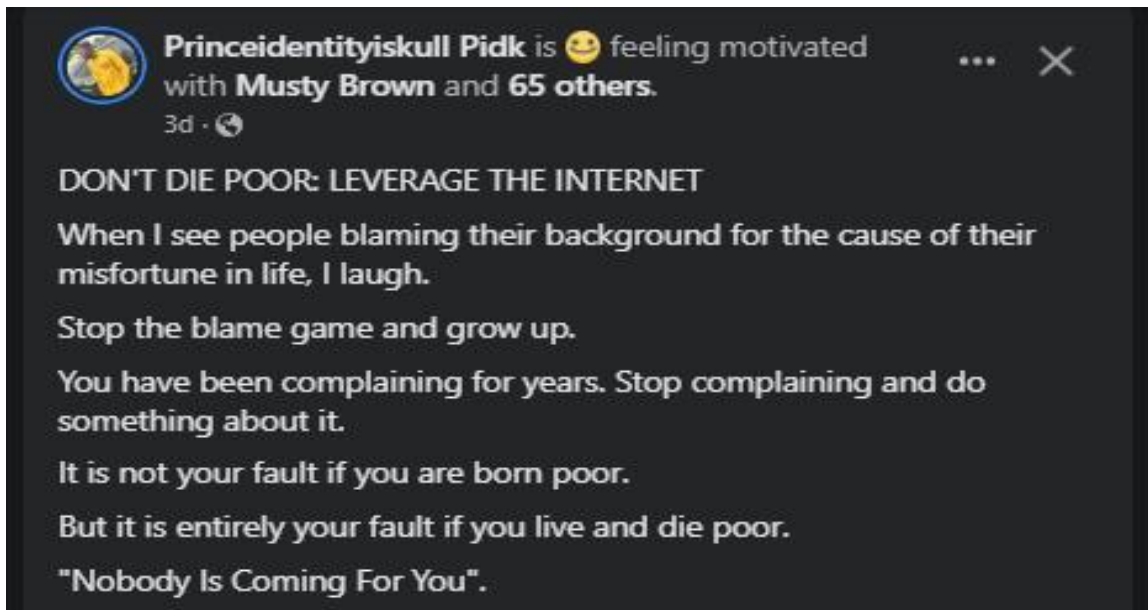


Plate 4.6: Facebook post 003

Source⁴

Gender identity is marked in plate 4.6 through onomastics that is the name of the speaker 'Prince identity skull Pidk'. It shows that speaker belongs to the male gender. The excerpt above also interrogates age as a factor in human transition from one stage to the other. There are two structural levels of condescension projected by the speaker. These are the level of staying and the second level is moving on. Those who condescend to stay are what the speaker refers to as engaging in the performative act of 'blaming' and 'complaining'. The speaker collocates condescension to 'misfortune', which he terms as a performative consequence. Age is indexed to 'years', and the performative act 'grow'. On the other hand, the act of moving on is performatively expressed, using 'stop', 'grow' and 'do'. There is structural parallelism in the acts of living and dying, treating them as sequential acts of condescension. The condescender identity here is interfaced with a demeaning status, that is being 'poor'. The speaker's structural approach in the excerpt is between instruction and evangelicalism; that is, trying to get one from being complacent (the first level of

condescension) to a state of activity, moving to change the situation (the second level of condescension).

4.2.1.2 The Progressor Identity

Certainly, age is a factor or condition that accelerates, not diminishes. In the same way, normatively, it is expected to contribute to one's development in life. Those that progress as a result of their progress in age are represented with the identity of 'progressor'. Many indices are used to index the progressor identity in Facebook and Nairaland posts and comments, such as success in endeavours, advancement, change of status, among others that are represented in the data.

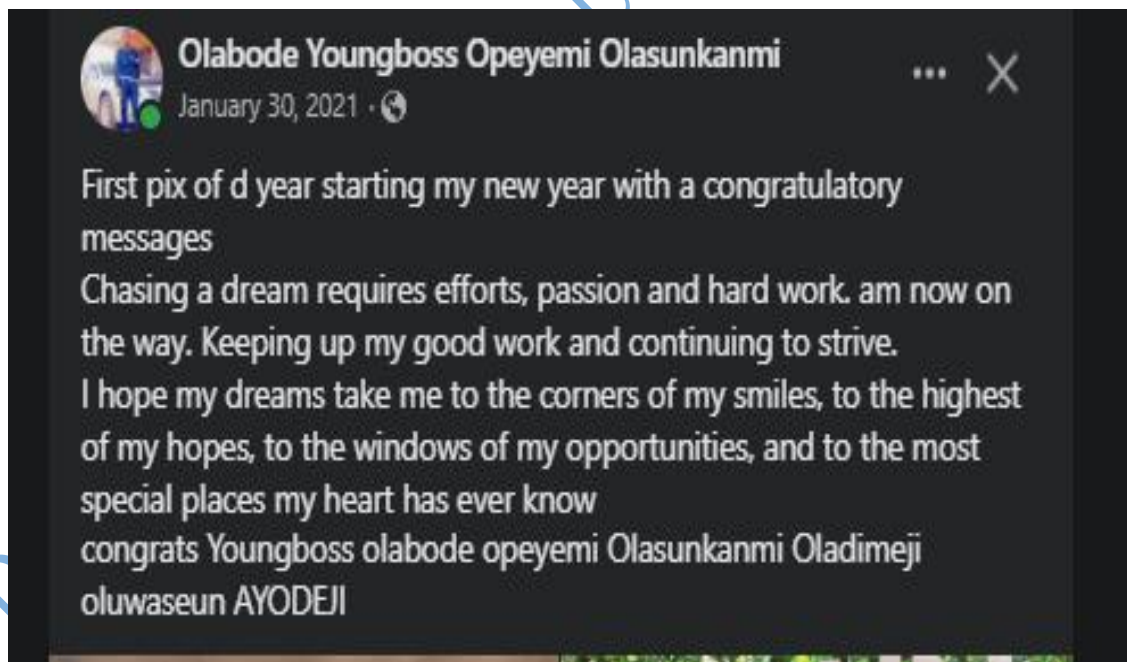


Plate 4.7: Facebook post 004

Source⁵

Plate 4.7 represents ethnic identity because of the name of the speaker ‘Olabode’ which is a Yoruba name. The above excerpt also represents the speaker as a ‘progressor’, in this case one who keeps moving on trying to achieve success. It begins by indexing success to progress, which comes with the performative act of exchanging ‘congratulatory messages.’ Progress is also linked to the act of crossing into ‘a new year’. The performative acts of progression in the plate include ‘chasing’, ‘keeping’ and ‘continuing’. However, making progress is portrayed in the ironic – connotative sense as striving, while it is associated with lexicographical structures that portray dignity of labour. These lexical resources are ‘good work’, ‘hard work’ and ‘effort’. The implication of this is that progress in life is not an easy task. It requires some of arduous effort and commitment. The speaker uses metaphor to describe the process and results of the progressor identity. The process is hoping and dreaming, while the results are ‘windows of opportunity’ and ‘special places.’ The same performative act is used to connect the process and results together, treating them as sequential events.

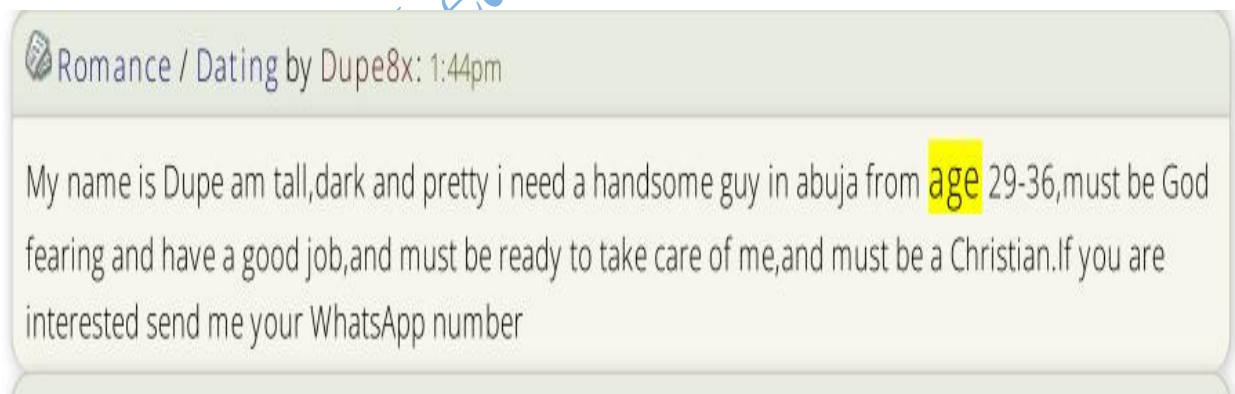
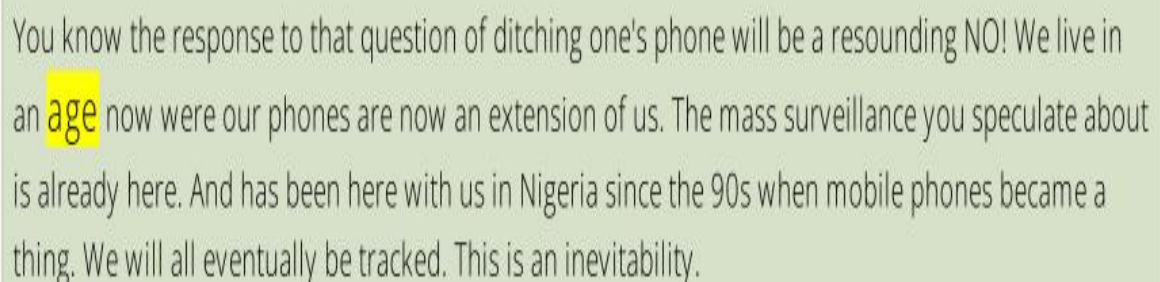


Plate 4.8: Nairaland post 004

Source⁶

The speaker in plate 4.8 combines the ethnic, gender, religious and national identity by the use of the name ‘ dupe’ from Yoruba tribe, the statement ‘I need a handsome guy’ to signify

that the speaker is actually a female,' must be God fearing' and a 'Christian' to show that the speaker is a Christian and lives in Abuja. In the excerpt above, the speaker ties progress in life to some other factors that are underlined by age and growth. First, the age range of progression or advancement is identified using cardinal adjectives '29-36'. The submission is relevant to the fact that this is the age of commencement of stability in one's growth, in the structural hierarchy. The speaker uses epistemic collocation as existential performative; the verb 'must be' which should be an epistemic modality of certainty, has been used to define responsibility. In other words, anyone within this age group, is expected to progress in the respective areas as a matter of responsibility. The performative of having and being is indexed to possession and attitude as markers of the progressor identity. The structure has parallelism in the post; the process of getting a job sequence to the ability to 'take care' of the speaker. She considers this to be conditions for readiness to start a relationship, while the latter, which is related to religiosity, is held with the performative of certainty.



You know the response to that question of ditching one's phone will be a resounding NO! We live in an age now where our phones are now an extension of us. The mass surveillance you speculate about is already here. And has been here with us in Nigeria since the 90s when mobile phones became a thing. We will all eventually be tracked. This is an inevitability.

Plate 4.9: Nairaland post 005

Source¹

The speaker in excerpt (9) uses 'Nigeria' to indicate national identity and structurally links age to be in sequence of time. In words, progression in terms of age is equated with changing times. The speaker uses existential performatives to signify the contrast between the changing

periods, on the one hand, which the period of phone communication, and the former period, on the other hand, which is the period with the development of phone communication. The speaker also uses the temporal, ‘now’, to strengthen the performative act of being, ‘are’, creating structural balance between the timeline: past and present. The temporal, ‘now’ implies a changing – progressive state; it also implies that there is a shift from what has been to what is in place at the material time, which is indicative of the representation of progressor identity.

The first mention of this garment was in the 16th century, when it was worn by sailors. They wore them to protect themselves from seawater and cold weather.
In the 20th century, this garment became popular among both men and women as an informal dress-wear attire.
In recent years, these garments have become popular among people of all **age** groups for casual wear.

Plate 4.10: Nairaland post 006

Source¹

The excerpt above reflects the age identity which is progressive as a result of changing time. Symbolically, the identity of progressor is tied first to the temporal indexes, ‘16th Century’, ‘20th century’, and ‘recent years’, which covertly represents the 21st century, following ordinal representations. These temporals are also indicators of age, as it applies to dispensations. Second, the progressor identity is indexed to ‘garment’; while the verb ‘to be’,

‘became’ and ‘have become’, in the existential and behavioural processes respectively, were used as performatives, to identify the state of progressive change from one dispensation to the other. There is cross indexation of the ‘age’ groups and the representation of identity. For instance, ‘men’, ‘women’, which are gender specific are indexed to ‘people’, which is the collective term. There is also indexation of the thematic – deictic centre, that is, ‘garment’. This is indexed to meronyms such as ‘dress-wear’, ‘attire’, and ‘casual wear’. There is the use of repetition, not only for structural effect, but to emphasise the significations tied to the use of ‘garment’. The three (3) generations represented in the excerpt have different signified use of the signifier, ‘garment’, that is, for cover, dress-wear and ‘casual wear’.

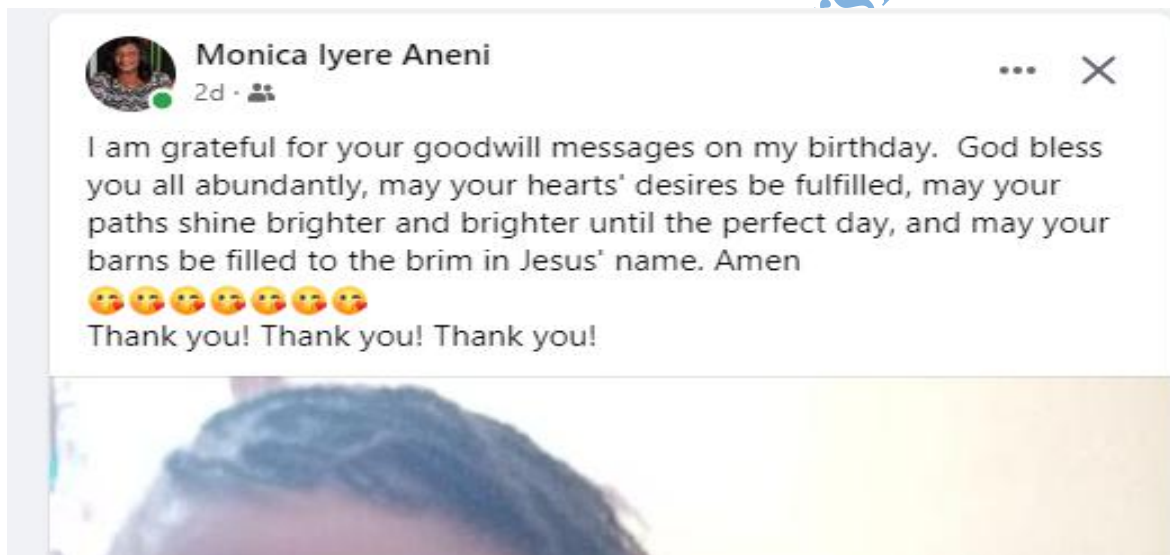


Plate 4.11: Facebook post 005

Source⁷

The symbolic factor indexing the representation identity in the plate is gender represented as ‘Monica’, religion represented as ‘...in Jesus name’ and age. Age overtly represented as ‘birthday’, which marks the meaning-relation in celebration. Birthdays are commemorated every year, marking, technically, age as progressor in its own right. However, the progressor identity is performatively metaphorized, using religious allusion. The verb ‘shine’ is parallel

to the comparative adjective, which overtly marks change in position that is symptomatic of progression from one state to another. The fact that it is repeated in the same way that is replicated in the bible where it was co-opted from shows emphasis that is placed in the identity. The representation culminates from the comparative to a superlative adjective, 'perfect'. Away from the representation of identity, the excerpt gives a glimpse of human relationship, especially how success or progress in age is commemorated. Birthday celebrations are graced with series of 'goodwill' messages, which are also wishes. In the same vein, goodwill and wishes are for better years, advancements, and prosperity, among other things that marks progress as represented, metaphorically in the last sentence, with emphasis on 'barn'. A collocating performative verb, 'filled', is used, while the nominal 'brim' is used as a parallel marker for indicating both quality and quantity of the content of the 'barn'.

4.2.1.3 The Regressor Identity

Not everyone believes or hold the opinion that age brings with it progress. The implication of this is that at a certain point in one's development, and, most especially, state of health, is bound to regress rather than progress. There are some people who maintain this as ideological stance; they tend to use performatives acts that compare between times, situations and conditions, in relation to what they experience in life.



Plate 4.12: Facebook post 006

Source⁸

In the above excerpts ethnic identity is represented through the speaker's name 'Olumide Ayinla'. As pointed out in the preamble of this section, one of the symbolic factors that condition retrogression in human life is disease, in this case, 'cancer'. The speaker adopts technical terminologies (registers) both to set a background and foreground the thematic focus, underscoring 'cancer' as a crucial case. These registers include, 'drugs', 'chemotherapy', and 'medicine', which synonymous to drug. Negative performative acts of retrogression are portrayed in the use of conjunction, 'but', and the negator, 'not', which is clitised with the auxiliary verb, 'was', while the performative, 'recovering' implicates, at the initial time, a state of stagnation. This is contrasting to the goal of taking 'drugs', and 'medicine', which is to enhance progress in one's condition of health. The speaker, in the second utterance, categorically index retrogression, pointing to the possibility of 'death', as a parallel consequence of 'cancer' disease. In other words, there is symbolically tagging or association of 'cancer' to mortality or fatality, and consistent financial death, which is

performatively indicated by ‘dying’. Retrogression is marked as tangible in both factors, ‘life’ and ‘business’ because both have propensity to grow and, in this case, retrogress, as the case may be.

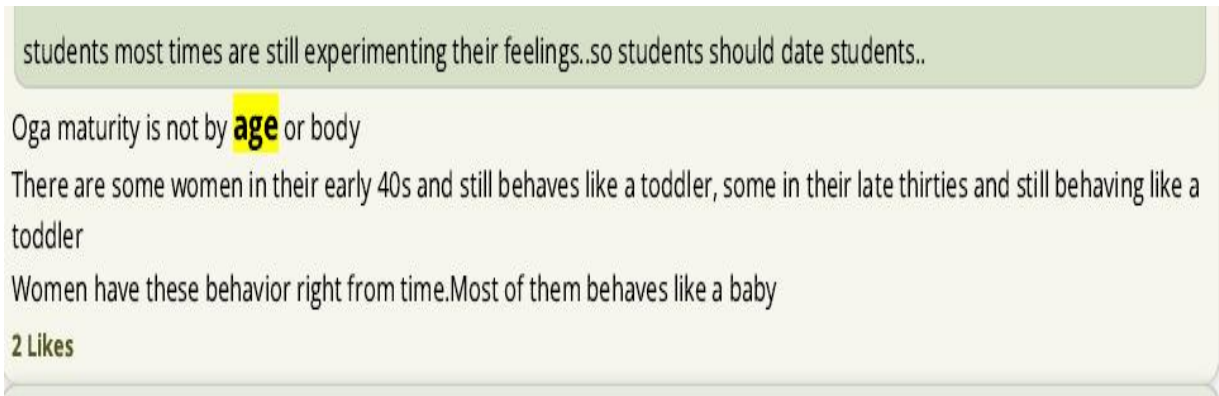


Plate 4.14: Nairaland post 007

Source¹

Plate 4.14 portrays ethnic identity and also employed identity crossing by using the word ‘oga’, this speaker seems to understand the ideology of men. The speaker above also counters ideological claim that age is associated with growth. Hence, rather than progress, which is overtly marked in a one-to-one relationship with age, as explicated in the previous section, the utterance implies retrogression, using symbolic contrast between ‘women’ and ‘toddler’ or ‘baby’, with the latter directly implying retardation, not in terms of age, which is already accounted for the excerpt with the ordinal, ‘40s’ and ‘thirties’, but in terms of the status, maturity, behaviour or responsibilities. Even while the regressor identity is generalised, performative verb is used to categorise the condition being represented. The verb, ‘behaves’, which is also repeated in the second summative utterance, foregrounds that the speaker is referring to retrogression in terms of behaviour. It is obvious, using the third person point of view, marked by the pronoun, ‘their’, which is basically non-inclusive, that the speaker is male, and though he does not generalise, as implied in the indefinite pronoun, ‘some’, has a

form of gender bias against the female gender, it is obvious that this is an opinion that forms part of his identity, with respect to dealing with the female gender. There is also the marking of age, using temporal ‘time’, and contrast established by way of similitude in the simile ‘like’.

Drew13:

defending is more hectic dunce 🏆 and he even scored a goal Making him tally with your ewu

How many strikers have u seen playing or starting for teams at 38?? U only see that with defenders ... chielini, Bonucci , pepe , Dani Alves , Thiago silva , all played or play for country at that **age** , but u can't mention strikers at same **age** that play in the highest level at that **age** .. it simply tells u that its difficult as a striker compared to a defender...

Plate 4.15: Nairaland post 008

Source¹

Ethnic identity is marked by the word ‘ewu; from Igbo tribe meaning goat. The question of strength and agility is connected to age. The speaker here uses analogical sequence, which aligns with the theme of the post that is sport. Evidently, there is turn relevance established by the performative act, ‘defending’, which is qualified using the adjective ‘hectic’. In the same vein, this is to justify the need for strength. Registers like ‘strikers’, ‘teams’, ‘defenders’ are used to justify the context, apart from the use of analogy, that is, mentioning players that fit into the sport. In connection with the above, the speaker uses contrast, juxtaposing between the measure of strength of strikers and defenders. However, the argument still subsists that the performance of sportsmen dwindle – retrogresses as they grow older. This is why ‘age’ has become the centre focus of the utterance, and the marker of the identity in the

excerpt. The active performative verbs used are collocational, for instance, there is ‘playing’ and ‘starting’, while pun is used in ‘played’ and ‘play’.

He said today the country has only 35 percent of employment out of over 200 million youths lamenting that youths of their productive **age** are doing nothing which is resulting to banditry, killing and other crisis in the country .

Plate 4.16: Nairaland post 009

Source¹

The above excerpt spreads the regressor mentality to address major challenges in the Nigerian sociological milieu. The speaker’s worry is that there is a growing population of youths, who are expectedly qualified as ‘productive’. The expression indexes the social relativism that age, particularly with respect to youth, means productivity. However, the reality is that the social support systems to enhance such productivity has continued to dwindle. The act of regressing is marked by the performative verb ‘resulting’, which implies consequences that are subsequently mentioned, using parallelism. Sequential order is portrayed in the parallel actions, ‘banditry’, ‘killing’ and ‘crises’; the latter two could be considered as hyponyms of the former. In other words, banditry, is backgrounded as the cause of retrogression in the ‘country’, which has subsequently led to ‘killing’, among other obvious ‘crises’, that are the manifestations of the retrogressive act.



A lady friend told me about her fiancé and I told her to forget the relationship. She cried and cried that day. She went ahead to marry him but they barely did 6 years before the pack crumbled. 😞

Plate 4.17: Facebook post 007

Source⁸

The name 'Olumide Ayinla' in plate 4.17 represent ethnic identity. The above excerpt also shows that retrogression in terms of relationship. The regressor identity is predictive, and it is performed by the performative act of warning, which is indexed by the performative, 'forget'. The implication is that human relationships have overt symptomatic traits of prediction of bliss or lament. The state of retrogression is performatively demonstrated in the verb 'cried', and subsequently 'crumbled'. Age is also represented as a factor of retrogression, as represented in the adverbial 'barely 6 years.' This means that age, that is time, is the real test of a good and lasting relationship, and a progressive one must survive the test of time. The excerpt also project gender identity. The speaker's intention is to signify that marital relationships are a critical decision that requires careful consideration and consultation. The latter (consultation) is represented with the verbal performative process, 'told... about', while the former (consideration) is implied in the advisory act, with repetition of the performative, 'told'. Having given the advice, the speaker expects the referent to give careful consideration to avoid the predicted retrogressive acts of crying and crumbling in the eventual failure of the relationship.



Praise Ajayi is with Adero A Ifeoluwa and Priceless Princess.

2d · 🌐



Hi Desire!

You know how life can be Dramatic? Every chapter unfolding with its own drama!
Some days, Joy, a lot of Joy, a few days had it's fair share of not so unpleasant events!

But yes! Here you are!
With another year in view!

Plate 18: Facebook post 008

Source⁹



Oshim Phinidy David is with Ani Simon Teska and 35 others.

February 28 at 10:19 AM · 🌐



Amist my unpleasant mood, let me sieze a little time to do the needful.

Happy birthday to my Angel in human nature, the Chair person of Oshiri DC, Mrs Ojiugo Chioma Oshim Phinidy.

May God grant you good health, long life, more money in your account in Jesus name. Amen....

See more

Plate 4.19: Facebook 009

Source¹⁰

The ethnic identity is represented by the name 'Oshim' while religious identity is marked by '...in JESUS NAME. Amen' speaker in the above excerpt marks retrogression as the second side of the coin in life's trajectory. There essence is to signify the vicissitude of life, such that with the unfold of 'time', which is iconic of age, life presents good, which is represented with the adjective, 'joy', and bad, which is indicated by the adjective 'unpleasant'. In other words, the speaker sees retrogression as a part of 'life', metaphorizing it in both adjectival and nominal forms, 'dramatic' and 'drama' respectively. The performative act, 'unfolding' sees

retrogression as an imperative; in other words, there is nothing one can do about it, or it just happen spontaneously as a part of life. Symbolically, the utterance alludes to William Shakespeare’s description of ‘life’. However, in the version of the speaker in plate 18, it is not man that does the playing, rather it is life that plays the act, bring to man different versions of realism, whether ‘joy’ and unpleasant conditions, which is the focus of this subsection. The nominal group, ‘a lot of joy’ is used to consciously create an imbalance between the good and bad, but this conversational maxim of quantity signifies that the speaker is merely consoling themselves in the face of ‘unpleasant events.’ This consolatory performative act, in spite of a retrogressing situation is marked in plate 19, where the speaker has chosen to celebrate the birthday, in and ‘unpleasant mood’.

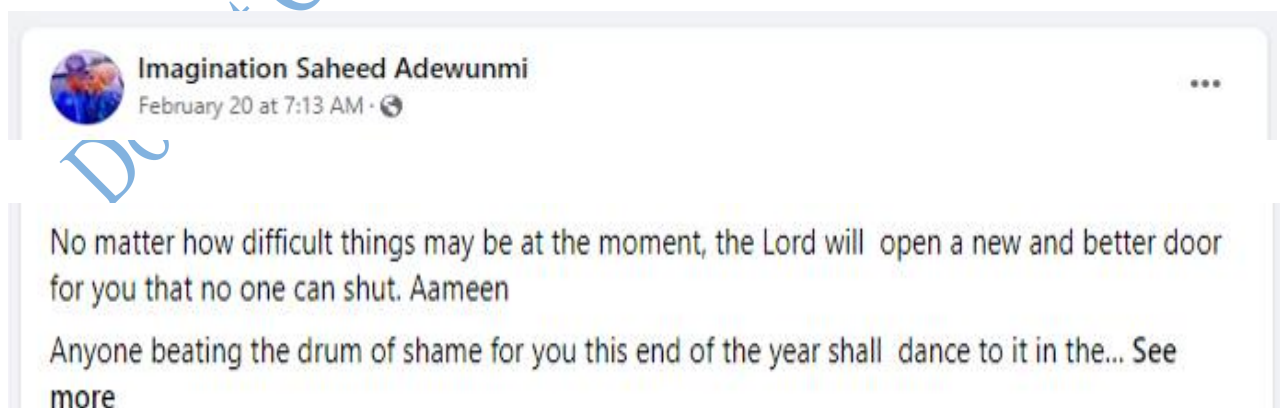


Plate 4.20: Facebook post 010

Source¹¹

The speaker in plate (20) represents religious identity to divinity, making reference to ‘the Lord’ and ‘Aameen’. To the speaker, the adjectival ‘difficult things,’ and the epistemic modality of possibility are used performatively to describe the action of retrogression. The use of modality also shows vicissitude; in other words, it gives the condition of occurring or not occurring. As explained earlier, retrogression is represented as the second side of progression or advancement. Putting it more directly, the speaker looks to divinity as the settler, and human beings, represented by the indefinite pronoun, ‘anyone’, can be the cause of retrogressive tendency. This is conveyed by the metaphor ‘beating the drum of shame’. This implies one making others sad for the sake of pleasing oneself. One has the capacity of making others happy or sad. On the other hand, the fact that one can condition oneself for progressive action is represented in another metaphor, in the earlier paragraph, using the performative act of ‘opening’, in this case, not just ‘doors’, but ‘with a modifier - adjective, ‘new’. The utterance fundamentally suggests one of the familiar features of humans, which is religion. This is bidirectionally connected to age, especially in Facebook discourses. Birthday celebrations are opportunistic events to speak to the intervention of God in retrogressive circumstances.

