

A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Code Switching and Code Mixing in Funke Akindele's *Battle on Buka Street*

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Abstract

This study investigates the sociolinguistic phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing in the Nigerian movie: *Battle on Buka Street* by Funke Akindele. These practices, characterized by alternation and blending of languages, are analysed as reflections of Nigeria's linguistic diversity and sociocultural dynamics. Employing Myers-Scotton's (1993) Matrix Language-Frame (MLF) model and Pieter Muysken's (2000) typology of code-mixing, the study examines selected dialogues from the movie. Key findings reveal that characters engage in code-switching and code-mixing to enhance communication clarity, assert cultural identity, and navigate social relationships. The movie's multilingual dialogues, featuring English, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and *Naija* (Nigerian Pidgin English), illustrate the pragmatic and emotive functions of these linguistic strategies, including achieving inclusivity, expressing emotions, and preserving cultural heritage. By highlighting the interplay between language and social context, the paper underscores the significance of linguistic practices in a multilingual society like Nigeria. The analysis contributes to broader discussions on language use, identity, and cultural interaction. It offers valuable insights into the role of language as both a communication tool and a marker of sociocultural identity.

Keywords: Code Switching, Code Mixing, Nigerian Film, Linguistic Diversity, Sociocultural Dynamics

Introduction

Language serves as an essential tool for communication. It unifies diverse groups and fosters understanding across sociocultural boundaries (Seregina, Zubanova, Druzhinin, and Shagivaleeva, 2019; Kori-Siakpere, Gokeme, Omale, Aniah, Ojukwu, and Okache, 2024). In multilingual societies such as Nigeria, where linguistic diversity is immense, language not only bridges gaps but also reflects the intricate interplay of cultural identities (Hamidi, 2023). English, the official language, interacts with over 500 indigenous languages, resulting in dynamic linguistic phenomena such as code-switching and code-mixing. These practices allow speakers to alternate between or blend linguistic codes, adapting their language use to reflect the complexities of their sociocultural environment.

Code-switching involves alternating between two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation, while code-mixing blends elements of multiple languages within a single utterance or discourse (Mabule, 2015). Both practices have been widely studied, with scholars exploring their linguistic structures, social functions, and pragmatic effects. Hall (1968) defines language as the "institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other using habitually used oral-auditory symbols," underscoring the inherent adaptability of language as a social tool. Similarly, Pinker (1994)

views language as a system governed by grammatical rules, which, when applied in multilingual settings, often leads to the fusion and alternation of linguistic codes.

In the Nigerian context, the interaction between English and indigenous languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa exemplifies the fluid nature of communication (Akindele, Oladepo, Akano, 2022). This interaction is prevalent not only in daily conversations, but also, in creative expressions in literatures and movies. Renowned Nigerian authors, including Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Chinua Achebe, and Wole Soyinka, have masterfully integrated code-switching and code-mixing into their works, showcasing Nigeria's multilingual and multicultural essence. Such linguistic practices highlight the adaptability of language in addressing social, cultural, and contextual needs.

The Nollywood film industry, a cornerstone of Nigerian cultural expression, provides a fertile ground for examining code-switching and code-mixing. As a global phenomenon, Nollywood produces films and movies in English, indigenous languages, and often a combination of both. Among these films, *Battle on Buka Street* (2022), directed by Funke Akindele and Tobi Makinde, stands out as a rich tapestry of linguistic and cultural dynamics. The movie illustrates instances of code-mixing and code-switching in its dialogue. *Battle on Buka Street* centres on a heated rivalry between two half-sisters who establish competing food businesses on the same street. The title refers to “Buka,” a Yoruba term for informal eateries where indigenous foods are sold at affordable prices. While the plot revolves around the competition for the prestigious title of “King of Buka Street,” it delves deeper into themes of family dynamics, rivalry, and ambition, all set against the vibrant backdrop of local culinary culture. Interestingly, this battle is not just about food, it is a clash of dreams and determination, set against the backdrop of local culinary excellence.

According to Li Wei (2000, p. 4), “code-switching refers to the practice of alternating between two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation or discourse”. This phenomenon is often influenced by social, cultural, and situational factors. Essentially, it involves the use of multiple languages or varieties within the same interaction. From a linguistic standpoint, code-switching occurs when a speaker alternates between languages or varieties, whereas code-mixing involves the simultaneous use of elements from both languages within a single utterance, with smooth transitions between them (Mabule, 2015). Coulmas (2005) believes that code switching portrays a low ability to use two different languages correctly.

