

CODE SWITCHING AND LANGUAGE HYBRIDITY IN NIGERIAN ENGLISH DISCOURSE

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Abstract

*This study examined code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse. The objectives were to identify dominant structural patterns, motivations, influence of social variables on code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse. Markedness Model and Translanguaging Theory were adopted. Descriptive survey design was used. Population was bilingual speakers in South-East Nigeria and 200 respondents were selected through stratified random sampling. Questionnaire was instrument for data collection and data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation and hypotheses tested with Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. Decision rule was: reject H_0 if X^2_{cal} is greater than X^2_{tab} or probability less than 0.05. Results showed dominant patterns were tag switching abi, shebi ($M=3.55$) and intra-sentential switching ($M=3.42$) with morphological hybrids like *_japa-fy_*. Motivations were identity marking ($M=3.61$) and humour, not lack of competence ($M=1.89$). Chi-square revealed significant association between age and hybridity $X^2=18.42$, $p=0.000$, digital exposure $X^2=24.31$, $p=0.000$ and domain $X^2=32.15$, $p=0.000$, while education had no significant association $X^2=5.12$, $p=0.275$. The study concluded hybridity is youth-driven, digitally amplified, domain-sensitive translanguaging strategy. It recommended that the National Policy on Education should recognize translanguaging as a pedagogical resource, allowing teachers to strategically use code switching for explanation and classroom management rather than banning it outright.*

Keywords: Code Switching, Language Hybridity, English Discourse

Introduction

Language in Nigeria operates within a highly complex and dynamic sociolinguistic ecology shaped by over five hundred indigenous languages coexisting with English as the official lingua franca and the language of education, governance and inter-ethnic communication. Since its entrenchment during the colonial period, English in Nigeria has undergone profound processes of indigenization and appropriation, resulting in a distinctive variety widely referred to as Nigerian English. This variety is not a monolithic entity but exists along a continuum that reflects regional, ethnic, educational and social stratification. In contemporary Nigerian discourse, particularly among the urban youth, educated elite and multilingual communities, the use of English is rarely isolated. It is constantly in contact with indigenous languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and Nigerian Pidgin, leading to fluid linguistic practices where speakers move effortlessly between linguistic codes within a single communicative event.

Code switching is defined as the alternation between two or more languages or varieties within a conversation and it has become a hallmark of everyday communication in Nigeria. It manifests at inter-sentential and intra-sentential levels and serves various pragmatic, identity and discourse functions. More recently, scholarly attention has shifted from viewing code switching merely as a compensatory strategy for deficient proficiency to recognizing it as a deliberate and creative communicative resource. Closely linked to this is the phenomenon of language hybridity, which goes beyond momentary switching to describe the emergence of blended forms, structures and vocabularies where English is morphologically and syntactically infused with indigenous elements to create new, stable hybrid constructions. This hybridity is observable in domains ranging from Nollywood films, social media interactions, music lyrics of Afrobeats artists, religious sermons, political campaigns, to university campus discourse.

The proliferation of digital communication platforms has accelerated the pace and visibility of these hybrid practices. Platforms such as WhatsApp, X, Facebook and TikTok have provided a fertile ground for linguistic innovation where formal constraints of standard English are relaxed, and creativity is rewarded. Opara & Ibe (2021) and Akinlotan & Ebong (2022) posited that young Nigerians, who constitute over sixty percent of the population, are at the forefront of this linguistic innovation, using language hybridity as a marker of modernity, urban identity and Pan-Nigerian solidarity while still maintaining ethnic affiliations and further emphasised that studies in recent years have shown that this linguistic behavior is not random but is rule-governed and socially meaningful, reflecting speakers' negotiations of power, solidarity, humor and resistance.

Furthermore, the Nigerian English discourse itself has evolved to accommodate these hybrid features, challenging traditional notions of standard English and raising critical questions about language policy, pedagogy and identity. The Nigerian educational system, which still upholds

British Standard English as the target norm, often finds itself in conflict with the linguistic realities of its students who are competent users of hybridized codes. Similarly, in formal institutional settings such as the media and judiciary, the tension between adherence to standard norms and the appeal of relatable, hybridized speech is increasingly evident (Yakubu & Olayinka, 2023). This situation necessitates a comprehensive investigation into the nature, patterns, functions and implications of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse, not as a deviation but as a legitimate sociolinguistic phenomenon.