4.2.1.4 The Stabiliser Identity

For so many people, the thing about age and growing up is to arrive at some measure of stability. In other words, stability is a sequence after making a form of progress. For some Facebook and Nairaland interactants, stability implies or is conditioned by factors like comfort that, is a position of being able to afford certain necessities of life, or convenience, that is, a condition where one does not need to worry about anything. These are epistemically or relatively represented through performative acts in various chats and comments.

GloriousGbola:

Too many of these late stage liberals are ironically binary minded. Our way or nothing. They refuse to come to terms with the fact that so many things are a spectrum. Very few liberals my age can make any sense out of they/them non binary / genderfluid and the alpbabeth mafia capturing more letters than a sesame street episode.

Plate 4.20: Nairaland 010

Source¹²

Plate 4.20 portrays ethnic identity through the use of Yoruba name 'Gbola'. The excerpt above presents stability in the form of a negative ideological stance. This is represented in the adverb 'ironically', categorically portrays the reverse of the 'liberal' identity. For instance, the liberalist identity is progressive and socially minded. In other words, anything opposed to this is conservative and a measure of stability. These are portrayed by epistemic adverbs and adjectives for instance, in the earlier part of the statement, the speaker says that stability happens after some time of development, using the adjective 'late' and the nominal: 'stage', while subsequently in the same sentence, there is the use of the adjective 'minded'. The excerpt affirms that there is polarity between in-group identities. This is presented in referential pronouns, and epistemic adjectives. For instance, the inclusive pronoun: 'our' is referential to one section of the liberal in-group, while the exclusive pronouns, 'they', 'them' are referential to the other section of the in-group with a different identity. On the other hand, the bidirectional adjectives: 'binary and non-binary' reinforce the two shades of identity, the progressor and stabiliser identities. Infinitival verbs, 'to come', 'to make' and performative verb, 'refuse' and modal verbs, 'can' and 'are', are also used to reinforce the shift in identity

from the progressor to the stabiliser. Indefinite pronouns, with modulation and intensity, ‘so many’, ‘too many’ and ‘very few’ are used to mark out the participants – actors.

mancoconut:

Lagos are jobless and unproductive, it's not the same in Anambra, every youth of productive age across Igboland especially Anambra is already planning a business idea or opening up a shop rather than wait on a useless government on jobs that they might never get after graduation. I was in Aguleri

Plate 4.21: Nairaland post 011

Source¹

Ethnic identity is represented in the above excerpt with the use of words like ‘Igboland’ and ‘Anambra’. The excerpt above defines scopes of stability. For instance, there are two factors that determine human stability, which are career engagement, which is represented as job search, and vocation, which is nominalised as ‘business.’ The speaker uses collocation and indirectness to establish the background for ‘youth’ stability. ‘Jobless’ and ‘unproductive’ are used as collocating terms. In implication, they are sequential and consequential terms. Joblessness is synonymous, and sequential to unproductivity, while being unproductive can be taken to be consequential of joblessness. Relevance is established between ‘youth’ and productivity, while reference is used in ‘youth’ and ‘age’, marking the underlying condition for the representation of identity. Performative verbs: ‘planning’ and ‘opening’, which are represented in the progressive tense, are used to indicate the factors or condition for stability. This is parallel, in a negative sense, to ‘wait’, and it is disjointed in terms of its tense form to create a variance between stability, defined by the ability to secure a job or engage in a

comfortable business, on the one hand, and instability, marked by the job search or inability to get one, especially after ‘graduation’. Getting a job and starting a business are connected, performatively, to the same epistemic goal, which is to attain economic and social stability.

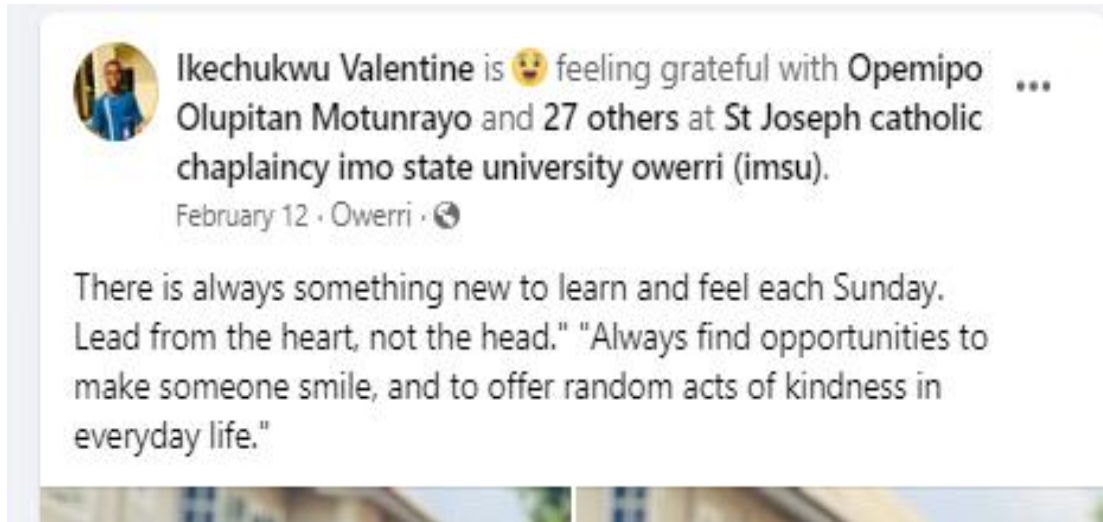


Plate 4.22: Facebook post 011

Source¹³

Ethnic identity and religious identity is represented in the above excerpts using the name ‘Kelechukwu’ and ‘Sunday’ respectively. Emotional stability is also represented, in plate 22, in different structures as an indispensable condition for human beings. Emotional acts are referenced and indexed, using performative acts, ‘learn’, ‘feel’, ‘lead’, and the nominal, ‘heart’. The prepositional phrase, set up by ‘from’ sets up the logical actor, ‘heart’. The heart regulates every performative act connected to learning, feeling and leading. The negation: ‘not’ in the compound prepositional phrase is used for distancing, the issues of the ‘heart’ from the ‘head’. The speaker uses perlocutionary acts to demonstrate the situations represented in the opening sentence. These are portrayed using collocating infinitival performative acts ‘to make’ and ‘to offer’. Stability in the expression is conditioned by the factor of time, which is a feature of ‘age’. The inference is that stability is conditioned by

smiling and showing ‘kindness.’ and both are conditioned by ‘opportunity’. These are factors that determine one’s emotional stability in ‘everyday life’. The speaker uses modular adverbs: ‘always’, and ‘random’, to indicate frequency. These are used to show that the feeling – identity of stability is not constant, reinforcing also that they are conditions acts. Acts of emotion are connected to individuals, using the indefinite pronoun, that is, ‘someone’ and the metonymy, ‘life’, which is at the centre of human existence. The inference here is that the feeling of stability is life-related and conditioned. It is the will to maintain life that gets ‘someone’ to act in any way or maintain any form of identity or ideology.



Plate 4.23: Facebook post 012

Source¹⁴

From the excerpt the name ‘Mc Mallam Danlami’ reveals the factor of ethnicity and gender, revealing that the speaker is from the northern part of Nigeria and also belongs to the male

gender. The above banner post from Facebook adopts foregrounding as a strategy to signify stability as a process. In other words, it does not occur momentarily, but it is motivated by certain factors, including divinity, which is referred as indispensable. The speaker uses performative acts, in the progressive tense, ‘praying and asking’, to demonstrate importunacy. These are collocating actions in relation to, not only the context of religiosity, but also the condition for attaining to the ‘position’, which is nominalised as the point of social and economic stability. Consequently, stability is metaphorised as a ‘position’ and figurised using alliteration and assonance. ‘Able and afford’ alliterate, while anything and everything assonate. Non-particular or indefinite pronouns, anything’, everything’ and ‘anyone’. Capitalisation is used to define the scope of stability; the inference is that stability is equated with comfort, and this is explained as a state of having no constraint or want, and signified by ‘anything’, and having what one needs at one’s beck and call, as implied in ‘everything’. The behavioural and cognitive performative acts are entailed in the ‘having’ and ‘wanting’ respectively.



Plate 4.23: Facebook post 013

Source¹⁴

The ethnic identity is marked by the name 'Mc Mallam Danlami'. The above excerpt is explicit of both psychological and emotional stability, being that it concerns issues of relationships. The speaker, obviously the same as the previous, uses capital letters to foreground the performative indicators of physical and emotional stability. It is noteworthy that what defines stability in the subject matter is balance of two alternatives, described using the adjective 'easy' and committal, 'shame' and 'pride'. The speaker uses proximal locations, established by the indicative pronoun, 'there', and the existential performative, acts in sequential structures. The performative acts of stability in the excerpt include 'willing' and the existence, 'are still', indicating certainty. There is indexation of 'shame' to instability and 'pride' to 'stability' in relation to emotional and psychological balance – stability.

4.2.2 Research Question Two: What is the nexus between the constructed identities and the forms of language used in relation to the context of discourse engagement in the two online communities?

This research question examined the nexus between the constructed identities and the forms of language used in relation to the context of discourse engagement in the two online communities.

Language is used to construct identity through the use of names, choice of words, subject of their discussions, synonyms, Nigerian pidgin, codes, collocational acts, alliteration, assonance, simile, metaphor and repetition. There is also the use of capitalization to foreground markers of identity.

Religion, Ethnicity and Nationality related IRS in FB and NL Post

Issues of ethnicity, religion and nationality have raised so many controversies and multiplicity of identity representations. These identities include opportunists, using religion or ethnic affiliation to arrive at some form of gains, chauvinist, optimist, pessimist, divisive and nationalist. In other words, issues related to these identities are underpinned or reinforced by the contexts of religiosity or ethnicity, at the lower ebb, which is more populated in the data, and nationality in the broader sense, though not the popular representation in the data.

4.2.2.1 The Opportunist/Entitlement Identity

Religion, ethnicity, and nationality often bequeath some levels of privileges, which may transcend to expressions or manifestations of opportunism - rights. Both ethnicity and nationality are tantamount to indigeneity, while religion, wholly relies on affiliation. These factors symbolically account for why people lay claim to possession, heritage, and other entitlements. In the same vein, these factors can account for denial of privileges to people who do not share the same ethnic, religious, and nationalist identity or ideology. There are many instances, symbolically portrayed or represented in the data, most of which arise from social and political contexts of situation.

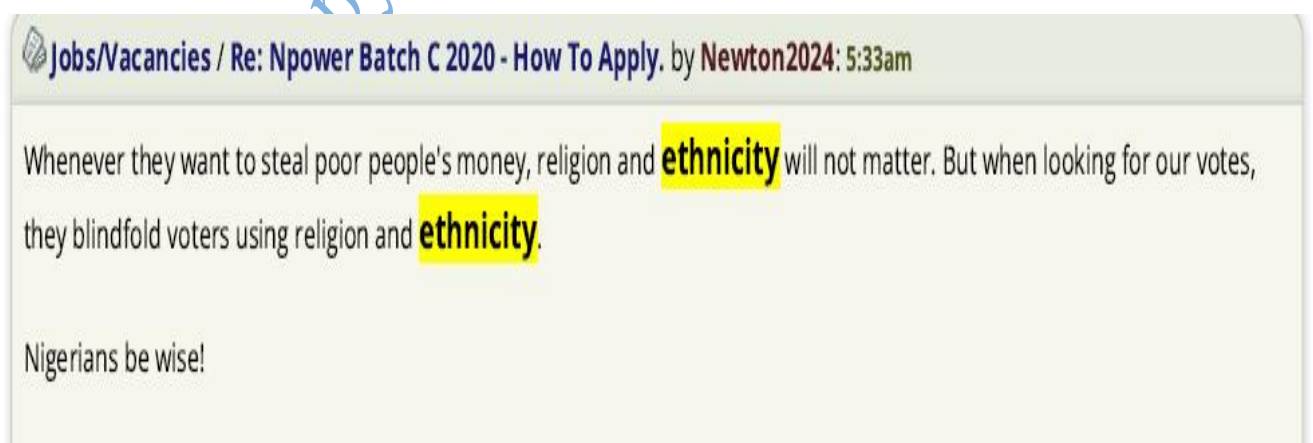


Plate 4.24: Nairaland post 012

Source¹⁵

In the above plate, 'ethnicity' and 'religion' is used as the basis for laying claim to political mandate. This is denotatively represented and referenced in the excerpt. In this case, both factors are equated performatively as determinants of the identity of opportunist indexed to political agents, and other negligible identities, with respect to common interest. These performative acts informing the identity are 'looking for', 'using', which are collocating in terms of tense, and 'blindfold', which is used, symbolically, as a closure, that is a condition of one-sided perspective or identity. In other words, it implies that election – voting and the political structure entails the practice of religious and ethnic affiliation. Both ethnicity and religion are used as the selling point of campaigns, because people are highly ethnic or religious, and these inform their choice or decision to support the candidates, who have made reference to them for their opportunistic gains.

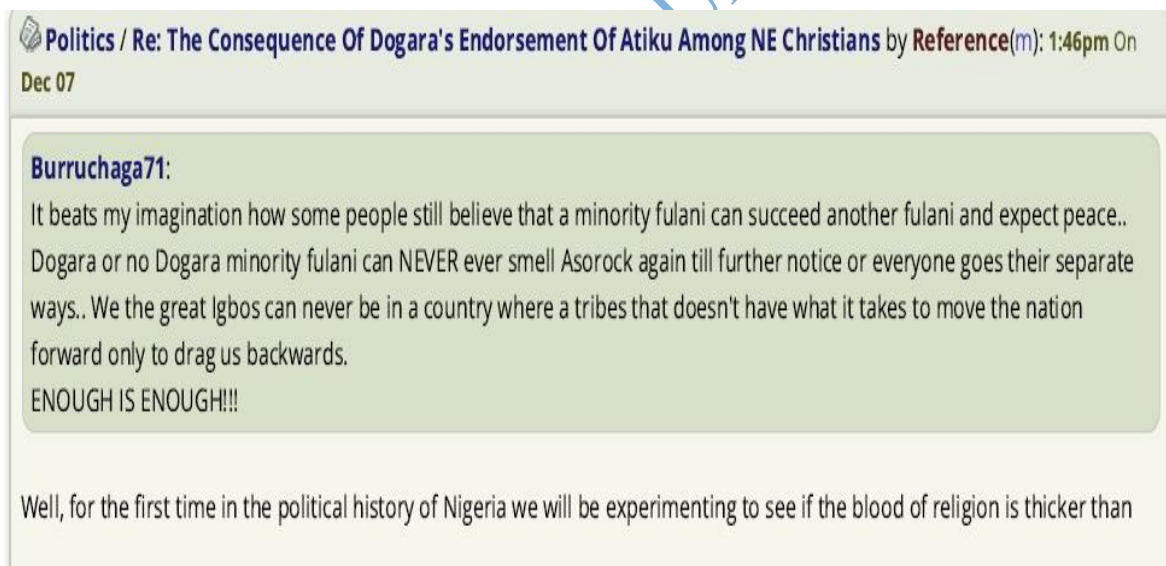


Plate 4.25: Nairaland post 013

Source¹⁶

The above plate is focused on the entitlement identity; in this case, it reviews claim to power. There are two ethnic groups referenced in the plate, 'Fulani', and 'Igbo'. One is considered as a 'minority', while the other, 'Igbo' is, inferentially, represented as 'majority', using

conceptual antonym. This is broadly referenced to the fact that there are three ethnic groups that lay claim to the entitlement, ‘majority’ in Nigeria, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo. Entitlement is performatively portrayed, using adverbial negation and the epistemic modality of certainty. Saying that the group ‘can never ever again’, among other things, means opportunism. It implies that the group has been opportune to get power, despite not being entitled to it. The same modality is used subsequently in the last sentence to refer to the larger picture and the disintegration in terms of ethnic sentiments that is the Igbos, being deprived and the Fulani being rejected by the other ethnic group on the basis of entitlement. The speaker uses antithetical reference to the negations established in the utterance. These are ‘forward, backward’, does and ‘doesn’t’.



Plate 4.26: Facebook post 014

Source¹⁴

The above Facebook post puts at parity the factors of ethnicity and religiosity, especially a opportunistic factors of the Nigerian states. These are reinforced using capitalisation, drawing attention to the context of politics. In other words, ethnic and religious actions are linked when it comes to Nigerian or state politics. There is presupposition in the fact that ‘violence’ is a result of political entitlement. On the other hand, it goes to show that violence, which

dominantly features in Nigerian Politics is caused by ethnic and religious affiliations. Temporal is used to indicate performative relevance, in this case of the ‘election’, which is used as the performative act. Subsequently, the speaker uses performative inference to show the prevalence of ethnic and religious entitlement. The performative act, gathering information, in the last sentence, indicates that social media interaction is used to project or solidify ethnic and religious sentiments that are basis for expressing entitlement or opportunism.

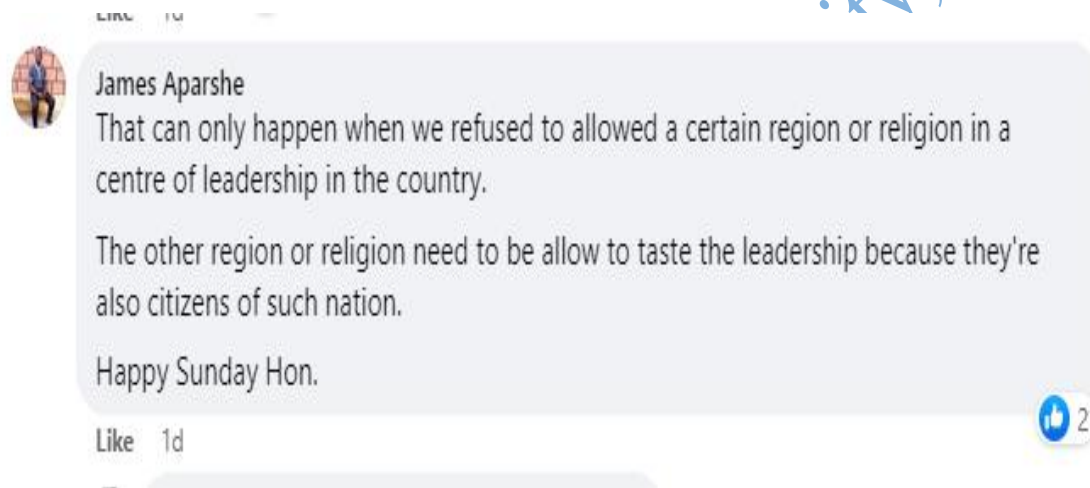


Plate 4.27: Facebook post 015

Source¹⁷

The above excerpt uses synonym ‘region’, to refer to ethnicity, in contrast to religion. The fact is that both are indexed to ‘country’. This is used to foreground that both regional – ethnic and religious affiliation. The second utterance shows the exploitation of ethnicity and religion for entitlement. The performative act of entitlement is represented in a metaphor, referring to ‘leadership’ with the gustatory imagery of ‘taste’. In the same vein, leadership comes with opportunism; while one region or religion has opportunistic claim to power, the other is deprived. There is conceptual proximity established to show polarity of ethnic

affiliation, using infinite modifier 'other', and nominal 'citizens.' The latter is used performatively to establish affiliations.

4.2.2.2 Ethnic and Religious Chauvinism

The chauvinist's identity, which is connected to a feeling of supremacy, is often attached to ethnicity and religion. This is the feeling of being superior to others. Many conflicts are caused by a feeling that one's religions or ethnic group is better or superior to the other. This also amounts to suppression of people's identity because religion and ethnicity or nationality shape identity. In other instances, religious or ethnic chauvinism may arise from privileges that are granted to some ethnic or religious groups over others.

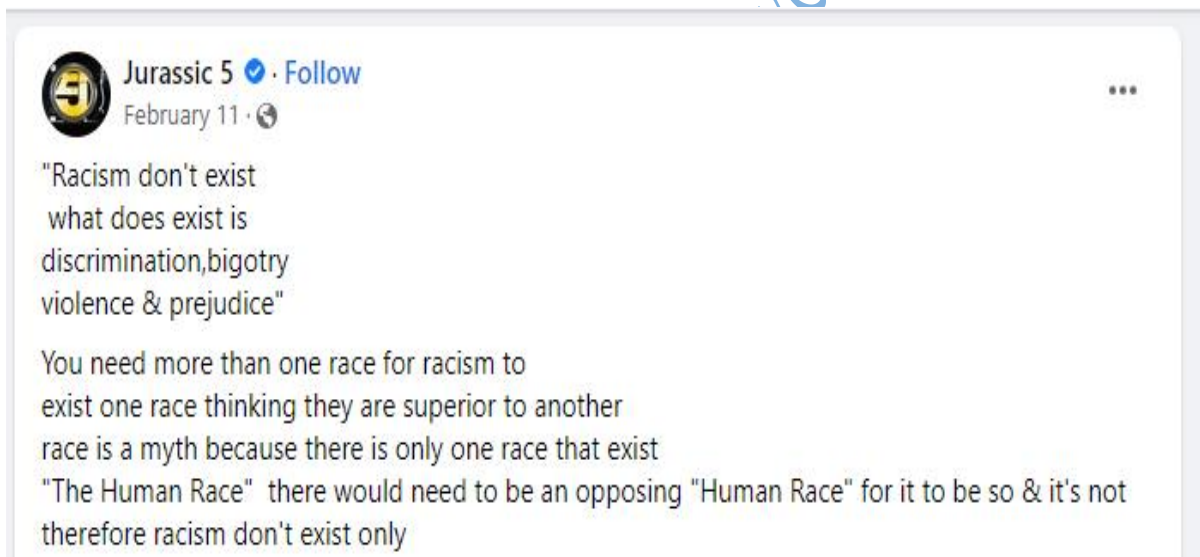


Plate 4.28: Facebook post 016

Source¹

Chauvinism is always motivated by polarity of ethnic and religious affiliation. In plate 28, ethnicity is represented using synonym that is, the nominal, 'racism'. This exists in polarity because it performatively marks acts of profiling and weighing ethnic affiliations. The concept of racism also performatively, shows supremacy of one race or ethnic group to the

other. This is portrayed using nominals such as ‘discrimination,’ ‘bigotry,’ and ‘prejudice’. There is unusual parallelism in the inclusion of ‘violence’ to the list, which is rather the consequence or effect of ethnic chauvinism and suppression. The speaker makes use of irony, using negative performative acts like ‘not’ ‘opposing’ and ‘don’t’. It is ironic to say that ethnic and religious chauvinism or segregation does not exist, when at the initial utterance, they have identified consequential acts resulting from racial – ethnic segregation. Chauvinism is marked explicitly by the adjective ‘superior’, and the existential act is used to show that the speaker is referring to a phenomenon that exists in socio-cultural settings.

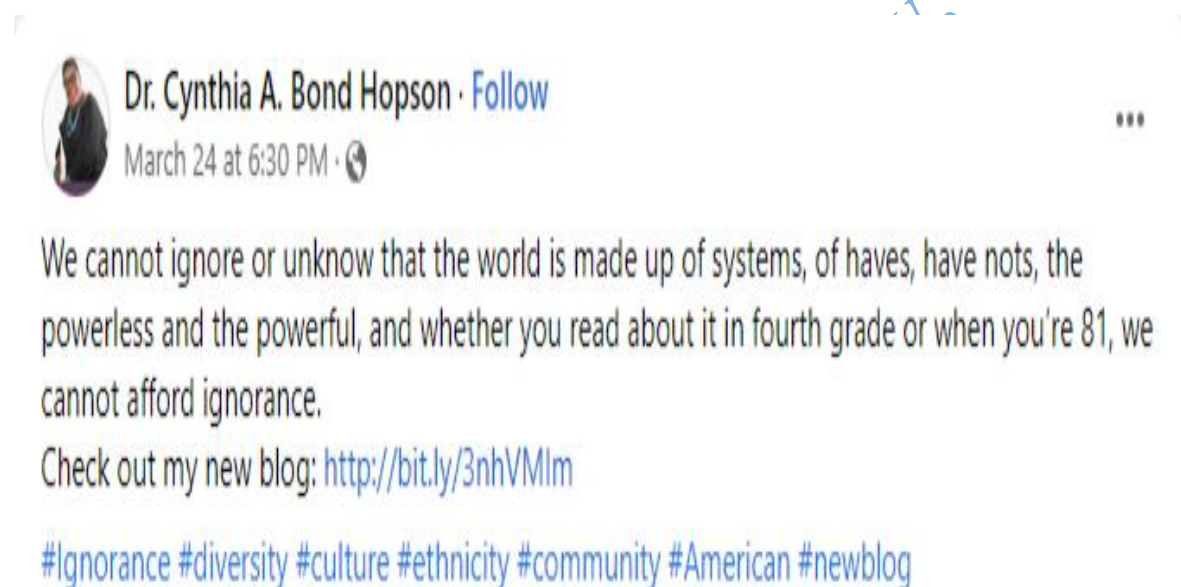


Plate 4.29: Facebook post 017

Source¹⁸

The polarity that shapes the identity of chauvinist is further expressed in the above excerpt. The speaker, first, justifies sectional identity by the nominal ‘systems.’ In other words, systems presuppose everything related to class, ethnicity or certain privileges, which are performatively exemplified in the excerpt using antithetical balance. For every positive term, the speaker introduces a corresponding negative term, for instance, ‘haves’ and ‘have nots,’

‘powerless’ and ‘powerful’. The positive terms indicate some form of ‘superiority’, relating to the economic and political context. These tend to be the dominant factors that condition ethnic chauvinism. The speaker implicitly performs the acts of differentiation, indicating conspicuously that there is gross imbalance in the ‘system.’

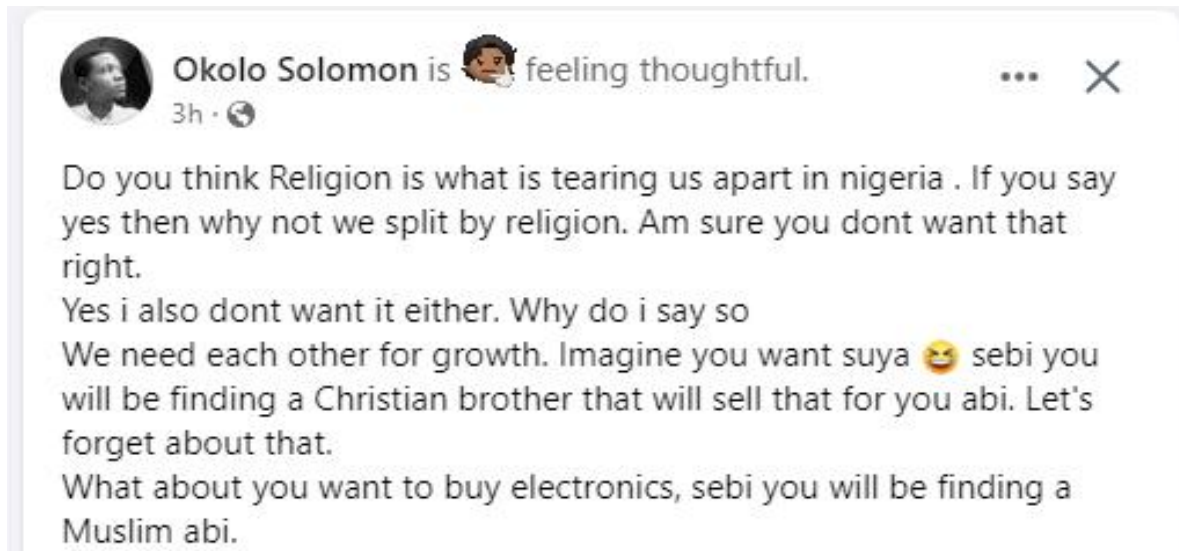


Plate 4.30: Facebook post 018

Source¹⁹

The plate above excerpt is centered on the polarity of religion, and the fact that there is an epistemic – a clear link between religion and separation, which is performatively represented as ‘tearing’. This is a physical act which is collocated with ‘split’, which is a performative of separation orchestrated by religious pluralism. The two dominant religious identities, ‘Christian’ and ‘Muslim’ are indexed in the utterance. Religious chauvinism is presented using the nominal ‘brother’, which is used to express religious association or affiliation. In other words, one that does not share the same religion, would not be identified as ‘brother’, hence the possibility of being relegated or segregated. The fact that religion is chauvinistic and a cause for separation is reflected in the least utterance, using the adjective ‘differences.’ The speaker also uses indirectness to signify the possibility of religious chauvinism, in this

case making reference the need for mutual association, using performative acts that are connected to indispensable human transactions. The inference is to show that religious chauvinism is transactional and can be averted.

