

**THE RISING POPULARITY OF PIDGIN ENGLISH RADIO STATIONS IN
NIGERIA: AN AUDIENCE STUDY OF WAZOBIA FM, LAGOS**

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Abstract

This research is located within media studies and draws on the Cultural Studies approach. It is an audience study, which uses the mixed methods of focus group discussions and an online survey to examine the importance of the use of Nigerian Pidgin as a broadcast language in investigating the rising popularity of Pidgin English radio in a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual Nigeria. The study focuses on Wazobia FM, a radio station in Lagos, and the first pidgin station in Nigeria. It seeks to determine whether the station's audience engaged with the station's programming based on its prioritisation of NigP and the linguistic identity it offers them.

The study foregrounds the marginalised status of NigP within the politics of language in Nigeria. It traces the language's evolution through popular and oppositional expressions in broadcasting and in music. It also seeks to establish the place of Pidgin English within the role that language plays in the formation of the Nigerian identity. This study thus adopts the 'emic' perspective, which underpins qualitative methodology, and views social life in terms of processes as opposed to static terms.

The theoretical framework of this research revolves around culture, language and identity. Pertinent concepts in post-colonial studies, together with conceptual frameworks in Cultural Studies, such as popular culture, representation, hegemony and counter-culture have been used to make sense of the popularity of NigP radio stations.

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Chapter One: Introduction to Research

Pidgin English is the most widely spoken language in today's Nigeria. For many Nigerians, the language has a strong bargaining power, in socio-economic and cultural terms. I grew up partly in the multi-ethnic community of a military barracks in the 1980s as the daughter of a soldier. In the barracks, living quarters are stratified along social classes as it is in civil societies. My friends and playmates cut across these living quarters, and spoke languages different from mine, so we socialised in Nigerian Pidgin (NigP), the lingua franca in military barracks across Nigeria. This experience made me critically aware of the socio-cultural significance, and the sense of cohesion that NigP can foster in a multi-ethnic environment.

My research started, more specifically, however, in Abuja in 2011. As a news anchor on the Network Service of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), I had observed the increasing number and frequency of adverts and jingles in NigP, within the network news bulletin of Radio Nigeria. The news slots were targeted at the intellectual and the ruling class, which in proper Marxist classification are the middle and upper class people in a society. News anchors were also required to speak the English Language in the formal register used by BBC presenters. This led me to wonder why more NigP adverts were scheduled within that news bulletin. I thought perhaps the network news audience had been de-intellectualised to incorporate people at the grassroots (See Appendice1).

I raised the observation at an editorial meeting of Radio Nigeria's network news unit sometime in 2011 and a debate arose about the appropriateness of airing NigP adverts within news bulletins. The major argument was that if the target audience of the network news slots at 7am, 4pm and 10pm were the literate and educated, why then does the national broadcaster air adverts in Pidgin English, a previously marginalised language which has no official status and which had been associated with the illiterate?

The Controller of Marketing justified the practice by stating that clients such as multinationals, world development agencies, advertising agencies, corporate Nigeria and government ministries, produced their adverts in Pidgin English in order to attract a larger audience and reach previously unreached audiences. He argued that, given the revenue drive of the radio network, it was imperative to alter the original profile of the ideal network news listener and embrace a more inclusive audience. It was agreed however that NigP adverts should be confined to Radio Nigeria's indigenous language stations in the country. However, the scheduling of NigP adverts within prime time network news belts continued.

In Lagos, Nigeria's media capital, the country's first NigP radio station, Wazobia FM, has been rated the number one station of the 23 stations in Lagos, for three years consecutively. Its popularity continues to soar. These developments befuddled me and triggered my thinking about the currency of Pidgin English in Nigeria and the shifting public perception of the language. What is responsible for the popularity of Pidgin English in Nigeria. How central is NigP to the identity of Nigerian people? These thoughts informed this research into the popularity of Wazobia FM.

The goal of this research, therefore, is to determine how important the use of NigP is in explaining the popularity of Wazobia FM in Nigeria's multi-lingual society. In doing this, I will examine how the radio station's audience engages with the station's programming. As the first of the eight chapters of this research, this chapter highlights my personal convictions for embarking on this study. It also gives an outline of the content of the research.

Chapter Two explains the origins and development of Nigerian Pidgin English. It documents the spread and stabilisation of NigP in post-colonial Nigeria. It contextualises the language's movement to the centre of linguistic reckoning in contemporary Nigeria. It also details the scope of usage, characteristics, variations of NigP and the geographical spread of its speakers, and further foregrounds the complexities of the linguistic environment in which NigP developed. It contextualises the significance of Lagos, in the domestication and development of NigP in Nigeria. Lastly, it includes the contribution of late musician-activist, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, to the popularity of NigP in Nigeria.

Chapter Three tracks the use of NigP on radio from the 1950s to the present, highlighting significant socio-cultural milestones which influenced the continual currency and shifts of the language from the margins to the centre. It examines the politics of language in radio broadcasting, and the broadcasting terrain in Nigeria including the peculiarity of commercial broadcasting, as one in which both the Federal Government-owned and privately owned commercial stations operate. It details the initial contribution of Radio Nigeria, the public broadcaster, to the visibility of NigP in broadcasting and its subsequent failure to build on this initiative. It considers the influence of the British Broadcasting Corporation World Service Trust (BBCWST)¹ in the eventual emergence of NigP radio stations. It also provides a profile of the popular, privately owned and first Nigerian Pidgin radio, Wazobia 95.5 FM.

¹ It is now BBC Media Action.

Chapter Four provides the theoretical framework of this research with particular reference to theories relating to culture, language and identity. It focuses on the British variant of Cultural Studies and the ‘ethnographic turn’ in Cultural Studies, which privileges the text, reading and lived culture moments within the circuit of culture. The concept of identity is used as an analytical tool in explaining the NigP radio station phenomenon as it encompasses ethnic, social and national identities in Nigeria. The concepts ideology, hegemony, popular culture, counter culture and imagined community, as well as concepts from post-colonial studies, a tributary of Cultural Studies were used to interrogate the evolution of NigP. Gramsci’s Hegemony Theory is utilised to examine the struggle for social power, and the ruling class’s late adoption of NigP in business and entertainment.

Chapter Five continues the theoretical framing by engaging with the literature surrounding media audiences, in order to deconstruct the audience of Wazobia FM. It privileges the consumption, identity and lived experience moments in the circuit of culture in explaining the relationship between text and audience. It engages particularly with scholarly works that speak to how audiences engage with texts. It uses the concept of interpolation in explaining the recognition of self in media texts and how speakers relate to texts in NigP. It explains pertinent issues about media and audiences such as the interpretive freedom of audiences and the determining power of the media, audience autonomy, resistance to dominant readings of text, and how the sense of individual and collective identity influences the decoding of media texts. It also examines the notion of taste publics, pleasure and entertainment, and what identities texts propose to audiences.

Chapter Six discusses decisions about the research design, methodology, methods, and sampling choices. It highlights the reasons for adopting a qualitative methodology framework for the study and justifies the ontological and epistemological positions underpinning the research and the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. It captures the limitations experienced in the course of the fieldwork and the data analysis procedure.

Chapter Seven analyses focus group discussions, results of the online survey, and the themes which emerged. The first theme centres on how the prioritisation of NigP by Wazobia FM propelled the station’s popularity. The second is about the role of NigP in the audience’s engagement with the station’s programming. Chapter Eight critiques the findings, by offering more depth to the assertions by respondents in both the focus groups and online survey, and concludes the research.