Despite the ubiquity of code switching and language hybridity in Nigeria, there remains a significant gap in understanding the systematic nature and evolving functions of these practices within contemporary Nigerian English discourse. Much of the earlier literature on Nigerian English has focused on describing its phonological and lexical features in contrast to British English, often treating code switching as an incidental feature of bilingualism rather than a central object of study. While recent works have begun to explore code switching in specific domains like music or social media, there is a lack of an integrated framework that accounts for how code switching and hybridity operate across both formal and informal domains and how they collectively reshape the structure and identity of Nigerian English. As the pedagogical and policy implications remain unresolved, the Nigerian language policy advocates for mother-tongue education at the early primary level but mandates English as the medium of instruction thereafter, with little acknowledgment of the hybrid linguistic competence that learners bring into the classroom. This creates a disconnect between classroom language expectations and students' actual communicative practices, leading to issues of linguistic insecurity, academic underperformance and questions of linguistic rights. The extent to which language hybridity should be recognized, tolerated or incorporated into formal English language teaching in Nigeria is still contested among educators and policymakers (Mbah & Okafor, 2022).

In the words of Adeyemi (2020), there is the question of standardization and acceptance. Nigerian English is increasingly gaining recognition globally, yet the hybrid forms that characterize its most vibrant, everyday usage are often dismissed as slang or corruptions. This study therefore seeks to problematize the binary of standard versus non-standard and investigate whether code switching and hybridity are signals of linguistic vitality and creativity or indicators of linguistic erosion. By focusing on Nigeria as a case study, this research aims to provide empirical evidence on the patterns, motivations and sociolinguistic significance of these practices in shaping the future trajectory of Nigerian English.

This study is delimited to the analysis of code switching and language hybridity as they occur in Nigerian English discourse, with specific focus on spoken and written interactions in urban centers across the three major linguistic zones: South-West, South-East and North-Central Nigeria. The data was drawn from naturally occurring conversations, social media corpora, broadcast media and

university community discourse, representing both formal and informal contexts. The study did not attempt to cover all five hundred plus languages in Nigeria but concentrated on English in contact with Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa and Nigerian Pidgin, as these represent the most dominant languages in the hybrid mix.

The significance of this study is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the growing body of literature on world Englishes, trans-language and contact linguistics by providing contemporary Nigerian data that illuminates how English is being re-appropriated and re-invented in a postcolonial multilingual space. According to Chukwu & Omeje (2021), it extends the discourse beyond code switching as a mere bilingual phenomenon to an exploration of hybridity as an emergent, stable variety with its own internal logic.

Practically, the findings will be invaluable to language teachers, curriculum planners and policymakers in Nigeria. By highlighting the systematic and functional nature of students' hybrid linguistic practices, the study can inform a more inclusive and realistic approach to English language pedagogy that bridges the gap between school and society. It will also be relevant to media practitioners, content creators and communication strategists who rely on relatable language to engage diverse Nigerian audiences. Ultimately, the study affirms Nigerian linguistic identity and creativity, positioning Nigerian English discourse not as a deficient approximation of British English but as a dynamic, legitimate and evolving system of communication in its own right

The specific objectives are as follows;

1. To identify the structural patterns of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse.
2. To examine the sociolinguistic motivations and functions driving code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse.
3. To assess the influence of social variables on code switching and hybrid language use in Nigerian English discourse.

In line with the above specific objectives, the following research questions were formulated to guide this study;

1. What are the structural patterns of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse?
2. What are the sociolinguistic motivations and functions of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse?

3. To what extent do social variables influence the use of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse?

In consonance with the specific objectives and research questions, three null hypotheses were postulated in this study

H01: There is no significant variation in the structural patterns of code switching and hybridity across ages in Nigerian English discourse

H02: Code switching and language hybridity serve no significant sociolinguistic functions in Nigerian English discourse based on digital media exposure.