I believe the issue of **ethnicity** in 2023 far supercede that of Religion.
After a Northern Muslim Fulani man has ruled Nigeria for 8 years, Uncle Dele Momodu believes it's fair for another Northern Muslim Fulani man to take the baton.
That's why I'm totally in support of Asiwaju/Shettima Tickets.
All I see is the **ethnicity** and not the religion, Yoruba/Kanuri is what I will vote for, we must stop these endless circle of Fulanis installing themselves in Aso Rock since 1999 at the detriment of all other Ethnic tribes in the country.
There are over 200 tribes in Nigeria, why should we only work with 3-4 ethnic groups.
God bless Nigeria...

Plenty rubbish

Politics / Re: Chatham House: APC 'Window-Dressing' Tinubu - Dele Momodu by Ogbuefi2020: 5:21pm On Dec 06

Plate 4.31: Nairaland post 014

Source²⁰

The speaker in plate 31 overtly expresses themselves as an ethnic chauvinist. The speaker is chauvinistic about ethnicity. First, the speaker dissociates ethnicity from religion, prioritising religion. The performative act 'supersede' to stipulate supremacy of ethnic affiliation. The performative act shows that the speaker's action is reactionary. It is a reaction to the same ethnic chauvinistic act by another ethnic group 'Fulani' who is at close rival or contention for power. The speaker uses ordinals to either enumerate ethnic groups, the ones that are treated as inferior, and those that are 'superior', that is 'supersede', or as temporal, which are indicative of time. The speaker creates an imbalance in the enumerated ethnic groups, the contrast is that among 'over 200 ethnic groups, 3-4 are marked with chauvinist's identity. This disparity is created using adjectives like 'endless' and 'detriment'. Ethnicity is represented in the synonym, tribe. The speaker, in spite of dissociating ethnicity, pairs it with

religion, which is another form of ethno-religious profiling, which is also chauvinistic. The speaker identifies subgroup identity to performatively polarise every ethnic or religious group, from the superior to the inferior. For instance, the speaker mentions ‘Northern Muslim Fulani’, which means that there is Northern Christian Fulani, among other groups which are presupposed. This also gives the inference that even within groups, there are chauvinistic tendencies.

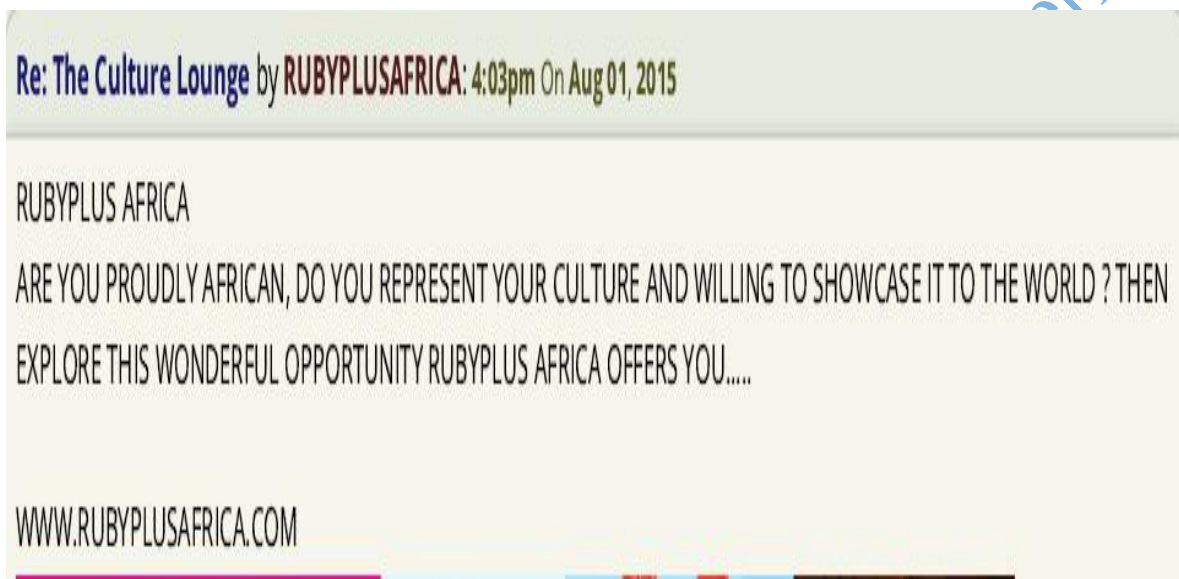


Plate 4.32: Nairaland post 015

Source²¹

Ethnic and cultural chauvinism is not limited, in description, to a negative implication as discussed in the previous sections. There are positive sides to chauvinism as symbolised rhetorically in plate 32. In this case, the speaker uses the performative acts in form of rhetorical questions, evidently not requiring verbal response, but performative action. The interrogative sentence is a closed yes/no question, which points to bidirectional act, that is, it is either one loves one's culture or one does not. The use of synonyms to show ethnicity or nationality is evident. 'African' and 'culture' are both synonymous, in this sense, to demonstrate ethnic affiliation. However, both culture and ethnicity are the demonstration of

‘Africanness’, that is, African Heritage. Performative expressive acts are used in the excerpt to show elicited commitment to ethnicity. These verbs include, ‘represent’, ‘willing and ‘explore’. These verbs require some form of commitment descriptive of the identity of a chauvinist. This goes on to explicate that love for one’s culture – ethnic affiliation, which is chauvinistic, requires one’s commitment or expressive effort.

4.2.2.3 The Optimist Identity

Optimism is not a rare representation in a religiously or an ethnically polarised environment. The optimist identity implies saying good things about ethnic and religious groups irrespective of their status. Just as no one agrees that their religion or culture is inferior to another, one is often expected to justify it by giving it compliments. On the other hand, one is not supposed to castigate other ethnic groups or religions; in other words, one is expected to see the good or positive side of every culture, ethnic group or religion.

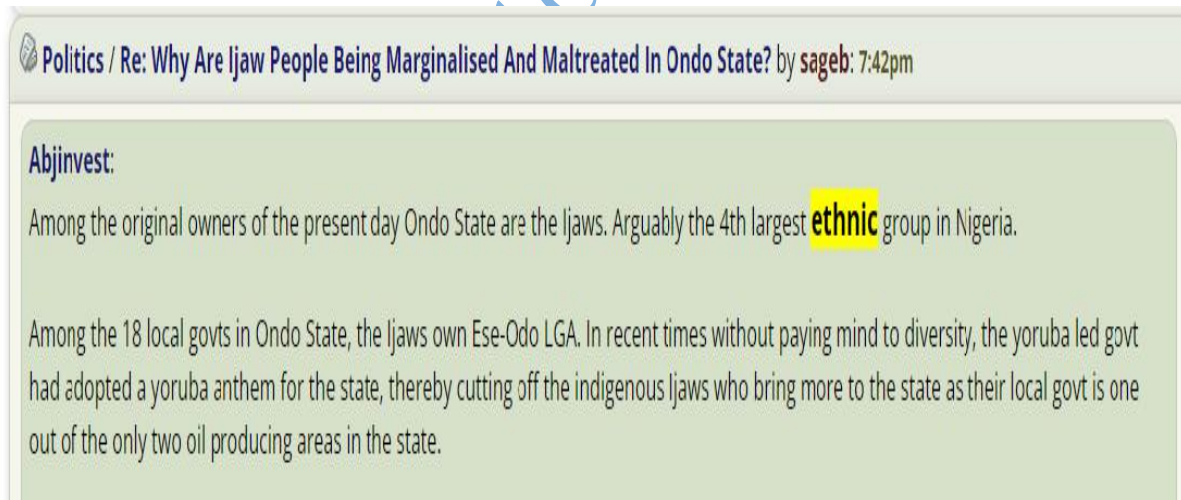


Plate 33: Nairaland post 016

Source²²

The speaker in plate 32 is optimistic about the ‘Ijaws’, making reference, performatively, to history, relevance and size, which are essential in validating the importance of any ethnic

group or culture. First, the significance of any ethnic group is traced to its historical background. This is marked by temporal nominals – ‘present day’, ‘recent times,’ while there is existential performative act in ‘are’ the quality adjective, original, is used to signify supremacy, comparatively showing that the tribe has been in existence for long. Saying that they are the ‘owners’ represents them as the dominant ethnic group in the state. In terms of size, they are portrayed to be dominant. The inference in saying that they are the ‘4th largest’ is that the ethnic group is compared with the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria, Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa. This speaks highly of the Ijaw people. The adverb ‘arguably’ is used to establish the basis for comparing the ethnic group with the major ones. In the second utterance, the speaker moves from the macro level of comparison to the micro level, which is within the states. The speaker enumerates the local government areas in ‘Ondo state’ to signify the Bicultural nature of the state, that is, it is made up of both Yorubas and Ijaws. In the framework of the utterance, every ethnic group is diverse, but essential in their own rights. At the latter part of the expression, the speaker raises another significant quality about the ethnic group, which is the economic importance of the Ijaw people, this time connecting back to the initial line of comparison at the macro level. Being an oil producing ethnic group, the optimism is that they are existentially important in the landscape of Nigeria.

IGALA:THE PLIGHT OF IGALA PEOPLE IN ANAMBRA STATE BY VICTOR O EKELE.

Igala is an **ethnic** group In Nigeria with over ten million population as of now. The home of the Igala people is situated east of the river Niger and Benue confluence and astride the Niger.

The Igala people shares boundaries with the Igbo's(ibo) people at the south, Idoma at the east, Benis people at the west and Epira people at the north.

The Igala people are found in Kogi state with 55 percent of kogi state population and also found in Anambra state, Enugu state, Edo state and Delta state.

Plate 4.34: Nairaland post 017

Source²³

The above plate expresses optimism about the relevance or significance of 'Igala' ethnic group, despite being addressed as a minority group. The significance of a language can be measured by the 'population' of indigenes and the spread, areas where members can be traced or found. Ethnicity is denotatively stated in the opening sentence, while reference is used to situate the ethnic group within the macrostructure, which is Nigeria, and then the microstructures, 'Niger' and 'Benue'. Relevance of the ethnic group is also juxtaposed with other microstructures, from different regions of the country. Performative references are made to areas in the 'south', 'east' and 'north' to represent positive popularity, while cardinal enumerator '55' is used for the purpose of generalisation, in other words, it is used to enumerate the dominance of the ethnic group in the state. Existential and behavioural acts are used by the speaker to state the fact that the ethnic group is still relevance. For instance, the behaviour act, 'are found', is repeated, while the existential act, 'shares' is used for the purpose of equating the tribe with other dominant ones. Nominal reference is made, mostly to 'people', to signify, performatively, that what makes an ethnic group is the people. Without people, there would not be ethnicity or religion cannot exist because both concepts are practiced by people.

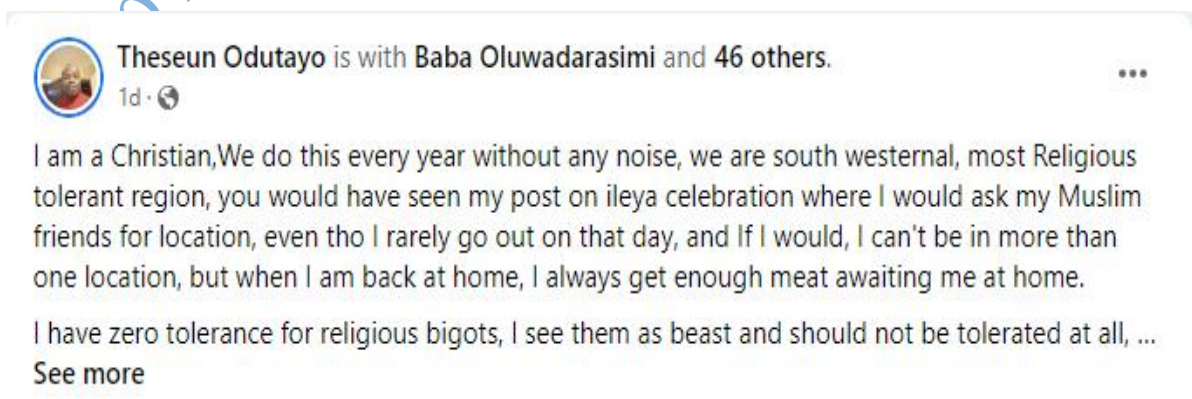


Plate 4.35: Facebook post 019

Source²⁴

The moment people are quick to identify themselves with a religion or ethnic group, they are sure to say some elevating things about it. This template is followed in the opening sentence of the above excerpt. The speaker first identifies themselves with a circular 'religion', referring to Christianity. Following that, there is the use of descriptive performative adjective, 'tolerant' to imply the absence of violence or conflict that is descriptive of most religious fanatics. The inference is that the speaker is dissociating their religion from such vices. The comparative – intensifier adjective 'most' to optimally signify difference between the two religious affiliations mentioned. The speaker dominantly uses epistemic modality of possibility and obligation performatively. The reason for this is to elevate the religion above the other. These modal performatives are also used to make recommendations of the acts that mark positive representation of religion, which is also descriptive of the act of tolerance.

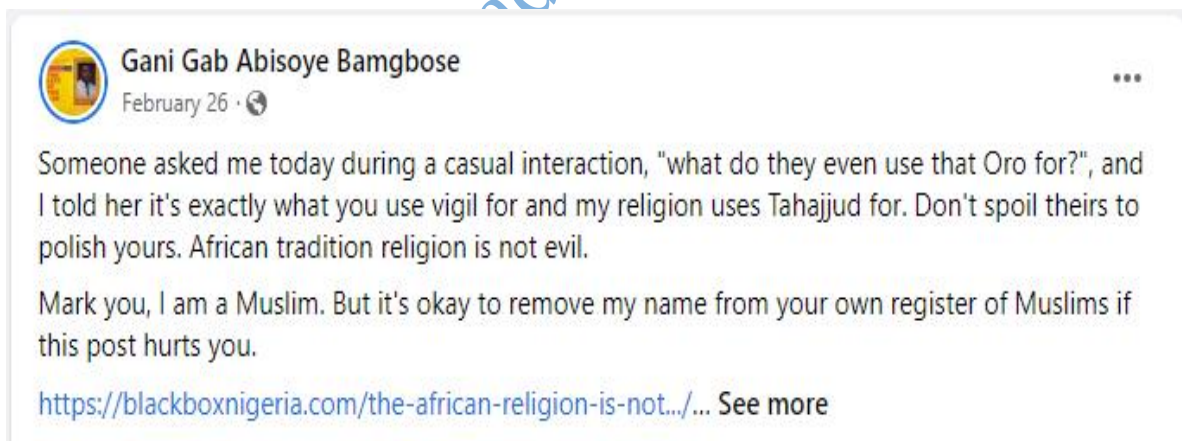


Plate 4.36: Facebook 020

Source²⁵

In the above excerpt, the speaker uses the act of equating to give a positively compliment or an optimistic remark about the traditional religion, comparing it to their religion. The

implication is that one is first an African, and therefore, belongs to a traditional religion, before contemporary. This also means, implicitly, that the other religions, Christianity and Islam are foreign religions, while the symbolic performative act of traditional religion should be equated with that of other religions. These performatives are conveyed in referential nominal, that is, 'Oro', 'vigil' and 'Tahajjud'. These are indexed to the three major religions, Christianity, 'Islam' and 'African tradition religion'. The spear explicitly conveys the reason for religious optimism in the expression. This is mutual coexistence that is, not undermining one's religion of ethnicity for the sake of elevating one's own. In this case, religious optimism means more than tolerance; it means accepting what is practiced in other religions.

4.2.2.4 The Pessimist Identity

The pessimist identity is demonstrated by acts of resentment, hatred, rejection and ignorant condemnation of the ethnicity and religion of self and others. There are people who have a monolithic mindset and because of this, are so chauvinistic of their religion or ethnic affiliation that they reject the existence and importance of others. Thus, they performatively reflect acts or give inferences to the fact that they are intolerant of other people's religious and cultural heritage. There are foregrounded representations of ethnic and religious pessimists in Facebook and Nairaland posts, some of which are discussed below.

Politics / Re: Petition Against Bola Tinubu By Bolaji Akinyemi by snowwhyte607: 1:40pm

gasparsciotta:
Figment of IPOB's imagination

Prof Bolaji Akinyemi is a refined gentleman and a diplomat per excellence

So because he's a refined gentleman, he shouldn't say the truth anymore?

Some of you are just so pathetic, seeing everything through **ethnic** jingoism! SMH

1 Like

Plate 4.37: Nairaland post 018

Source²⁶

The above excerpt uses a synonymous term, performatively to portray ethnic pessimism. This is the word 'jingoism', learning on aggressive tendencies for one in defense of one's ethnic affiliation or religion as against the vagrant rejection of others. The jingoist is completely pessimistic about other people's faith or belief or association. In other words, any ethnicity or region that is not theirs is dispensable, including those affiliated with these groups. The speaker represents, performatively, the actions related to 'jingoism' using both verbal and cognitive performative process – acts, using the verbs 'say' and 'seeing' respectively. The inference is that religious or ethnic perversion or jingoism prevents perpetrators from seeing things from others' perspective, or even saying the truth about others' belief'. 'Truth' is referenced, performatively, as the basis for weighing ethnic jingoism. For instance, one who is jingoism consciously obfuscate the truth of one's ethnic group or religion and others, using falsehood and alternative 'truth'.



Politics / Re: Apostle Chika Onuzo Issues Decree, Cancels Tinubu's Presidency. Video. by plaindealer: 5:47am

In life, we attribute everything to God, we say God is omnipotent, we say God is everywhere and whatever happens, is the will of God and what God prescribed, but because of our own personal, religious, tribal, and **ethnic** hypocrisy, all of a sudden, what we don't like is not the work of God, we say God had nothing to with it, we arrogate God's and power to ourselves, we push God to the side and replace Omnipotent God with our own god and interpret God's will as rubbish and not the work of God just because we are sour losers.

This is how the Church, pastors, and Christians rubbish God and God's will in Nigeria, they fabricate and peddle lies and fake prophecies, and they mislead their flocks with lies, religious bigotry, intolerance, and division.

Christianity in Nigeria today looks more like a dangerous cult where supposedly holy men radicalized and indoctrinate church members to further their evil and divisive ways

5 Likes

Excerpt 4.38: Nairaland post 019

Source²⁷

The above excerpt represents the pessimistic identity using ‘hypocrisy’. This is a strong form of personal pessimism, in this case, with conscious knowledge of what is supposedly right. The speaker wraps all fundamental basis of polarisation ‘religious’, ‘tribal’ and ‘ethnic’ into one description for the purpose of legitimisation of the act of pessimism, although the speaker’s focus is on religious pessimism. This is represented, using the negative term ‘cult’. This is to performatively give it a negative – pessimistic picture that would either aggrieve the affiliate or discourage others. Hence, the speaker uses strong performatives like ‘radicalised’, and ‘indoctrinate’ as negative markers in correspondence to the adjectives ‘evil’ and ‘divisive’, which are the parameters for pessimism about the religion being referenced.

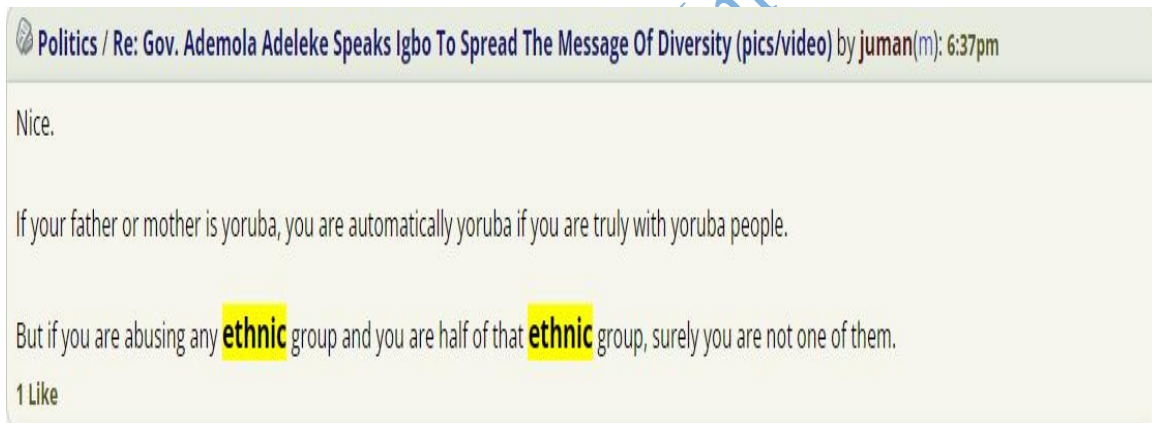


Plate 4.39: Nairaland post 020

Source²⁸

The above excerpt shows conditions for ethnic partisanship or membership. First is the issue of belongingness, which is represented with the performative of birth. In other words, the speaker presupposes that by virtue of being born to an ethnic group, that person ‘automatically’ can claim the heritage. The use of the non-particular signifier ‘or’, showing alternative shows that mixed parentage does not amount to non-ethnicity, but dual-ethnicity of

the child. The reason for stating this can be seen in the statement implicitly. The implication is that people are discriminated against on the basis of mixed origin. Ethnic pessimism is evident in the performative ‘abusing’, and the existential performative ‘are’ and the negative ‘are not’ are used to signify ethnic affiliation, which is another basis for not only profiling but also ethnic subversion by way of abusive or pessimistic comments. The speaker uses condition – modality of certainty, headed by ‘if’ and the adverb ‘truly’ at the initial statement to indicate the fact that nobody should be compelled, either by way of heritage of coercive pessimism, to affiliate with any ethnic majority or minority group.

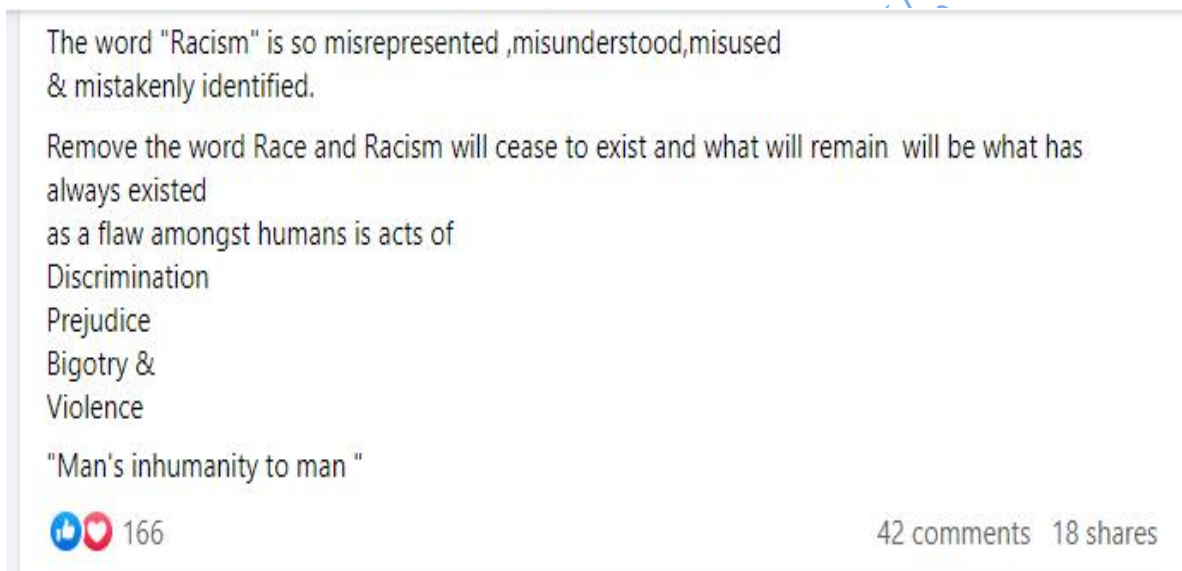


Plate 4.40: Facebook post 021

Source¹

The above excerpt presents a glossary of different registers or terms that define pessimism about other people’s ethnic group or religion. These glossaries are ‘discrimination’, ‘prejudice’, ‘bigotry’ and ‘violence’. These are laden with performative acts. For instance, discrimination can be activated by both verbal and performative acts, while prejudice and bigotry are seen as close synonyms in the ethnic pessimism is also represented using the nominal ‘inhumanity’, which implies the absence of humane, logic, reason and every good

quality that marks cultural, ethnic and religious profiling which are identified with people that castigate other people's ethnic or religion.

4.2.2.5 The Divisive Identity

Ethnicity and religion have recently been tagged as factors that trigger or enhance division among people living in a religious and ethnically polarised nation. Narrowing down to the Nigerian situation, ethnicity and religion have maintained critical positions, and are at the centre of every problem or conflict that have continued to dominate the country. People with divisive identity use ethnicity and religion as a tool to divide people; they also maintain perspectives that are divisive about other religions or even the concepts of religion or ethnicity.



Plate 4.41: Facebook 022

Source¹⁹

The above plate represents the divisive identity as an inherent phenomenon in Nigeria, which is indexed explicitly in the excerpt. The speaker uses both implicit and explicit indexes in nominal forms to show performative acts. For instance, in the opening sentence, the predicative – performative act ‘what is tearing’, shows the performance of division. This shows implicitly, as people ‘think’ that Nigerians are divided along the factors of ‘religion’, which is explicit in the plate, and ethnicity, which is inferred in the use of the nominal ‘suya’, co-opted from the Hausa lexicon, and ‘electronics’, which is inferred as the popular trade of the Southeasterners. The speaker also posits the performative act of profiling, naming Christians and Muslim, which are seen as two sides of the divide of the religious coin in Nigeria. The symbolic significations of division in the plate are the performatives, ‘tearing’, ‘split’, the adverb, ‘apart’ and the non-particular pronoun ‘either’, which performatively entails two optional entities, but requires adoption of only one. The use of rhetorical questions is a conscious attempt of the speaker to only presuppose, allowing the hearer to infer and relate the performative acts of division presupposed.

Lagos is working and Nigeria is forging ahead.

The combine forces of **ethnic** sentimentalists, treasonous media journalists, Religious partitioner , social-media validation craving yeyebrities, hateful souls and ignorant Endsarz kids; can never stop the shine.