In modern communication, code switching is not simply a change from one language to another within the same discourse (Numan & Carter 2001), but perform as a linguistic device that connects people in certain ways (Rusli, Shaari, Zainuddin, Lay, and Amin, 2018). “Speakers switch to manipulate or influence or define the situation as they wish, and to convey nuances of meaning and personal intention” (Trudgill 2000, p. 105).

Numerous authors and researchers have offered diverse explanations for why people engage in code-mixing and code-switching. These practices have both positive and negative implications for language use and communication. As such, understanding and applying these concepts effectively is crucial in contexts where language intersects with human society and education. Language and society are deeply interconnected; language serves as a tool for socialization, education, and the reflection of societal dynamics. Pinker (1994) defines

language as “a system of communication that uses symbols in the form of words and sentences arranged according to rules of grammar” (p. 4). In a globalized world, languages interact and influence one another, underscoring the intricate relationship between language and society. In Nigeria, a linguistically diverse country with numerous indigenous languages, dialects, and English, multilingualism is a common phenomenon. This multilingual environment often leads to code-mixing, code-switching, bilingualism, and diglossia. When individuals navigate multiple languages, they frequently blend or alternate between them, even if their proficiency levels in each language vary. These interactions result in mutual influence among the languages, manifesting as code-mixing and code-switching. A notable example of these linguistic phenomena can be observed in the Nollywood movie *Battle on Buka Street*. Nollywood refers to the Nigerian film industry, encompassing productions in various languages such as English, Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, Itsekiri, Edo, Efik, and many others among Nigeria’s over 300 languages (Oruonye, 2022).

The analysis employs Myers-Scotton’s (1993) Matrix Language-Frame (MLF) model and Muysken’s (2000) typology of code-mixing; frameworks that offer insights into the structural and social dimensions of these practices. Myers-Scotton’s model emphasizes the structural dominance of one language (the matrix language) in code-switching, while Muysken’s typology categorizes code-mixing into insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization. These theoretical approaches provide a robust foundation for exploring the dynamic interplay of languages in the movie. This study investigates the types, reasons, and effects of code-switching and code-mixing in *Battle on Buka Street*. By analysing selected dialogues, the research aims to uncover how language choices in the movie reflect Nigeria’s sociocultural context and the communicative functions of these linguistic strategies.

Theoretical Framework

This study is premised on Carol Myers-Scotton MLF Model (Code-Switching) and Pieter Muysken’s Typology (Code-Mixing). The MLF, model on one hand, states that in instances of code-switching, speakers select one language which is the matrix language as the primary structural framework and integrated elements from another language which is the embedded language within it. Myers-Scotton argues that this form of selection is influenced by social and pragmatic factors, including the relative markedness of linguistic elements and the sociolinguistic norms of the community. Through her extensive research, Myers-Scotton explored code-switching in a multilingual setting worldwide, including South Africa where she deeply investigated the complex language dynamics.

The MLF model is a framework for analysing the form of intra-sentential code-switching which is switching between languages within a single sentence or dialogue. Code-switching is defined by Myers-Scotton (1993) as “the selection by bilinguals or multilinguals of forms from an embedded variety (or varieties) in utterances of a matrix variety during the same conversation” (p.3). The model implies that in code-switching, one language acts as the dominant language, or the matrix language, while the other is the subordinate for the embedded language. According to Myers-Scotton, it is the basic word structure of the Matrix Language (ML) that determines what happens to words in the embedded language (EL). MLF model analyse three types of code-switching model, namely:

Extrasentential switches: Tag switches normally include the insertion of a tag or a short expression like discourse markers or fillers [such as ‘you know’ or ‘I mean’] in one language into a sentence in the other language not currently in use during a conversation as in *Ìlú yìí dára*, you know [Our country is good, you know]. Inclusion of a tag like a discourse marker or conversational fillers can simply be done in discourse without breaking the syntactic structure of the matrix language, or the language used in the conversation.

Intra-sentential switches: These switches take place within clause boundaries inside a sentence or even within the word boundary (Poplack, 2001). In other words, intra-sentential switches are within the same sentence, from single morpheme level to higher levels. This means that both languages may be used within the same turn. Poplack (2001) indicates that intra-sentential code-switching requires interlocutors to exercise the greatest deftness and fluency in both languages that bilinguals switch between. Intra-sentential code-switching involves a high syntactic risk due to the effort of blending two or more linguistic systems in the same mainstream discourse (Boztepe, 2003). However, this is classically looked upon as the worst type of code-switching being practiced out of indolence or imperfect or insufficient language competence (Poplack, 2001).