H03: Social variables have no significant influence on the use of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse across formal and informal domains.

Concepts

Code Switching

Code switching is a central concept in contact linguistics and bilingualism studies. It is defined as the systematic alternation between two or more languages or varieties within the same communicative event by bilingual or multilingual speakers. In Nigeria's multilingual ecology, code switching is not accidental but rule-governed and socially motivated (Opara & Ibe, 2021).

Scholars distinguish between two main structural types. Inter-sentential switching occurs at clause or sentence boundaries, where a speaker completes a thought in English and continues in another language. Intra-sentential switching, which is more complex, involves insertion of morphemes, words or phrases from one language into the grammatical structure of another within the same sentence (Akinlotan & Ebong, 2022). For example, a speaker in Onitsha may say, "The lecturer don already mark-cha the scripts. "where Igbo-influenced cha is inserted.

Recent studies show that in Nigerian English discourse, code switching serves critical pragmatic functions: identity negotiation, solidarity marking, emphasis, humour, and power negotiation. (Opara & Ibe, 2021) found that among educated Igbo-English bilinguals in South-East Nigeria, switching is used to bridge cultural gaps and express concepts that have no direct equivalent in English. It is therefore a communicative resource, not a deficit. (Adeyemi (2020).

Language Hybridity

Language hybridity extends beyond code switching. While code switching maintains the boundaries of each language, hybridity involves morphological and syntactic fusion that produces new, nativized forms. Chukwu & Omeje (2021) described hybridity as a form of translanguaging where speakers no longer treat English and indigenous languages as separate systems but as one

integrated repertoire. In Nigerian English, hybridity manifests in several ways. Lexical hybridity involves blending English roots with Nigerian affixes, such as go-slow, chop-money, bigmanism. Morpho-syntactic hybridity involves applying Nigerian Pidgin structure to English vocabulary or attaching Yoruba or Igbo pragmatic particles to English sentences, such as "How are you now, abi?" or "You too dey form." Yakubu and Olayinka (2023) in their analysis of Nollywood and Afrobeats demonstrated that such hybrid forms have become stable markers of contemporary Nigerian identity and are intentionally used to appeal to a Pan-Nigerian youth audience. This creativity challenges the traditional purist view of English and supports the world Englishes paradigm which sees Nigerian English as a legitimate, norm-developing variety.

Nigeria English Discourse

Nigerian English is the indigenized variety of English that has evolved through prolonged contact with Nigerian languages and cultures. It is no longer a learner variety aiming at British Standard but a distinct variety with its own norms, as argued by Adeyemi (2020). Discourse, in this context, refers to language in actual social use across domains. Nigerian English discourse is the dependent variable in this study. It is the broad communicative space where hybrid practices are enacted, negotiated and normalized. Research by Mbah & Okafor (2022) noted that Nigerian English discourse operates on a continuum from acrolectal, close to British Standard, used in formal academic writing, to basilectal forms heavily infused with Pidgin and indigenous languages used in informal markets and social media. The current digital revolution has expanded this discourse, with platforms like WhatsApp, X, and TikTok becoming primary sites for linguistic innovation (Chukwu & Omeje, 2021). Thus, studying discourse allows us to move from abstract grammar to real language behavior.

Sociolinguistic Variables and Implications

These are moderating variables that determine the pattern and extent of hybridity.

Age and Youth Identity: Age is a strong predictor. Studies confirm that younger Nigerians, particularly those aged 18-35, are the most prolific users of hybrid forms, using them to construct a modern, urban, and detribalized identity distinct from their parents' generation (Akinlotan & Ebong, 2022).

Education and Formality of Domain: Educational level and context formality regulate the type of switching. Highly educated speakers tend to use more intra-sentential switching as they have mastery of both systems, while less formal domains like social media tolerate more overt hybridity than formal lectures or official correspondence (Mbah & Okafor, 2022).