Plate 4.42: Nairaland post 021

Source¹

The plate above first justifies performative acts leading to other performatives that are connected to divisive identity. The speaker posits that divisive cultural identity is caused by ‘ethnic sentiment’. The nominal performative act ‘combine forces’ shows that it is part of a

whole. Also, this means that division exists in a macro-microstructure, having its own superstructure. It is marked denotatively, using the synonym ‘partitioner’, while acts related to it are profiled subsequently. It is explicit that the speaker does not share the same group identity with the referent in the text. Hence, the speaker resorts to name-calling to copiously mark his divisive identity. Two group identity divides are identified, using coinages ‘yeyebrities’ for celebrities, and ‘Endsarz kids’ for the youth identity that stood their ground to protest against police brutality. The speaker demonstrates his personal sentiment, using negative performative acts – descriptions for the other group identities in the plate. The speaker refers to celebrities as ‘validation’ cravers, and the youths as ‘hateful’.

searchng4love:

Addressed to “the Igbo People”, the statement claimed to “sincerely apologise for allowing a toxic political banner advert which said: ‘Lagos can never be run from Anambra; go and vote’ to run on Nairaland for several hours on Wednesday, March 15, 2023.” It described the advertisement as part of “an ethnically **divisive** political campaign aimed at securing Lagos State for the ruling party by instilling fear in Yoruba people, making them believe that Igbo people intended to ‘take over’ Lagos State”.

Plate 4.43: Nairaland post 022

Source¹

The above plate ties the divisive identity, performatively, to political schemes. The inference is that division is used as a weapon politically to sway voters. The speaker engages in profiling, stating the two contentious ethnic groups in the spatial index ‘Lagos’ mentioned at around the temporal ‘Wednesday March 15 2023’ stated in the excerpt. Ethnic division is denotatively – explicitly mentioned in the passage, in the second utterance. It is indexed to ‘politics and ‘campaign’, which implies that it is motivated by personal interest, in this case, of the political agent. The speaker, however, uses irony, saying that the reason is to secure

Lagos, which is a little vague. What is true is that, performatively, it is not ethnic division that secures the state; on the other hand, ethnic division performs the act of fueling conflict and insecurity, as intertextually seen in events that preceded the Nigerian election at the period indexed. This is represented by performative adjective ‘fear’ and the performative verb ‘take over’.

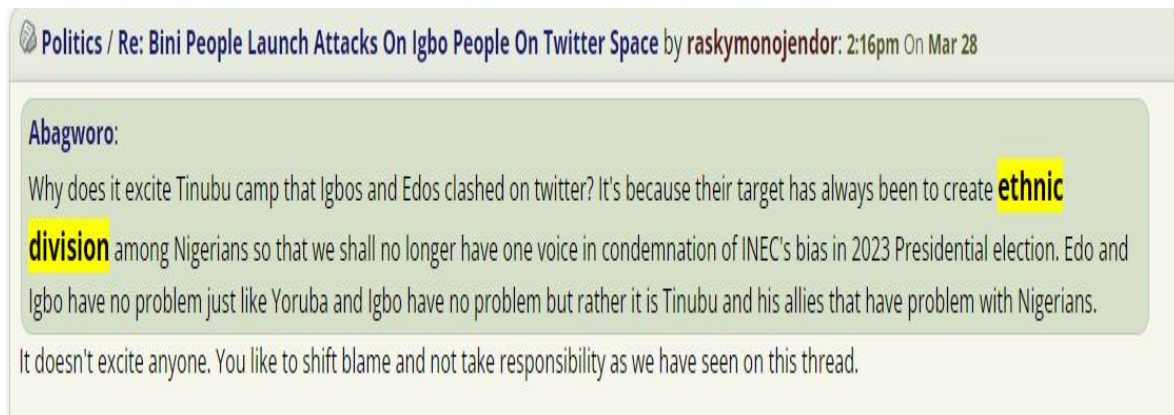


Plate 4.44: Nairaland post 023

Source²⁹

Plate 4.44 represents the consequences of the divisive identity to nations, using Nigeria, in the macro structure, and ‘Igbos’, ‘Yoruba’ and ‘Edos’, at the microstructure. The speaker, in the same manner as the previous data, links the divisive identity to political agents, and the fact that it is aimed at achieving self and political will. The speaker goes to the extent of naming a political agent, accusing him performatively as one that incites divisive ideas when it comes to securing his own political base. The essence, using self-profiling, is to signify the pettiness of both political agents and their followers. Politicians will do anything for power, including dividing people along culture, ethnic and religious lines, while their followers can do unsolicited divisive things to give politicians their mandate. The speaker performatively identifies group divisive identity, saying that it is possible for a group to be in unity with one

group, and be in discord or disunity with another. This is represented with the performative adjective ‘problem’.

4.2.2.6 Ethnic Liberalist Identity

The liberalist identity is hinged on acceptance of others’ ethnic and religious affiliation. This is maintaining an open mind, accepting the peculiarities of other religions and ethnic groups. To the in-group of the liberalists, ethnicity and religion is a leveler, rather than a divider, and hardly discriminate on the basis of both factors. In this case, religion is not considered when relating to people because such individuals show tendencies of religious and ethnic neutrality.

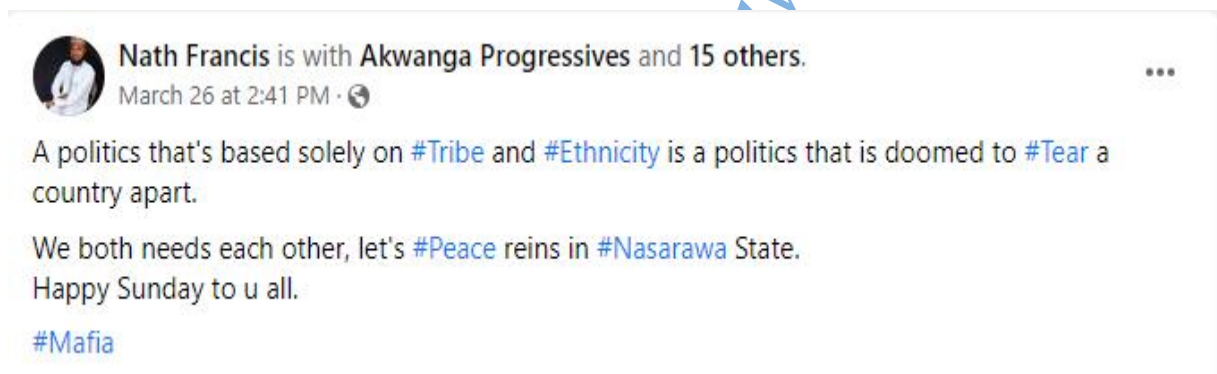
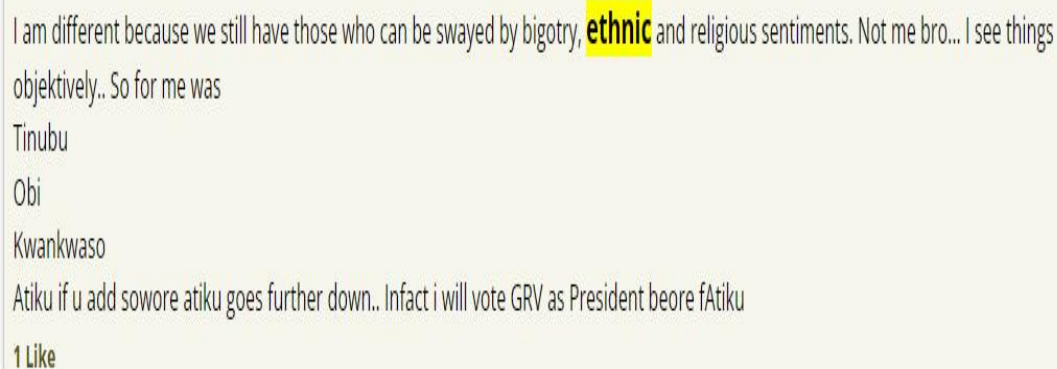


Plate 4.45: Facebook post 023

Source³⁰

Plate 4.45 reveals the mental picture – frame of the identity of a liberal. This is conveyed in the latter part of the plate. The inclusive personal pronoun, ‘we’ is used to mark collectivism, which imply belongingness to the same side. The inference is that regardless of ethnicity, which is also portrayed by the synonym, ‘tribe’, people should treat others as belonging to one group or family in collocation with country. The speaker identifies two sides, using the ordinal ‘both’, which gives a religious undertone to the post, seeing that there are two

dominant religious groups in consistent rivalry in the context represented. The essence of being together is performatively represented in two structures, using the verb ‘needs’, and a behavioural process of letting ‘peace’ to rein. The choice of ‘need’ represents a higher form of necessity that is a performative modality of obligation. This is also paralleled to the need for ‘peace’, which is also a basic necessity. The liberalist’s perspective is to see peace and working together as obligatory.



I am different because we still have those who can be swayed by bigotry, ethnic and religious sentiments. Not me bro... I see things objectively.. So for me was
Tinubu
Obi
Kwankwaso
Atiku if u add sowore atiku goes further down.. Infact i will vote GRV as President beore fAtiku
1 Like

Plate 4.46: Nairaland post 024

Source¹

Plate 4.46 has a contrasting feature which is the use of exclusive personal pronoun ‘I’ for the purpose of isolating themselves from a general, ‘we’, which is a perspective or position of ‘ethnic and religious sentiment’ held by many. The liberalist on the other hand, has a contrasting position, which is marked using the adjective, ‘different’ performatively, to mark a conscious attempt employed by the speaker to segregate or differentiate their identity from that of a bigot, which is the antonym liberal. The speaker characteristically uses character indexation that is person indexes to foreground ethnic affiliations; the persons listed at the latter part of Plate 4.46 are connected to the major ethnic groups that are the bases for pushing the identity of bigotry. Another part of indexation is in the performative acts of ‘being’ and ‘seeing’ at the two segments of the utterance. The act of being different, which is

the marker of liberality makes people begin to see things from a different perspective, which is marked by the adverb, 'objectively'. The excerpt also means that there are two ways of seeing things. On the one hand, it is to see things from the subjective perspective, that is, in polarity of ways, which entails people having ethnic biases. On the other hand, it is to see things from the objective perspective, which entails receiving others mindless of their ethnic affiliation or religions.

Politics / Re: Apostle Chika Onuzo Issues Decree, Cancels Tinubu's Presidency. Video. by plaindealer: 5:47am

In life, we attribute everything to God, we say God is omnipotent, we say God is everywhere and whatever happens, is the will of God and what God prescribed, but because of our own personal, religious, tribal, and ethnic hypocrisy, all of a sudden, what we don't like is not the work of God, we say God had nothing to with it, we arrogate God's and power to ourselves, we push God to the side and replace Omnipotent God with our own god and interpret God's will as rubbish and not the work of God just because we are sour losers.

Plate 4.47: Nairaland post 025

Source²⁷

Plate 4.47 presents the image – identity of God as a liberalist. This is performatively represented using inferences and implicatures. First, the speaker dissociates god's identity from people's identity, referring to God in the third person, and using the inclusive pronoun, 'our' to mark individual's identity. The speaker, thus, links individuals' religious, ethnic and tribal identity to 'hypocrisy', while God's identity is non-segregationist. The performative act of being 'everywhere' and being for all, according to the speaker, is what is implied in using the religious register, 'omnipotent'. The intention of the speaker is made clear in the constant repetition of 'God', and the distinction between divinity and individuality using the capital 'G' against the lowercase, 'g'. the speaker uses these to show the distance between 'God' and every form of sentiment, which is indexed to man. The fact that there is freedom of 'will' to

choose or to act whether in humans' selfish religious and ethnic agenda, or in the divine agenda marks God as a liberalist. There is allowance for freedom to think, take a side and then act, which are indicative of the identity of a liberalist.

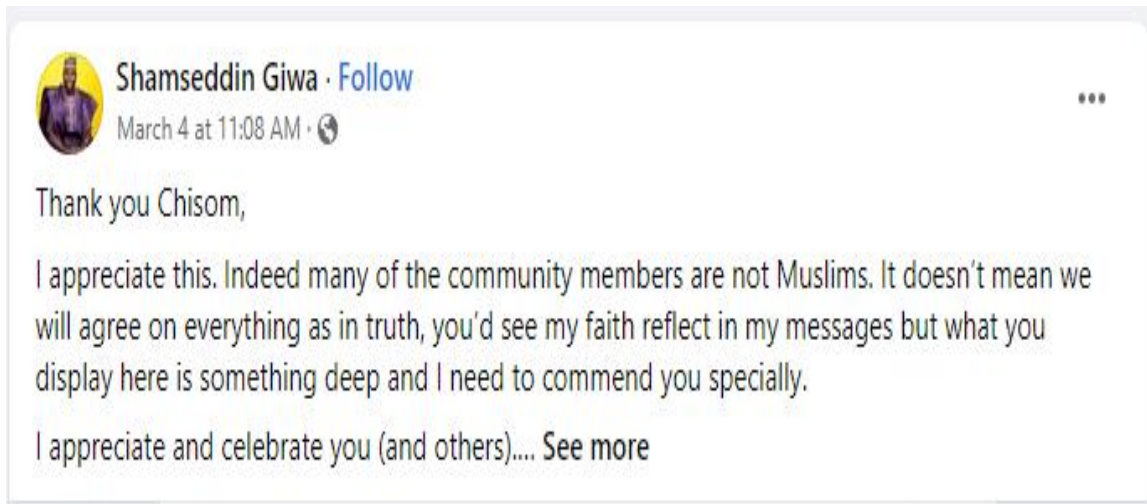


Plate 4.48: Facebook post 024

Source³¹

In plate 4.48, the signification of the liberalist identity is represented at the latter part of the utterance, using compound performatives, both in consonance and parallelism. These are the acts of appreciating and celebrating. These are markers of corresponding actions, which is acceptance. The most significant principle in expressing the liberalist identity is acceptance, because, as Plate 4.48 imply, there are different religions, and each do not have the same way of seeing things. The speaker performatively reflects this in the performative act 'agree', while the indefinite article 'everything' is used to indicate the various perspectives that issues, principles and actions could be represented. The speaker also variegates the notion of 'truth' performatively in the mood adjunct. In this case, it synonymous to 'belief', which is preempted by the act of believing. It is given that every religion has its own shades of truth – belief that are projected through basic doctrines and teachings. The implicature of this is that

every religion's propagation (of truth) should be respected, accepted, 'appreciated' and celebrated', even by people outside the religion. This is the hallmark of the liberal identity.

4.2.3 Research Question Three: What are the linguistic resources for constructing identities in the selected excerpts?

This research question examines the linguistic resources for constructing identities in the selected excerpts.

The linguistic markers are the linguistic choice. Four groups of performatives have been identified to underly the representations of identity in Facebook and Nairaland communication. These are performative verbs, descriptive (adjectival) performatives acts, nominal performative acts and modal performative acts.

Gender-related Identity Representations (IRs) in FB and NL Posts

Gender is always a serious condition for identity positions or representations, especially in developing countries where dogmatic gender roles exist. In other words, there are patriarchal and feministic tendencies that significantly affect the identity of people represented in the social media space. The dominant identity representations linked to gender in Facebook and Nairaland discourses chauvinist, welfarist, seductive, and patroniser. Some of these are gender specific, while others are generalised. The above identity perspectives are engaged, in no particular order, in the following subsections to show how they condition or affect how genders in the social media community respond to issues in posts and chats, which are unfolding conversations.

4.2.3.1 The Patroniser Identity

Most of the interactions, posts and comments, especially on Facebook are designed for the purpose of approbation, or approval, which are the indices of patronage. There are generalised – marked performative features of patronising. For instance, the act of festivity which conditions birthday and anniversary posts, or posts of certain achievements or successes. These are normative messages that attract patronising comments. It can also be linked to sympathy maxim, where patronage is demonstrated to commiserate people. There are also exceptional markers of the patronizing identity demonstrated for the purpose of getting certain favours, especially in the region of politics. This is dominantly portrayed by the male gender, since the political space is dominated by them.

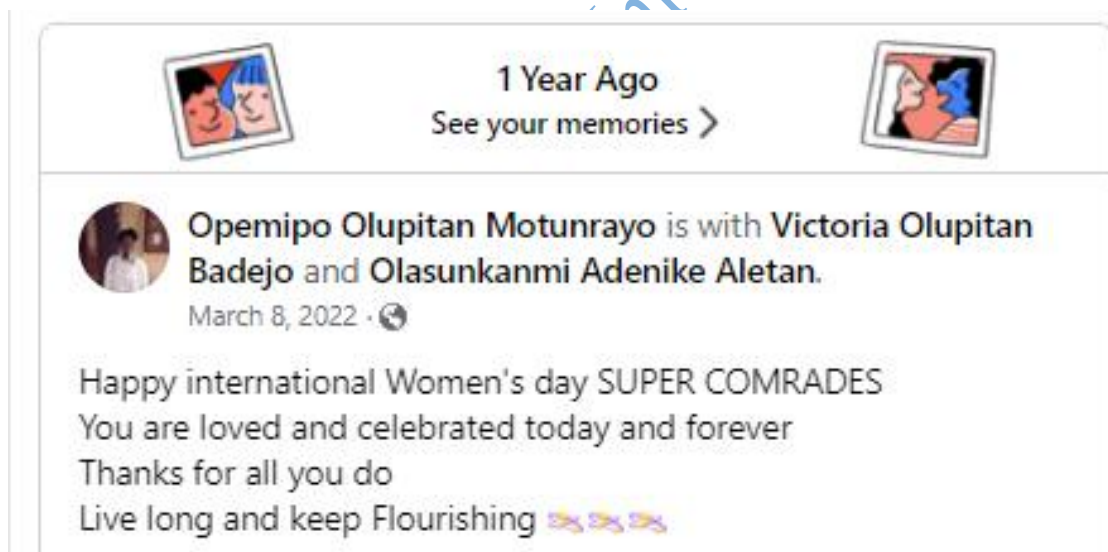


Plate 4.49: Facebook post 025

Source³²

Plate 4.49 shows the performative acts of felicitation and the identity of patroniser, using the adjective 'happy', which introduces the post, and the foregrounding of the nominal expression, which also has an adjective of approbation, 'super'. This is to show collective patronage of the female clique. It is evident that the speaker identifies themselves with the

female gender, using the nominal, ‘Comrades’, which implies collectivism in experience and attribute. There is a feeling of patronage of femininity itself in the introductory utterance, ‘internation women’s day’; this gives a feeling of importance, which is also a feature of patronage. The patronage identity is used in Plate 4.49 to valourise women, such as to dedicate a day for their commemoration. The following utterances on the plate represents three structural performatives that also define patronage, these are the acts of ‘loving’, celebrating and approving. The act of approving is indexed with temporal adverbs, ‘today’ and ‘forever’ to show the institutionalisation of feminine patronage. In other words, it is an act that started and has lingered from the past, even though this is not lexically represented in the plate. The fact that there is forever implies that futuristic acts are undetached from the past where they have their promises. Lastly, the act of thanking, which concludes the plate is denotative of the identity of partroniser, approving the actions of women, without making or evaluating preferences. In other words, everything done by a woman is approved without question.



Plate 4.50: Facebook post 026

Source³³

In Plate 4.50 the speaker demonstrates, performatively, a generalised form of patronage, using different interactional cues. First, the nominal, ‘congratulation’ is generalised for all forms of events or occasions. In this instance, it is used by the speaker for the purpose of association, and patronage. This can be inferred by the performative adjectival structures in the first utterance. The speaker, for instance, refer to the persona as ‘servant leader’, which is representative of approbation, intended to praise-sing the senator, since his performance in the position has not even been tested to know if he qualifies for such description. The nominal set up by the adjective ‘emerging’ indicates that it was a product of a contest, which also implies the performative epistemic modality of responsibility or obligation. As a matter of fact, the persona was elected to bear the ‘representative’ interest of a group of people, which is stated on plate 4.50, ‘Lokoja’. In other words, he has to not only welcome patronage and approval by the people he is expected to represent, but also required to ‘represent’ them well, which is performatively represented in the performative epistemic act of certainty, ‘will make a good representative’, which the speaker obviously used to mark the identity of a patroniser, even when he is not so certain that the personal will do exactly that when he gets to power or rather, use the opportunity to build his own political base.

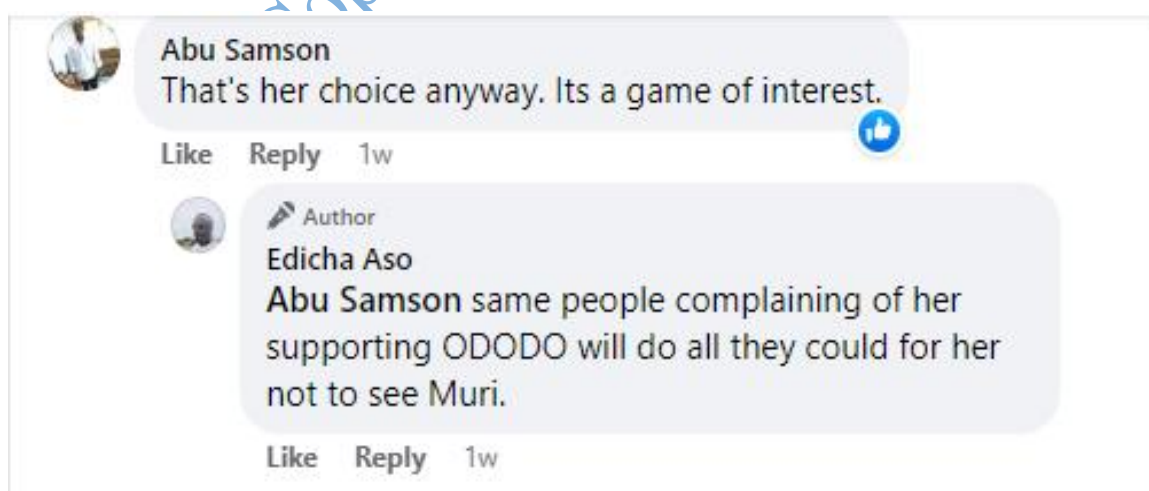


Plate 4.51: Facebook post 027

Source³⁴

Plate 4.51 particularises the patroniser identity to the female gender, using the third person exclusive pronoun, 'her', and collocating performatives, 'choice' and 'interest'. The inference here is that patronage is about making choices either for the sake of 'interest' or mere 'support' which is represented performatively in the following comment. The ability to choose between alternative costs or two to three options is premeditated by interest, while both acts sequence to patronage, meaning that one's eventual choice of an action, person or position is an act of patronage for the result of that choice. With respect to individuals and political affiliation, there is a stronger control of interest over choice. It is interest that determines the choice of a candidate or party, while it is patronage for people to support the choice made. The second speaker in plate 2.51 represents diversity of choice or interest, using two performative acts, 'complaining' and 'supporting'. This evidently shows that there are always different sides or factors to choose from, depending on one's preference or patronage. The second speaker reiterating the point of view, the third person, as reflected in the use of the pronoun, 'her', points to the profiling of the female gender as patronisers, whose consistent actions are premeditated on choices.

Rokiat:

Source? Women may enjoy sex more than men but women don't like sex more than men. Get your facts right.

Which **gender** pay for sex more men or women?

The prostitution and porn industry is booming because of men thirst for sex. You can't even compare men want for sex with women on the general overall level all races.

Plate 4.52: Nairaland post 026

Source¹

The posts and comments on Nairaland are more casual when it applies to discussing issues of gender. In other words, gender and sexuality which become dominant subjects are used to significantly reveal identity standpoints. For instance, Plate 4.52, the speaker uses the performative act of intercourse, which is evidently portrayed in 'sex' to index the patroniser identity to both the male and female gender. The speaker uses a rhetorical – interactional style, that is, rhetorical questions in the two opening statements, where the main identity and connection with the respective gender is marked. The performative acts, 'enjoy' and 'like' are used as synonyms, even though the speaker has used them to mark degrees of sexual patronage. The speaker concludes by eliciting for empirical proof, implying that both genders have different degrees of patronage, which is replicated in many parts of the world, and not just the speaker's immediate environment. The second opening utterance in Plate 4.52 directly – denotatively marks the patroniser identity to gender relation, using the performative acts of buying and selling. Of course, the nominal act 'sex' is metaphorised as a commodity that operates within the purviews of demand and supply. Both genders have their relations in the two acts, though rhetorically represented on Plate 4.52. The speaker expects the community to make direct inferences of the gender roles or association with the performative act as such, that the male gender buys, while the female gender sells. However, both the buyer and seller are equally sexual patronisers, irrespective of the degrees or standpoint the speaker is eliciting.

4.2.3.2 Chauvinist Identity

The chauvinist identity as it applies to gender is different from that of ethnic in the previous section (4.2.2). In this case, it reflects in the performative acts or actions of one gender to the

other; it can also be marked by cognitive impressions, or verbalised as a standpoint. The chauvinist identity is a generalised form of identity because is dominantly indexed to males, due to its connection with patriarchy, which is the sociocultural and religious indication of chauvinism. However, there are rare instances where the female gender expresses confidence and pride in being a woman, which is in the literature connected with feminism. In some case, in social media discuses, gender chauvinism may not be about gender position but representation or impression.

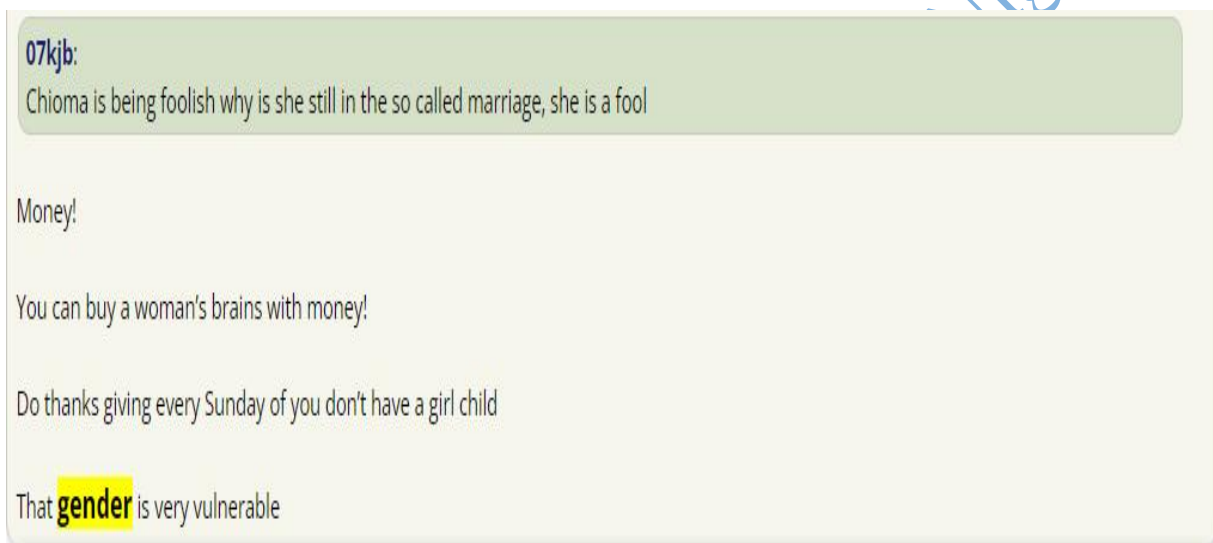


Plate 4.53: Nairaland post 027

Source¹

The chauvinist identity is marked by feelings of importance that the other gender as represented in Plate 4.53. Here the performative acts of importance are represented by the tagging or profiling of the other, questioning of the identity or personality of the same gender. The speaker who is obviously male, tags their female counterpart using adjectives, 'foolish' and 'vulnerable'. The previous is with the inference that females are inferior in reasoning than their male contemporary. This is ironically portraying the chauvinist identity. In the same manner, representing them as 'vulnerable' is a way of connecting the entire discourse in

parallel interactional sequence. For instance, being vulnerable, according to the speaker, is connected consequentially, to the act of foolish, or an impact of foolish actions. The direct naming of female – ‘woman’ in the text, posits that the speaker is chauvinistic and patriarchal, and seems to be pushing that agenda or identity

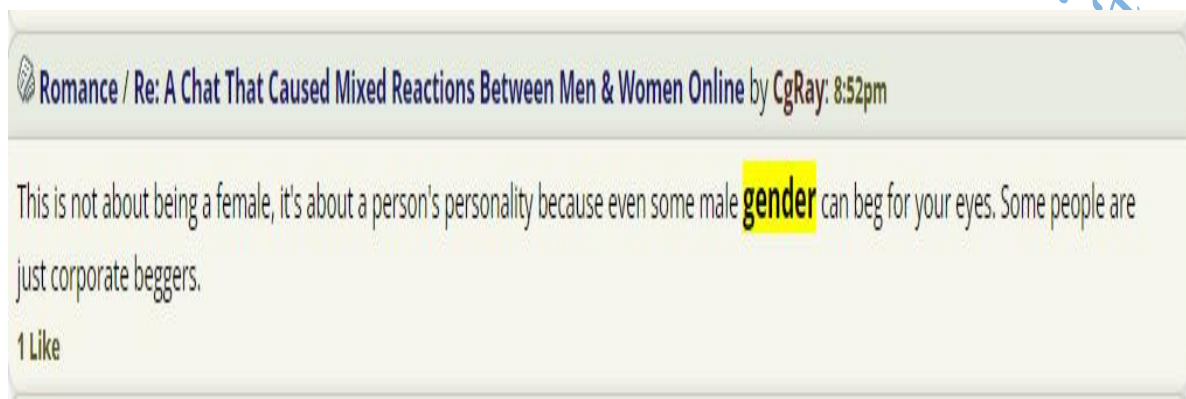


Plate 4.54: Nairaland post 028

Source³⁵

Usually, gender discrepancies instigate arguments about which gender is more deficient. For instance, in Plate 4.54, the argument is on which gender suffers more constraint. The reason this is significant is that there is a normative perspective attached to chauvinism in possessions. While the male gender is often said to own more possession, while the female gender is profiled as being the dependent of the two. The speaker in plate 4.54 is obviously a female, who is performatively defending her gender, using the negator ‘not’ and the existential performative ‘being’, indicate status. The nominal ‘person’s personality’ is the interactional marker of identity in the plate, showing denotatively that there is chauvinistic profiling of one gender. The contrasting position is that females can also be chauvinistic about their identity. They are proud of being female, and thus, can link or index their so-called ‘personality’ weakness to their male counterpart to imply that, in some ways, they have

a hedge over them. The speaker uses a figurative performative act in form of hyperbolic metaphor to demonstrate the extent of constraint and desperation attached to the constraint of males. There is generalisation in the nominal ‘people’, and indexation in the indefinite (non-particular) pronoun ‘some’ suggesting that their main focus is the male gender. There is the use of nominal description ‘corporate’ in the conceptual metaphorical performative sense, to describe intensity of the constraints, justifying that males deny their chauvinism more in periods of challenges.