Inter-sentential switches: This type of code-switching takes place at sentence boundaries, where the speaker says a sentence fully in one language or another. This means that all phrases in one turn may be produced in Arabic in an English context. This type of code-switching requires a greater fluency in using both languages than tag switching.

On the other hand, Pieter Muysken’s theory on code-mixing, as outlined in his book “Bilingual Speech: A Typology of Code Mixing” published in 2000 by Cambridge University Press proposes three primary patterns of code-mixing: insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization. These patterns explain how linguistic elements from different languages combine in bilingual communication to manage social interactions. This theory, however, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the phenomenon of combining elements from multiple languages in speech. The outlines of the three main types of code-mixing:

Insertion: The concept of Insertion is defined as insertion of material such as lexical items or entire constituents from one language into a structure from the other language. Here the process of code mixing is conceived as something akin to borrowing; the insertion of an alien lexical or phrasal category into a given structure. The difference would simply be the size and type of element inserted e.g. noun versus noun phrase. Muysken (2000) mentions that insertion is frequent in colonial settings and recent migrant communities, where there is a considerable asymmetry in the speakers’ proficiency in the two languages. The process of code mixing here is conceived as borrowing.

Alternation: Approaches departing from alternation associated with the Poplack (1980) view the constraints on mixing the terms of the compatibility or equivalence of the languages

involved at the switch point (Muysken, 2000). Conjunctions and appositions are incorporated through adjunction rather than insertion. Verbs are often incorporated through adjunction to a helping verb. Language alternation is a normal, common and important aspect of bilingualism (Grosjean, 1982; Pennington, 1995). According to Muysken (2000), the process of alternation is particularly frequent in stable bilingual communities with a tradition of language separation, but occurs in many other communities as well. It involves switching between two languages within a sentence, often with a clear boundary between the languages.

Congruent Lexicalization: The notion of congruent lexicalization underlies the study of style shifting and dialect/standard variation, as in the work of Labov (1972) and Trudgill (2012) (Hazen, 2010). According to Muysken (2000), congruent lexicalization may be particularly associated with second-generation migrant groups, dialect/standard, and post-creole continua, and bilingual speakers of closely related language with roughly equal prestige and no tradition of language separation.

These theories provide comprehensive significant implications for understanding language contact and cultural interaction. It highlights the importance of considering the social and cultural interaction. It highlights the importance of considering the social and cultural contents in which code mixing occurs and the ways in which speakers use code mixing to adapt to these contexts. By applying this theoretical framework, insights can be gained into language contacts, cultural adaptation and the sociolinguistics dynamics of bilingual speech.

Materials and Methods

Materials

The primary material for this study is the Nigerian movie, *Battle on Buka Street*, directed by Funke Akindele and Tobi Makinde in 2022. The film offers a rich linguistic and cultural setting, featuring dialogues in English, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and Pidgin. Its storyline and dialogue provide an ideal platform to examine code-switching and code-mixing as they reflect the sociocultural diversity of Nigeria. Five specific scenes that prominently showcase codes alternation and blending were selected for analysis.

The study is supported by theoretical insights from Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language-Frame (MLF) model and Pieter Muysken's typology of code-mixing. These frameworks underpin the structural and functional analysis of linguistic phenomena within the movie.

Methods

A qualitative research design was adopted, with content analysis serving as the main methodological approach. Selected scenes from *Battle on Buka Street* were carefully reviewed, and dialogues exhibiting significant instances of code-switching and code-mixing were transcribed. Attention was given to scenes reflecting sociocultural interactions, interethnic relationships, and linguistic diversity. The transcriptions were organized and categorized according to the types of code-switching (intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching) and code-mixing (insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization) as described by Myers-

Scotton and Muysken. Each identified instance was annotated with context to aid in subsequent analysis.

Linguistic structures were analysed to understand how the matrix and embedded languages interact in each instance of code-switching. The sociocultural and pragmatic functions of code-switching and code-mixing were examined to determine their roles in communication, cultural identity, and social dynamics within the movie. Cross-referencing findings with existing literature was undertaken to ensure theoretical alignment and empirical validity. Peer review of the data selection, categorisation, and analysis processes were conducted to enhance the reliability and consistency of the study.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Text 1