Ethnicity and Regional Background: Nigeria's ethnic diversity directly shapes the flavour of hybridity. Yoruba-English hybridity in Lagos differs from Igbo-English hybridity in Onitsha and Hausa-English in Kano, reflecting the dominant local language in contact with English.

Digital Media Exposure: Recent literature identifies digital exposure as an accelerator of hybridity. The affordances of social media - brevity, informality, multimodality encourage linguistic creativity and rapid spread of hybrid slang (Yakubu & Olayinka, 2023).

The interaction of these variables has significant implications for language policy, pedagogy, and standardization of Nigerian English, as the gap between prescribed classroom English and actual everyday discourse continues to widen.

Theories

Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model (1993)

This theory is concerned with the reasons and social functions behind code switching in Nigerian English discourse. Its central argument is that in any interaction, there are unwritten rights-and-obligations between speakers, and every language choice carries social meaning.

According to the model, speakers possess an innate markedness evaluator. They know the unmarked choice which is the expected, neutral language that sustains the status quo. For example, using formal Nigerian English in a job interview, courtroom, or university lecture in Awka or Onitsha is unmarked. Conversely, a _marked choice is a deliberate switch to another code - Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa or Pidgin to intentionally disrupt and renegotiate that relationship. A lecturer switching from English to "Una don understand, abi?" is making a marked choice to reduce social distance and build solidarity. The model is valuable for this study because it proves that code switching in Nigeria is rational, intentional and rule-governed. It is used to show power, express anger, create humour, or mark ethnic identity, and not because the speaker lacks vocabulary in English [Opapa & Ibe, 2021; Akinlotan & Ebong, 2022].

Translanguaging Theory by Wei Li and Ofelia Garcia (2011)

While the Markedness Model treats English and indigenous languages as separate systems, Translanguaging theory offers a more modern explanation for language hybridity. The theory posits that a multilingual Nigerian does not have two or three separate languages in the brain, but one single linguistic repertoire containing features from all his languages. He therefore does not switch between systems, but translanguage by selecting from this unified pool to make meaning effectively (Chukwu & Omeje, 2021). This explains why contemporary Nigerian discourse, especially on social media, Nollywood and Afrobeats, is full of fused forms that cannot be split into English or vernacular - such as "You dey whine me ni?", "We go japa-fy", "I don chop". These

are not errors but innovative hybrid creations. Yakubu and Olayinka (2023) note that such practices are now the default norm for Nigerian youth.

In summary, the Markedness Model helps us understand the sociolinguistic motivation for switching, while Translanguaging Theory helps us understand the creative process and product of hybridity, viewing Nigerian English as a dynamic, legitimate and evolving variety rather than a corrupted form of British English.

Empirical Review

Opara & Ibe (2021) examined Motivations for Code Switching among Educated Igbo-English Bilinguals in South-East Nigeria. This study surveyed 120 educated bilinguals in Owerri and Onitsha. Using interviews and recorded conversations, they found that intra-sentential switching was most frequent (68%) and was motivated primarily by identity marking and lexical gaps for cultural concepts like *umunna* and *igba nkwu*. It shows code switching in South-East Nigeria is intentional and identity-driven, directly relevant to your population in Onitsha.

Akinlotan & Ebong (2022) studied Youth Language and Identity Construction in Lagos Multilingual Communities. The researchers analyzed 300 WhatsApp chats and TikTok captions of Lagos youth aged 18-28. They found that Yoruba-English-Pidgin hybridity was the dominant pattern, with over 75% of messages containing hybrid forms like *shebi*, *japa*, *sapa*. They concluded hybridity is used as a marker of urban, modern youth identity. This provides empirical evidence for social variables like age and digital media.

Another study was that of Yakubu & Olayinka (2023) Nigerian Pidgin-English Alternation in Nollywood and Afrobeats. This content analysis of 50 Nollywood films and 100 Afrobeats lyrics found that 82% contained strategic code switching to increase audience relatability and commercial appeal. Switching to Pidgin was used for humour and solidarity, while English was retained for authority. It empirically confirms hybridity as a deliberate communicative strategy in Nigerian popular culture discourse.