Chapter Two: Social Context of Study

When speakers of two or more languages come in contact, the languages influence each other in proportion to the extent of the contact, the social relations between the speakers and the practical benefits of such influence for the recipients. (Hudson,1981:339)

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain the history of the development of Nigerian Pidgin English (henceforth NigP)² noting its origin in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. This history spans the pre-colonial era, when the Portuguese dominated trade in the region, through to the colonial era, when the English arrived with imperial power, missions and institutions.

I further document the spread and stabilisation of NigP across Nigeria in the post-colonial era, and contextualise the language's movement from the periphery to the centre of linguistic reckoning in contemporary Nigeria. This includes an account of the scope of usage, characteristics, variations of NigP and the geographical spread of NigP speakers.

I analyse the arguments about orthography and the accordance of an official national status to NigP. This is to foreground the peculiarities and complexities of the nature of the linguistic environment in which NigP has developed. By extension, this offers a backdrop for understanding the status of the language in Nigeria's 'linguistic market place'³ today.

I also contextualise the shifting public perception of NigP and its 'symbolic capital'⁴ within Nigeria today. I include the context in which Lagos is significant in the domestication and development of NigP in Nigeria. These include its position as the location of practice of the musician-activist, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, who popularised NigP through his oppositional music. It is also the site of contemporary popular expressions of NigP which encompasses the media, especially radio broadcasting. It is therefore the location of my fieldwork.

2.1 History of Pidgin English in Nigeria

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country with 170,123,740 people (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012; Subair, 2013). It consists of 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

² Scholars changed the name to 'Naija' at the Conference on Nigerian Pidgin which was held at the University of Ibadan in 2009. They reasoned that the term 'Pidgin' has helped to encourage derogatory connotations associated with the language (Ofolue and Esizimotor,2010:1). I however have chosen to adopt the old name, Nigerian Pidgin, in this research.

³ A concept from Bourdieu (1991) which sees language as a commodity.

⁴ Bourdieu (1991:37) in which he talks about linguistic exchanges as relations of symbolic power

(See Figure 2.1) The country has over 527 languages⁵, which are indicative of its multiple ethnic groups (Lewis, 2009). As a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic nation, Nigeria's linguistic complexity is further compounded by different identifiable dialects (Akande & Salami, 2010). Given this linguistic diversity, most Nigerians grow up speaking more than one indigenous language. English has, however, remained the dominant official language for business, education and politics (Ojo, 2010). In 1998, French⁶ became Nigeria's second official language (Igboanusi & Putz, 2012). In addition, the country's language policy recognises the three dominant languages that correspond to the country's major ethnic groups: Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo (Akinnaso, 1991). Despite the statuses of the recognised languages in Nigeria, NigP fulfils the role of an unofficial lingua franca. It is the most widely spoken 'language' in the country, with fluent speakers numbering over half of the 140million inhabitants of Nigeria (Faraclas, 2004).

Historical research has located the genesis of Nigerian Pidgin to the Niger Delta area of Nigeria (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991; Elugbe, 1995; Egbokhare, 2001; Esizimotor, 2002; Adegbija, 2003). Geographically, the Niger Delta is one of the largest deltas in the world. The entire region extends for over 70,000 km² and makes up 7.5% of Nigeria's land mass (Esizimotor, 2010). The flat low-lying swampy basin has a network of rivers and creeks, and an extensive freshwater swamp forest. The challenging topography compels the region's population to gather in small communities (Niger Delta Partnership Initiative Foundation, 2010): "of the estimated 13,000 plus settlements in the region, 94% are thought to contain less than 5,000 people" (Niger Delta Partnership Initiative Foundation, 2010)⁷.

The Niger Delta (see Figure 2.2) is one of the densest, most linguistically diverse regions in Nigeria (Buah, 1974). There are approximately 20 million people and more than 40 ethnic groups in the region and about 250 spoken dialects (Egbokhare, 2001; Plouch, 2008). The major tribes include the Annang, Efik, Eket, Ekoi, Ibibio, Ijaw, Isoko, Itsekiri, Oron, Urhobo, Ukwuani, Yoruba and Igbo groups. Despite the linguistic diversity of the Niger Delta people, there is no known indigenous lingua franca amongst them.

⁵ 514 of these are living languages

⁶ National Policy on Education (1998). French is the third largest of the Romance languages in terms of the number of language speakers after Spanish and Portuguese (Igboanusi and Putz, 2012:235).

⁷ <http://ndpifoundation.org/where-we-work/>

Scholars of language have noted that peoples of the Niger Delta area had lived for a hundred years as “distinct and separate ethno-linguistic groups before their contact with Europeans” (Onwubiko, 1966: 61).

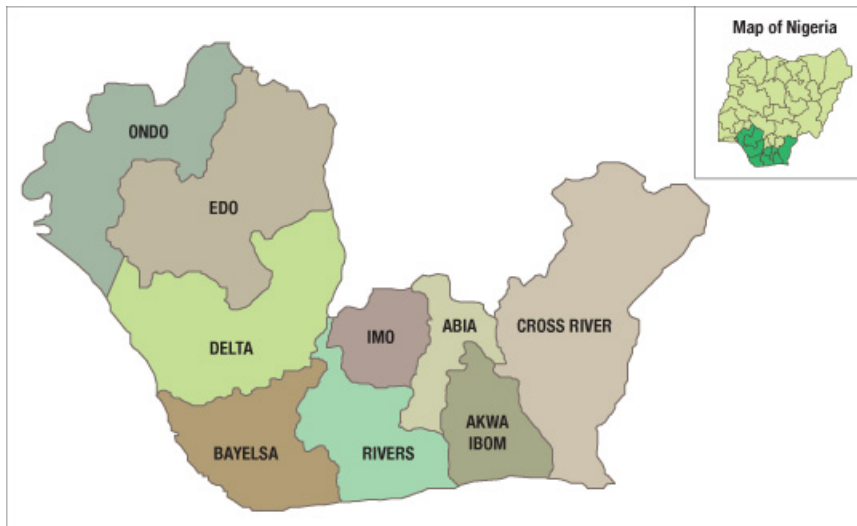


Figure 2.2: Map showing the delineation of states in the Niger Delta as defined by the Nigerian government⁸

They had engaged with “Arab Europe” in the Trans-Saharan trade for several decades through middlemen such as the Tuaregs, Hausas and Yorubas (Esizimotor, 2010:4). The long contact situation which “...spanned well over 1000 years” was, however, indirect because of the presence of these middlemen whose languages were mutually intelligible (Esizimotor, 2010:4). This led to a “linguistic enrichment” (see Table 2.1) of the languages in contact, instead of resulting in a pidgin language (Esizimotor, 2002b:9).

