Ars Artium: An International Refereed Research Journal of English Studies and Culture
ISSN: 2319-7889; E-ISSN: 2395-2423
Vol. 13, January 2025, pp 90-107
Edited by Vijay Kumar Roy
https://www.arsartium.org

Code-Mixing in the Gospel Songs of Some Nigerian Music Artistes

*Faith Motito**
*Christopher E. Nwabudike***
Funke J. Oni ****

Abstract

The study is an investigation into the use of code-mixing in the gospel songs of some Nigerian music artistes. There has been a remarkable evolution of code-mixing in Nigerian gospel music over the years. This evolution has been as a result of the multi-cultural and multi-lingual complexities of the Nigerian Language system. Therefore, this study explores and examines the various reasons why code mixing is employed in the gospel music industry in order to identify the limitations inherent in the conveyance of thoughts and meanings. The study also determines whether or not the message and theme of Nigerian code-mixed gospel songs are understood by non-speakers of the languages. Using observation and empirical analysis of three gospel songs selected purposively from the three major languages in Nigeria: Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo, the study shows that the reasons Nigerian gospel artistes' code-mix includes the desire for adequate expression and communication of ideas to a wider audience; the need to maintain the indigenous heritage by Africanizing some English terms and to showcase prowess and prestige and foster the spirit of

*Postgraduate Student, Department of English, Federal University, Dutsin-Ma, P.M.B. 5001, Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, Nigeria. Email: motitofai@gmail.com

**Senior Lecturer, Department of English, Federal University, Dutsin-Ma, P.M.B. 5001, Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, Nigeria. Email: chrislizzyn@gmail.com

***Associate Professor, Department of English, Federal University, Dutsin-Ma, P.M.B. 5001, Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, Nigeria. Email: joeoni2002@yahoo.com

© 2025 The Authors. Published by Paragon International Publishers. Open Access Under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC BY 4.0).

nationalism and unity amongst Nigerians. The Matrix Language Framework by Carol Myers-Scotton and Accommodation Theory by Howard Giles provide the theoretical framework for the study. From the analysis, it is gathered that code-mixing arises from limitations in the flow of expression. Hence, Nigerian gospel artistes resolve to a quick switch of languages. Lastly, with the aid of a statistical representation of data, it is gathered that non-speakers of code-mixed languages comprehend the messages embedded in Nigerian gospel code-mixed songs.

Keywords: Code-mixing, Gospel, Music, Multicultural, Multilingual

1. Introduction

Gospel music in Nigeria, a faith based motivational music, was introduced into the Nigerian society when the Portuguese catholic missionaries in the 16th century came to Benin City. Since music is an integral part of the services and ceremonies of Christians, gospel music was introduced to the locals. Those days it was purely a chant and monolithic liturgy. This conversely means that the concept of code-mixing was not a practice of the Nigerian gospel songs. As a matter of fact, those gospel songs were pure and unadulterated. However, with the advent of CMS taking over the missionary activities in Nigeria, congregational hymns became the gospel music trend at that period. Now, this is not to mean that hymns were not translated into indigenous Nigerian languages. As a matter of fact, the first Nigerian to have recorded a gospel song in Nigeria, late Reverend Josiah Jesse Ransome Kuti, composed songs in English and Yoruba and also translated hymns from English to Yoruba. Now translation is vastly different from the concept of code mixing because code-mixing has to do with a switch from a language which may be a word, phrase or clause into another within a particular sentence. This was not the case with Nigerian gospel music in the 1920s; music was either purely indigenous or English. Also in the Eastern part of Nigeria, this trend continued even with indigenous gospel artistes as Ikoli Harcount who was referred to as the father of Igbo Church music in the 1950s. He sang songs in Igbo and English even though he sang before British dignitaries and even went around the world with his choir.

Code-mixing began to encroach subtly into the Nigerian gospel music when artists of various ethnic groups emerged. In the 1970s, gospel artistes like Bola Are, Ebenezer Obey, Panam Percy Paul, amongst others began a new wave of music which was a whole different dimension to what it used to be. These artistes, probably in a bid to communicate to a wider audience or to enhance the spirit of brotherhood

and unity amongst Nigerians did not just sing in their local dialects but began combining other indigenous languages, Nigerian English and pidgin into their collections. This has given rise to a lot of contemporary artistes maximizing and utilizing the concept judiciously. There are hardly songs released in a year that would not have a bulk of code-mixed music released also.