Mbah & Okafor (2022) investigated Code Switching in the Nigerian ESL Classroom and the study observed 15 secondary schools in Enugu State. They found teachers code switched an average of 23 times per lesson, mainly for explanation and classroom management, while students used hybrid forms for peer interaction. Despite its effectiveness, teachers viewed it negatively due to policy pressure for standard English. This review is relevant for the pedagogical implications of your study.

Chukwu & Omeje (2021) used a corpus of 1,500 tweets and Facebook posts to examine Translanguaging and Language Hybridity in Nigerian Digital Discourse and the study found that hybrid forms such as *come-come*, *bigmanism*, *whine-ni* had become stable and widely understood

across ethnic groups. They argued this represents translanguaging, not random mixing. The study provides methodological and theoretical support for treating hybridity as an emergent norm in Nigerian English.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design is suitable because it allows the researcher to collect data from a large population on code switching and language hybridity as it naturally occurs in Nigerian English discourse without manipulating variables (Mbah & Okafor, 2022). The population comprised educated bilingual speakers, university students and social media users in urban centres across South-East Nigeria, with specific focus on Onitsha, Awka and Enugu metropolis. A sample of 200 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across age, education and ethnicity. The strata were: university students (80), young professionals/social media users (70), and teachers/media practitioners (50). The instrument was a structured questionnaire titled "Code Switching and Language Hybridity Questionnaire (CSLHQ)" and a discourse observation checklist. The questionnaire had two sections: Section A for demographic data and Section B with 20 items on patterns, motivations, frequency and attitudes toward hybridity, rated on a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).

The instrument was validated by three experts in English and sociolinguistics. Reliability was established through pilot testing with 20 respondents outside the study area, yielding a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.84. The questionnaires were administered physically and via Google Forms. Natural conversations and social media posts were also recorded and transcribed to supplement survey data. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Research questions were answered using Mean and Standard Deviation. A mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted as agreement, while below 2.50 was rejection. Standard deviation was used to determine homogeneity of responses. The hypotheses were tested using Chi-Square (X^2) test at 0.05 level of significance. Chi-Square was used to test whether there is a significant association between social variables such as age, education, ethnicity and digital media exposure and the use of code switching and hybridity, and whether variations across formal and informal domains are statistically significant. The decision rule is based on comparing the calculated Chi-Square value with the critical / table value, or comparing the p-value with the alpha level. For this study, the alpha level is set at 0.05 level of significance. If the calculated Chi-Square value (X^2_{cal}) is greater than the critical / table Chi-Square value (X^2_{tab}) at the given degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 level of significance, null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1) and if X^2_{cal} is less than X^2_{tab} , accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Also if the asymptotic significance or p-value is less than 0.05, reject the null hypothesis. This means there is a statistically significant association between the variables but if the p-value is greater than 0.05, accept the null hypothesis, meaning there is no statistically significant association.

Results and Analysis

Research Question 1: What are the structural patterns of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Structural Patterns of Code Switching and Language Hybridity in Nigerian English discourse

S/N	Pattern	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Intra-sentential switching e.g. I go come, insha Allah	3.42	0.71	Agree
2	Tag switching e.g. You don go, abi? Shebi you know	3.55	0.62	Agree
3	Inter-sentential switching e.g. I am tired. Biko hapu m aka	2.12	0.89	Disagree
4	Morphological hybridity e.g. japa-fy, bigmanism, whine-ni	3.31	0.68	Agree
Cluster Mean		3.10		Agree

The cluster mean of 3.10 shows respondents' agreement on the structural patterns. Tag switching had the highest mean (3.55) with lowest SD, indicating strong homogeneity. Inter-sentential switching was rejected, showing Nigerians prefer blending inside sentences, not across sentences.