Item	Arabic Words	Glossary	Linguistic Enrichment in Niger Delta and Nigerian Languages
1.	Al-basal	Onion	Albasa (Hausa) Alubosa (Yoruba) Alubasa (Yekhee) Alubara (Bini), Alibasa (Igbo)
2.	Al –afiya	Peace	Lafia (Hausa) Alaafia (Yoruba)

⁸ Source: <http://ndwgnews.blogspot.com/p/national.html>

3.	Tasa	Bowl	Tasa (Yoruba), Atasa (Yehkee)
4.	Al'ibara	Needle	Allura (Hausa) Abere (Yoruba) Agbede (Yekhee), Egwede (Oleh), Egbede (Urhobo)

Table 2.1: Arab Influence and Linguistic Enrichment of Nigerian and Niger Delta Languages. Source: Isizimotor (2010)⁹

2.1.1 The Pre-Colonial Influence of the Portuguese

NigP developed in the Niger Delta as a result of direct and sustained contact between the Niger Deltans and Western Europeans who visited the region. The Portuguese who began their exploratory¹⁰ journeys to West Africa in early 1434 AD arrived in the Niger Delta first, in search of gold, spices and slaves (Esizimotor, 2002). They monopolised trade in the Nigerian coast for 70 years from about 1469 -1539. According to Ryder, (1969), the French came to the Benin coast in 1539, while the Dutch took over in 1593 as the main trading partners of the coastal people of Nigeria. From 1650 onwards, however, the English became the chief European participants in the slave trade. Unlike their engagement with the Arab Europe, the people of the Niger Delta and their European trade partners did not share a common language, intermediaries were not used in their trade relations and the languages in the contact situation were mutually unintelligible. The urgency of the contact situation and the need for a mutually intelligible language inevitably resulted in the development of a contact language between the two trading partners (Burns, 1972; Ryder, 1969; Ryder, 1980).

In another account, Ryder, (1969), traces the Portuguese trade relations with Niger Deltans to 1469 AD. He notes that a Portuguese-based pidgin developed as a market place language between the host communities and the visiting Europeans out of a need to meet the quota of slaves demanded by the European trade partners in the Gold Coast. He asserts that thriving trade relations between Western Niger Deltans and Western Europeans developed thereafter on the authority of King Ewuare of Benin¹¹. The Portuguese trading post in Gwatto, the port of Benin, was the main point for all trade with the people of the Niger Delta. (Onwubiko, 1966).

⁹ Diagram has been modified considerably by this author but the original structure is retained.

¹⁰ Their exploration gave rise to place names such as Lagos, Guinea, Cape Verde, Novo, Sierra Leone, Fernando Po, Cameroon amongst others (Barbag-Stoll,1983:42).

¹¹ Benin was a powerful kingdom then and its kings were revered. 'Oba' is the indigenous word for the title of king.

The Portuguese-based pidgin language was thus the means of communication between the coastal and inland natives. It consolidated and sustained their trade for years. Despite the thriving trade, the Portuguese abandoned Gwatto in 1520 AD and moved on to the Islands of Sao Tome and Fernando Po (Onwubiko, 1966). There, the Portuguese-based pidgin¹², which was developed in the Niger Delta creolised¹³. It is said to be the only evidence of what NigP sounded like in 1500s and 1700s (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991; Ferraz, 1978 cited in Esizimotor, 2010:7). Portuguese words like *saber* (to know), *palavra* (to talk), *pequenino* (a child) and *das* (give) are found in NigP as ‘*sabi*’, ‘*palaba*’, ‘*pikin*’ and ‘*dash*’ respectively. Traces of French influence on NigP are evident in words like ‘*beaucoup*’- many, ‘*jou-jou*’ masquerade, *holler* – yell/shout, *vexer* – vex/angry pronounced ‘*boku*’, ‘*ojuju*’, ‘*hala*’ and ‘*veks*’ respectively (Barbag-Stoll, 1983:42; Ativie, 2010:13).

2.1.2 Colonial & Post-Colonial Influence of British Missionaries & Institutions on NigP

The English from Britain constitutes the second language group to influence the formation of NigP. They became trading partners with the Niger Deltans after taking over from the Dutch in 1650. By the 1750s, the English, controlled trade in the region, especially trade in slaves¹⁴ (Onwubiko, 1966 cited in Esizimotor, 2010:11). Ayandele (1980) details the metamorphosis of the European slave traders to missionaries, explorers and colonialists.

By the second half of the 18th century, the English began to set up colonial administrative structures and schools, in addition to missionary activities. The initial Portuguese-based pidgin became relexified, while the English language pidginised at this juncture in history (Esizimotor, 2010). The linguistic pattern for an English-based pidgin and English as a second language became established by mid-19th century. While the former developed informally based on continuing contact between colonialists and natives of different ethnic backgrounds, the latter grew from classroom education (Banjo, 1995 cited in Esizimotor, 2010:13). See Table 2.2 below for examples.

¹² This contained a large proportion of languages from Edo area of the Niger Delta

¹³ The Portuguese-based pidgin stabilised: slaves from the Niger Delta and women married to Portuguese merchants spoke it continually. Today’s Portuguese-based Sao Tomense creole evolved from the marginal Portuguese based pidgin spoken in the Niger Delta (Esizimotor, 2010:7-8).

¹⁴ Autobiographies such as ‘The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustav Vassa, ‘The African’ give insight into the cultural and linguistic changes during the slave trade in the Niger Delta region.

Meanwhile, Freetown Krio¹⁵ speaking migrants who worked in Nigerian coastal towns of Calabar, Port Harcourt and Lagos at the onset of Nigeria’s independence are said to be responsible for the number of Yoruba loan words found in NigP (Eze,1980; Esizimotor, 2010).

Item	NigP	English	Glossary
1.	Wetin?	What?	What is it?
2.	I troway salute	I greet you	Warm welcome
3.	I dey come	I am coming	I’ll be with you shortly
4.	Kwench	Quench	To put out
5.	Make I come?	Should I come?	Do you need my help?
6.	Yamayama/doti	Dirt/Dirty	Germes

Table 2.2: Influence of English on NigP. Source- Researcher

2.2 Nigerian Pidgin (NigP) – Outlook and Features

NigP is a variant of the larger group of English-based pidgin¹⁶ and creole¹⁷ languages, which developed in West Africa¹⁸ as a result of contact with British colonialists. Nigeria shares this linguistic history with other British colonies in West Africa, which include countries like Ghana, Cameroon, Gambia and Sierra Leone, who all share a similar background of multilingualism. The English language exists alongside its Pidgin English variety in most of these countries (Eze, 1980).

West African Pidgin English is one of the three varieties of West African Pidgins: the two others are Sierra Leonian Krio and Liberian Kru (Holm,1988 cited in Mowarin, 2010:2). The three sub-varieties of West African Pidgin English are Ghanaian Pidgin, NigP and Cameroonian Pidgin (Mowarin, 2010: 2). The major difference in these variations, according to Lothar and Wolf (2007), is in pronunciation. Structurally, it has been noted that each

¹⁵ Name of the creole language spoken in Sierra Leone.

¹⁶ A pidgin arises in a multilingual setting where normally at least three languages are spoken and none is used as the common medium of communication (Kaye & Tosco, 2003:28).

¹⁷ A creole arises when a pidgin language becomes the mother-tongue of a substantial population of people.

¹⁸ There are four groups of Atlantic creoles and pidgins: West African Pidgins, Scranum spoken in Surinam, East African Creoles spoken in Barbados, Virgin Island and Guyana and lastly West Carribean Creoles spoken in Jamaica and Panama (Mowarin, 2010:2).

variety of West African Pidgin English (WAPE) closely corresponds with the respective national variety of West African (standard) English (WAE) (Barbag-Stoll,1983).

NigP¹⁹ has been a spoken medium for centuries, primarily because of its history as a contact language. It was a coastal phenomenon of the southern states of Nigeria (Eze,1980), which later spread to the interior of the country (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991). It is the mother-tongue of a substantial population of people in the Niger Delta, particularly in the Sapele and Warri areas. This gives the language the status of a creole. Faralas (2004: 828) asserts that “there is no creole language worldwide with nearly as many speakers as NigP”. It is, however, an expanded pidgin in the rest of Nigeria. This is because NigP is “...no longer a makeshift language used for limited communication needs”, it is now used in “...every conceivable aspect of daily life” (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991:122; Ativie, 2010:1-3).