Ben Korir · Follow
 April 4 at 6:56 PM · 🌐

Gender equality vs male chauvinism

Marriage Logic Gate

www.fb.me/Matelong2

Man	Woman	Result
Wrong	Right	Woman is Right
Right	Right	Woman is Right
Right	Wrong	Woman is Right
Wrong	Wrong	Man is Wrong

👍 3

Plate 4.54: Facebook post 028

Source³⁶

The speaker in plate 4.54 uses componential and mathematical relations to performatively represent gender preference, which is an act of chauvinism, in marriages. The two gender and the 'result' or perceptive judgement are tabulated denotatively on Plate 4.54. The table is laden with inferences. First, there is the inference of the profiling of gender as either 'right' or 'wrong', also implying positive or negative, good or bad. The second inference is with respect to the identity of the gender represented on the table, which is seen in the componential mapping. By performative act, it is possible to have 'right' and 'wrong' in each gender as a pre-existing trait in every relationship. This is functionally characteristic of the very nature of man. The third inference is marked in the 'result' of both genders coming together. Primacy – chauvinism is moved from the male to the female, marking her in every instance as 'right', that is good, and him as 'wrong', that is bad. The identifying performative act is used in Plate 4.54 can trigger bidirectional interpretation in terms of action. Take for instance, the componential mapping of a 'right' man and a 'wrong' woman is termed as a 'right' woman, which implies that it is the man that makes the woman right, which means justifying male chauvinism. On the other hand, the coming together of a 'wrong' man and a 'right' woman is labeled as resulting to a 'right' woman, implying that the female gender is attributively supreme.



Plate 4.55: Facebook post 029

Source³⁷

There are instances of cross mapping of gender chauvinist identity in social media conversations as evident in Plate 4.55. The speaker here is male and unusually, tags the male gender as emotionally inferior, using a performative adjective, that is, 'vulnerability', which he foregrounds by capitalizing it. To be vulnerable has the performative traits of being fragile, susceptible to defeat, or being powerless to act on certain occasions. The unusuality of such representation is performatively marked, using the mental process, 'like', just like cross chauvinism is marked with the mental and behavioural acts, 'loves' and 'respects'. The speaker also justifies cross gender chauvinism, using the adjective, 'vanity', and the performative act, 'trivialise'. The essence of this is to signify the need for males to seed or consider seeding their feeling of chauvinism to the female gender, considering certain injustices that are done to females, such as 'rape', which is performatively represented on Plate 4.55. The performative act of seeding the chauvinist identity to the female gender is portrayed in the verbs, 'try', 'imagine' and 'resist', which is repeated for emphasis. Plate 4.55 also suggests the inference that male chauvinism is backed up or reinforced by 'religion'. The speaker represents this negatively as an ideological stance with an aggressive identity register

that is 'religious fanaticism'. The inference is that many women have been victimised by male chauvinistic acts with religious undertones.



Plate 4.56: Facebook post 030

Source³⁸

There is gender chauvinist advocacy in the data as portrayed in Plate 4.56. The speaker here posits that the political terrain in Nigeria is encompassed with male chauvinism. This is performatively historical, as the cardinal '10th' suggests. This means that there have been nine previous 'assemblies', which have been dominated by men. There has only been one brief instance a female was allowed to lead the House of Representatives in 2007, which was also toppled by the male gender under the disguise of corruption, though later declared unindicted by the 6th session in 2007 (Nigeriagalleria, 2007). The speaker is a male, but obviously, is speaking for the female gender, and critiquing acts of political 'chauvinism' against the female gender, which is denotatively represented in the plate. The speaker here is advocating for balance in the identity of chauvinism for both male and female, using adjectives like 'inclusiveness', 'sensitivity' and 'blissful', and the performative verbs, 'reposition', and 'giving'. He uses these to place a demand on the male gender in the legislature to seed the leadership to women, since the other alms of decision-making, the

executive and 'judiciary' are already dominated by males, and the minority in the legislature, which is the subject of the post, is the female gender.

4.2.3.3 The Seducer Identity

The seducer identity appears as a result of profiling in social media discourses. In most cases, it is linked to the female gender, but not limited to them, because certain posts and comments of males are intentionally aimed at 'inviting' in like manner. The seducer identity is projected by photoshoots, or 'selfies' and captions. There are also textual mapping of the seducer identity in the captions, posts or comments in social media conversations.

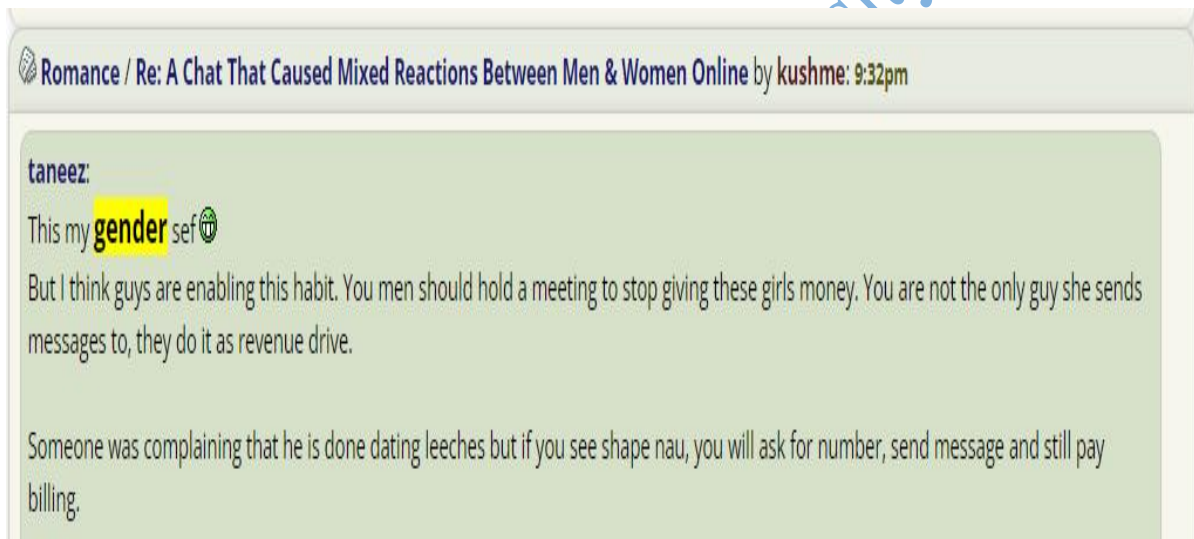


Plate 4.57: Nairaland post 029

Source¹

Plate 4.57 represents the subject of seducer identity as the female gender, and the target as the male for monetary benefits. This also profiles gender's response to bisexual relationship. For instance, the male perspective profiled is the belief that every advance of the female gender is seduction aided by the motif that the male gender has money to spend. On the other hand, the profile of the female gender is hinged on seducing as an exploiting tool, as portrayed in the

adjective, ‘leeches’. The performative inference in leech is metaphoric of a blood sucking animal that attaches itself to a host, just for the sake of feeding on its blood, which inferentially becomes money in Plate 4.57. Seduction in Plate 4.57 is marked by the performative act of inability to resist or ignore, in spite of strong will or resolution. This is represented by an imagery – the picture of a female, as seen in the adjective, ‘shape’. The speaker also, performatively represents the vulnerability of male gender to the beauty – ‘shape’ of the female gender; he is easily responsive to seduction, which the speaker represents in parallel performative acts in the concluding utterance, ‘ask for number’, ‘send message’ to the number, which involves spending money, a part of the culminating act, ‘still pay bills’.



Plate 4.58: Nairaland post 030

Source¹

The seducer identity is not always represented as a bad attribute in social media interaction. It is held as the starting point of every relationship. In the case of Plate 4.58, it is marked with the performative act ‘likes’ and the adjective ‘attraction’. These performative acts are normatively labeled as triggers of seduction and are bidirectional, and interconnected somehow. To like is connected to having attraction, while the speaker posits that seduction can either trigger attraction or can serve as the goal of seduction. The speaker in plate 4.58 indexes the identity of seduction to the male gender, being that the subject of attraction (also

the target of seduction) is the female gender, which is marked using the nominal, ‘ladies’, modified by the indefinite pronoun ‘some’ to indicate that it is performatively unusual. On the other hand, the subject of seduction, which is the male gender is referentially marked in the utterance, using the pronoun, ‘you’ and the nominal ‘opposite gender’ for the purpose of introducing prestige to the referent. The nominal ‘ladies’ has a performative inference, being mapped to an unmarried female gender.

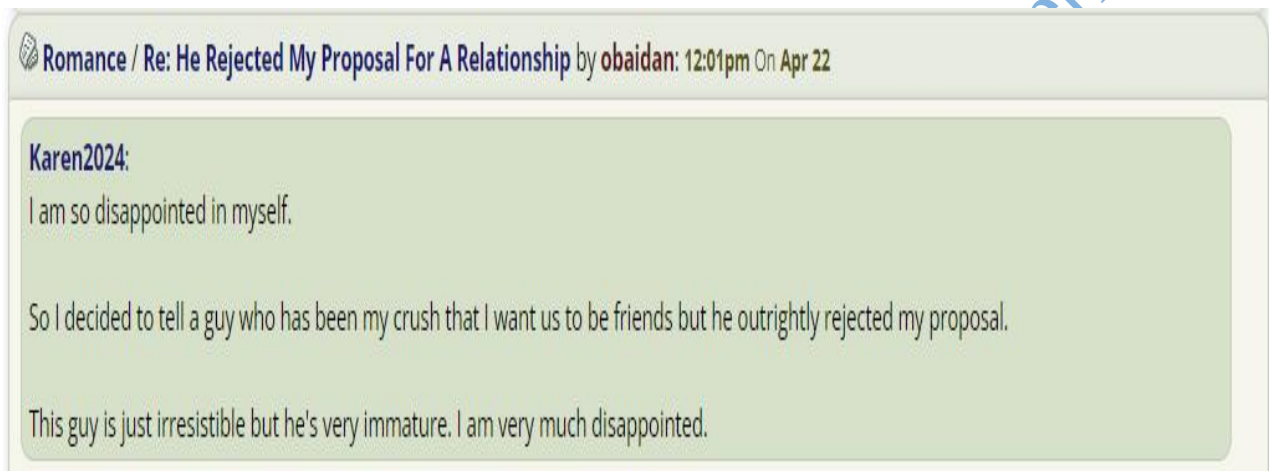


Plate 4.59: Nairaland post 031

Source¹

The speaker in Plate 4.59 presents another instance of seduction connected to the male identity as subject. Seduction is marked by the performative behavioural act in the perfect form, ‘has been’. This underscores the fact that it can go on for a period of time. Also, attraction, which is a basic condition in seduction is marked by the adjectives ‘irresistible’ and ‘crush’; this has the performative act of not being able to ignore. The act of irresistibility is also in comparative sequence with attraction, that is, a stronger form of attraction. ‘Crush’ is also related to attraction, therefore, can be seen as a synonym, which the ‘irresistible’ is parallel to. There is a reoccurring form of representation in Plate 4.59, which is the fact that the seduction identity can be represented in lexical form, and also demonstrated by the act of physiognomy. In Plate 4.59, the speaker lexically demonstrates this, using the performative

verb, 'tell', that is speaking to the subject of attraction, the seducer, while the performative physiognomy act is captured in 'crush', due to the irresistible nature of the attraction.

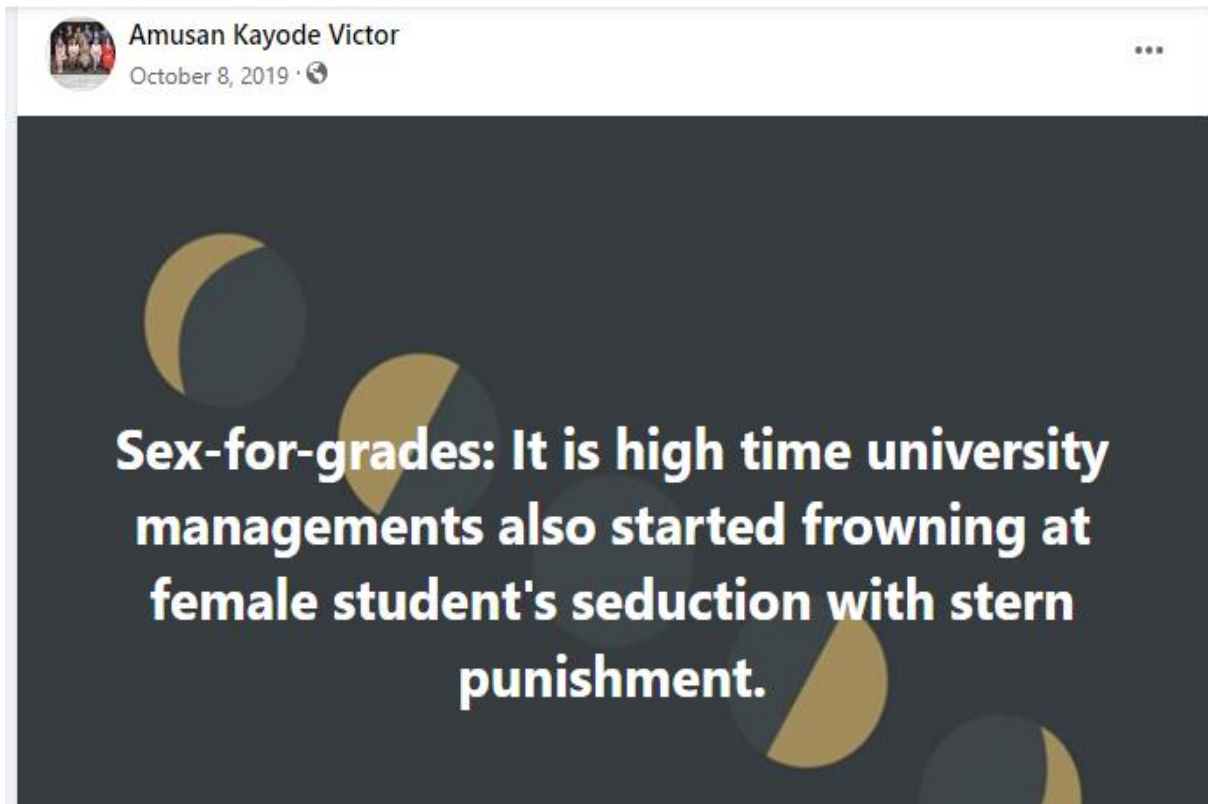


Plate 4.60: Facebook post 030

Source³⁹

The inference in Plate 4.60 is that the seducer identity is linked to the female gender, though the male gender is blamed for resultant consequences, which is represented performatively in the plate using the nominal 'punishment'. The linker, 'also' is used to imply to the punishment of the other agent involved. It is important to reiterate that when the seducer identity is marked there are two agents involved, the subject, which is the seducer, and the target, who is the seduced. Plate 4.60 indicates that seduction is negative and hence should be discouraged using the performative act, 'frowning at' and the nominal 'punishment'.



Plate 4.61: Facebook post 031

Source⁴⁰

Seduction is not only a pre-relationship issue, which has been well expressed in the previous plates. Plate 4.61 puts it that it is a continuous and procedural – collocational act. Primacy is placed here on the ‘atmosphere’, which is synonymous to ‘mood’, which is repeated for emphasis. The inference is that the seducer identity is not isolated from ‘setting’, while ‘setting’ is denotatively marked as the ‘success’ of seduction. The speaker uses certain cues to describe the setting, such as ‘lighting’, ‘candles’ and ‘black lights’ as the ‘factors’ enabling the seducer identity. These factors are interconnected in different ways, with respect to the purpose of seduction. This is symbolically reflected in the ellipses, while the listed nominal entities are treated as hyponyms of ‘mood’. There is profiling of the temporal to justify the time of relational seduction. ‘Lightening’, ‘candles’ and ‘black nights’ are features related to night time.

4.2.3.4 The Gender Pervasive Identity

The gender pervasive identity is marked by feelings of distrust, distaste and ignobility against the other gender. In most cases they capitalise on the weakness or deficiency of gender, or

certain personal resentment for that gender. in some cases, evidently, gender pervasion or resentment is motivated by historical occurrences with that gender. it is important to state here that people behaviour and tendencies are shaped by experiences, events or antecedents, some of which are lexically and performatively marked in the post and comments.

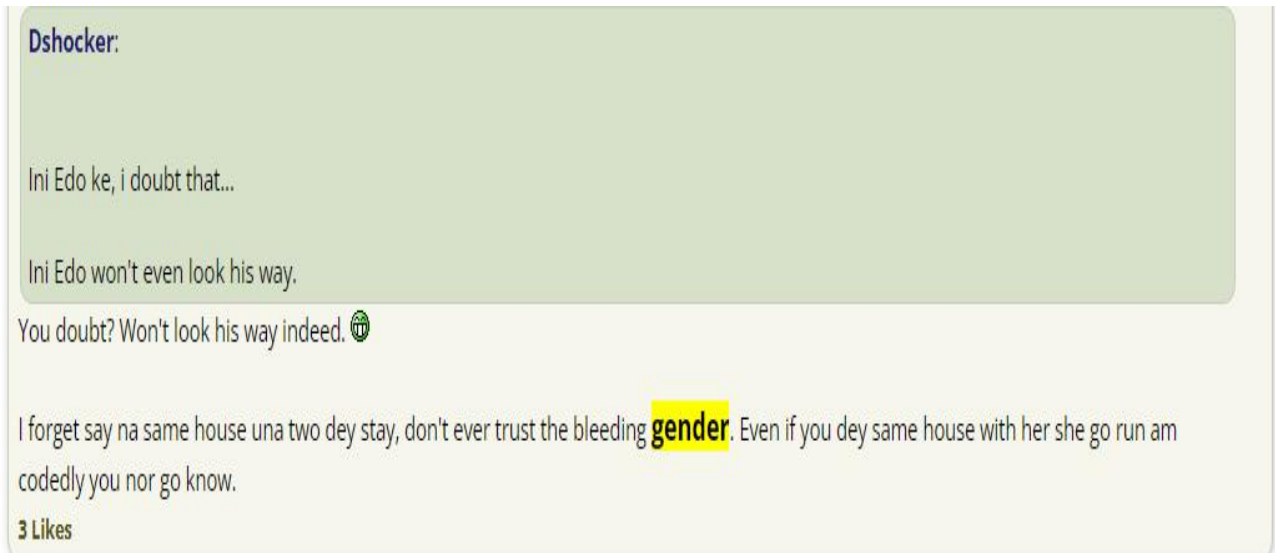


Plate 4.61: Nairaland post 032

Source¹

The speaker in Plate 4.61 is a male gender, who certainly has issues with the female gender. The emphasis is on the second utterance, which lexically and performatively captures the resentment that the speaker has with that gender. This makes the speaker to first profile the female gender, using the performative act, 'bleeding', which denotatively portrays the regular menstruation cycle of the female gender. His intention is to use this term derogatively. Resentment in the plate is marked by the performative act of 'distrust', which is often considered as one of the basic requirements for a marital relationship to thrive. Bidirectionally, the performative act of infidelity is referenced as the basis for distrust of the speaker of the female gender. The inference is that the speaker himself does not trust the female gender, even if married.

Billionaire2:

Nice one 👍

If you hate someone for no reason

If you hate someone that has not done any wrong to you ...

If you hate someone because of where he/she is from, his religion, **gender** or status...

The hatred is a demon.. inside your head.

Plate 4.62: Nairaland post 033

Source¹

The act of pervasion against gender is performatively represented in Plate 4.62 using the verb, 'hate', which is repeated for emphasis in every line of the utterance, before conceptualising it in the last utterance in the nominal, 'hatred'. The speaker makes performative inference of several things that could cause pervasion – hatred, including 'gender' or status. These two are bidirectionally connected, gender has a lot to do in status, it affects the identity and status of gender relations. These factors 'wrong' doing, and 'religion'. Another performative inference in Plate 4.62 is that hatred may not be connected to any particular reason traceable to the hater, but on some basic conditions that have shaped the speaker's perspective of such gender. The uses non particular pronoun, 'he/she' to signify generalisation of gender pervasion interchangeably between the two genders. At the latter part of the utterance, gender hatred or pervasion is critiqued using the conceptual metaphoric act. This is portrayed by the nominal reference to 'demon', who is often held accountable for every negative action perpetrated by human beings. The prepositional phrase, 'inside your head', which characteristically marks the scope, is used to imply that performative actions are regulated in two areas in human beings, the 'head', which is referenced in plate 4.62 and the heart, which is implied by the

performative verb ‘hate’ and the nominal hatred, which is an antonym for ‘love’ and is domiciled in the heart.



Plate 4.63: Facebook post 032

Source⁴¹

The most striking justification used for gender pervasion in all instances discussed is hatred. This is also conveyed in Plate 4.63. However, there are clear performatives that foreground the fact that ‘hatred’ is demonstrative. This is implied in the performative verb, ‘exhibit’. Plate 4.63 also stipulates that ‘hatred’ and pervasion are motivated by factors, which are nominalized as ‘conditions’ and ‘issues.’ In some cases, this can be out of simple ignorance of the other gender or other factors, which according to the speaker, may be personally motivated. The inference is that there is no general template for acting against gender. The use of the negative performative act, ‘don’t effect’ shows that, performatively, hatred may not be motivated by substantial or tangible ‘conditions’, but personal ‘traits.’ The speaker introduces the antonym, ‘kindness,’ and a collocational performative, ‘show’, which is synonymous to ‘exhibit’, used in the previous utterance.

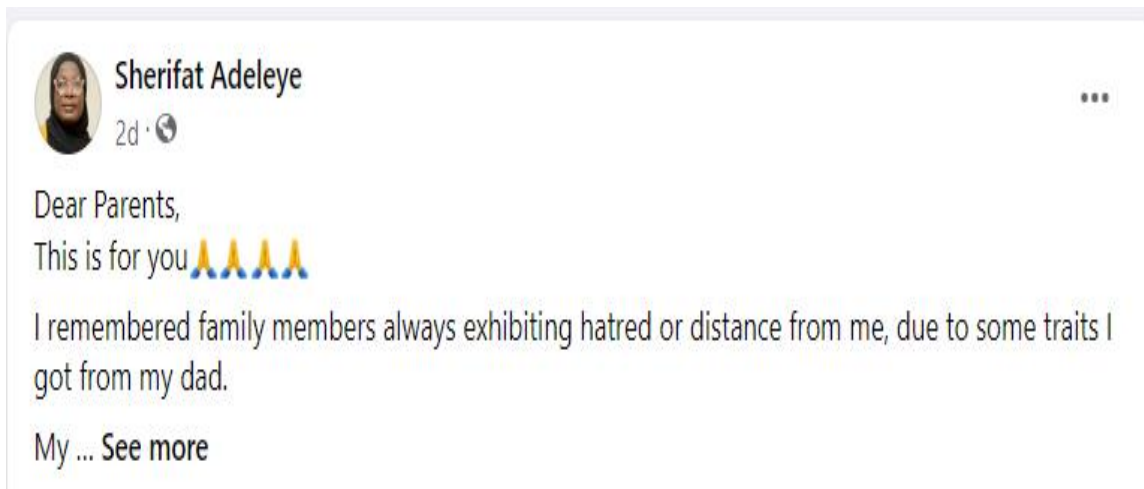


Plate 4.64: Facebook post 033

Source⁴²

Plate 4.64 reiterates the same performative act with the previous, that is, Plate 4.63, ‘exhibiting’ indicating that the act of hating involves some form of demonstration. In this case, the adjective ‘hatred’, which the performative marker of gender pervasion in the excerpt, is presented as a synonym for ‘distance’. The speaker gives the inference that gender adaptation and treatment can be as a result of heritage. For instance, the speaker is experiencing disparity in treatment, as a result of her heritage, which is performatively represented in the adjective, ‘trait’. Just like gender pervasion can be triggered as a result of inherited traits, the acts of ‘hatred’ – pervasion against gender can be motivated by inherited ‘traits’. The speaker uses referential performatives such as ‘family’ and ‘dad’ to reinforce their stance about heritage, which is the subject of the interaction.



Kingsley Madugba · Follow



April 20 at 8:53 AM · 🌐

Be careful of some standards.

It's more than just standards. They have negative effect.

If you check some of these standards, they have a negative effect on your perception of the opposite sex.

Have you also noticed that all of a sudden, some of these standards makes you develop hatred and bitterness towards the opposite sex?

You find yourself involved in gender wars.

You find yourself hating.

My dear, if you're single, you need to protect yourself from these standards so they don't prevent you from getting into a relationship.

Because gradually, some standards are creating a mindset in you that is against building a beautiful relationship.

Plate 4.65: Facebook post 034

Source⁴³

There are disguise notions that are used to cover the acts of pervasion against gender, which are represented in different structures and using different performative acts and lexical representations. First, it is important to note that there is gender-pervasive advocacy, which is the main representation in Plate 4.65. The plate shows that there is gender pervasion against the female gender that is largely perpetrated by the male gender. this is portrayed by the reference pronoun, 'you', which is used exclusively, because apparently, the speaker is not identifying with gender pervasiveness. There is are positive and negative performative inferences used to signify gender pervasion in Plate 4.65. For instance, the nominal 'standards' as a positive inferential strategy to foster gender separation or pervasion, while the negative inference is represented by linguist-performative nominal acts like 'hatred', 'bitterness', 'wars', and performative verb 'hating'. Plate 4.65 shows that there are consequential performative acts that are linked to gender pervasion, which culminate to

barriers failure to ‘develop’ good ‘relationship’. They are represented with the nominal ‘negative effect’

4.2.3.5 The Independent/Dependent Identity

Gender relations have built around feelings of liberty – independence, on the one hand, and dependence, on the other hand. There is the representation of the opinion or perspective that a certain gender (female) is characteristically expected to be dependent on the other gender (male). However, there are instances that the role relations are reversed. But the main reason for representation is that it has been formed as a form of identity or even ideology, determines how people feel about their gender or the other gender. in some cases, it determines how one gender acts or responds to the other gender. The perspectives of social media interactants are reflected in the posts and comments.