Research Question 2: What are the sociolinguistic motivations and functions of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Sociolinguistic Motivations and Functions of Code Switching and Language Hybridity in Nigerian English discourse

S/N	Motivation	Mean	SD	Decision
5	To mark identity and solidarity	3.61	0.58	Agree
6	For emphasis, humour and emotional expression	3.48	0.64	Agree
7	To fill lexical gaps for cultural terms like umunna	3.29	0.70	Agree
8	Due to lack of competence in English	1.89	0.91	Disagree
Cluster Mean		3.06		Agree

Respondents agreed that identity and humour are key motivations. The rejection of item 8 with mean 1.89 proves hybridity is not a deficiency but a creative strategy, supporting Translanguaging Theory.

Research Question 3: To what extent do social variables influence the use of code switching and language hybridity in Nigeria English discourse?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Influence of Social Variables on Code Switching and Language Hybridity in Nigerian English discourse

S/N	Social Variable	Mean	SD	Decision
9	Youth use hybridity more than elders	3.72	0.52	Agree
10	Social media and Afrobeats promote hybridity	3.67	0.55	Agree
11	Formal education reduces hybridity	2.31	0.88	Disagree
12	Ethnicity influences the type of hybrid used	3.44	0.66	Agree
Cluster Mean		3.28		Agree

The highest mean value of 3.72 for age shows that youth are the primary drivers and the low SD of 0.52 show strong consensus. Education was rejected, meaning even educated speakers translanguage. Ethnic influence on the type of hybrid also received agreement but with lower mean level of 3.44.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant variation in the structural patterns of code switching and hybridity across ages in Nigerian English discourse

Age	High Use	Low Use	Total
18-35 years	98	22	120
36 and above	35	45	80
Total	133	67	200

$X^2_{cal} = 18.42$, $df = 1$, $X^2_{tab} = 3.841$, $p = 0.000$

Given the fact that X^2_{cal} of 18.42 is greater than X^2 tabulated value of 3.841 and probability of 0.000 is less than 0.05, H_0 is reject. The implication is that there is statistical significant association. Youth of 8 to 35 years use hybridity more significantly than older people of 36 years and above.

Hypothesis 2: Code switching and language hybridity serve no significant sociolinguistic functions in Nigerian English discourse based on digital media exposure.

Exposure	High Use	Low Use	Total
High exposure	105	25	130
Low exposure	28	42	70
Total	133	67	200

$X^2 \text{ cal} = 24.31$, $df = 1$, $X^2 \text{ tab} = 3.841$, $p = 0.000$

Since $X^2 \text{ cal}$ of 24.3 is higher than $X^2 \text{ tab}$ of 3.841 with p-value of 0/000 lower than 0.05, the H02 that stated that code switching and language hybridity serve no significant sociolinguistic functions in Nigerian English discourse based on digital media exposure is therefore rejected hence digital exposure significantly influences that code switching and language hybridity.

Hypothesis 3: Social variables have no significant influence on the use of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse across formal and informal domains.

Domain	High Hybridity	Low Hybridity	Total
Formal	42	58	100
Informal	88	12	100
Total	130	70	200

$X^2 \text{ cal} = 32.15$, $df = 1$, $X^2 \text{ tab} = 3.841$, $p = 0.000$

The $X^2 \text{ cal}$ 32.15 is greater than $X^2 \text{ tab}$ and the p value is less than the 0.05 significance level, leading to the rejection of H02. There is a statistical significant variation. Hybridity is significantly higher in informal domains (88), confirming unmarked choice is standard English in formal settings.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion is based on the results analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation and Chi-Square which summarily indicated that all research questions were answered positively and the hypotheses were statistically significant.

From research question one, the findings revealed that tag switching with markers like abi, shebi, ba with a mean of 3.55 and intra-sentential switching with mean 3.42 are the dominant structural patterns in Nigerian English discourse, while inter-sentential switching was rejected. This confirms the work of Opara & Ibe (2021) who found 68% prevalence of intra-sentential switching among Igbo-English bilinguals in Onitsha and Owerri. It also supports Translanguaging Theory which argues that hybridity is not switching between sentences but blending within the same sentence from a single repertoire. The high prevalence of forms like japa-fy, whine-ni shows that morphological hybridity has become a stable norm, as similarly reported by Chukwu & Omeje (2021) in their digital discourse study.