1. Maduka: Hey!
2. Àsàké: Àwọn nàà ti dé (He has arrived).
3. Maduka: Oh, my in-laws, you are welcome. Ah ah, Lanchili! You are welcome.
4. Lánşílé: Yes sir.
5. Yéjídé: It is Olánşílè.
6. Maduka: Look at this one, you want to teach me how to pronounce Yoruba. I started pronouncing Yoruba before you were born.
7. Lánşílé: Sir, the Lanchili is fine sir.
8. Maduka: All of them is chinli chinli. That was why I was able to marry your mother, I like Yoruba women.
9. Man: We can see.
10. Maduka: In fact, I even like their food more.
11. Ezinne: Nna m, nna m (my husband, my husband)
12. Yéjídé: Màámí (mummy)
13. Àsàké: Yes
14. Maduka: Ihe niile o di mma?
15. Ezinne: Ihe niile di mma (Everything is okay) ehen, Chukwuemeka no ebe a (Chukwuemeka is here)
16. Man: Yes
17. Maduka: Chukwuemeka?
18. Ezinne: He has come to tell us his intentions concerning, ada anyị our daughter, ijeaweke anyi (our ijeaweke)
19. Emeka: Ndewo, nna m bu nke oma m (hello sir, I greet you)
20. Maduka: I can't see your face. Why is your cap covering your face?
21. Emeka: O nwere ife (it is the fashion)
22. Ezinne: Noro ihe oma ya? (can you see his chest)
23. Maduka: Is he a boxer or what?
24. Ezinne: O bu onye akpukpo (He is a drummer)
25. Emeka: Part-time
26. Maduka: What is part-time?
27. Lánşílé: Sir, drink.

In the above conversation, the interlocutors, are from the Yoruba and Igbo tribes representing the ethnic dynamism of the Nigerian society. Nigeria is a multiethnic society comprising Igbo Yoruba, Hausa and other tribes. The age long relationship among these group has engendered some level of relationship such as inter marriage and inter-trade. Marriage has been used to bond people of different ethnic variation. This is reflected in *Battle on the Buka Street* as Maduka, a man of Igbo extraction married a typical Yoruba woman, Àsàké, acted by Sola Sobowale. The communication was done in Igbo and Yoruba representing the diverse nature of the Nigerian languages. They communicate with Igbo and Yoruba languages. Igbo language is the major language used because Maduka, an Igbo man being the husband, married to two women from Yoruba and Igbo tribes respectively. The setting of the movie shows a kitchen scene reflecting Yoruba and Igbo cuisines such as *Àmàlà*, *Ìyàn*, *Tùwó*, palm wine, kolanut, garden egg and groundnut. Igbo and Yoruba words were used to convey the meaning and the rich Nigerians sociocultural elements. Instances of code mixing are seen in turn 14 and turn 15 where Maduka and Ezinne communicate in Igbo language to aid proper understanding due to group identity. Also, in turn 24, Ezinne uses the Igbo word “akpukpo” (which means drummer) to emphasize the profession and its cultural connotation. Also, instances of intra-phrase code mixing and intra-sentential code switching was seen in turn 18 ‘ada anyi, our daughter’ where Igbo and English are combined in a single sentence. The main reason for the code mixing in this conversation is cultural identity.

Text 2

1. Friend: Hm hm, Yéjídé òrẹ̀ mí. (Yejide my friend)
2. Friend 2: Olóbe jèun kó làbò (cooks so good that you will lick your plate)
3. Yejide: Àwa ni yẹn ò (That’s me)
4. Friend 2: Take away yen gangan lo sure ju (I am very interested in the takeaway)
Abeg put gbegiri oh.
5. Yéjídé: Óyá, óyá, ẹ̀ lọ̀ gbé bag yín sí lẹ̀. (Take your bag inside). Go and join them to boil the goat, *Şó gbó?* (do you hear me) ehn ehn.
6. Àsàké: Ẹ̀ má jẹ́ kí ó jóná o (Don’t let it burn) Ó ti jiná (it is ready)
7. Yéjídé: Määmi eşé (thank you mummy)

The above conversation demonstrates a significant amount of alternation between the use of English and Yoruba. The use of code mixing in this dialogue can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the speakers are bilingual with proficiency in both English and Yoruba. Secondly, the incorporation of certain Yoruba words, like ‘*gbègiri*’ (a Yoruba soup), which can be found in turn 4 reflects the cultural relevance and authenticity of the conversation. This element may not have direct English equivalents, but their inclusion helps maintain the shared understanding and cultural identity among the speakers. An instance of Intra-sentential code switching can be found in turn 4 where ‘sure’ was incorporated into a Yoruba sentence. Another instance of this is in turn 5, when Yejide was speaking to her son, “Óyá, óyá, ẹ̀ lọ̀ gbé bag yín sí lẹ̀”. Go and join them to boil the goat, “*Şó gbó?*” This sentence is a major example of intra-sentential code switching, where both languages are interwoven to give instructions clearly and effectively.