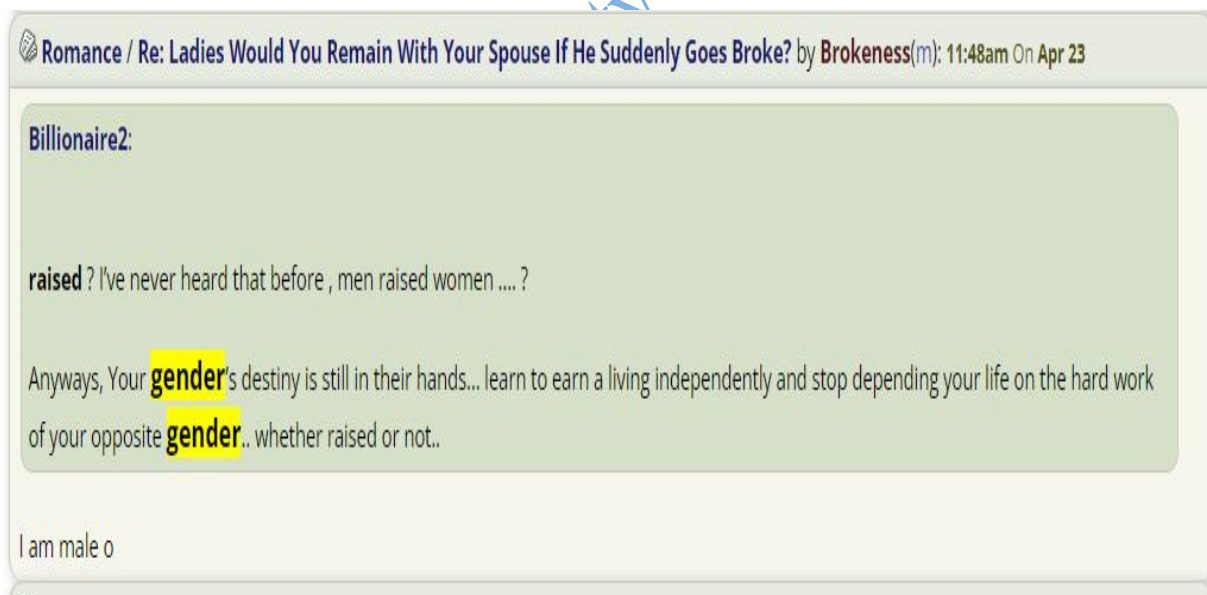


Plate 4.66: Nairaland post 034

Source¹

The speaker in Plate 4.66 employs the cognitive, and advisory performative acts, using inferences to represent gender dependence. The first inference is seen in the open utterance, which is cognitive, that is, in a puzzle. The inference here is that no gender is 'bound' to be responsible for the other. This is portrayed using the negative performative mood adjunct, 'never' and the cognitive – verbal process, 'heard', as well as the temporal, 'before', while the demonstrative pronoun 'that' is used as a referential model to the concept, gender dependency, not the identity as linked to any particular gender. The second utterance in the clause complex, has the lexical verb, 'raised' which characteristically marks the responsible performative act, which also characteristically marks the dependent identity. This posits that there are some persons that are bound to argue against the speaker's motion, with the claim that women, who are the goal (beneficiary), in the material clause as implied by the verb 'raised' are expected to depend on the male gender. This is performatively portrayed in the inferences raised in the following clause. 'Gender' diversity is represented by the possessive nominal case, 'gender's destiny', and contrast, 'opposite gender'. The referential adjective 'hard work', which is linked inferentially to the male gender has both positive and negative inferential profile of both genders. for instance, while the speaker opines that both genders should be involved in 'hard work', it creates a vacuum for the hearers to fill, with the inferences that the male gender is conditioned to work hard, while the female gender depends on their hard work for survival or success, as denotatively marked in the performative act 'depending your life'.

Family / Re: Abandon Your Spouse, Go To Jail For Three Years! by Kobjunkie: 4:37pm On Dec 23, 2022

TyroneP:

This is not just for only men as the term "dependence" can be used for a variety of occurrences. It may imply financial, social, psychological support and more. Children need all of these from both father and mother. Domestic violence could be physical or emotional; both men and women experience it. We have heard of wives abandoning their matrimonial homes for selfish reasons but the trend is more common to men. In furtherance to this, wives should support their husbands and men should live up to expectations as required.

Well, it says so right there that the Law applies to both men and women who abandon their responsibilities. 🤔

2 Likes

Plate 4.67: Nairaland post 035

Source¹

The speaker in Plate 4.67 uses generalised performative inference to underpin both the identities of dependence and independence at the same time. First, the speaker generalises the dependent agents in the opening utterance, using the negator and performative premodifier phrase, 'not just' and 'only', implying that both genders can be dependent on themselves or a higher persona. Then, the speaker generalises the concept of 'dependence' attaching it, performatively, to 'varieties' of occurrences, which they go on to exemplify, as 'financial', 'psychological', while the synonym, 'support' is used as a varying term for dependence. The performative act of not being totally independent is marked by this utterance. It means that no gender is completely independent of everything, which the indefinite enumerative marker, 'and more' implies. Both genders are listed as co-participants of the dependence and independence performative ratio. For instance, both are marked as 'father' and 'mother', co-benefactors of a dependent group, 'children', and 'husband' and 'wife' to performatively indicate inter-dependence. Reference to matrimony symbolically underscores equality of

status, if not roles. However, the speaker, using the admonishing act, in modality ‘should support’ objects to the dependent identity. The performative, ‘support’ also symbolically implies mutual dependence between both genders, especially in family situations.



Plate 4.68: Facebook 035

Source⁴⁴

The speaker in Plate 4.68 adopts foregrounding, using capitalization, as an interactional strategy to mark the generalised performative act of dependence. The inference marked in the position of the speaker is that no gender is completely independent, due to the fact that there are multifaceted areas that determine their existence. In other words, all human endeavours are interconnected, such that one’s shortcoming in one aspect affects all others. The speaker, in the introductory statement employs adverbs to enumerate the areas that are represented as the componential parts of human existence, ‘physically’, ‘emotionally’, ‘spiritually’ and ‘intellectually’. These are performatively indexed to their social, interpersonal and religious experiences. The performative acts of dependence and independence are conveyed by the

adjective, 'complete', while dependence is denotatively marked. This is also qualified, using the indefinite pronoun, 'anyone' and the negator 'without', for the purpose of generalisation. The speaker in Plate 4.68 has double standards with respect to the dependent/independent identity. Initially, he does not connect the act of dependence to any gender, with the view that both genders can fend for themselves. But in the second part of the plate, which obviously the speaker has adopted from a shared post, the identity of dependent is mapped to the female gender. The inference in 'posting' and 'searching' is that one gender is looking to be dependent on the other. This is further justified performatively in the second part of Plate 4.68, using the conversational act. The performative act of dependence is represented using the verb, 'unemployed', the nominal 'job' and breach of the maxim of relevance in 'I'm beautiful', which has nothing to do with the question about what the gender can contribute to the relationship. The speaker's inference here is no gender must not be totally dependent in a relationship.



Plate 4.69: Facebook post 036

Source⁴⁵

Plate 4.69 fundamentally raises a question of perspectives which have been held about gender relations, with respect to gender dependent identity. A significant performative inference in the excerpt is that this has contributed to societal approaches in dealing with both genders.

The independent identity is mapped to female gender, while the emerging dependent identity is labeled for the male gender. This speaker implies that attention has been shifted from the males to females, making the former to assume more importance than the latter. The independent identity is performatively marked by the nominal, 'empowerment', which implies the ability to thrive economically, without relying on the male gender. This is further portrayed in the denotative adjective 'independent'. There is the use of synonym to define gender relation in 'women' and 'female'; while the latter is used in the nominal adjectival qualifying 'empowerment', for the purpose of customising attention on them, the latter is used as the nominal for emphasis. The dependent identity is denotatively marked and indexed to the male gender. The speaker further contrasts the verb, performative 'empower' with the 'dependence', to represent it as independence. The speaker advocates for equality of treatment on the basis of 'empowerment' and gender independence.

4.2.3.5.1 Group Aggressive Identity Representations

It is a given that the social media space is dominated by youths, and when issues that affect them unfold, issues like oppression and aggression, they take to different social media platforms to communicate their grievances. In commenting on such events or occurrences, they use language in such a way that it frames their identity. In other words, as it has been vastly accounted for in the literature, identity relations are shaped by experiences. This is wholly true also about group identity. Group identity here represents the way people who go through similar experiences represent their experience or feeling. In this section, aggression is co-opted as the basis for underscoring the identity of the youth who, in October, 2020 experienced a common aggressive act, the #EndSars protest, which witness institutional murder and maiming perpetrated by the state, with the heinous murder of their contemporaries. The identity representations that were labeled on the youths, while reviewing their comments and posts on Facebook and Naira land are the solidarist, activist, avenger,

revolutionist, compromiser and encourager/circularist. These are analysed in different subsections.

4.2.3.5.2 The Solidarist Identity

One of the talking points of the #Endsars protest was the solidarity among youths from different works of live, ethnicity and religion. They all came together to campaign against an institution of the nation that had wreaked havoc to their members. The fact that they could mobilise themselves from different parts of the country is the first marker of the solidarist identity, while the collective support that the group was able to generate on the subject and against the institution also proved the identity of solidarist. Even after the events, there is still solidarity among the youths condemning the actions of the government against them during the protest. Some dominant markers of the identity are significant in the excerpts presented in this section.

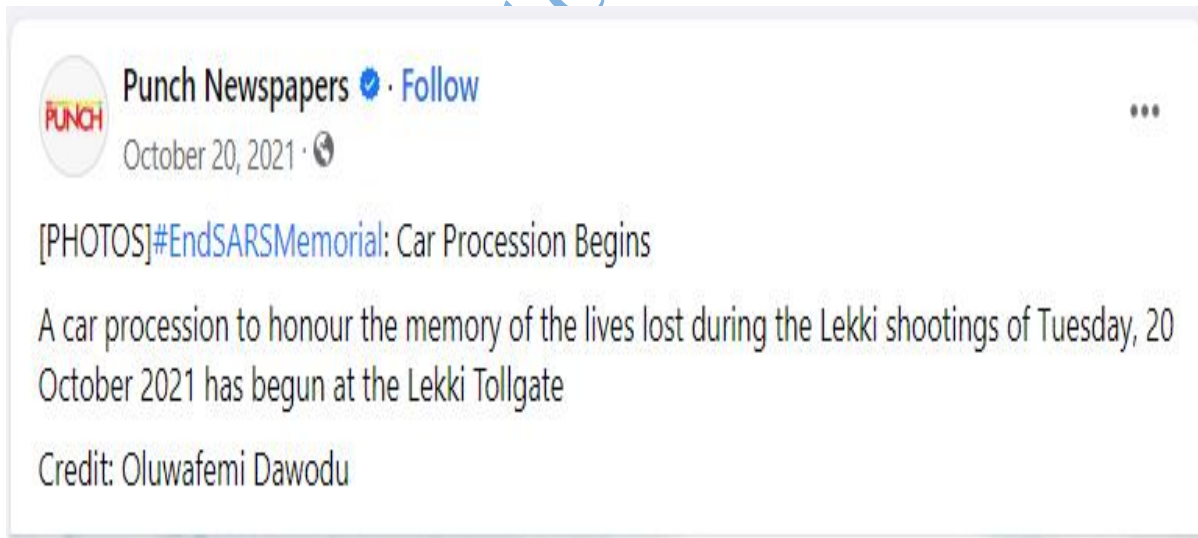


Plate 4.70: Facebook post 037

Source⁴⁶

The solidarist identity is marked in Plate 4.70, using performative verbs and adjective. The performative verb 'honour' is reserved for heroism and award or recognition of an act of service, sacrifice or achievement. In this case, it is used to performatively index sacrifice. The inference is that those who died during the protest paid the ultimate sacrifice for those who were lucky to be alive; hence, the best they can do to show their solidarity is to consistently honour them. Memory, on the other hand, is a collocating term for the verb that is used to indicate the action performed. Of course, 'memory' relates performatively to the fact that the victims were alive at one point, and stood with them at the protest at another point before they were stopped living, as a result of the killing, making their existence a memory. The performative act of killing is represented in the conceptual performative metaphor, using the possession as source. 'Lives lost' imply that these were notably precious people to their group that they cannot forget, hence, the relevant act of solidarity through remembrance. It is important to note that that identity is 'credited' to the youth who were the main actors of the protest, as well as the subject or agents labelled with the solidarist identity, not 'punch newspaper', which appears to be the speaker. The subscription on Plate 4.70, the 'credit' line, is used to reference the original speaker.

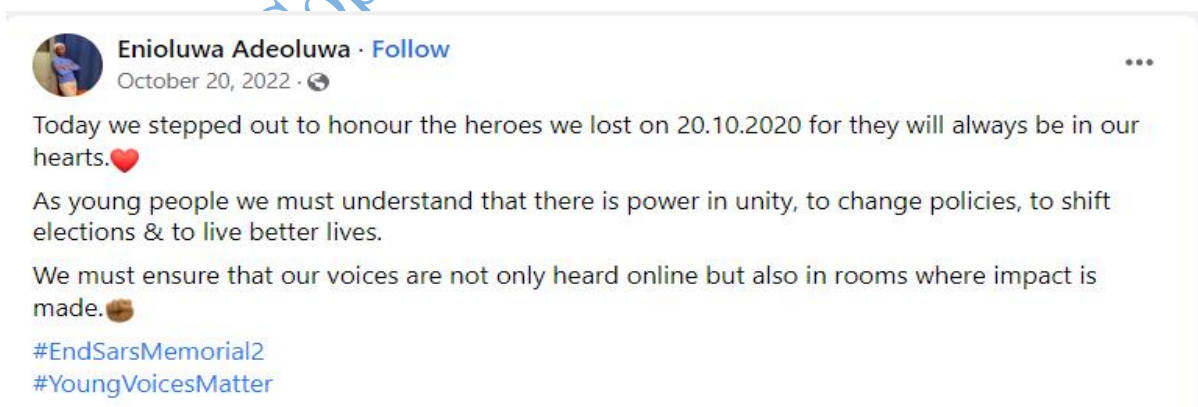


Plate 4.71: Facebook post 038

Source⁴⁷



Plate 4.72: Facebook post 039

Source⁴⁸

The inclusive – collective pronouns ‘we’ and ‘our’ are employed in Plates 4.71 and 4.72, to show collective solidarity, while reiterating a frequent lexical marker of the solidarist identity, the performative act, ‘honour’, which has been discussed in the previous data (Plate 4.70). However, Plate 4.71, performatively marks remembrance, which is another term for memory as expressed in Plate 4.70, using the behavioural performative act in a conceptual metaphorical manner. The act of being ‘in our heart’ describes a strong form of solidarity, and the importance of their comrades is referenced in the nominal ‘heroes’, while reiterating the metaphor of possession, ‘lost’. Plate 4.70 also introduces another lexical performative – synonymous act for solidarity, which is ‘unity’. This is an apt term to captures what the solidarist identity implies. To be in solidarity means being together, facing the same thing together. The speakers implies that the youth experience is similar in this regard, though only few were unfortunate to die in the process; the many who survived should then stand in ‘unity’, that is, in solidarity, to continue to make their demands known.

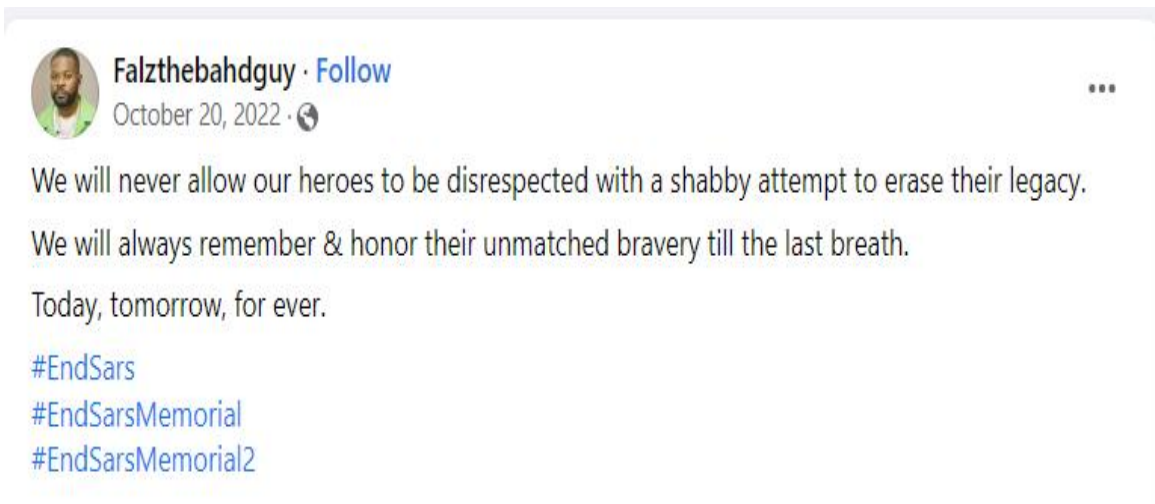


Plate 4.73: Facebook post 040

Source⁴⁹

The solidarist identity marked in Plate 4.73 is a reflection of what was represented in the previous plates. The lexical markers of the representation of solidarity, ‘heroes’ and ‘honour’ are reiterated, but with stronger convincing arguments, using negative – antonymous terms of non-solidarity, ‘disrespect’, ‘shabby’ and ‘erase’ to performatively condemn any act of or unwillingness to ‘honour’ the memory of the heroes, or to do it in a way that the effect or goal will not be achieved. The speaker uses collocating term for honour such as ‘legacy’ and ‘bravery’. The latter is performatively marked with intensity, using the adjective ‘unmatched’. The inference is that every participant in the protest were brave, but the once who died, as implied in the performative metaphor, ‘till the last breath’ implies, paid the highest level of ‘bravery’.

Politics / Re: Why My Son Faiz 'Embarrasses' Government - Falana by Cyberterror: 11:14pm On Apr 03

Faiz is part of the **endsars** gang of Labour party. All they did was steal and destroy. They want a lawless society where criminals like yahoo boys are allowed to enjoy their ill gotten wealth without any disturbance.

Plate 4.74: Nairaland post 036

Source⁵⁰

Politics / Re: Soyinka Survived Dictators, He Will Survive You - Moghalu To Obidients by ideylaff: 1:02pm On Apr 06

richmond500:

Obidients do not have brains.

They want to dictate for everyone, if you criticize Obi, you will be attacked.

Even Aisha Yesufu who totally surrendered the **endsars** protest to Obi and is far much important to Obi popularity than all of them put together could not escape their fangs

Let's take a step back and retrace all these activities most obedients are bn accused of.

Plate 4.75: Nairaland post 037

Source¹

Politics / Re: OBI Needs To Answer This. by Laple0541(m); 3:58am On Feb 19

Really?

So you guys know all these but claimed Bola Tinubu who was not even a governor then ordered the police to disrupt the #endsars protest?

That is the problem you guys have, you always think you tribe is wiser than others, you can defend your Igbo politicians and portray them as good but see others from other regions as bad, mind you your politicians are the worst in the country.

Anyway I don't blame you guys, I only blame those fools that fall for you guys antics.

1 Like 2 Shares

Plate 4.76: Nairaland post 038

Source¹

The solidarist identity of the youth, in retrospect of the #EndSars – aggression, has been factionalised owing to its mingling with politics. This performatively profile political association, affiliation or identity to be stronger than social group identity. In Plates 4.74 and 4.75, two respected – notable figures during the #EndSars protest are charged with selective solidarity, because of their support for a political party. For instance, the selective identity solidarity is represented performatively as ‘EndSars gang of Labour Party’, the inference is that the labelled faction of the #EndSars has been dissociated from the general clique, using a negative marker of solidarity, ‘gang’, which has been associated with nefarious groups, to represent them. The speaker also uses other negative performative acts to describe the group like, the verbs, ‘steal’ and ‘destroy’, the adjective, ‘lawless’ and the nominal ‘criminals’, with the negative profile name, ‘yahoo boys’. In Plate 4.75, the speaker performatively marks

transferred or bequeathed solidarity. Here, the selective solidarity is marked by the exclusive personal pronoun, 'they', against the indefinite pronoun, 'everyone' and the distal second person case, 'you'. The implication is that the faction of the #EndSars protesters that are in support of that political party and candidate have been dissociated from another group or faction, which obviously supports another political party or candidate as seen in Plate 4.76, using performative inferences. The speaker performatively downplays the agent's (Aisha's) popularity, which is the symbol of her solidarity to both the protest and the political party she is supporting. The speaker connects her popular solidarity to the #EndSars protest, ignoring her strong solidarity to the 'Bring-Back-Our-Girls' protest. The overall inference is that the youths – EndSars solidarists made a great mistake leveraging on it for political importunacy.

4.2.3.5.3 The Activist Identity

The main purpose of the #EndSars aggression was to protest against police brutality, as well as the nefarious activities of the SARS arm of the police. However, because the police represented or was seen as an agent of government, it became imperative to leverage on the protest to place demands on the government, which is one of the acts of activism. Apart from making demands, the #EndSars protest was tagged as a referendum against the government security apparatuses and approach, which was culminated by the mass shooting and killing of the protesters. This opened a new wave of activism for justice for the victims, which was carried to various social media platforms, including Facebook and Nairaland.

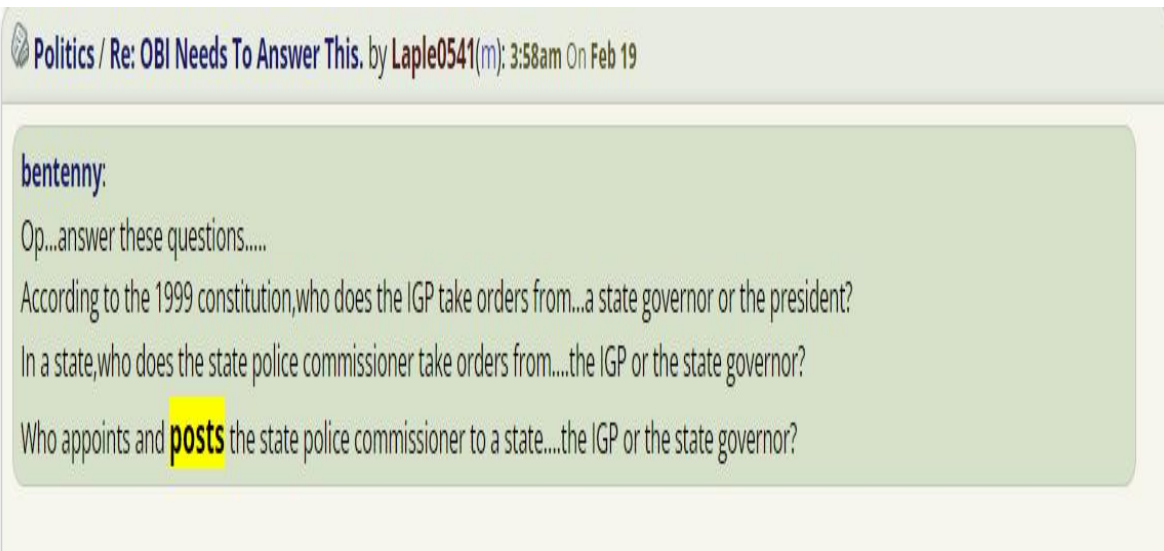


Plate 4.77: Nairaland post 039

Source¹

The most controversial occurrence in the #EndSars protest is the question, ‘who ordered the shooting at Lekki Toll-Gate’. Conceptually, for the purpose of saving face, no government functionary has agreed to have ordered the killing of the youths at the Lekki Toll-Gate. The speaker in Plate 4.77 employs collocative inferences performatively to fix the puzzle, and justify the activism against the government for killing its own citizens because of momentary economic gains. The collocative inferences are drawn from sequences in the Nigerian Constitution, which is the overall template of performative acts of government at various levels. The performative act of ‘taking orders’ is repeated at two interactional structures. It can be noted that the sequence is in order of descendances, that is, from the top – the IGP, which is the acronym for the Inspector General of Police, to the Commissioner. The performative inference is that if the IGP ordered the shooting, then the authority came from the president, and if the commissioner ordered the shooting, then the approval or instruction came from the state governor. However, the fact that the shooting was perpetrated by the

army, the broader question still persists in the mouths of the #EndSars activists, ‘who gave the order?’



Plate 4.78: Facebook post 041

Source⁵¹

The speaker in Plate 4.78 directs its activism to the entire entity that is the system, which is responsible for setting the conditions for protest, which culminated to killing. The performative act of killing, is portrayed by the verb, ‘wasted’, which referenced to the military register implying killing someone without purpose or reason. In order words, the speaker performatively implies that the youths #EndSars protesters were killed without a just cause. The use of the adjective ‘bright’ and the nominal ‘seeds’ are connotative of the superficial profiling of the ‘youths as the future’ of the nation. In order words, any nation who kills its future, has engaged in the act of wastage. Reference to the ‘third colour’ – ‘blood’, which is significantly red, signifies sacrifice; it is also linked to the wrapping of the victims with the Nigerian flag which the protesters were holding. This has become

emblematic for the #EndSars flag. The activist identity is marked using code mixing, ‘*SoroSoke*’, which interpreter implies speaking up against injustice. This is what informed the motif of the #EndSars protesters.



Plate 4.79: Facebook post 042

Source⁵²

The speaker in plate 4.79 marks the activist identity making reference to the denotative term ‘protest’, while stating, denotatively, the performative acts of institutional victimisation, superintended by the ‘government’, as denotatively referenced or mentioned in the text. The acts of protests are triggered by the ‘continued’ ‘harassment’ and ‘intimidation’. The speaker notes that these were the same conditions that caused the #EndSars protest, using the behavioural performative verb, ‘continued’. The speaker also qualifies the frequency of the acts, using the indefinite quantifier ‘many’, and the pluralized nominal ‘occasions’. The inference is that despite the initial protest, ‘activism’ against police brutality, nothing has changed. Reference to the government denotatively shows the speaker blaming the government for not intervening to stop the act. The speaker uses analogical performative

sequence to justify his activism. This is reflected in the later part of the utterance. The performative act of victimisation, in this case, with respect to murder or institutionalised killing is repeated in ‘got killed’ and ‘shot dead’. There is also plight, as strategy to blackmail the government in the midst of activism, representing pain in the killing of a youth, performatively represented by an adjective, ‘young’, and the performative ‘got married’ while indexation – profiling is used to indicate the fact that the killing was unwarranted, as the victim is presented as a ‘business man’, implying that he was not the so-called ‘fraud star’ or ‘yahoo boy’ that the ‘police’ claim to be out to purge. There is activism against corruption in the ‘police’, as implied in the nominal ‘bribe’, which is the reference point for the unjust ‘killing’.

4.2.3.5.4 The Avenger Identity in Youth Aggression

The #EndSars protesters in their post and comments show their inability to fight with the apparatuses of the state or government. This does not hinder their desire for vengeance for those connected to or responsible for their protest and unfortunate losses. Thus, they express wish to see them suffer some form of losses, and pain of their own in significant areas. The youth hold politicians accountable for their #EndSars suffering; thus, express some form of vindication against them while commenting on their political ambition. This may be responsible for the transfer of or association of a faction of the #EndSars to the ‘Obidient’ movement. The avenger identity also translates to celebrating the political, personal and economic woes of the so-called politicians



Plate 4.80: Facebook post 043

Source⁵⁴

The latter notion in the introduction to this section is averred by Plate 4.50. The vindictiveness of some of the #EndSars protesters performatively caused the massive support received by the nominal 'Obi-dient' movement. The speaker employs personified performative act to indicate the avenger identity. For instance, the performative – nominal, 'spirit' is used to mark youth aggression and repeated for attention. This is parallel to the personal pronoun, 'he', repeated in the following sentence. The performative act of a living thing is marked on the protest, giving the inference that the group will continue to find means to ultimately hold people in government responsible for their pain to account. The alliterative negative performative act, 'don't die' is collocational to the performative act, 'manifest' in the precedent clause.