An expanded pidgin has ‘a complex grammar, a developing word formation component, and an increase in speech tempo...it is used in almost all domains of everyday life” (Romaine, 1988:138). It develops in special social circumstances and is said to be “instrumental in providing cohesion in heterogeneous groups” (Romaine, 1988:138). Migration by Nigerians from one region to another has contributed to the development of NigP into an expanded pidgin and simultaneously enriched its lexicon. This has resulted in an abundance of loan words and slangs from regional languages and cultures in NigP (Ativie, 2010).

Indigenous languages contribute to the vocabulary for West African Pidgin English (WAPE). The superstrate of NigP is the English language, while any of the three major languages, namely Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo can be used as a substrate language. Minority languages in the Niger Delta (Ijaw, Itshekiri, Urhobo, Edo, etc.) also form part of the substrate language, because of their principal position in the contact situation through which NigP evolved centuries back.

NigP has expanded in different ways. It has done so by extending the basic meaning of specific expressions; calquing, creating entirely new lexical items which it does through reduplication, and nativisation through phonological adaptation (Mafeni, 1971:103-106). It does not have a reduced vocabulary; rather it expands and “...falls back on well known events within and outside Nigeria to coin new items of vocabulary”(Elugbe and Omamor,1991:55, 56). It also weighs in on special events in the country to create “specific lexical items”

¹⁹ NigP is a pitch accent language which also operates an intonation similar to that of English language (Elugbe & Omamor, 1991:87). The variant of Pidgin English spoken in Nigeria is often referred to as Nigerian Pidgin English and represented in most of its literature as NPE or NigP.

(Elugbe and Omamor,1991:54). There are other coinages which are cultural and peculiar to certain genres like music²⁰ (Ugot, 2009).

NigP however lacks “subject–verb agreement” (Ugot and Ogundipe, 2011:228; Onuigbo, 1999: 205) as well as “...grammatical categories like gender, person, number, mood and voice (Ugot and Ogundipe, 2011: 228). It also lacks inflections for plural possessive or derivational types. It however has its own syntactic pattern, which is a reduced form of inflections and derivations, which differs from the English language (Ugot and Ogundipe, 2011: 228; Onuigbo,1999:205).

NigP is sometimes referred to as Pidgin and erroneously as ‘broken English’ or ‘broken’. This has been vehemently contested by scholars like Omamor (1982b), who recognise that the term ‘ broken’ is a denigration arising from the politics of language in Nigeria. They have thus made a distinction between NigP and ‘broken English’ by stating that, while the latter results from an inadequate mastery of the English language, NigP is a distinct language, which operates on well defined and discoverable governing principles (Elugbe and Omamor 1991:73). In addition, Kperogi (2011) says ‘broken English’ approximates the linguistic conventions of standard English while NigP on the other hand, is “the product of a historically specific, socio-linguistic alchemy of Nigerian languages and English”²¹.

NigP has also been described as “the medium of intranational and interethnic communication in Nigeria” (Bamiro, 2009: 277). It is noted to be “a performance variety, which resides in the public domain” (Bamiro, 2009: 277). One, which is formally acquired in the streets, in the neighbourhood and at home, as opposed to Nigeria’s official languages, English or French which are learnt in formal settings (Yuka, 2001 cited in Ativie, 2010: 3).

It is imperative to note that majority of the world’s pidgin languages, like NigP, do not enjoy official recognition²² and are excluded from the education system. Scholars like Ndimele (2003), however, note the use of NigP in Niger Delta states like Rivers and Bayelsa in the early stages of primary education. He writes that despite the exclusion of NigP as a language of instruction in classrooms, teachers resort to NigP for “explanatory purposes” at

²⁰ Examples include NigP slangs in music like Yori- yori; Yahooze; Kolomental; Shayo etc

²¹ A newspaper article taken from the website of Nigeria’s Daily Trust newspapers.

<http://sundaytrust.com.ng/index.php/politics-of-grammar/8203-broken-english-pidgin-english-and-nigerian-english>

²² Jamaican Patois has a similarly been continually excluded despite its popularity through the medium of Reggae music and the Rastafarian religion (Pryce, 1997). Sierra Leone Krio was banned from schools and official domains until the early 1980’s (Sengova, 2006:184). The creole languages spoken in Papua New Guinea, Sao Tome and Fernando Po, however, are officially recognised.

this level because “there is no other common language among the pupils” (Ndimele, 2003:357).

In terms of linguistic and social status, certain scholars argue that NigP is spoken by the underprivileged (Agheyisi, 1971; Obilade, 1979). Agheyisi in particular describes this social class as “the majority of people who have little or no formal education” (1971: 30). They include unskilled labourers in government projects and agencies, petty traders, store keepers (Agheyisi, 1971), market women, taxi and lorry drivers. NigP is said to lack prestige because it is often perceived as a ‘bad’ form of English and “associated with non-literate persons and a socioeconomically deprived group” (Igboanusi, 2008:1). This criticism is, however, not peculiar to NigP, the Sierra Leone Krio suffers this aspersion, despite benefitting from language planning, having a dictionary and being used extensively on radio.

In contrast to Agheyisi (1971), and in conformity with present day reality, Elugbe and Omamor assert that speakers of NigP “span the different strata of the society and include highly literate people in the different professions...” (1991:50). This is supported by Deuber, whose focus is on NigP “spoken by educated speakers” (2005:6; 42). They argue that the fortunes and statuses of NigP and its speakers have been increasingly positive since Nigeria’s independence. There are also areas in Nigeria where those in their mid-forties and below speak NigP as a first language across all social classes and backgrounds (Omamor,1982b).

NigP is spoken fluently by over half of the 140 million inhabitants of Nigeria, making it the most widely spoken language in Nigeria and, it is also the indigenous African language with the largest number of speakers in the world (Faraclas, 2004). NigP has become the native language of approximately three to five million people and a second language for at least other 75 million (Ihimere, 2006 cited in Esizimotor 2010:17). In a 2008 study, Marchese and Schnukal, attested to hearing NigP in the market place, in government offices, department stores, schools, hotels and petrol stations. NigP is regarded as ‘the language of solidarity among university students and used by politicians who attempt to identify with the people (Obilade,1979 cited in Elugbe and Omamor,1991: 51).

2.2.1 Variations of NigP within Nigeria

According to Obiechina (1984 cited in Abdullahi–Idiagbon, 2010:52) there are five major variants of NigP: Bendel, Calabar, Lagos, Kano/Maiduguri and Port Harcourt. Each variant is characterized by a preponderant influence of its substrate language on its form and usage (Abdullahi-Idiagbon, 2010). (See Table 2.3). Meanwhile, new varieties of Nigerian pidgin

have developed, these include the Ikom-Ogoja and Ugep varieties in the northern and central parts of Cross River State respectively (Iwuchukwu & Okafor, 2011).

NigP has “three sets of social lects”²³ (Faraclas, 1996: 2; Ihemere, 2006:298; Mowarin, 2010: 2). They are basilect, acrolect and mesolect varieties, using the analysis of sociolects of pidgins and creoles by Bickerton (1975). The creolised variety, which is significantly influenced by the Nigerian Standard English is acrolectal, while the basilectal is a re-pidginised variety most distinct from English language, and influenced by Nigerian languages. The third is the mesolectal, which is the speech of those who learnt English as a first language or mother tongue. Nigerians are known to “change their lect or variety of NigP” in relation to the social context (Ihemere, 2006:298).