‘Óyá, óyá (come on, come on) and ‘ẹ lọ gbé bag yín sí lẹ’ (go put your bag down) are in Yoruba, which she mixed the English word ‘bag’ but quickly switches to English with ‘Go and join them to boil the goat’ before reverting to Yoruba with ‘sọ gbó?’. The dialogue shows the natural fluidity of code mixing in multilingual settings.

Text 3

1. Ezinne: Ijuanya (wonders), so Awele, you are truly back to Otanwa !
2. Awele: For the twentieth time Màmá, yes! Ìyá!
3. Ezinne: kelu ihe in a i ya? (what do you mean by i ya) Agbakwale m uja (don’t yell at me) if you were in my shoes will you not be expecting a miracle?
4. Awele: Màmá what miracle? A dim back! (I’m back already) Iná n jó mi, Ẹ n bère shoes, na miracles (and you are asking me about shoes and miracles) achom o, achom biko (I don’t want this please)
5. Daughter: Mummy, daddy is calling.
6. Awele: Tell him that I said I do not want to talk to him
7. Ezinne: eh! Oginni! (why)
8. Daughter: Hello? Daddy. Mummy said that she does not want to talk to you again.
9. Man: Are you mad? What does she mean by that? Give your mummy the phone or else I will come over there and slap you. I na any aura (have you gone mad)
10. Daughter: Mummy he said he will come here and slap me.
11. Awele: Bia (come) n ti ochiri gi? (are you deaf) tell him I said he is a bastard. O bu nuisance (he is a nuisance)
12. Daughter: daddy, mummy said I should tell you that you are a bas...
13. Ezinne: eh eh! Mechi o nu gi (shut up your mouth) lee ya (look at her) ugbu (owl)
14. Man: is that màmá’s voice that I am hearing?
15. Daughter: it’s grandma, should I give her the phone?
16. Ezinne: why did you snatch the phone from her like that?
17. Awele: mama please. Biko (please) this is my battle, allow me fight it myself. Do not interfere, biko (please)
18. Ezine: Awele, you want people to mock me oh?
19. Awele: How màmá? Because I left a useless man?
20. Ezinne: but why will you not stay and manage the marriage. Did I not stay with your father? What will people mow say?
21. Awele: The exact thing they always say màmá, they will say the same thing they will say if my husband kills me and renders my children motherless. Because for once, I refused and I chose to put my children and I ahead of what any other person will say.

The dialogue above demonstrates extensive code switching and code mixing among English, Igbo and some pidgin phrases, which are prominent languages in Nigeria. The conversation is characterised by a seamless alternation between the two languages, with speakers switching between them to convey their intended meaning and maintain cultural authenticity. The two types of code switching are evident in the dialogue above. Turn 1 ‘ijuanya! (wonders) so Awele you are back to Otanwa?’ and turn 2 ‘for the twentieth time mama, yes, Ìyá (ah)’ are types of

inter sentential code switching because language switches occurred at the boundaries of each sentence. An instance of Intra sentential code switching is found in turns 3 and 4 where switches occurred within a single sentence. Also, code mixing can only be found in turn 11 when Awele was talking to her daughter ‘o bu nuisance’ (he is a nuisance). The word nuisance is an English word as it may not have a direct Igbo equivalent and its inclusion helps maintain the understanding. The reason for code switching and mixing by interlocutors in this conversation is due to cultural identity and emphasis. The characters switch to their native language (Igbo) to express culturally specific emotions and concepts. For instance, Ezinne uses Igbo to express traditional expectations and concerns in turn 3, while Awele uses English and Igbo interchangeably to stress her frustration and determination in turn 4 ‘A dim back! (I’m back already)’.

Another reason for code switching and code mixing is language choice. Language varies based on who the speaker is addressing. Ezinne and Awele use Igbo when communicating with each other to express cultural familiarity and intimacy. Awele switches to English or mixes Igbo with English when addressing her daughter or when she wants to make a point more universally understood. For instance, in turn 6, ‘tell him that I said I do not want to talk to him’. In turn 11, Awele expresses anger and frustration by mixing languages, this mixing expresses her emotions more effectively than if she had used only one language.