Plate 4.81: Facebook post 044

Source⁵⁴

The performative act of subjection as a causative performative sequence for vindication is exemplified in Plate 4.81. the speaker opines here that the response of the government is subjugating, as represented by the performative verb, ‘forced’, and the performative infinitival, ‘to bow’, which is repeated and modified using performative – repetitive performative adjective, ‘very very’ to show the intensity of the subjugation, and the fact that the youth were powerless against the machinery of the state. However, as clearly – denotatively stated in Plate 4.81, the identity of avenger is indexed to nemesis and justice, which is performatively metaphorised by ‘the blood of the innocent’. The act of vengeance is also represented metaphorically in the same expression, using game as source code, in ‘hunt their killers’. The avenger identity is represented using denotative performative act in ‘revenge’, which is a synonymous term with vengeance. The speaker also employs plight as interactional – performative strategy to lament about the events of the protest and the shooting. This is reflective in the nominal, ‘that bitter memory’, with performative emphasis on the adjective, ‘bitter’; and the performative verb, ‘massacred’. The latter implies intentional and brutal murder of an already vulnerable group.

Politics / Re: Dabiri-Erewa, NIDCOM Plead For Leniency As Ekweremadu Awaits UK Court Sentence by 12inchess: 3:04pm On May 03

It's **sentiments** that ruin Nigeria. Let him do his time. I understand thier plight and I have compassion for them and for their daughter but it shouldnt be at a poor Nigerian's expense. If it was in Nigeria he will never be charged talkless of spend any time in jail. The people that committed crimes against humanity during **endsars** are walking free today. Some where even given promotions and appointments. I won't mention names. But for the first time, justice is prevailing on a politician outside Nigeria. I'm compassionate and sorry about their daughter but I'm also compassionate and sorry for millions of Nigerians that are going through hardship one way or the other becasue of "these people"

Plate 4.82: Nairaland post 040

Source¹

The performative act of vengeance is represented through supplication in plate 4.82. as a little background to the interactional sequence of the plate, the political agent indexed on the masthead of the comment, a serving senator during the #EndSars protest also complicit or blamed in the Lekki massacre, as denotative reported in Plate 4.82 using the performative, 'committed' and the nominal adjectival act, 'crime against humanity'. This senator was apprehended for crime against the human trafficking act, which would have been overlooked in his country, where it to happen there. The speaker in Plate 4.82, views his indictment, arrest, and prosecution as some form of 'vengeance', which the speaker represents, using the performative adjective, 'justice'. The inference is that the actor has got what he deserved for participating in the wrong against the Nigerian Youth. There is negative performative inference and supplication in citing the spatial location, 'outside Nigeria'. The inference, with respect to the avenger identity is that justice is rare in the home country, while the supplication is that vengeance or justice to the political elites who major roles in the protest should be both within and outside the shores of the country.

4.2.3.5.5 The Compromiser Identity

The events that succeeded the #EndSars protest, the robing of the protest into contemporary politics have shown evidently and performatively that the essence of the protest, and the sacrifice paid by the victims have been compromised. This clearly indicates the belief that it will be difficult to force a meaningful impact through protest. In the same vein, the after-reaction, three years down the line, many of the main perpetrators or frontliners of the protest have taken new stance that reflect or imply compromise of what they initially stood for during the EndSars standout, which reflect the identity of compromiser.

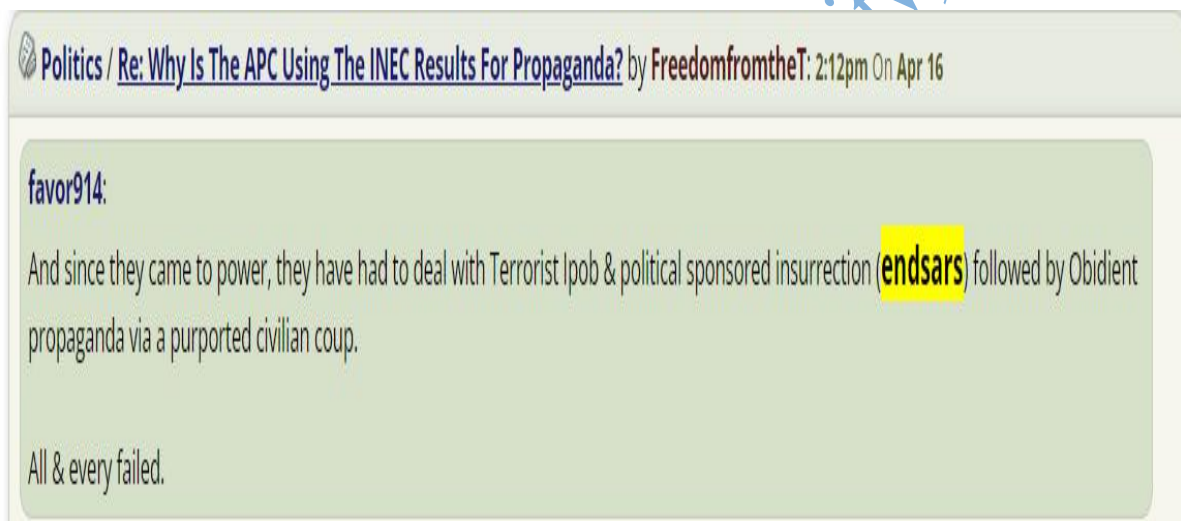


Plate 4.83: Nairaland post 041

Source¹

The speaker in Plate 4.83 denotatively and inferentially represents a compromised stance about the EndSars protest. The verb, ‘sponsored’ is used to performatively shows that the speaker has changed their perspective from the honest intention acclaimed at the period of the protest. The speaker goes forward to profile the protest, using the nominal performative ‘insurrection’, which has a negative connotation of disturbance and illegality. This gives the inference that the speaker is in support of the government’s action against the protesters, and

the order to shoot and kill the protesters. The performative act of insurrection connotes that whatever forceful action is applied is totally deserved by the insurrectionist, in this case, the #EndSars protesters. The speaker justifies their negative profiling of the protest by equating the #EndSars protest to 'IPOB', which they profile, using the performative adjective 'terrorist'. If any worse, the speaker's inference is that the EndSars protest was as dangerous and outlawed as the secessionists.



Plate 4.84: Nairaland post 042

Source¹

Another compromising – after-perspective of the EndSars protest is presented in Plate 4.84. The speaker here uses the metapragmatic performative act as interactional strategy to profile the #EndSars protest as a misguided 'Southern agenda'. The metapragmatic act of swearing, as seen in the modality, 'may' is used to performatively compromise position from solidarity to regret, following acclaimed victimisation by Southerners whom they shared the platform of the EndSars protest together. The speaker makes reference performatively to 'bullet',

qualifying it with the adjective 'stray', implying justification that the killings during the protest were unintentional. A change in perspective about the authenticity of the protest is conveyed by the nominal, 'charade', which is a performative feature of relevance to fake identity. The inference in 'charade' is the compromised opinion that the EndSars protest and the protesters bore a fake identity. Connoting that the protesters owe death a debt gives the inference that the speaker now justifies the killing, against the earlier condemnation, and wished more or all the protesters were killed.

4.2.3.5.6 The Divisive Identity

As it applies to the youth identity in Nigeria, there is a conception, widely represented in protests that the entire persons in one group cannot be in support of the same ideology or perspective. It is often found that when one side of a group is pushing a claim, there is always another group objecting the claim. In relation to the EndSars protest, despite the opinion that they were fighting the group's common interest, the interactants portray politically motivated subgroups or breakout groups to invalidate and criminalise the protest, and then use that to justify brutal responses to the protest. This action results to the identity of division among the youth group. Another portrayer of the divisive identity is represented by the transfer of solidarity from the youth to the side of the so-called oppressors of the EndSars discourse due to political reasons as represented in the following plates.

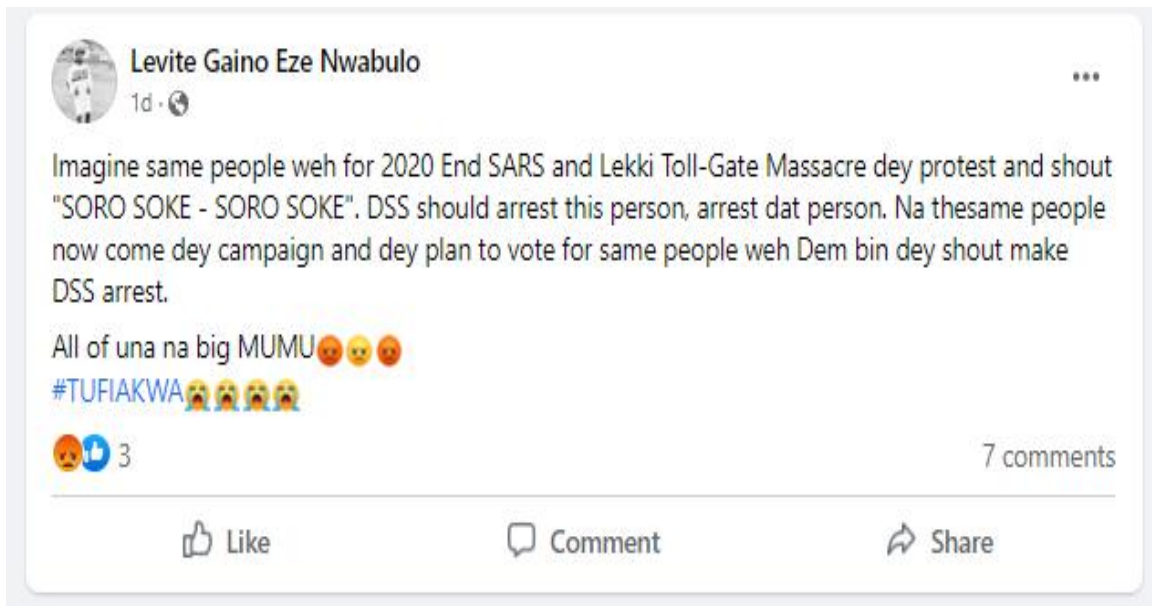


Plate 4.85: Facebook post 045

Source⁵⁵

The speaker in Plate 4.85 suggests that there was a form of consensus among the youths to transfer the anger of the EndSars protest to the election process. These inform, symbolically, the speaker's disappointment that while one group of the sect is trying to uphold that agreement, a breakout group is now 'campaigning' for the same people who they believed oppressed them, as performatively represented in the nominal 'massacre'. The divisive identity is marked performatively by contrast, using pignised expressions, 'same people', interpreted as the same group, and another group respectively; it is also marked using parallel pignised verbs like, 'campaign for', 'plan' and 'to vote for'. The general identity is performatively marked by foregrounding, that is, using the capitalised code-mixed expression, 'SORO SOKE', which represents the performative act of speaking up against the oppressors. In order words, the passage of time and event, as well as the new temporal which is the political dispensation has produced two identities, the solidarists, those who stand by the determination to undo the present politicians, and the divisive identity, those who have pulled out to support the oppressors.

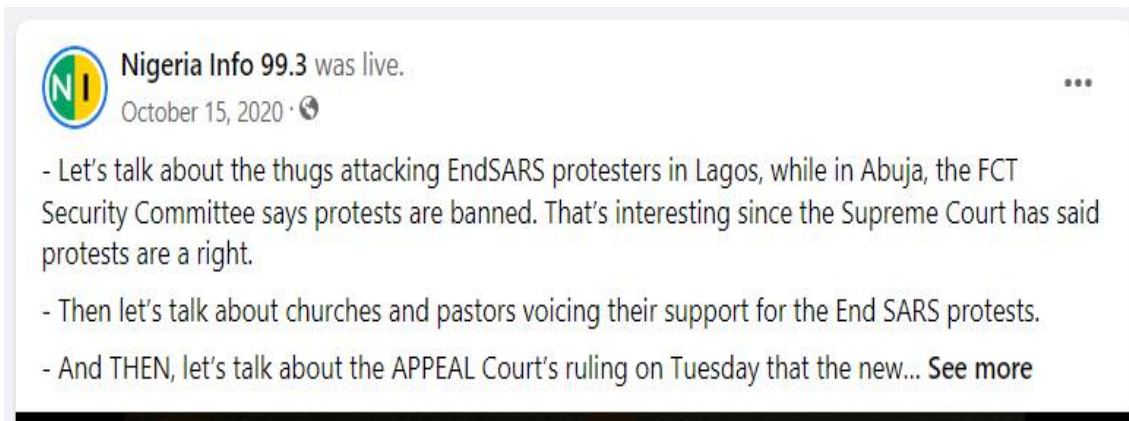


Plate 4.86: Facebook post 046

Source¹

The divisive identity is marked in the opening utterance in the youth-related sense, and in the second utterance in the institution-based sense. First, the opening utterance implies that there was division among the youth during the EndSars protest. While some of the youths, performatively represented as 'protesters', were protesting, some, performatively represented as, 'thugs' were mobilised to attack them. The inference is that the so-called 'thugs' are also from the youth class. The performative verb, 'attacking', is used to portray the divisive act or identity. The only way they are 'attacking' the protesters is to show that they were not in alignment with them on the EndSars protest. The spatial index, 'Lagos', which is directly mentioned in the plate justifies the basis of the institutional divisive tendency that is portrayed in the second utterance. The inference is that the 'protest' happened in Lagos, where it could not be institutionally stopped, and was institutionally denied of happening in 'Abuja', even against the law. Which is performatively marked in the pronouncement of the 'Supreme Court', the highest court in the land. This also gives the inference that the divisive identity that succeeded the EndSars protest was occasioned and instigated by the government, who were classified with the oppressors in the #EndSars discourse.



Fearless Akpan is with Kenneth Ekanem Snr and 7 others.

February 24 · 🌐



BREAKING NEWS...

The hoodlums found.

I am directed to bring to the notice of the public that the hoodlums that stole people properties, vandalized government buildings and even burnt police station during #ENDSARS2020 protest has been found.

We can all recalled that during October 2020 some passionate youth in Nigeria came out from every state in Nigeria to protests for #EndSARS and police brutality.

All this was that they wanted their voice to be heard and they needed a change in the country called Nigeria wish they all own.

It was unforgettable move that had never happen before, the unity among the youth was alarmic and terrifying.

The government opted to kill them than to give them the change they were looking for hmmm Nigeria was seriously bleeding.

The elders were the one who ordered the killing of their young ones.

Then some hoodlums who had no passion for the country, who were only hanging around to steal people's phone, who had no vision for the moves steps in and start stealing.

Plate 4.88: Facebook post 047

Source⁵⁶

The divisive identity is reinforced in Plate 4.88, using different performative strategies. First, the speaker uses agent profiling to identify the two youth-groups. On the one hand, there is the legitimate protest group, which the speaker refers using the performative adjectival, 'passionate youth' to represent; on the other hand, there is the divisive group, which the speaker profiles, using the performative nominal, 'hoodlums'. Second, the speaker uses descriptive performative actions to justify their profiled identity. For instance, the 'hoodlums' are attributed with the performative acts, 'stole', 'vandalised' and 'burnt', which are actions that totally contrasted the original intention of the 'protest', while the legitimised group is qualified by the performative nominals, 'voice' and 'change', acts that described the position or intention of the 'protest'. The third is the transfer the same representation to the institution

that the protest was against. The speaker using inferential connotative labelling to refer to the government, which is also performatively nominalised as ‘elder’, as a killer, and associates it with the performative act of ‘killing’.

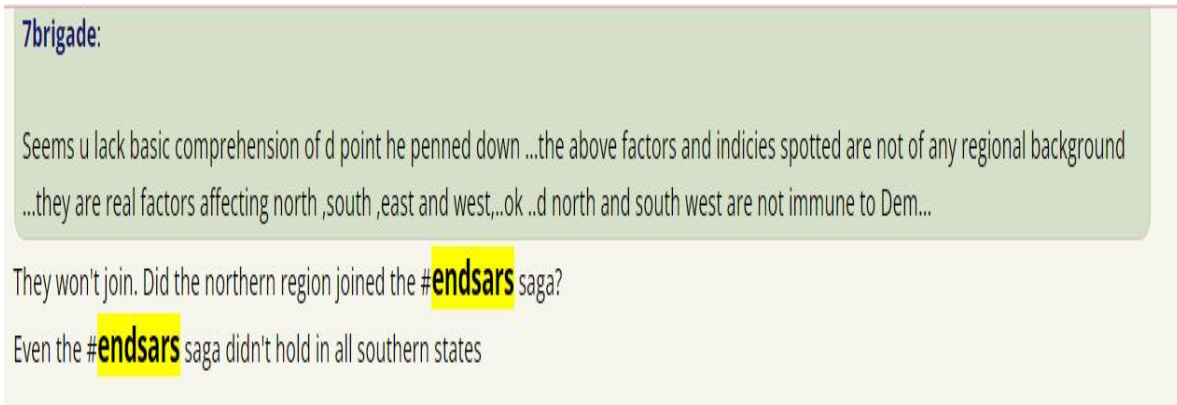


Plate 4.89: Nairaland post 043

Source¹

The divisive identity, in relation to group aggression, is inter-sectional and intra-sectional, as performatively marked in Plate 4.89. It is noteworthy that the speaker references the sectionalisation of Nigeria into various regions, two of which are represented on the plate, using direct indexical, ‘Northern’ and ‘Southern’. The inference is that the youths of the regions are divisive on several matters, including the ‘EndSars’ protest, and political alliance. The divisive identity is performatively marked by the negator ‘not’, the auxiliary verb, ‘won’t’, which is also clitised with the same negator, and the performative verbs, ‘join’, which is also marked by the past tense marker, to show divisiveness as a recurrent issue among the youths, and the performative verb ‘hold’. In other words, youths in the North do not respond in the same way as those in the South when it comes to certain issues; in the same vein, youths in the South are subdivided in their response to the same issues. Even on issues that concern them directly, such as the EndSars protest, the youths across the regions, or even in the same region, behaved differently, or took different positions. The speaker

opines that while some took to the street, others in other regions, or the same regions had a different response.

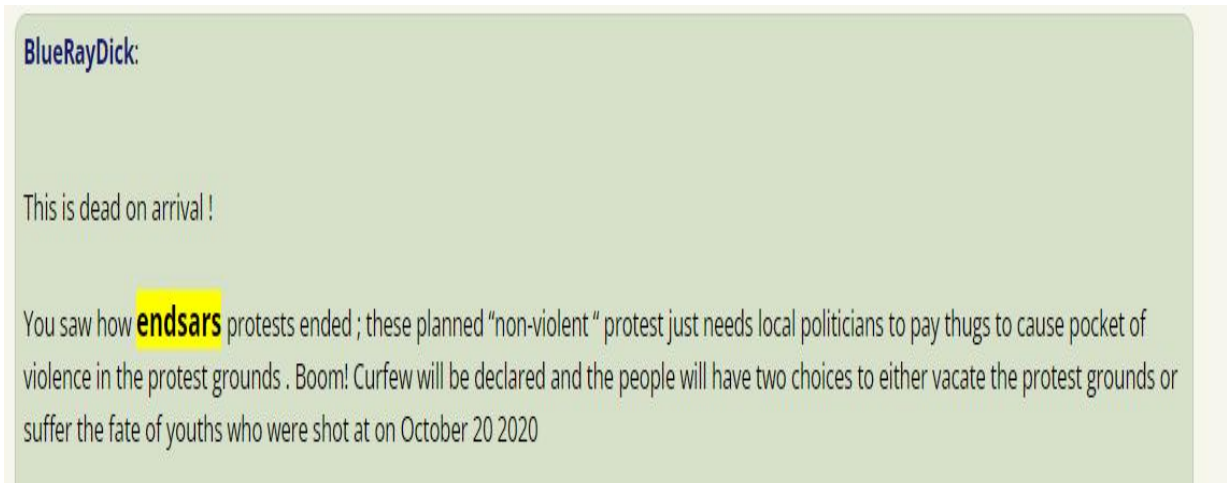


Plate 4.90: Nairaland post 044

Source¹

The speaker in Plate 4.90 uses topicalisation as a symbolic strategy to represent the effect of the divisive identity. The performative act, 'dead' is used to portray the fact that the divisive identity is not a positive nor a progressive identity. The reference pronoun, 'you' is used to point to agents outside the group, while the EndSars protest is performatively used as a template to portray or signify the divisive tendency that succeeds protests. The divisive act is performatively represented in the nominal 'thugs', while the speaker represents the opinion that the divisive group identity is politically motivated. This is for the sake of disuniting the youths, because of the fear of the success that their agitation can cause. The speaker uses performative indexation, pointing out performative action that justifies the 'thug' agent mentioned, that is, the adjective 'violence'.

4.2.3.5.7 The Edifier/Campaigner Identity

The youths have the social media space for multifarious kinds of communications. In times of aggression, such as the EndSars protest, some of the protesters use the event as basis for enlightening other people to take certain actions. For instance, the EndSars protest was used to edify youths about who they should vote for, what they should do and the part they should play in a nation that berates their interest and demand. The youth-interacts on Facebook and Nairaland use group edifier or campaigner strategy to influence others' beliefs, perspectives and actions, using an aggressive experience as point of reference. In some cases, the edifier and campaigner identity are taken together, while they can be dissociated in some utterances.

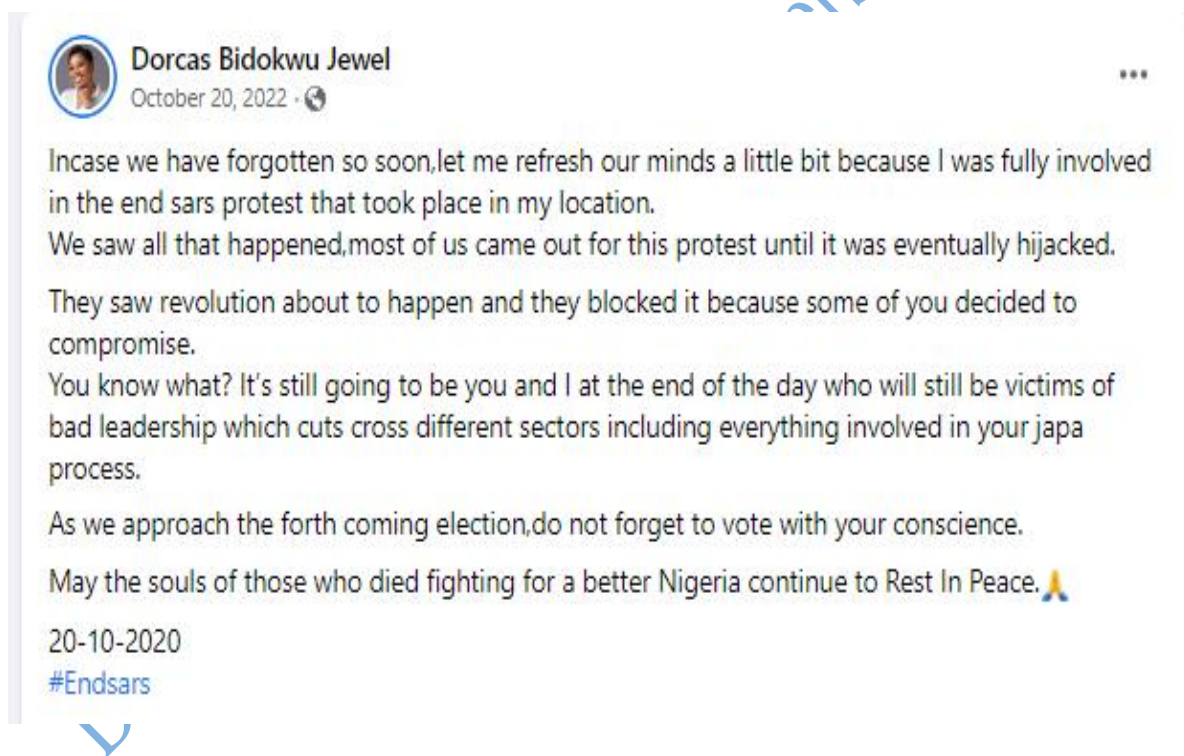


Plate 4.91: Facebook 048

Source⁵⁷

The speaker in Plate 4.91 combines the edifier and campaigner identity, using it as a sequence. First, as edifier, the speaker reminds the youths of the EndSars protest and the consequences they endured or suffered. The edifier identity is marked with the performative verbal expression, 'have forgotten', and the adverb, 'so soon', on the one hand, and the performative verb, 'refresh'. The speaker provides justification for edifying the youth to act against the ruling class, who were labeled as the oppressors. As campaigner, the speaker opines that the fallout of the EndSars protest should be a referendum against the political elites. The utterance gives the inference that the speaker wants the youths to consider the EndSars massacre in the decision of the next leaders. The same significations, modified by the negator 'not'. The campaigner identity is performatively portrayed by the nominal, 'election' and the verb, 'vote'. The condition for 'voting' is represented by the performative adjective, 'conscience'. The inference in using this performative act is that 'conscience' is not totally devoid of certain consideration(s). In this case, the speaker's consideration is represented performatively in the last utterance. This is seen in the performative – metonymy act 'souls' represents people, while thematic indexation is used in the performative verb, 'died' to signify the consequence of the EndSars protest. There is religious inference in the use of 'souls', which is to reiterate the faith-based argument that the soul of man continues to live after dying physically.

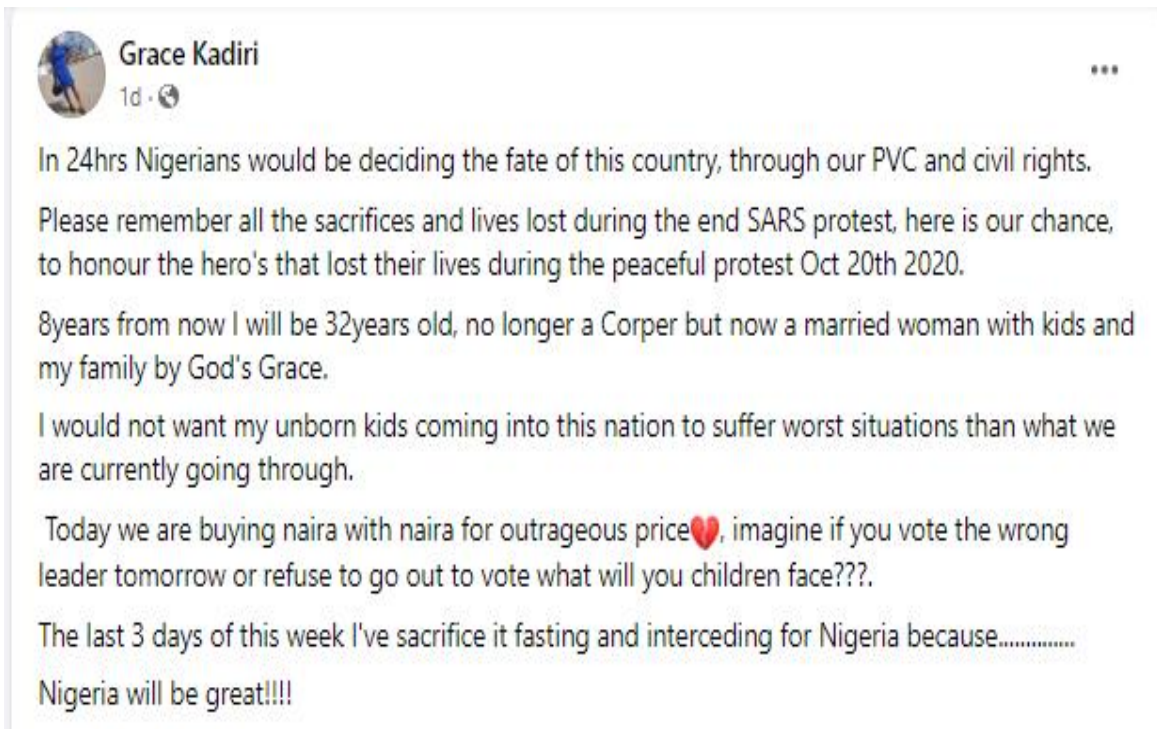


Plate 4.92: Facebook post 049

Source⁵⁸

The speaker in Plate 4.92 portrays the campaigner identity, viewing the revolutionary powers that the youth electorates have to decide the faith of leaders – those who are contesting political offices. The same signification in Plate 4.91 is deployed in Plate 4.92, using the youth aggressive act as basis for deciding on who to support or vote for in the election. In this case, the performative act of reminiscence is used to signify the condition for voting. This is marked by the performative verb, 'remember', while the death of the youths during the 'EndSars' protest is nominalized as 'sacrifice'. The performative verb, 'lost' is used to reminisce on the killing or massacre as it is often referred. In other words, transferring the aggression into voting choice will be a way to immortalise or performatively 'honour' the people that were 'lost' during that period.