2.2.2 Nigerian Pidgin Orthography

One of the major challenges confronting NigP and limiting its use in formal circles is a lack of a standard orthography. An orthography is described as “a symbolic representation of a language” (Ofulue & Esizimotor, 2010: 1). The attempts to represent NigP in a written form date back to the late 18th century, with Calabar having the oldest record of NigP in a written form as evident in the famous diary of Anterra Duke²⁴. Since then, individual writers have written NigP in whichever way they thought was appropriate²⁵.

Various scholars have written extensively about NigP orthography and offered linguistic formulas aimed at solving the problem (Mafeni, 1971; Todd, 1974; Eze, 1980; Elugbe & Omamor, 1991; Esizimotor, 2010; Emenanjo, 2010; Mowarin, 2010). There is, however, no consensus to adopt any of them until after the first conference on NigP, which was facilitated by IFRA²⁶ in July 2009. The ‘Naija Langwej Akademi’, which has a pool of Nigerian language scholars, was mandated to “create a Pidgin reference guide including a Pidgin alphabet, dictionary, a standard guide for orthography, and a history of the language (Reuters, 2010).

²³ These are systems of individual speakers, and each lect is the output of a grammar which differs from the one immediately next to it (Romaine, 1988: 163). See also (Bickerton, 1975:24).

²⁴ Anterra Duke was an Efik Chief and trader who maintained a diary between January 18, 1785 to Jan 31, 1788.

²⁵ The two UN documents - the UN Charter and Millenium Development Goals were written in different orthographical representations. This a glaring example of how a lack of standard orthography poses a challenge.

²⁶ IFRA -Nigeria is a non-for-profit Institute set up to promote research in the social sciences and the humanities. It funds the Naija Langwuej Akademi, which has adopted this name for Nigerian Pidgin English.

Prior to the development of the Langwej Akademi, there was the Linguistic Association of Nigerian (LAN), an academic association which promotes the study of Linguistics and Nigerian languages in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Although they made attempts at studies on Nigerian Pidgin, it was considered inappropriate “for the same organization working for the growth and development of Nigerian languages” to be seen “canvassing for the promotion of Nigerian pidgin” without conflicts of interest (Iwuchukwu and Okafor, 2011:14).

In adopting a standard orthography for NigP, the central question which confronted the Naijá Langwej Akedemi (NLA) was whether orthography as an instrument is adequate to convey the nature of the message inherent in the language. Nevertheless, a unified standard for writing NigP would solve the problems of standardised use of NigP in letters, reports, newspaper articles, advertisements; as well as artistic application in poems, novels, plays, songs; and scientific descriptions exemplified in linguistic researches (Ofulue & Esizimotor, 2010:1). However, contrary to views that there is no known dictionary of NigP, Orhiunu (2000) is an online NigP dictionary.

2.3 Scope of NigP Usage

A language which cuts across and survives in a heterogenous nation like Nigeria, must be “... easily understood by both the educated populace and the illiterate members of the society” (Olatunji, 2007:29). According to Olatunji (2007), the only language that best qualifies for this purpose in Nigeria is NigP. His assertion is affirmed by other scholars like Akande, who state that NigP is an inter-ethnic code available to Nigerians who have no other common language, therefore it is “a marker of identity and solidarity” (2008:38). Other scholars see NigP as a neutral language, one which escapes both the “elitist connotations” of English and “the ethnic connotations” of the indigenous languages (Deuber, 2005: 51). The absence of these connotations, I believe, is a critical factor in the continual survival, spread and vitality of NigP, as well as its preference by Nigerians.

By applying the domains of language use classification by Fishman (1972) to NigP, it becomes evident that NigP features prominently in the family, friendship, and the unofficial business domains. It is, however, only partially used in the religious domain and significantly excluded in both the official and education domains (Ndimele, 2008). It has been observed, however, that despite the exclusion of NigP officially as a medium of instruction in schools, “in Rivers and Bayelsa states, teachers resort to the use of NigP for explanatory purposes,

especially in the early stages of primary education, since there is no other common language among the pupils” (Ndimele, 2003:357).

In a study on the language spoken by various Nigerian groups in informal domains by Igboanusi & Peter (2005), 24 percent of the population of minority language speakers in Southern Nigeria spoke NigP at home, while 39 percent spoke standard English. In the overall survey, Hausa, English and NigP are projected as languages that will “dominate communication in Nigeria in the informal domains where mother-tongues are expected to be used” (Igboanusi, 2005:142).

NigP has also been framed ideologically. Its ideological dimensions are said to be in the nature, meaning and function of the language variety (Bamiro, 2009). It is inherent in the social and functional power of NigP in interpreting the Nigerian social structure²⁷, a structure which is said to be “polarised along the rich-poor axis” (Bamiro,2009:277). NigP as a language thus provides an ideological zone for “working out social meanings and enacting social differences between the dominant and dominated classes” (Bamiro, 2006: 316). It is also seen as a ‘deviant’ language, which challenges “the authority and hegemonic territoriality” of the English language (Bamiro, 2006: 319). This view is particularly useful in media studies because the appropriation of the concept of hegemony has consistently given NigP more visibility. This invariably played out in the adoption of the language as a medium of broadcast for twenty four hour radio services.

Even in a regimented society like the Nigerian armed forces, NigP has since emerged as the lingua franca (Luckham, 1971). It has been described as the “unofficial language of the armed forces²⁸ and the police” (Bamgbose,1991:29). It has “widespread use in the army and the police”, (Simpson and Oyetade 2008:192). Apparently, this is because the heterogeneity of the population in army formations across the country reflects the multi lingual and multicultural nature of Nigeria. But Eze (1980) adds that the mobility of people of different ethnic groups as well as the “educational and social background during the civil war and the subsequent social restructuring contributed to the liberalisation of pidgin usage in the army”

²⁷ In the Nigerian military, residential quarters in the barracks are structured along the upper, middle and working class structure as it is in the larger society. Despite this class distinction within the Armed Forces, NigP emerged as a bridge between many cultures, ethnic groups and the limitations of their educational attainments. This author grew up in the army barracks.

²⁸ NigP may have merged with Barikanchi, a pidgin of the Hausa language which itself developed in the British Army barracks of Northern Nigeria in the first half of the 20th century.

(Eze,1980:52). Police, army and other service barracks are considered as “areas traditionally associated with NigP” (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991:140-141).

Presently in Nigeria, comedy is a thriving profession and NigP is its major medium of communication. This is largely because of the humour inherent in NigP as a spoken language (Kemper, 2008), and NigP’s ability to retain sounding qualifiers or words (Olatunji,2001). Grammatically, qualifiers in NigP have onomatopoeic characters, unlike English adverbs or adjectives, which qualify a noun in abstract. This conforms with features of indigenous African languages, most of which operate by using a word and a corresponding sound to convey a meaning. These words thus describe the meaning, sound it and qualify it (Olatunji, 2001). These are words like ‘*gragra*’, ‘*gbosa*’, ‘*fiam*’, which mean ‘commotion-hustle’, ‘sound of a loud explosion’, and ‘all of a sudden’ respectively (Orhiunu, 2000).