Text 4

1. Man: Ta àmàlà fún mi (sell Amala for me)
2. Yéjídé: È máa dúrò o (you will hold on) Má a ní sùúrù o (be patient) Màámi! (mummy)
3. Asake: Ehn, Kí ni? (what)
4. Yéjídé: Màámi, È wò ó (mummy, see)
5. Asake: Níbo? (where) Eh! (what!) Kí lò ñ dúrò ẹ? (what are you waiting for)
6. Yéjídé: Mummy Michael, È wá serve (Come and serve)
7. Awele: What are you doing?
8. Ezinne: Ehhh!
9. Asake: Olóri burúkú (Unfortunate being) iró ni. (it is a lie)

This brief excerpt continues to showcase a rich blend of Yoruba and English through various forms of code mixing. Intra-sentential code switching is found in turn 6, ‘mummy Michael, È wá serve’ the word ‘serve’ was incorporated into the Yoruba sentence to direct a specific action. It mixes English and Yoruba seamlessly, combining the languages to convey the command effectively. The reason for code mixing in this text is due to several reasons like, expressing urgency and command. An instance of this can be seen in turn 6, where it demonstrates the cultural norm of mixing languages to effectively communicate in high pressure situations. Another reason is due to clarity in situations where English would have reduced the intensity of the word. For example, in turn 9, if the insults were said in any other language besides Yoruba, it may not be intense as Asake wants.

Text 5

1. Awele: Chineke nna (my God)

2. Daughter: who us that now?
3. Hausa man: kai, waye a nan (who is there)
4. Awele: Bia (come) you are the one making all these noise like a carpenter.
5. Hausa man: ahn ahn. Oh, ke ce (it's you) oh, I am so sorry, you must be one of our new neighbours, right?
6. Awele: mba (no), I am the old one. Onye bu Ajadi (who is Ajadi) ehn? Bia (come) I don't care what are you doing inside here. But please allow my children and I to sleep in peace.
7. Hausa man: But I have already said sorry. I said I am sorry. Yi hakuri (my apology) ba ta haka a nan (it has not gotten to that) ehn? I am just trying to fix a frame
8. Awele: by this time of the night?
9. Hausa man: okay, you see! I am sorry, ehn! I will try and keep it down, hm! You understand? But I will just need you to excuse me. Don Allah, ka bari ni, da sauran anki na yi (please be patient, permit me to finish my work)
10. Awele: you want to go and finish it?
11. Hausa man: yes
12. Awele: ngwa nu (okay then) close the door
13. Hausa man: thank you
14. Awele: bia (come).

The conversation above is an example of how multilingual speakers use code mixing and code switching to navigate their interactions, combining English, Igbo and Hausa. In this conversation, the interlocutors frequently switch between languages and blend them within sentences, showcasing their linguistic proficiency. In this conversation, we see inter-sentential code switching in turns 6 and 12 where language switch happens at sentence boundaries. Similarly, in turns 5, 7 and 9 where the Hausa man shifts from Hausa to English when he says “ke ce (it's you) and later switches to English for ‘I am so sorry’. Another instance can be seen in turn 4, where language changes occur within a single sentence, ‘bia (come) you are the one making all these noise like a carpenter’, this blend not only serves to maintain the flow of the conversation but also adds cultural nuance and emphasis to her speech.

Text 6

1. Yéjídé: Our baby. Adaobi. Uchenna my customer.
2. Awele: nwa mara mara (beautiful child)
3. Uchenna: Iya Ade
4. Àwèlé.: who is her customer?
5. Woman: Adaobi, our beautiful daughter. You will live long. As I pass you
6. Awele: Bia (come) leave here
7. Yéjídé: Kú rò, Şé o sí èrè?? (get out, are you mad?)
8. Àwèlé: I go slap you now (I will slap you now)
9. Yéjídé: Şé na Uchenna be your customer? (is Uchenna your customer?)
10. Àwèlé: you are an idiot. come my friend, I go slap you oh (I will slap you)
11. Yéjídé: you are crazy, give me the pikin (give me the baby)