The above has led to contemplation about the sudden surge of code mixing in what is supposed to be a sacred and sanctimonious branch of music. Code-mixing is in rampant use in Nigeria due to the multilingual complexities of Nigeria and the superior hold that the English language has on the country. Code mixing has affected every field in Nigeria including politics, education, and socio-economic sectors. Thus, finding code mixing in gospel music in Nigeria is not an exception. Among other concepts, codes mixing seems to have taken a great toll on Nigeria as it is majorly used in a system that experiences language contact.

Most recently, there has been a surge of trendy code-mixed music in the Nigerian music industry like never before. "It has translated from just being a church song into music for Christian social functions, such as weddings, naming ceremonies, burial ceremonies, house warming and birthdays" (Chimene-Wali 2). Gospel music has a stronger hold on the Nigerian Music industry than other music types, and one may begin to wonder if this is so due to the impact of code-mixing rampant in the Nigerian gospel music.

It is important to closely monitor developments that might affect the industry. It might be for the same reasons that *The Native* observes, "the need for youths to have a kind of music that caters for their social interest, has also contributed to code-mixing in the Nigerian gospel music" (3). However, the population of the listeners to Nigerian gospel music is not just the youths; actually the older people equally benefit from Nigerian gospel music, even the code-mixed ones. More so, gospel music is one that seeks to pass a message across, either as adoration to God or a call to repentance. A code-mixed gospel song is not an exception either. The population that listens to these songs also do so in a bid to access a message.

A study of code mixing in Nigerian gospel songs cannot be said to be novel. Some studies in this area definitely do exist. An example of some similar work is the one by Adenike Adenugba. He has examined the nature of code switching as a linguistic phenomenon in communication, stylistic effect of the trend, the implication of the practice in communication and the strategies Nigerian artistes employ in carrying this out (15).

From the existing works exemplified by the ones cited above, it is obvious that the aspect of code mixing in Nigerian gospel music as related to the equivalence of meaning has not been researched. Therefore, this research examines the concept of code mixing in relation to the equivalence of meaning. It focuses on how listeners of a code mixed song get the message embedded in it.

Eirlys E. Davies and Abdelali Bentahila also confirm that code switching in song lyrics is by no means a recent phenomenon but "motivated by the expansion of mass media that provides unprecedented opportunities for people all over the world to be exposed to music originating from cultures other than their own" (34). Nilep Chad reviews code switching in sociology, linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics and suggests a definition of the term "sociocultural analysis" (1).

Oreoluwa Kuponiyi in "Code Switching in Contemporary Nigerian Hip-Hop Songs" opines that a lot of research has already been done on code switching and only few have been carried out on the use of code switching in music, especially hip hop songs by Nigerian artistes (3).

Adenugba also addresses the nature of code switching as a linguistic phenomenon in communication, stylistic effect of the trend, the implication of the practice in communication and to check out strategies Nigerian artistes employ to carry this out specifically. Chimene-Wali in her study: "Code Switching and Code Mixing in Nigerian Gospel Songs" observes that "code mixing is carefully exploited to produce rhetorical and aesthetic effect" (11). Taiwo Babalola and Rotimi Taiwo examine the nature of the phenomenon and reasons of code switching and also discusses the stylistic effect of this trend and its "implication on English, Nigerian pidgin and Yoruba" (1). Zafar Khan and Vijay Kumar Roy in their paper "ELT in Africa: Challenges from Nigerian Pidgin English" opine that "Nigerian English has given entry to several pidgin words, phrases, and usages." (161)

The paper seeks to examine the concept of code-mixing in relation to the equivalence of meaning. It focuses on how listeners of a code mixed song get the message embedded in it. The study aims to provide a socio-linguistic investigation of code-mixing in selected gospel songs in the Nigerian music industry. Its objectives are to investigate the reason for code-mixing in Nigerian gospel songs; identify the limitations, if any, in terms of the conveyance of thoughts and meaning, if code-mixing is not used in Nigerian gospel songs, and to determine whether or not a non-speaker of a language can get the message embedded in a code-mixed Nigerian gospel song.