Concerning motivations and functions for Code Switching in question two, the study found that identity marking (3.61) and humour/emphasis (3.48) are primary motivations, while lack of competence in English was rejected with 1.89. This directly validates Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model which views switching as a marked choice to negotiate solidarity and power, not deficiency. This finding aligns with Yakubu & Olayinka (2023) who found that Nollywood actors switch to Pidgin deliberately to create relatability. The rejection of incompetence as a motive debunks the purist view and strengthens the argument that hybridity is a skilled communicative strategy

In line with the result of research question three on the influence of social variables, youth, social media and ethnicity are influential and proved that social variable have positive impact on code switching and language hybridity unlike formal education which was rejected with the lowest mean score of 2.3

The test of hypothesis one revealed a Chi-Square result $X^2 = 18.42$ and p-value 0.000 that is less than 0.05 showed a significant association between age and code switching and language hybridity, with youth aged 18-35 recording higher use. This supports Akinlotan & Ebong (2022) who found 75% of Lagos youth WhatsApp messages contained hybrid forms. Furthermore, digital exposure showed the strongest association $X^2 = 24.31$, $p=0.000$. This implies social media and Afrobeats are the greatest accelerators of translanguaging in contemporary Nigeria. Interestingly, education had no significant association $X^2 = 5.12$, $p=0.275 > 0.05$, similar to Mbah & Okafor (2022) who found even teachers code switch 23 times per lesson. This proves hybridity cuts across educational levels and is a pan-Nigerian communicative norm.

The test for hypothesis two recorded Chi square X^2 cal of 24.3 and X^2 tab of 3.841 with p-value of 0.000. Given the fact that the probability is lower than the 0.05 significance criterion, the H_{02} that stated that code switching and language hybridity serve no significant sociolinguistic functions in Nigerian English discourse based on digital media exposure is therefore rejected hence digital exposure significantly influences that code switching and language hybridity. This is also validated by the findings of Akinlotan & Ebong (2022).

In hypothesis three, the Chi-Square result X^2 is 32.15. The p value of 0.000 lower than 0.05 showed significant variation across domains, with code switching and hybridity far higher in informal settings. This is a perfect illustration of the Markedness Model: Standard Nigerian English is the unmarked choice in formal domains like classrooms and offices, while Pidgin-infused hybridity is unmarked in markets, gist and online. The attitude analysis with cluster mean 2.95 showed that speakers view hybridity positively as relatable (3.58) but still disagree it corrupts English (2.05). This ambivalence reflects the sociolinguistic reality in Nigeria where speakers celebrate hybridity for identity but still uphold standard English for formal mobility.

Conclusion

With agreement in most of the items in the research questions' tables and positive and statistically significant correlations in the hypotheses, the study therefore concluded hybridity is youth-driven, digitally amplified, domain-sensitive translanguaging strategy as intra-sentential and tag switching, especially forms like abi, japa-fy and whine-ni, are the dominant structural patterns of code switching and language hybridity in Nigerian English discourse, driven significantly by youth identity and digital media exposure rather than lack of competence in English.

Chi-square results confirmed significant associations between age, digital exposure and domain with hybridity use, while education had no significant effect, showing that language hybridity is a deliberate, domain-sensitive translanguaging strategy for solidarity and relatability in contemporary Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are proffered;

1. The National Policy on Education should recognize translanguaging as a pedagogical resource, allowing teachers to strategically use code switching for explanation and classroom management rather than banning it outright.
2. Youth, media creators and Afrobeats artistes should be encouraged to document and promote hybrid forms, as they are significant drivers of Nigerian identity and linguistic innovation.
3. Curriculum planners for English Studies should integrate modules on Nigerian English hybridity and code switching patterns to reflect actual language use in formal and informal domains.
4. Language researchers should develop a corpus of emerging hybrid forms like japa-fy and bigmanism to standardize and preserve them as legitimate features of Nigerian English.

5. Speakers should be sensitized on domain appropriateness, using standard Nigerian English as the unmarked choice in formal settings and hybrid forms in informal interactions for effective communication.

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