I will Cast my VOTE because it's my Civic Responsibility...

I pray my Vote for Labour Party will not be in Vain.. inshallah.. in Jesus Name Amen

We most protect this Vote ooo

No story..

We did not forget all the Killings and Suffering in the Last 7yrs couple with Hardship and hunger...

ASUU STRIKE PROMAX

CRUDE OIL THEFT

Percentage Salaries

Zero Mass Employment Opportunities

Zero Federal Mortgage Scheme

Zero Electricity Supply, National Grid break down multiple of times in the Last 7yrs

NEPA ESTIMATED BILLING

Forex hit the highest in history times

Border Closures

Twitter Ban

Crypto Ban

Kidnapping on the Rise

Cattle herders invasion and killing in all the communities

Plate 4.93: Nairaland post 045

Source!

Apparently, the youths are not only vindictive of the killing of their comrades during the #EndSars' protest, but also dissatisfied with a long list of government-induced problems, which the speaker in Plate 4.93 mentions using performative acts or descriptions for every content. Every problem has a collocating act, which are also denotatively represented on the plate. The inclusive pronoun, 'we' is used by the speaker to identify the supposed solidarity

of the youths, and the campaigner identity. The speaker is directly campaigning against the ruling party that presided on the massacre of the youths during the EndSars protest, and caused all the problems that are listed and performatively portrayed.

4.3. Discussion of Findings

The entire chapter has focused on the analysis of data and discussion of the findings of this research. This was done in four broad sections, each focusing on the symbolic – interactional factor that determine the representations and the variables of identities that are evident in Facebook and Nairaland discourses. These symbolic areas are age, gender, ethnicity or religion, and aggression, particularly focusing on the #EndSars subject, which has lingered for so long in the social media space. Each of the symbolic factors in the representation of identity constituted the sections in this chapter, while the identities that were represented were analysed in respective subsections under the symbolic interactional averring factors⁶⁰. The analysis was conducted identifying the performative acts that project, justify, explain, or describe the identity representations identified. The following chapter discusses these performatives in the ways that they affect the identity representations that constitute the findings of this research.

Findings show that there are four macro factors that attract or underscore the representations of identity mutually in Facebook and Nairaland discourses. These factors are age, gender, ethnicity or religion and group aggression. The study finds that these factors or variables are generic subject matters of interactions in the social media space, especially on Facebook and Nairaland. This is the justification for selecting the data in the first place. Each of these macro variables are inter and meta-discursive. The implication is that these factors relate to conceptual issues that could be regarded as the micro conditions or factors that attract, in themselves, arguments and shades of representations about self (self-identity) and others

(others-self-identity). Findings show that these conceptual issues - factors are credited for the representations of identity in the two dominant social media platforms studied. Findings reveal that the conceptual issues around age that conditioned identity include 'change', which applies to individuals, group or even time. Change is, in the data, reflective of social status, personal growth, personal or group relationship, position or productivity, whether positive or negative.

Do Not Copy, Lead City University, Nigeria

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Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings

This section is devoted to the review of the findings of this research. This is carefully summarised in paragraphs, and in a way that evaluate the research questions that were set at the beginning of this study. In other words, the section discusses the findings with respect to the forms of social identity represented in mediated communication platforms, using Nairaland and Facebook as examples; the factors that underly or condition the construction or representation of identity in Facebook and Nairaland, including factors that validate or invalidates certain forms of identity representations; the linguistic markers of these identities, in other words, the linguistic choices, including the performative acts that justify such representations; and lastly, the pragmatics markers or features that are evident in the representation of the identity variables in Facebook and Nairaland posts and comments. It is fitting to begin with the second sequence Identifying the macro and micro factors or features of identity representations in the data.

Age also raises the issue of stability, which is bidirectional to maturity and responsibility. These issues inform the presentation of opinions on celebration, personal relationship and other factors that are evident of emotional and physical acts. Of course, the study finds that the social media is a platform for projecting congratulatory and celebrating messages about individuals, the content of the messages, which are in form of posts, and responses to posts, are reflective of not only self-identity, but also a range of the above issues. They explain the reason for celebration, the responses or perspective(s) of self and others about the reason for celebration, and reflect the position – status of the identity subject. In terms of status, three conditions are accountable for identity positions. These are condescending status, stabilised

status, and the progressive status. For youths in the social media space, age decides the respective status that one is or would be, hence the identity variable that they have been profiled with.

The second macro factor that underly the conceptual issues that mark identity in Facebook and Nairaland interactions is ethnicity or religion. Findings show that the ethnic and religious affiliations of youths in Nigeria are meddled with certain political and hegemonic tendencies. Findings establish the link between religion and ethnicity and conceptual factors like privileges, possessions, heritage, entitlements and denial of entitlements that are the hub of significant identity representations in the discourses. Findings show that social media interactants maintain or consolidate their ethnic and religious divides or affiliations. While they are united on certain fronts that are outside the scope of religion and ethnicity, they are egregious of their ethnic and religious affiliation. Findings show that Facebook and Nairaland interactants are defensive of their ethnic and religious biases. Findings show that ethnic sentiments are stronger and more hegemonic that religious in the formation of identity. The implication of this is that there is a new wave of ethnicity that has been woven into the political system, which causes verbal or strategic suppression, even among the youth population that makeup the social media space. This tends to defeat any form of cooperation or solidarity among the youthful generation, ethnicity or religion is often deployed for opportunistic reasons in social media interactions.

The study's findings show that gender is deployed as a macro factor in conditioning identity in social media. Since Facebook and Nairaland are common places for mutual convergence of the male and female genders, it is often taken for granted that the way they use language projects their gender identity. Peculiarly, this study finds that there are cross-sectional identity representations that are tied to gender. Hence, the question of profiling gender, which

this study conceptualises as gender tagging, is fast undergoing changes in the social media space. For instance, while males have been previously tagged with chauvinism, it is discovered in this study that there is female chauvinism, which are marked by the feeling of independence or self-dependence and ‘productiveness’ that are the conceptual basis for identity representations by Facebook and Nairaland users.

The last macro factor for the representation of identity in social media handles is built around the common experience that the interactants, who are largely youths, face, particularly together. The most defining of these experiences is the #EndSars protest. This was conceptualized in this study as ‘group (youth) aggression’. For once in the history of the nation and the youth themselves, one event – police brutality almost forced a revolution. The contribution to this study is that it became a fundamental defining factor for concepts that determined identity positions of the youth. The significant conceptual averring factors found in this study include grievance, solidarity, authority and interference, especially by the oppressive class. These issues led to the formation of the identity variables that were found with respect to the group aggression identity. It was discovered that group identity, when mingled with other forms of identity factors, is not so indefatigable. For instance, political influence or the attempt to merge political association with group identity among the youths, generated bifurcating identity that eventually became divisive.

In terms of the identity labeled, which aligns with the second objective, findings in this study isolates them to the macro and micro factors; only the macro factors will be referred to subsequently to keep the discussion reflective. The identity representations conditioned by the factor of age include age condescender, progressor, Regressor and Leveler. The identity ‘age as condescender’ is bidirectionally positioned. The entity ‘age’ or the agents are often regarded as the identity subject. Age itself being, a condescender, is presenter as the natural

definitive cause for people's positions, while for the agent, it is used to capture the fallibility, and vulnerability. Age is also responsible for retrogression and progression, which are like two sides of the same coin. The 'progressor' and 'regressor' identity is marked on social media agents, and are referred to when speaking to an event, such as birthday celebration, among others. For the leveler identity, it is the social agents that carry the position.

The second groups of identities are related to ethnicity or religion. The identities labelled are ethnic chauvinist, opportunist, entitlement. As reported earlier, the findings show that there is still ethnic bigotry among the youths as a result of influence of politics in everything that concerns ethnicity. Religion and ethnicity, as discovered have become basic reasons for claiming privileges, which falls under 'entitlement'. The entitlement objective is close to the opportunistic identity. In this case, the religious and ethnic enthusiast – bigots use them to annex certain opportunities or entitlements. This sequences to two identities that dominate the findings of this research, which are the divisive identity and liberalist identity. Under the divisive identity the study discovered that the social media space, Facebook and Nairaland, is as divisive as the immediate society, and one of the reasons for such division is ethnocentric and religious sentiments, mingled with everyday political partisanship.

The major identities that are conditioned by gender are chauvinist, welfarist, seducer, dependent/independent, and patroniser. A significant finding here is that some of these identities are gender normative, while some are cross representational. However, there is an on-going attempt to break normative barriers, especially in the profiling of genders with a normative form of identity. For instance, gender chauvinist identity, which is normative to male, and marked by patriarchy, and superior actions. This is contested in Facebook and Nairaland by female participants, leading to a new wave of female chauvinism, marked by feelings of exceptionality, superior intelligence and domestic cum societal value, for instance

in Plate 4.58, where the componential action is used to foreground 'female as right' in every situation involving a 'right' or 'wrong' male, and male as 'wrong' in every occasion that involves a 'right' or wrong male.

The patroniser identity is marked by the acts of approbation and approval, which is demonstrated in every post or comment about festivity or celebration of any kind that are considered as the conceptual factors (acts) underscoring the patroniser identity. This is represented as a cross representational identity. Birthday and anniversary posts, or posts of certain achievements or successes. The patroniser identity is also reflective in commiseration, and sweet-talking tendencies for the purpose of attracting favours. Another identity representation is the welfarist, which is profiled as a female identity, except in rare instances that it can be traced to males. The same form of representation is seen for the seducer identity. Mostly, the seducer identity, as found in the data, is represented by marked photoshoots, or 'selfies' that conspicuously reveal certain parts of the male or female physiognomy for the purpose of 'inviting' or tempting the other gender. Hence, the seducer identity is to some extent cross-gender. The seducer identity is also revealed by captions and textual foregrounding of certain body parts or 'sexual' procedures.

Lastly for the identity relations to gender, there is the dependent/independent identity, which is relative to one gender depending on the other or not depending as the case may be. Findings in this study show that the dependent/independent identity is translational to ideological stance. For instance, it was reinforced in the study that one gender, profiled as the female gender, is considered to be the dependent of the two genders. However, this is fast change from a normative representation, considering that there are more independent women in contemporary societies. The study also finds that the dependent/independent identity determines people's perspectives or feel about gender relations.

The last macro factor or condition for the representation of identity is the group aggression, which produced the solidarist, activist, avenger, revolutionist, compromiser and encourager/circularist identities. The solidarist identity is marked by youths 'coming together', group mobilisation, group reminiscence, and group participation. The most dominant issue marked with the solidarists is the commemoration of the EndSars massacre, which is often precludes the memorial for the youths who were killed. The revolutionist identity in the youths encapsulates the revolutionary tendency that is building up in the youth. The EndSars protest, which was the main basis for tagging the youth aggression identity, can be said to be a foundation for youth 'activism'; for once in the nation, the entire youth stood up in solidarity to push for a kind of revolution in the 'police'. But their activism was voided due to certain political factors, which would be pointed out in the next section.

For the activist identity, findings revealed that it corresponds with aggression and protest. The protest was against 'police brutality', and the government's response to the situation of the country at that time. Findings in the study show that the factors that caused the protest still persist in contemporary society, and the EndSars protest has a remnant in form of the activist identity, consistently demanding justice and continuously holding government to account. This is also, in a way, connected to the avenger identity. The youths as avengers, associate the Endsars consequences to every action, especially political choice of who to vote for or support. Findings, in the avenger identity, show that the EndSars protest gave birth to the 'Obedient' movement in the political landscape of Nigeria. The youths were ready to, under that platform, avenge all the ills melted to them during the End Sars protest, which the blame exclusively to government officials. Findings also show that youth aggression identity is polarised. Identity polarity among the youths is sponsored by the oppressors. To this end, there is the compromiser identity. The study finds that some of the youths have wholly or partly forfeited the purpose of the EndSars protest. This has also given birth to the

encourager/circularist identity. Because there is a growing number of youths who have lost track of the EndSars protest intentions, a group of individuals in the same group, have taking the responsibility to always remind them of the commitment to the purpose, particularly for justice for those who were killed in the process.

With respect to the linguistic markers of these identities or the linguistic choices, four groups of performatives have been identified to underly the representations of identity in Facebook and Nairaland communication. These are performative verbs, descriptive (adjectival) performative acts, nominal performative acts and modal (conditional) performative acts. Vastly, performative verbs were used in the data to define – state categorically the actions performed to determine classification into such identity variable. For instance, every identity mentioned were underscored by dominant performative verbs. These verbs conveyed certain illocutionary forces – actions that were related to the labelling of identity. The performative acts were marked with tenses, polarity, and voice. For tense, sequences like progressive, past, present and perfect tense; these are representative of time of representation or demonstration of the identities. For polarity, the positive and negative polarity were found. Polarity was used in the data to positively or negatively validate or invalidate identities. They were used to mark definite or indefinite actions about identity. Negation was achieved using the conventional negative act, ‘not’, prepositional negation, ‘without’, and contracted negation such as ‘won’t’, among others. In terms of voice, the sentences were characteristically in both the active and passive statement.

The second form of performative is descriptive (adjectival) performative acts. The study finds out that every adjective used to qualify identity has an inherent performative act. Different forms of identities are found in the data. They include comparative adjectival acts, nominal and cardinal adjective, and representative and descriptive adjectives. There are also nominal

performative acts, which are nouns and pronominals. Lastly, there is the use of modal (conditional) performative acts. The modal performative acts found in the data include existential modality, epistemic modality, obligation, certainty and responsibility. These modalities are the conditions of actions that define the identity variables foregrounded in the data.

The study also discovered the use of collocations in the data. These collocations are either regular or punish. Regular collocations like 'playing' and 'starting', were used to emphasise acts or actions, while punish collocations were used to undermine consequential actions or positions. There is also the use of parallelism in two dominant forms, structural parallelism like 'living and dying', sequential parallelism in 'banditry', 'killing', and unusual collocation. There is figurisation in the data, which manifest in form of alliteration, assonance, simile, metonymy, antithesis and repetition. There is also the use of capitalisation to foreground markers of identity.

Lastly, identity is marked in Facebook and Nairaland using pragmatics markers. The dominant features – markers that are evident in the data include reference, inference, metaphor and metapragmatic act. At the broad level, reference was made to personal, spatial and temporal entities. Reference to persons were inclusive and exclusive. The solidarist identity, for instance, had inclusive reference. Personal references were anaphoric, while spatial and temporal references were more exophoric. Spatial and temporal references foregrounded the context of representations. Inferences were used by the participants to justify actions, take implicit positions or validate certain conditions that underpin the representation of identity in the chats or posts. Metaphor also featured as a pragmatic marker of identity representation in Facebook and Nairaland. There were denotative and connotative metaphors. The denotative metaphors often coincided with conceptual or deictic metaphor,

while the connotative metaphor was symbolic. Metaphors used in the data to mark identity had inherent performative acts portraying one form of identity or the other. The most dominant metapragmatic act in the data is swearing,

5.2 Conclusion

This section foregrounds the conclusions that can be adduced to this study. These conclusions also serve as evaluation of the main findings along with the objectives of the study. First, with respect to the representation of identity, it can be concluded that Facebook and Nairaland users both consciously, unconsciously, implicitly and explicitly portray their identity as part of their communication. Some identities are attributed, while some are indicative. In both cases, however it can be concluded that identity tied to certain conceptual actions or factors. This study focused on four of these factors, age, gender, ethnicity/religion and aggression. The study also concludes that these factors are capable of igniting division and diverse shades of identity, as discussed above. The study concludes that identity cleavages are collective, personal or interpersonal. There is political interference in the representation of identity, which makes it significant to conclude that politics is a meta-intrusive condition that account for divisiveness in group identity.

It can be concluded that ethnicity in the Nigerian context is meddled with politics, which contributes to the plurality of identity in the social media space. Just when it felt as if the youths had found a rallying point, especially with their being able to mobilise themselves together during the EndSars protest, the resurgence of political partisanship stepped in to widen the gap. The youths are now widely separated by politics. The study also concludes that the divisive or separatist identity in some factions of the youth population is politically motivated, if not sponsored. Examples of this have been analysed above.

The study concludes that there is bidirectionality between identity representations and the linguistic or pragmatic feature that represent or underscore them. On the one hand, each identity represented in Facebook and Nairaland discourses has denotative significations that underscore them, whether in form of performative act or linguistic resources. It can be concluded that every class of word that is used to mark identity has inherent performative acts, in other words, the nominal – nouns, adjectives or even adverbials marking different identities have performative actions, which they directly or indirectly (inferentially) convey about the identity variables. On the other hand, there are marked linguistic and performative words that foreground virus identity positions in Facebook and Nairaland interactions. These can be referred to as definite signals of in-group and out-group identity. In the same vein, the representation of some kinds of identity occasions the use of certain linguistic, pragmatic and performative acts, which this study concludes is synonymous to resources. Thus, the identities of age, gender, ethnicity and aggression are foregrounded using marked resources.

Lastly, the study concludes that the pragmatic and linguistic acts used by interactants in Facebook and Nairaland post and comments are the bases for maintaining group-self-identity or individual-self-identity. Thus, it can be affirmed that the youths, who are the majority users of the social media reinforce identity cleavages using linguistic and pragmatic resources.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are projected by this study.

1. In spite of not focusing on political identity, it was found that every identity representational factor is meddled with political action(s). Hence, the study recommends that the youths should learn to separate politics from their interpersonal actions and mobilisation, if they intend to keep a group identity that is constant. The more the meddle politics with serious – consequential actions, such as the #EndSars solidarity, they will never get justice and fair treatment from the political elites, who use politics as a tool against them.
2. The study recommends tuning down rhetoric and performative acts that are divisive and threatening on the social media space the expression of unity and group receptive or tolerant identity. The social media space should be a place for group networking and the establishment of strong relationship that would also enhance a group or national identity that is harmonious not a place for pursuing self and political identity interests.
3. This study recommends personal or group censorship, and **‘not political control’** of the social media space. It is the struggle for political control of the social media handles that has caused so much division in youth-group identity.
4. Lastly, the study recommends to the youths who form the majority of social media community, and of course, the bulwark of divisive identity actions in the social media space, to build a common identity that would be the real third-force in the politically, ethnically and religiously divided nation. Not only do they have to build the identity in the social media space, but also, they need to project them, using performative,

linguistic and pragmatic acts that will put the government of the day at alert to always lead in the interest of the young people and the nation at large.

5.4 Contributions to Knowledge

There are three areas that this study contributes to existing knowledge, namely, the theoretical and analytical framework, the levels of identity representations, and lastly the discourse of the New Media. Taking the first, that is the theoretical anchorage, this study has contributed to the dynamics of performative acts, with representational conditions that made it applicable to the formation or analysis of identity.

Second, at the representational level, the study contributes to micro identity positions of the existing in-group, and out-group identities that has been formalised. It even foregrounds group-aggressive identity, not as a consequence of certain identity or ideology, but as identity positions in its own right, causing various forms of identity positions. At the level of representation, the study posits that representational factors of identity can be extended further, due to the fact that actions have the capability of generating identity, in the same way that identity leads to certain actions.

Finally, the study contributes to the evolving area of discourses on the New Media, not only limiting to Facebook and Nairaland that contributed the data for this research, but also all platforms. First, it underscores the fact that the social media platforms project identity not just in the broad or macro sense, as applied to the image that are seen in the post and profiles, but in the way they respond to comments or make their own comments, initiate acts and actions, with respect to crucial positions or topics of interaction. Second, the study contributes to the knowledge of resources that should be looked at in social media conversations; this is performative acts. The inference is that every action and comment projected on the social media space has performative acts, which are the basis for the underlying identities that

succeed the interactions between and among participants in the platforms. To this end, other researchers have a working template to adopt in studying other variables of identities that were not covered in this study.

5.5 Suggested Areas for Further Research

Based on the findings that politics has encroached severely on the common identities of the youth, a significant area to study will be the political identity of the youths in social media space. A study of this nature will uncover the underlying reasons politics has infested all aspect of national identity, and the variables of such political identity that we need to look out for in the social media, particularly among the youth population, who are the majority of the social media space.

This present study focused on the EndSars protest as a group-aggressive trait underpinning certain forms of identity. However, the post-EndSars matters also spark different forms of identity. Hence, it will be significant to study the representations of post-EndSars protest identity or even ideology among the youths. Such a questions will address among other things, how the youths are feeling about the prospect of the nation, with respect to security and their common struggle against police brutality and political subjugation.

Lastly, there are other social media handles or platforms that the youths are present; two that attract the most attention, apart from the two (Facebook and Nairaland) adopted for this present study, are Twitter and Instagram. It will be good to apply the model of performative act developed for this study on data from these media platforms to really test if the results are replicable in other platforms.

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Bio-data

A. Personal Data

1. Full Name: Abosede Bukola ALABI
2. Address: Alabi's House, Ogeroju, Bako Ibadan, Oyo State.
3. E-mail: abosealabi@yahoo.com
4. Phone No: 08034618754
5. Date and Place of Birth: 4th September, 1983 Ode-Remo, Ogun State.
6. Nationality: Nigerian
7. Name and Address Next of Kin: Pastor Alabi Stephen, Alabi's House, Ogeroju, Bako, Ibadan, Oyo State.

B. Educational Background with Dates and Qualification

Lead City University	2021 till date	PhD (in view)
University of Ibadan	2007-2009	M.A (English)
University of Ilorin	2001-2004	B.A (English)
FUTA Staff Secondary School	2000	SSCE

C. Working Experience:

Mary Magdalene Seminary Girls School, Abia State-Teacher	2006
Bola International Group of Schools Akure, Ondo State-Teacher	2006
Peaceland Nursery & Primary School-Librarian	2007
Lifespring College-Teacher	2006
Timbel Forte Consult-PRO	2007
Ondo Boys' High School, Ondo, Ondo State- Teacher/Staff Secretary	2007
Federal College of Agriculture, Ibadan	2013 till date

D. Awards and Fellowship

Nil

E. Membership/Professional Bodies

- Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM)
- English Scholars' Association of Nigeria (ESAN)

F. Publications

- ❖ Alabi Bukola A. *The Role of Agricultural Extension in Food Production and Poverty Reduction in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria*. **Review of Public Administration and Management (ROPAM)** Vol. 6. No 11, 2017 pages 41-49.
- ❖ Akintayo Atinuke, Oluwaseun & Alabi Bukola. *The Perception of Rural Women in ERO Community on Radio Skill Acquisition Programmes on their Socio-economic Development*. **Review of Public Administration and Management (ROPAM)** 2017.

- ❖ Alabi B.A. & Atinuke A. *Language Use in the Age of Globalization: The Case of Social Media*. **Review of Public Administration and Management (ROPAM)** Vol. 5. No 10, 2016 pages 123-131.
- ❖ Alabi B.A., Olukiran O.A., Makinde B. O. & Omoyola Y.R. *The Use of Information Communication Technology for the Effective Teaching of Agricultural Science in Secondary Schools in Oyo State*. Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Mobile e-Services. 7th to 19th October, 2017. Vol. 7 ISBN: 978-2902-43-8.
- ❖ Alabi Bukola A. *Language and Sex in Electronic Advertisement: A Case Study of Automatic Answering Machines*. **Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research** Vol. 3 Issue 3. 2017.
- ❖ Makinde A.I., Oluwafemi, Adeowyin D.T.E. Alabi Bukola A., Okunade R.I. & Adediji J.A. *Comparative Effect of Organic and Inorganic Fertilizers on the Growth Yield and Mineral Content of Tomato*. **ActaSATECH** 9 (1), 2017, Pages 61-70.
- ❖ Alabi Bukola A. *The Role of Agricultural Extension in Increasing Food Production as a Strategy in Reducing Poverty in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State*. **Review of Public Administration and Management (ROPAM)** Vol. 8. No 18, 2020 pages 81-93.
- ❖ Makinde A.I., Okunade R.F., Oluwafemi M.O., Alabi B.A., Akinboye O., Adedeji J.A. & Ayodele S.Y. *Effect of Okra Spacing on the Growth and Yield of Okra (Abelmoschus esculentus L. moench) In a Jatropha-Okra Intercrop*. **International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation**. ISSN: 2321-2705. August 2020, Pages 236-239.
- ❖ Alabi Bukola Abosede & Modupe Victoria Davies. *Pidgin English: An Alternate Means of Communication in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions: Case of Adeyemi College Of Education, Ondo, Ondo State*. **Review of Public Administration and Management (ROPAM)** Vol. 8. No 18, 2020 pages 61-64.
- ❖ Alabi B.A. *A Discourse and Analysis of Olu Obafemi's Naira Has No Gender*. **Review of Public Administration and Management (ROPAM)** Vol. 6. No 11, June 2017 pages 41-49.
- ❖ Ibitoye D.O., Akindele O.D, Ogungbemi O.R., Augustus E.O., Alabi B.A. & Raji T.O., *Agricultural Vocational Training Programme (ANTP): Challenges and Implication for The Attainments of The 2030- Sustainable Development Goals*. 2022 Conference Proceedings of the Association of General Studies for College of Agriculture and Allied Institutions in Nigeria (ACOSCAAIN) Theme: Human Development and Insecurities in Nigeria: The Nexus ISSN: 1234567-98911-3. 2022 PP 198-205.

- ❖ Akindele O.D., Omoyajowo O.A., Okpeze V.E., Oluade E.A. & Alabi B.A. *Poverty, Urban Violence and Implications for National Stability: A Case Study of Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State*. 2022 Conference Proceedings of the Association of General Studies for College of Agriculture and Allied Institutions in Nigeria (ACOSCAAIN) Theme: Human Development and Insecurities in Nigeria: The Nexus ISSN: 1234567-98911-3. 2022 PP 217-229.
- ❖ Alabi Abosede & Oyeyebi Ayomiposi, *Impact of Ethno-Regional Appointment in the Nigeria Public Service on Governance 2017-2022*. **Journal of Pure Sciences and Public Policy** ISSN: 227-0038 Vol 14 No 1 June 2022 PP 1-16

G. Major Conferences Attended with Date

- ❖ 32nd Annual National Conference of English Scholars Association (ESAN) Ife, Osun State. 2016
- ❖ 11th Annual National Conference of the History of Education Society of Nigeria. Ibadan, Oyo State 2014
- ❖ 7th International Conference on Mobile E-Services held at Adeleke University, Ede. Oct. 2017
- ❖ Ketos Integrated Konsults. Topic: Enhancing Employees Productivity in Challenging Academic Environment. Oct. 5, 2018
- ❖ English Scholars' Association of Nigeria: 1st Virtual and 36th Annual Conference. 2020
- ❖ Ketos Integrated Konsults. Topic: Cooperative Societies as Tools for Poverty Alleviation and Survival in a Depressed Economy. 2020
- ❖ Department of Languages And Literature, Faculty of Arts, Lead City University, International Multidisciplinary Conference Theme: Rethinking Language & Literature as Problem-solving Tools in the 21st Century. 2023

H. References:

1. Dr V.O Okpeze
Dean, School of Basic Studies and Media Technology
Federal of Agriculture, Moor Plantation, Ibadan. Oyo State.
2. Dr R.U. Davies
Department of Languages and Literature,
Lead City University, Ibadan. Oyo State

Signature

Date

University Compliance Certification

This is to certify that this thesis written by Abosede Bukola ALABI with Matriculation number LCU/PG/001508 in the department of Language and Literature, Lead City University, Ibadan is in full compliance with the approved University Format and Style.

Signature

Date

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