The study is significant because it will improve the knowledge of the impact and relevance of code-mixing in music including gospel music. This in turn will expose further intricate issues about code-mixing and how, if efficiently maximized, can serve the purposes intended by the singers. More so, by the end of the study, it will be evident what message is acquired by listeners when they listen to code-mixed songs among other expositions. Gospel music being a branch of music that seeks to pass a message across, this research shows how much of these messages can be acquired even when code- mixing is used. Furthermore, the research being a sociolinguistic one, will not only draw the attention of linguists, rather other fields of knowledge will also get salient information; whether it is from the music sector or religious field and organisation, it will improve and attract a wider group of scholars. Apart from the fact that this study serves as advancement to the knowledge and depth of scholarship, it will also expose further areas where more studies can be carried out. As knowledge increases, there is a need for this research to serve as a stepping stone for other works and studies.

2. Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks are deployed for this study. They are the "Matrix Language Framework" by Grosjean and Myers-Scotton as well as the "Accommodation Theory" by Howard Giles.

The Matrix Language Framework Model

Matrix Language Framework Model (MLF) is a production-based theory used "to explain the morphological and grammatical language units in code switching speech" (Grosjean 245). The premise of this theoretical frame is that the Matrix Language (base language) exists as a dominant language form into which the code switches are inserted as the embedded language (guest language) items. Understanding of the MLF proposed by Myers-Scotton is impossible "without identifying the constraints of the codes-witching behaviours, and the 4m model" (Myers-Scotton and Lake 160).

The Accommodation Theory

Accommodation theory also known as communication accommodation theory emphasizes the adjustments that people do while communicating. Howard Giles developed the theory, which, according to him, is when people try to emphasize or minimize their linguistic behaviour in the light of their interlocutors' behaviour (11).

Howard Giles further explains two ways by which people adjust their speech: Speech convergence and speech divergence. Speech convergence is when you change the way you talk about sound more like the person you are talking to. It refers to strategies through which individuals adapt to each other's communicative behaviours to reduce these social differences (14). Divergence in speech exists when a speaker signals social distance that differs from the style of other speakers.

3. Data Collection, Presentation and Analysis

Data was collected from a primary source. The researchers gathered the data from the internet and transferred it into a mobile device which was thereafter transcribed and translated for analysis. Due to the complexity of the Nigerian language system and the multi-lingual nature of Nigeria, a purposeful random sampling was the method used in collecting data. Since Nigeria comprises of three major languages: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, the three major languages were chosen because they constitute the highest number of speakers in the country. The researcher used a simple but reliable method for obtaining randomly the data each with these three major groups. Thus, the researcher came out with three songs: 'Oji Oku Eri Aja' by Mr. M and Revelations, 'Power Flow' by Monique and 'Aboki' by G-Wills.

This research is both a qualitative and a quantitative one because the songs used are analysed by adequately observing each of the lines where code mixing is used and empirically analysed using statistical properties. Due to the peculiarity of the research questions, the instrument used is appropriate in ensuring a successful and valid data collection.

Below is a table that shows the names of the gospel artistes, the songs selected and the languages that have been used by each of the artistes.

Table 1: The Songs Analysed

NAME OF ARTISTE	TITLE OF SONG	ALBUM TITLE	YEAR OF RELEASE	CODE-MIXING LANGUAGES
Mr. M and Revelation	Oji Oku Eri Aja	Sweet Devotion	2021	Igbo, English
Monique	Power Flow	Power Flow	2014	Yoruba, Igbo and English
G-Wills	Aboki	Single	2020	Hausa, English

The above table gives a summary of the songs used for the analysis of this research. The first column mentions each of the names of the artistes of the songs selected.

Mr. M and Revelation, Monique and G-Wills are the names of the artistes who sang "Oji Oku Eri Aja", "Power Flow" and "Aboki" respectively. The titles of the albums these songs were recorded in are also listed in column three. Column four contains the year the songs were released. "Oji Oku Eri Aja" was released in 2021 while "Power Flow" and "Aboki" were released in 2014 and 2020 respectively. The languages used for code mixing in "Oji Oku Eri Aja" are Igbo (Matrix Language) and English (embedded language) while Monique used Yoruba (Matrix Language), English (embedded language) and Igbo (embedded language) in "Power Flow". G-Wills sang in Hausa (Matrix Language) and English (embedded language) in "Aboki". Below is the presentation of each of the code mixed excerpts of the songs used in this research. The translations of the transcribed excerpts were also presented. The analyses of the songs were carried out afterwards.