NigP is used in songs, oral literature, radio programming and sections in several newspapers (Barbag-Stoll,1983:39). The use of NigP in newspapers dates back to the 1980’s with *Lagos Life*²⁹ and ‘Wakabout’³⁰ (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991: 55). Despite the non-recognition of NigP officially, all tiers of government in Nigeria use it for social and health mobilisation programmes, political campaigns and public service announcements (Mann, 2000). In music, NigP has featured in songs since the country’s independence, nowadays contemporary and popular musicians blend NigP, English language and other Nigerian languages in songs. Major stage plays³¹ have been performed in NigP, popular radio and TV drama in NigP abound from the 1950’s and boomed especially in the 1980’s and ‘90’s. Nollywood, Nigeria’s movie industry, has also influenced the currency of NigP. A new commercial television station WAP TV³², in Lagos now devotes a large percentage of its airtime to NigP programmes.

Although NigP has no standard orthography, prominent literary figures³³ in Nigeria like Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe and Ken Saro Wiwa³⁴ have used NigP in their works.

²⁹ A weekly newspaper published by the Guardian Group.

³⁰ It’s a weekly column in the Lagos Weekend newspaper under the defunct Daily Times Group.

³¹ These were pioneered by late Ola Rotimi best known for the adaptation of ‘Oedipus Rex’ as ‘The Gods are not to blame’.

³² Which started operation in Lagos in 2012 and is owned by Wale Adenuga, who pioneered NigP comics and also produced a comedy series in NigP in the 1980’s.

³³ They however largely re-inforced the stigma that its a language of the illiterate and the under privileged by their characterisations.

³⁴ He stated personally stated that ‘Sozaboy’ is not entirely written in NigP. “Sozaboy’s language is “Rotten English”, a mixture of NigP, broken English and occasional flashes of good, even idiomatic English”.

Today, NigP is primarily used in corporate newspaper and magazine adverts. There are several examples of the preference for NigP as a medium of communication in advertising, because of the mass market of NigP speakers. Orally, NigP is used in popular radio and TV jingles.

In terms of usage on new media platforms, there are websites, blogs and Facebook pages which use NigP as the medium of communication. In sports, NigP is the official language each time the national football team is in camp (Ayinor, 2012). It has been observed that “even the national football team” use NigP on the pitch (Esogbue cited in Osuagwu, 2010:3). This is in response to the heterogeneity of languages spoken by these footballers, who are drawn from different ethnic groups in Nigeria (Ayinor, 2012).

NigP has, however, been continually excluded in the politics of language in Nigeria, both formally in the language policy of the nation formulated in the 1970’s and informally in the lack of socio-linguistic associations and pressure groups which could press for its inclusion. Rather than press for the official recognition of NigP, speakers of minority languages³⁵ in areas where NigP has creolised, struggle for the recognition, survival and rights of their more marginalised languages in Nigeria’s language policy (Ndimele, 2011:12; Mowarin, 2010:4-5). Despite this opposition to NigP, it has survived primarily because it functions as the ‘fall back’ language when there is a language crisis in Nigeria. During the Nigerian civil war, NigP was used for propaganda purposes (Todd 1974 cited in Elugbe & Omamor, 1991:123). After the war, minority groups in Eastern Nigeria switched to NigP for the purposes of inter-group communication (Igboanusi & Peter, 2005; Kemper, 2008).

Despite its treatment in the past as ‘uneducated speech’, and reservations by some scholars about NigP attaining a national language status (Jowitt, 1991), there are calls for NigP to be accorded the status of a national language (Okon, 1997; Onuigbo, 1999; Essien, 2003; Deuber, 2005). Deuber argues that it is “a more realistic one, than the trilingual option which forms the basis of present language policies” (Deuber, 2005:188-189).

NigP has also had notable influence on neighbouring countries to Nigeria. NigP is referred to as ‘Abongo Brofo’ which means ‘English of the military’ in Ghana (Dako, 2002). This is

³⁵ World directory of minority and indigenous operated by minority rights group international declares that although English is the official language in Nigeria, Hausa and Pidgin are the most widely spoken languages in practise. Retrieved on April 22, 2013 from www.minorityrights.org

because at a point in history, NigP speaking troops formed a sizeable portion of the Ghanaian military (Dako, 2002; Pipkins, 2004; Simpson, 2008; Huber, 2004).

2.4 NigP in Lagos City - Influences and Developments

The city of Lagos is significant in contextualising the evolution of NigP in Nigeria for several reasons. One, it is a hub of intra-country migrations and a city which developed from the colonial practice of establishing churches, schools, colonial administration headquarters and law enforcement agencies in urban centres. These diverse people consequently formed migrant communities which reflect the multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria in ghettos and other densely populated neighbourhoods in such urban centres, especially in Lagos. This is the reason NigP has been described as “essentially a product of urbanisation” (Mafeni,1971:38)..

Secondly, the city was the site of practise for late Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Nigeria’s charismatic musician and political activist who used NigP as an oppositional tool in canvassing for the rights of the people. This is not an isolated case however because the city has a history of “working class and protest tradition” which Olorunyomi (2003:60) notes dates back to the 19th century. In the past, Lagos was home to such political and labour activists like Herbert Macauley, Michael Imoudu, Mokugo Okoye.

Thirdly, Lagos was once Nigeria’s former capital³⁶, it is presently widely regarded as Nigeria’s most populous city (Lagos State Government, 2012; Metz,1991) having grown from about 300 thousand inhabitants in 1950 to an estimated 15 million people today. It is estimated that Lagos by 2015 will be the third largest city in the world (IRIN, 2006). The Nigerian government estimates that the city would have expanded to 25 million residents by 2015 (Macdonald & McMillen, 2010). Fourthly, the city hosts Bond FM³⁷, which has a NigP service and Wazobia FM, the first radio station in Nigeria to use NigP as the only medium of broadcast for a 24-hour service. This is unsurprising because Lagos has been described as “both the birthplace and the heartbeat of the media in the country” (Oluigbo, 2013:1). This accounts for its vibrancy and its reputation as a space for media expressions unequalled in the rest of the country.

Two kinds of migrant communities in Lagos aided the preponderance and currency of NigP as the preferred language of communication: the slums and the sabongari settlements.

³⁶ It ceased being the capital city in December 12, 1991. Abuja is now Nigeria’s capital city.

³⁷ The station is owned by Nigeria’s Public radio broadcaster. It is the first in Lagos to use NigP on radio but it is only a 3 hour pidgin service from 11am to 2pm daily. Wazobia FM on the other hand is a commercial station which uses NigP as a medium of communication for a 24 hour service.

Lagos's largest slums include Agege, Ajegunle, Amukoko, Badia, Bariga, Ijeshatedo/Itire, Ilaje, Iwaya and Makoko. Of these, Maroko and Ajegunle have especially contributed to the currency of NigP in Lagos because of the large concentration of Niger Delta indigenes there. Sabongari³⁸ settlements are essentially "localised Hausa communities" within towns outside the Northern parts of Nigeria (Cohen,1969:9). They are described as 'stranger settlements', because of the non-indigene status of the dwellers (Salamone, 2010:149). Although inhabitants of these migrant communities carried on their language identities to the urban centres, they consistently relied on NigP as a communicative platform (IRIN, 2006; Olatunji, 2001:4).