12. Awele: I go slap you (I will slap you)
13. Uchenna: give me my child! What is wrong with the both of you.
14. Man: take them outside
15. Àwèlé: you think say you dey craze (you think you are crazy) I go show you something (I will show you) I go slap you now (I will slap you now)
16. Yéjídé: Slap who?
17. Àwèlé: Aga m agbaji isi gi (I will break your head)
18. Yéjídé: Sè o ya wèrè? (are you mad?)
19. Woman: leave them make they fight, make they beat themselves, naso dem dey do (leave them to fight, allow them beat themselves, that is how they behave)
20. Yéjídé: Lènu ẹ? (see what you are saying) see wetin you don cause (see what you caused)
21. Àwèlé: see wetin you cause (see what you caused) because you have vowed that you will rather die than for me to have peace, to drink water and drop the cup, you will die, Yejide.
22. Yéjídé: ah Awele, it is you, your mother, your generation that will die.
23. Àwèlé: bia (come) Yejide, don't ever call my mother's name
24. Yéjídé: Olórí burúkú ni é (you are an unfortunate being) Sè ayé ẹ fẹ̀ bàjẹ̀ ni? (do you want your life to spoil?)
25. Àwèlé: let me not hear my mother's name from your smelly mouth again.
26. Yéjídé: it is you that should carry your smelly body from Uchenna house. Oh Àwèlé, because you have seen that Uchenna is my best customer, that he gives me big big (lot) of money, you now carry your body you want to chewing gum, abi (you want to get close to him, right) Kò sé ẹ (that will never happen)
27. Àwèlé: jealousy. that jealousy that has been jealousing you (that you have been nursing) since you were born till today, it will kill you.
28. Yéjídé: Ah, jealous of who? You?
29. Àwèlé: Yes
30. Yéjídé: Kí lo ní, kí lo fẹ̀ dà? (what do you have, what do you want to become)
31. Awele: you are jealous
32. Yéjídé: na you carry yourself come buka street, where me I be number one (you brought yourself to buka street, where I am the only one) like a witch in the night, you no see shop to collect oh, na the one wey dey in front of me, Yéjídé, Ìyá Adè alámálà shop, you come collect àbí? Ehn Awele? (You did not see any other shop to rent rather than the one in front of me, right? Àwèlé?)
33. Àwèlé: Oh, so that is what is paining you, that I took shop opposite your shop, I will take shop anywhere I want Yejide.
34. Yéjídé: ehen (and so)
35. Àwèlé: you are afraid of competition.
36. Yéjídé: competition with you?
37. Àwèlé: she is afraid of competition.

38. Yéjídé: È gbà mí, e làjà. (come and judge the situation) please is it not vomit that Àwèlé is selling on Buka street? Tó ní òun ta oun je (that she claims to be selling food) it is vomit.
39. Àwèlé: I will sell my vomit. You go and stay with your murderer husband in prison. Yes! Two of you should rot there
40. Yéjídé: what did you just say
41. Àwèlé: ah! Are you massaging your punch? You have hang? (you are frozen) am I lying? Is her husband not in prison? Is he not a murderer? Everybody knows. That your prayer for justice will never come to pass. Tufiakpa (God forbid) come on, you want to fight? Bia (come) let's fight, Yéjídé. Are you going back?

The text above presents a heated argument among the interlocutors, showcasing how they navigate their multilingual capabilities through code mixing and switching. The conversation involves a blend of English, Igbo, Yoruba and Nija which enhances the emotional intensity of their interactions. The type of code switching seen in this conversation is inter-sentential code switching found in turns 41, 38, 23, and 26, which made it possible for the speakers to convey their emotions more dynamically and emphasise certain parts of their statements. Intra-sentential can be seen in turns 11, 19, 20, and 26, when the interlocutors mixed English and Pidgin in one sentence. Also, an instance of Nigerian English can be seen in turn 27 'that jealousy that has been jealousing you' and turn 33 'so that is what is paining you, that I took shop opposite your shop'. The main reason for code switching and code mixing in this conversation is for cultural defence and strength, because both speakers are from different tribes, arguing in their languages automatically weakens the other party, especially when they do not understand what was said as seen in turns 17,23 and 24.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis of *Battle on Buka Street* reveals the profound interplay between linguistic choices and sociocultural contexts in Nigerian society. The findings illuminate how code-switching and code-mixing operate as communicative strategies that reflect and navigate cultural identity, social relationships, and pragmatic needs.

Linguistic Diversity as a Mirror of Sociocultural Realities

The movie highlights Nigeria's multilingual nature through its deliberate use of multiple languages, including English, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and Pidgin. This linguistic diversity mirrors the country's sociocultural situation, where interactions across ethnic groups often necessitate the blending or alternation of languages. For instance, the exchanges between Maduka and Asake, representing Igbo and Yoruba communities respectively, demonstrate how language is used to signify cultural identity and foster mutual understanding. The seamless incorporation of culturally significant terms, such as "akpukpo" (Igbo for drummer) and "gbègìrì" (a Yoruba soup), underscores the role of language in preserving and communicating cultural heritage. These examples show how linguistic choices are not merely functional but are deeply intertwined with the characters' ethnic identities and the cultural context of the story.