Song 1: "Oji Oku Eri Aja" by Mr. M and Revelation

"Oji Oku Eri Aja" is a song that was composed to explicitly inform listeners about the intensity and sovereignty of God's nature. In a bid to explain this complexity, they utilize a blend of English language and Igbo languages to express the supreme power of God. Below are major lines where code mixing was used:

I worship Oji okueriaja: ***I worship the All-consuming fire***
I worship chi yiriokudikauwe: ***I worship He who is clothed in fire***
Behold Oji okueriajah: ***Behold the All-consuming fire***
Behold chi yiriokudikauwe: ***Behold He who is clothed in fire***

A glance at the words and how the artistes have intelligibly voiced their respect to God shows how weighty and overwhelming the inexplicable sovereignty of God is in their hearts. The song starts with ***I worship*** but immediately deviates into a statement in Igbo language ***ojiokueriaja***. This tells us that the magnificence of the meaning in Igbo language may have a more vigour than when just it is sung in English. The sudden switch to the Igbo language tells of the inadequacy of English language to vehemently convey the thoughts of the artistes, hence a code-mixing. Most times, a translation or interpretation from an indigenous language into English language may lose its beauty, vigour or potency. This is why the artistes decide not just to sing in English language alone but rather to code-mix according to the rhythm of their emotions and also the proficiency they have in their mother tongue.

It is a known fact that repetition is done for the purpose of emphasis. Here we see a rich blend of Igbo and English languages. The song continues in the same

trend as in '***Behold chi yiriokudikauwe…'*** as a way of the artistes to show casing their linguistic prowess in both English and their indigenous language. A repetition of the same act proves a subtle intentionality to not just express freely their thoughts and emotions but also to flaunt their skill and versatility in the two languages. Even though the aim of the artistes is to eulogise about the supremacy of God, the artistes have also proven that they possess such incredible skill of praising Him in two languages.

The table below gives a representation of "Oji Oku Eri Aja" by Mr. M and Revelation using the MlF as a guide.

Table 2: Matrix Level of Song One

ANALYSES LEVEL	SUB-LEVELS		SUB-TYPES	FREQUENCY #	PERCENTAGE %
Whole language level analyses	English	EL		80	29.2
	Igbo	ML		194	70.8
Sentence level analyses	Intra-sentential analysis			34	31.5
Morpheme level	Content morpheme		Noun	42	33.6
			Adverbial	-	-
			Verb	41	32.8
			Adjectival	42	33.6
	System morpheme			97	100

The Matrix Language constitutes 70.8 percent of the total intra-sentential aspect of the song. The English language constitutes about 29.2 percent of code mixing in the song. One of the purposes of code-mixing is to be able to reach audiences that are beyond the cultural concerns of the song. From the above interpretation, it can be noted that even though Igbo is fondly used in the song a listener who is not a native of Igbo can still get 29.2 percent of the message that is being sung about. Furthermore, in the second row, the sentence level analysis was conducted and obviously the major concern of this research is code-mixing which an intra-sentential code-switching is. This does not negate the fact that other types of code-switching was used but due to the focus of the research, the only analyses done was on code-mixing which can also be referred to as intra-sentential code-switching.

In "Oji Oku Eri Aja", code-mixing constitutes about 31.5 percent of the total song. This was calculated by dividing the sum of the lines in the song by the code-mixed lines and multiplying the outcome by one hundred. As in

$$\frac{Total\ number\ of\ Code\ mixed\ lines}{Total\ number\ of\ lines} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

From the outcome received from the song, it is noteworthy to say that code-mixing covered almost half of the song.

Lastly, from the morpheme level analyses, it can be gathered that nouns and objectives are the most used content morphemes in the song having 32.6 percent each while verb carries 32.8 percent of the total content morpheme level of the song. The total system morpheme level of the song is 97.

Song 2: "Power Flow" by Monique

Power flow is a different form from the song earlier analysed. The core theme of the song is a quest for God's blessings and unlimited presence and anointing upon her life. The artistes makes a genuine and repetitive plea to God to show His power in her life. She does this by extensively employing the tool of code-mixing to pass on her message to God and of course her listeners. Below are instances of code-mixing in Power Flow:

Fi agbararehan	***display your power***
Fi agbararehan	***display your power***
Fi agbararehan Onyeoma	***display your power the good one***
I worship you, Alagbawimi o	***I worship you, the ancient one***
I adore Jehovah, Eledumare	***I adore Jehovah, the creator of the universe***
I depend on You,	***I depend on you, the one that saves***
Agbanilagbatan Oba	***completely***
Emmanueli comforter o	***distinct way of calling the name***
	Emmanuel in Yoruba
Emmaneli redeemer o	
Emmanueli provider	
Iwo ni my signs and wonders	***You are my signs and wonders***
Emmanueli, Emmanuelionyeoma	***Emmanuel the good one***

A distinct beauty of the song is the blend of two indigenous languages with English language. "Power Flow" has a mixture of three languages as a display of opulence probably in a bid to gain more access to God and or her listeners. The song opens with the repetition of the clause ***fi agbara re han*** and then concludes the statement with ***onyeoma***, an Igbo phrase. This does just not reflect an ease in switch between two languages but also shows that the artistes try to achieve two things at a time; to make a request from God and to praise Him at the same time. It furthermore suggests

a hope for a wider audience to get a hold of the song and not just a particular ethnic group, thus dissociating the song from having prominence in just an ethnic group.

I worship you Alagbawimi o
I adore Jehovah Eledumare

I depend on you Agbanilagbatanoba… also proves how the artiste who at a point may have been stuck in terms of conveying her thoughts decides to shift into Yoruba in order to successfully get a breakthrough at ensuring that all that is within is what is being sung. She does not allow the fact that the song had already begun in English language to deter her from expressing her thoughts in the language that conveyed it the best; hence the switch from the English language to Yoruba.

The artistes do not just code mix, they try to reform an English word into Yoruba language. This is a norm among indigenous speakers where an English word is pronounced locally therefore giving it a transformation from what it used to be. A typical example is seen where the artiste sings:

Emmanueli comforter o
Emmanueli redeemer o
Emmanueli provider o…

The word *Emmanuel* is an English word that is transformed and made indigenous into the above probably in a bid to weaken the hold English has on the song and also to reduce the volume of English terms used in the song in order for the song to retain its uniqueness.

The table below gives a representation of Power Flow by Monique, using the MLF as a guide.

4. Findings

In this data set, the code- mixing done in the three selected songs were analysed using the Accommodation theory by Howard Giles and the MLF model by Myers-Scotton. The focus was to accurately answer the three questions upon which this work was hinged.

To answer the first question, why do gospel artistes code-mix? The Communication Accommodation theory was used to address the question. The Accommodation theory provides a wide ranging framework aimed at predicting and explaining the adjustments individuals make to create, maintain or decrease social distance or interaction. From the data received, it can be seen that the gospel artistes have motives either to create, maintain or decrease social distance. Our focus shall be whether their motives are divergent or convergent. Brann reckons that an important motive for convergence is the desire to gain approval from one another. The premise is that of similar attraction. He furthermore explains that "the more social similar we are to our conversational partner; the more he or she will like to respect us and the more social rewards we can expect" (296). This view is in line with our findings.

On the other hand, divergence can also be adopted in order to shape receivers' attributions and feelings. It can also be an attempt to entice an interlocutor or audience to adopt a more effective communication stance. From the explanations given above, and a juxtaposition of the objectives of this study, the convergence and divergence aspects of the Accommodation theory have assisted us to know why artistes code mix and their message is received by their listeners.

From "Oji Oku Eri Aja" by Mr. M and Revelation, it can be seen that the artistes utilize more of the divergence aspect of communication because the use of English is almost consistently and repetitively interrupted by the use of Igbo languages. For instance**:**

I worship OjiokuEri Aja.
I worship Chi yiriokudikauwe.
Behold, Oji Oku Eri Aja, etc.

This is done to sharpen the listeners' attribution and feelings and also, it is used by the artiste to break through the limitations of language expression and not the other way round.

Another aspect of the data set that has a feel of the divergent communication is in power flow where the word 'Emmanuel' is transformed by the artiste as

'Emmanueli'. She could have just let it pass by using Emmanuel but a deep look at the song shows that there is an intentional effort to sharpen and enforce a particular notion and a particular way of speaking to the listeners. Generally, one of the purposes of code mixing among bilinguals according to Kayam Bazinth Edrinne Lora, "is to impress others with the mastery of other several languages" (32). From the discussions above, it can be seen that both artistes have code mixed in several points of their songs in order to impress their audience.