2.5 The Significance of Fela Anikulapo Kuti in the Evolution of NigP in Lagos

It has been proposed that the cultural status of NigP grew significantly in the late seventies due to the prominent role played by Afrobeat legend and human rights activist, Fela Anikulapo Kuti (henceforth Fela). He is particularly credited with the domestication of NigP in Lagos (Olorunyomi, 2005). Fela progressed from singing about love and everyday people in English and Yoruba³⁹ in the early stages of his career⁴⁰ to a musician – activist in the mid 1970's. This change in Fela's musical direction was for two reasons: to reflect his Pan African ideology⁴¹ and also to criticise Nigeria's despotic and corrupt civilian governments. This is against the background that Lagos of the seventies experienced 'the height of the oil boom opulence' (Falola, 1999:139; Olorunyomi, 2005:60; Simpson and Oyetunde, 2008:185) and its mismanagement by the ruling class (Falola, 1999:25).

Despite Fela's privileged middle class background and education in Nigeria and abroad, he chose to identify with speakers of NigP⁴². He therefore adopted NigP as his medium of composition, and the official language of Kalakuta Republic⁴³, his deviant commune. It was also the medium of communication in his club, African Shrine, where he had three shows per weekend (Olatunji, 2007). These weekly shows were critical as the sites of engagements in

³⁸ Sabo is the shortened and more popular name for the settlements, it means 'new town'(Cohen,1969)

³⁹ He is from the Yoruba ethnic group.

⁴⁰ His career started with highlife music with his Koola Lobitos Band and then he changed to African 70

⁴¹ He changed the name of his band to Africa 70 organisation as a result.

⁴² He was known to engage in conversations in NigP. In his authorised biography by Carlos Moore (2010), Fela retorts to the biographer's questions and recounts his encounters with security operatives, soldiers, prisoners and prison officials in NigP.

⁴³ This was Fela's communal residence derived from the name of his prison cell in 1974. It was created to accommodate 'every African escaping persecution'. It is also known as Kalakuta Republic (Olorunyomi (2005;xvii). Kalakuta means 'rascal' in Swahili.

Fela's oppositional stance. Fela thus legitimated the rights of people from the grassroots to be aware of national issues, he opened up a space for them to be engaged critically in the discourses surrounding these issues, a space to speak and be heard in NigP. This gained him acceptance with the masses and with the children of the elite who sang along to his popular NigP tunes (Olatunji, 2007:29). Idowu describes it as "... not merely Fela's artistic creation" but "a mass expression" (1986:95, cited in Olatunji, 2007).

This mass expression, was a consequence of NigP's ability to cut through social barriers, bridge the ideological divides of the Nigerian society and bring about a sense of collective agency against the ruling class. This is affirmed by Idowu who notes, "slum dwellers and the privileged came together ...what makes it more explosive is its appeal to the teenage offspring of the Nigeria elites" (Idowu,1986: 95). Scholars like Olorunyomi (2005) believe Fela's choice of NigP corresponds with his perception of his primary audience, who were made up of people at the grassroots, the oppressed and the underprivileged who were marginalised by successive military and civilian governments in Nigeria (Olatunji, 2007).

Fela particularly used NigP in his Afrobeat⁴⁴ music in the Barthian sense of the 'other'(Olorunyomi, 2005:46,72). He legitimated NigP in the Nigerian communication space as the 'other's medium' of communication. This was in defiance to the standard usage of English language, which was the "language of hegemonic discourse" (Olorunyomi, 2005:43) employed by the class conscious elite. Nevertheless, Fela gave NigP prestige by using it in his music to "contest the airspace with English, the linguistic code of officialdom" (Olorunyomi, 2005:69). He 'decolonised'(Olorunyomi, 2005:83) the English language by giving English words new meanings in his NigP songs (Olorunyomi, 2005:69-70).

One can also conclude that Fela popularised NigP in Lagos and across Nigeria more than any musician in Nigeria. As a consequence of prioritising NigP, he gave social power to speakers of NigP. Moreso, the critical mass which Fela's music appealed to aspired to speak NigP in order to gain "social exclusivity and identity against official culture" (Olorunyomi, 2005:66).

Slang words and phrases have enriched the register of NigP. These coined words and phrases particularly challenged power relations and class-informed values in the society; they contrasted situations of power relations "between the big 'oga'⁴⁵ and the marginal 'my

⁴⁴ Afrobeat contests the traditional hierarchy that celebrates the generosity of the wealthy and proposes a redistribution of social wealth(Olorunyomi,2005:57).

⁴⁵ Used to denote the big boss.

people” (Olorunyomi, 2005: 46). Most of Fela’s albums⁴⁶ were banned from the airwaves by the Nigerian broadcast regulator (Olorunyomi,2005:76), the repeated ban on radio airplay continually fueled public interest and outcry resulting in the popularity of Fela, his music and NigP.

As a consequence of Fela’s domestication of NigP in Lagos, the language has been used extensively in popular songs in Nigeria. It must be noted, however, that although Fela transformed NigP into a valid medium for ‘serious musical composition and a prominent language of broadcast’ (Olorunyomi, 2005:69), there were other composers like Tunji Oyelana,Victor Uwaifo, Nico Mbarga and Wole Soyinka⁴⁷ who also recorded hit songs in NigP in a smaller yet significant manner (Olorunyomi, 2002:69-70). None of them compares with Fela, who released seventy-seven albums and wrote one hundred and thirty three songs, most of them rendered in NigP (Olorunyomi, 2005:42-43; 46; Moore 2010:18).

2.6 International Recognition

In recent years, international recognition has been accorded NigP which has given momentum to the currency NigP enjoys. Specifically, the United Nations (UN), admits that NigP is “becoming more and more important as a language” (OHCHR,1998)⁴⁸. It has therefore translated two vital UN documents into NigP. They include the UN Charter and the Millenium Development Goals (MDG). Google has also recently introduced a NigP interface for searchers (Sonuga, 2012; Loy, 2011)⁴⁹. These are testaments to the political and economic capital which NigP has gained. It is also in alignment with Coulmas’ (1992) assertion that “a language’s value increases by every speaker who acquires it ...the more people learn a language, the more useful it becomes, and the more useful it is, the more people want to learn it” (Coulmas,1992:80).

2.7 Conclusion

⁴⁶ Even after his death, only a select few harmless tracks can be aired (Olorunyomi, 2005:76).

⁴⁷ The Nobel laureate composed the song ‘ethical revolution’ rendered by Tunji Oyelana during the Shagari administration.

⁴⁸ OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/Language.aspx?LangID=pcm>

⁴⁹ “I am feeling lucky” is translated “I dey feel lucky”.

NigP, which developed from a makeshift language for trade with the Portuguese and later relexified when the British became major trade partners in the Niger Delta, is no longer a marginal language used for limited communication needs (Elugbe and Omamor,1991:122). It has been enriched by the indigenous languages of Nigeria over the years, and today it has become an expanded pidgin. More importantly, it is also a creole, the native language of a speech community in the Niger Delta. Its use is no longer limited to the illiterate because as Eze notes, “even in formal conversations pidgin may be intermittently heard in Nigerian society” (1980:53).

Progressively since the 1950’s, NigP has consolidated its inclusion in different aspects of Nigeria’s national life. Today, NigP has moved from the margins, and it has found popular expressions in the media including the print and electronic, films, music, drama, and literature. In Corporate Nigeria, NigP is the choice language for advertising. Although the Nigerian government has denied NigP an official status, it nevertheless uses the language in socio-cultural and health awareness campaigns. This is a shift in the blanket exclusion it previously accorded the language.