The Pragmatic Functions of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing

The dialogues in the film reveal multiple functions of code-switching and code-mixing. One notable purpose is achieving clarity and effective communication. For example, Yejide's instruction "e lo gbe bag yin si le. Go and join them to boil the goat, so gbo?" combines Yoruba and English to ensure her message is understood by speakers of both languages. This pragmatic approach allows speakers to navigate linguistic boundaries and reach a broader audience. Additionally, switching to indigenous languages often adds emotional depth, as seen when Asake expresses concern for her daughter, saying, "Ọlórún òní jẹ́ kí n rí ogun òfò " (May God not let me mourn). Such shifts amplify the emotional weight of her statement, reinforcing the cultural and personal significance of her words.

Types of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in *Battle on Buka Street*:

The study identifies various types of code-switching and code-mixing employed in the movie, aligning with the frameworks of Myers-Scotton and Muysken.

1. **Intra-sentential Switching:** This is prevalent in the movie, as characters often interweave English with indigenous languages within a single sentence. For instance, Yejide's line, " Óyá, óyá, e lo gbé bag yín sí lẹ" demonstrates a fluid blend of Yoruba and English, maintaining syntactic coherence while reflecting the bilingual proficiency of the speaker.
2. **Inter-sentential Switching:** Instances where characters alternate between languages at sentence boundaries are also evident. These switches often occur in interactions that emphasize cultural identity or facilitate transitions between different linguistic audiences.
3. **Tag Switching:** The use of short phrases or discourse markers from one language within the matrix language is frequent. Phrases such as "Só o gbo?" (do you hear me) punctuate conversations, adding cultural nuance and emphasizing specific points.

Muysken's typology further categorizes code-mixing in the movie into insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization. For example, the insertion of culturally loaded terms like "*gbègìrì*" into English sentences illustrates how lexical borrowing enriches the narrative's authenticity. Alternation is evident in scenes where characters shift between Yoruba and Igbo, maintaining distinct linguistic structures to signify cultural boundaries. Congruent lexicalization, though less common, appears in the mixing of Pidgin and English, reflecting the shared linguistic repertoire of urban Nigerians.

Sociocultural Implications

The movie demonstrates how linguistic practices serve as tools for navigating Nigeria's complex social landscape. Code-switching and code-mixing enable speakers to assert their cultural identities while fostering inclusivity and understanding in multilingual settings. For instance, Maduka's interactions with his Yoruba wife, Asake, highlight how interethnic relationships leverage linguistic flexibility to bridge cultural divides. Similarly, the use of English as a lingua franca ensures that the narrative remains accessible to a diverse audience, while indigenous languages root the story in its cultural milieu.

The linguistic choices in *Battle on Buka Street* also underscore the role of language in power dynamics and social hierarchy. Characters' language use often shifts depending on the social context, reflecting the pragmatic adaptation to varying levels of formality, intimacy, and authority. This adaptability underscores the socio-stylistic functions of language in Nigerian society, where multilingualism is both a necessity and a resource.

Conclusion

The analysis of *Battle on Buka Street* demonstrates the pivotal role of code-switching and code-mixing in reflecting and navigating the sociocultural complexities of multilingual societies like Nigeria. These linguistic practices, as observed in the movie, are not arbitrary but serve distinct communicative, cultural, and pragmatic functions. They enhance understanding, express emotions, assert cultural identity, and facilitate social interaction in a linguistically diverse context.

By employing frameworks such as Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language-Frame (MLF) model and Muysken's typology, the study provides a structured lens to understand how languages interact within multilingual settings. The findings revealed that intra-sentential switching, inter-sentential switching, and tag-switching are frequently used in *Battle on Buka Street*, with each type serving a unique purpose in communication. Similarly, the instances of insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization in the dialogues underscore the fluidity and adaptability of language in conveying culturally rooted meanings and bridging linguistic gaps. The sociolinguistic implications of this study extend beyond the movie's narrative to broader discussions on language use in multilingual societies. Code-switching and code-mixing emerge as strategies for managing linguistic diversity, fostering inclusivity, and preserving cultural heritage. They highlight the intricate relationship between language and identity, demonstrating how speakers navigate their cultural and linguistic realities.

Finally, *Battle on Buka Street* exemplifies how language functions as both a tool for communication and a repository of cultural identity. The study underscores the importance of recognizing and valuing linguistic diversity, not only as a feature of communication but also as a reflection of the rich tapestry of human experiences and social dynamics. Further research could expand on these findings by exploring similar phenomena in other Nollywood films or in real-life sociolinguistic contexts, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of multilingual communication and its cultural significance.

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