Monique, in "Power Flow" also uses powerfully, the convergence aspect of communication because she tries to utilize three languages; Igbo, Yoruba and English in a way of gaining more approval from a wider range of people. She does this by dissociating the song from being typically one of the languages and to improve and foster a sense of nationalism and the spirit of unity among the listeners of "Power Flow". As previously explained, there is a reward that goes with the use of convergence as it tends to command the respect and love of the listeners to her.

As for G-Wills in "Aboki", we could see that he uses a divergent skill to emphasis his prowess in both Hausa and English. Trudgill explains that the idea of "status and an individual wanting to maintain identity with a prestigious group in the society" can be a reason for code mixing (168). The idea of Communication Accommodation theory is just to reflect the motive of people in the aspect of language switch which has assisted this research greatly to know that the reasons artistes code mix are to gain approval from a wider audience, to reflect prestige and status of controlling and proficiently communicating in two languages, to ensure a free flow of communication of feelings, thoughts and emotions and to foster unity in a multilingual society like Nigeria.

The second question is: Are there limitations in terms of the conveyance of thoughts and meaning if code mixing is not used in Nigerian gospel songs? The Accommodation Theory helped in exhuming the answers from Oji Oku Eri Ajah by

Mr. M and Revelation where the artiste shifts from English into Igbo as a result of what we can term a limitation in conveying thoughts and meaning. We can observe that there is a sudden switch from English to Igbo to enable communication. Also, G-Wills in Aboki expresses himself by switching into English from Hausa in order to adequately and accurately convey properly his thoughts on the message he sought to pass across.

The third question for this research is: If a listener of a code mixed song is not a speaker of the languages used, can he get the message conveyed in the song? To answer this question, the researcher employed the Matrix Language Framework by analysing the songs empirically. The second theoretical framework which is the MLF model determines the morpho-syntatic frame for code switching data sets. According to MLF model, ML have more morphemes and determines tense, aspect and agreement of the data set. From the analysis, it can be noted that the percentage of the three data in terms of the language level is as follows:

Table 5: Percentage Code- mixing in All Three Songs

DATA	LANGUAGE LEVEL			INTRA-SENTENCE LEVEL
Oji Oku Eri Aja by Mr. M & Revelation	English Igbo	EL ML	29% 70.8%	31.5%
Power Flow by Monique	English Igbo Yoruba	EL EL ML	42.7 % 6.7% 50.6%	23.1
Aboki by G-Wills	English Hausa	EL ML	69.7% 30.3%	25%

The above representation shows that indigenous languages take the form of the Matrix Language (ML) and English takes the form of the embedded language. A thorough glance at the table shows that even though English takes the form of the embedded language, it still manages to come up with an impressive percentage that does not make the indigenous language emerge with wider margins. To answer one of the questions in this study, non-speakers can still get the message that is embedded in a song if one of the languages they speak is a part of the code mixed song. For instance, Nigeria is a multilingual society, as such, its official language, English, is spoken by 60 million people in the country. Therefore, if English as an embedded language has been used to a reasonable level as shown in the data, the message of the gospel artistes can clearly be understood by the listeners.

5. Discussions

Code-mixing, a sociolinguistic term is the use of two or more languages in a speech especially within a specific sentence and this study focuses on the use of code-mixing in gospel music in Nigeria. Thus, the purpose of this research was to investigate why Nigerian artistes code-mix in their songs? What are the barriers to language switch and the processes involved in the conveyance of meaning within and outside the social context of the languages used and whether or not a non-speaker gets the message embedded in a code-mixed song?

Two theoretical frameworks were adopted and found useful in this research. The Matrix Language Framework sees code-mixing as the use of two languages namely the Matrix Language (ML) and the embedded language(s) within a sentence. They have enabled the researcher in getting facts on how non-speakers can get the message embedded in a code-mixed song. On the other hand, the Accommodation Theory which sees code-mixing as a form of linguistic adjustment done either upward or downward towards a particular goal has helped the researcher to identify the various reasons why code-mixing is used in Nigerian gospel music and the limitations involved if code-mixing is not used.

The data collected for this study were three songs from the three major languages in Nigeria and they show a good percentage of code-mixing done by Nigerian gospel artistes. The use of the indigenous language and English Language is a common trend featured in their indigenous languages by switching from English to an indigenous language and or vice versa.

The aim of code-mixing by Nigerian gospel artistes ranges from a passionate pursuit of expressing their thoughts, feelings and emotions without constraints, a reflection of prowess in two or more languages as a proof status and lastly an opportunity to reach wide audiences with their music.

Due to the complexities of emotions in music, there are limitations when it comes to the conveyance of thoughts, ideas and emotions. Most times, Nigerian gospel artistes do an abrupt switch in order that they may be able to adequately communicate effectively what they have in mind. To them such feelings are better captured, expressed and properly described in their indigenous languages.

Lastly, English is a language that most Nigerians speak and from our analysis, we have seen that most Nigerian gospel artiste prefer to code-mix between English and their indigenous language(s). Therefore, as far as English is utilized, non-speakers of English are rare to find in Nigeria, hence code mixed Nigerian gospel songs

should be understood adequately. Even though not the whole message may be gotten but a large chunk of it.

6. Conclusion

Gospel music in Nigeria is currently experiencing a wave of code-mixing such has never experienced before. The rate at which Nigerian gospel artistes have developed and adopted a new medium of accurately expressing themselves through their music has become a trend. As such, code-mixing is one of the tools that has been employed by most of them. From the data collected however, it can be seen that Nigerian gospel artistes still continue to utilise intensively their indigenous languages with a blend of English language as a proof of their solidarity to their cultural and ethnic heritage and a show of basic proficiency in English language. From all that has been studied, gospel music is centred on passing a message across to a targeted audience, thus, code-mixing has been used to further expand the scope of audience that listen to particular artistes.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that further studies be carried out to investigate into how messages are gleaned from code-mixed songs by international listeners who do not understand both English and the indigenous language(s) used. Also, the objectives of this research can be examined through the analysis of inter-sentential code-switching.

Works Cited

Abdulaziz, Mkilifi. "Triglossia and Swahili – English Bilingualism in Tanzania." *Language in Society,* vol.1, no.1, 1972, pp. 197- 213.

Adenugba, Adenike Funmilayo. *Code-switching and Code-mixing in the Lyrics of Selected Nigerian Secular Songs*. 2016. U of Lagos, MA dissertation.

Adetuyi, C. A., and A. A. Adeniran. "Aspects of Semantics of Standard British English and Nigerian English: A Comparative Study." *English Linguistics Research,* vol. 6, no. 3, 2017, pp. 5-14.

Adichie, Chimamanda N. *Purple Hibiscu*s. Algonquin Books, 1993.

Brann, C.M. *The Terminology of Multilingualism. Alsed-LSP Newsletter*. 12th Nov. 1989, http://ej.lib.cbs.dk/index.php/UANL/article/download/3269/3471. PDF download.

Chimene-Wali, Naomi. "Code Switching and Mixing in Nigerian Gospel Music." *Scholarly Journal of Science Research and Essay*, vol. 9, no.1, 2019, pp. 11-17.

Chad, Nilep. '"Code Switching' in Sociocultural Linguistics." *Colorado Research in Linguistics*, vol. 19, June 2006, doi: https://doi.org/10.25810/hnq4-jv62.

Davies, Eirlys E. and Abdelali Bentahila. "Code Switching as a Poetic Device: Examples from Rai Lyrics." *Language & Communication*, vol. 28, no. 1, Jan. 2008, pp. 1-20, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2006.10.001.

Babalola, E. Taiwo, and Rotimi Taiwo. "Code-switching in Contemporary Nigerian Hip-hop Music." *Itupade Online Journal of African studies*, vol. 1, 2009, 1-26.

Grosjean, Francois. "Exploring the Recognition of Guest Words in Bilingual Speech." *Language and Cognitive Processes,* vol. 3, no. 3, 1988, pp. 233-74, https://doi.org/10.1080/01690968808402089.

Khan, Zafar, and Vijay Kumar Roy. "ELT in Africa: Challenges from Nigerian Pidgin English." *Dutsin-Ma Journal of English and Literature,* vol. 9, no. 2, Oct. 2024, pp. 161-73.

Kuponiyi, Oreoluwa A. *Code-switching in Contemporary Nigerian Hip Hop Songs*. 2013. U of Ghana, MA dissertation.

Myers-Scotton, Carol. *Duelling Languages: Grammatical Structure in Codeswitching*. Claredon Press, 1993.

The Native. "The Evolution of Gospel Music in Nigeria." 22 Sept. 2020, https://thenativemag.com/evolution-gospel-music-nigeria/.

Trudgill, Peter. *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction*. Penguin, 1974.

❑❑❑