NigP’s latest consolidation is in radio broadcasting, it has recently become a language used for a 24-hour service by a privately owned commercial radio station in Lagos (Wazobia, 2012). The station has become popular (Akoh & Jagun, 2012; E-monitor, 2012) and attracted attention from the international media (Ibukun, 2010; Asokan, 2011; Mark, 2012). This has prompted its owner to establish similar stations in major cities of Nigeria, notably Abuja, Kano and Port Harcourt. Based on audience research, these NigP radio stations are reportedly rated the most listened to stations in two of the cities, Abuja and Kano (Akoh &Jagun, 2012:). This phenomenon of NigP radio stations is my preoccupation and focus in this research.

Chapter Three: Context of NigP Usage in Radio Broadcasting in Nigeria

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I track the use of NigP on radio from the 1950s to the present, highlighting significant milestones which influenced the continual currency and shifts of the language from the margin to the centre in terms of linguistic prominence, value and vitality. Furthermore, I examine the politics of language in radio broadcasting and how the gradual adoption of indigenous languages by radio stations has brought about inclusion of previously marginalised audiences. It is within this context that I consider the use of NigP as a medium of communication for a radio station.

I explain the broadcasting terrain in Nigeria and distinguish between the two types of public service broadcasters that operate, highlighting their peculiarities in the Nigerian context and their impact on commercial broadcasting. I also include an explanation of the peculiar terrain of commercial broadcasting in Nigeria, as one in which both Federal Government-owned and privately owned commercial stations operate.

I detail the initial contribution of Radio Nigeria, the public broadcaster, to the visibility of NigP in broadcasting and its subsequent failure to build on this initiative. I also provide a profile of the popular, privately owned and first Nigerian Pidgin radio, Wazobia 95.1 FM.

Although independent producers have used NigP for radio drama in the past, I focus specifically on the impetus of the use of NigP by the British Broadcasting Corporation World Service Trust (BBC-WST)⁵⁰ may have had in the eventual emergence of NigP radio stations and its acceptance by the people.

3.1 History of Radio Broadcasting in Nigeria

Radio is the dominant medium and main source of information in Nigeria (Freedom House, 2012; Akoh & Jagun, 2012). It is considered the most obvious and effective means of mass communication in Nigeria because of the immediacy of its impact (Akoh & Jagun, 2012).

The introduction of a wired broadcasting service⁵¹ popularly known as ‘radio distribution’ or ‘rediffusion’ signified the earliest phase of broadcasting in Nigeria. It was introduced in 1932 as an experiment by the Empire Service of the BBC which broadcast in English. Full

⁵⁰ It is now BBC Media Action.

⁵¹ Radio distribution was a system of wired distribution of programmes from abroad through a central receiver.

broadcasting started in 1952 with the establishment of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service⁵² (NBS) (Akingbulu and Bussiek, 2010:11; Ladele, Adefela &Lasekan,1979:11;158). The NBS later metamorphosed into the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) in 1957. In1978, a year later, when NBC was re-organised, the state stations were handed over to State Governments while NBC was left with only Lagos, Ibadan, Enugu & Kaduna (Ladele, Adefela &Lasekan, 1979). These became Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN).

The Nigerian broadcast sector was liberalised with Decree No. 38 of 1992 (Jibbo & Simbine 2003:182). It paved the way for privately owned radio and TV stations to begin operation. The decree also provided for a regulatory body known as the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). In 2000, FRCN was directed by the Federal Government of Nigeria to operate FM stations at various state capitals. By 2009, 17 years after liberalisation, the industry had developed such that there were “more than 394 stations and an annual advertising revenue estimate of about 2 Billion Naira” (NBC, 2009⁵³). This informed the need to allow alternative networks in the industry, more importantly however, the plurality of broadcast was informed by “the size of Nigeria, culture, her religious diversity, commercial and national interest” (NBC, 2009⁵⁴).

3.1.1. The Nigerian Radio Broadcasting Landscape

Radio is the dominant medium and main source of information in Nigeria (Freedom House, 2012; Akoh &Jagun, 2012). It is considered the most effective means of mass communication in Nigeria because of the immediacy of its impact (Ladele, Adefela &Lasekan, 1979; Akoh &Jagun, 2012). In the past few decades, the majority of Nigerians have relied on radio as their main mode of media consumption compared to visual or print media. A 2008 survey submits that “three quarters of households” in Nigeria own radio sets (ITU cited in Akoh & Jagun, 2012:6) while a 2010 survey⁵⁵ indicates that 43.5% of households in urban and semi urban areas own radio sets (Akoh and Jagun, 2008)⁵⁶. A radio listening culture is prevalent in

⁵² The NBS later transformed into NBC and Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) also called Radio Nigeria.

⁵³ www.nbc.gov.ng/broadcast.php?menu=1&submenu=4

⁵⁴ www.nbc.gov.ng/broadcast.php?menu=1&submenu=4

⁵⁵ A 2009 regional survey of Nigerians’ favored sources of news by the Steadman Group showed that radio was more frequently preferred to television in the north than in the south (Akoh & Jagun (2012:16).

⁵⁶ “Urban” are “all localities with a population of 40,000 and above with the following amenities: pipe-borne water supply, electricity, government hospitals, post offices, telephone network coverage, tarred road network and good drainage systems, primary, secondary schools and tertiary institutions, presence of industries, open

Nigeria perhaps because it is “most accessible and available to the ordinary, non-literate Nigerian living in a rural area with unreliable electricity access” (InterMedia cited in AMDI, 2005: 15).

3.1.2 The Place of Nigeria’s Public Service Broadcaster(s)

Nigeria has a duopolistic state broadcasting system, with stations owned by the federal government and state governments ⁵⁷(Akoh and Jagun, 2012; Akingbulu, 2010; Mytton, 2013; Bolarinwa, 2011). The two forms compete “in providing news and current affairs content, especially when the political affiliation of the state administration differs from that of the Federal government” (Akoh &Jagun, 2012: 28). The Federal Government owns the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) network and the Voice of Nigeria (VON) “which provides Foreign Service broadcasts” (Bolarinwa, 2011:1). The FRCN is the broadcaster mandated to “perform a Federally defined broadcasting function, it does not have a monopoly on state radio broadcasting” (Akoh &Jagun, 2012:28).

Each state has its own broadcasting corporation, which provides both radio and television services (Akoh &Jagun, 2012). These broadcast in English language and the predominant indigenous language(s) of the state. They are, however, obliged to link up with the Federal Government-owned network for the relay of national news. This gives the federal broadcaster the widest reach in the country (Akingbulu, 2010).

There are, however, arguments that there are no public broadcasters in Nigeria (Obijiofor, 2011; BBC cited in Akoh &Jagun, 2012:27), because they are funded through government grants and commercials. In addition, public broadcasters presently account to the executive arm of government across the tiers of government instead of the public through the legislature. These modes of operation negate the declaration of the principles of freedom of expressions in Africa (BBC cited in Akoh and Jagun, 2012:27).

Furthermore, Lewis & Booth (1989) make a clear distinction between public service broadcasting and commercial broadcasting. They state that while the former should be in “the business of selling programmes which inform, educate and entertain, to audiences”, the latter is expected to sell “audience to advertisers” (Lewis and Booth, 1989: 99). The boundaries of the

market and modern sewage disposal. “Semi-urban” refers to localities with a population of between 10,000 and 39,999 with the following amenities: pipe-borne water, electricity, post offices, tarred road network, primary and secondary schools, and some industry” (See Akoh & Jagun, 2012:14).

⁵⁷ Nigerian operates the presidential system of government which has three tiers comprising the federal, state and local government levels.

basic functions are, however, blurred in Nigeria; the context of FM broadcasting is such that Federal Government-owned FM stations in Nigeria compete with privately owned FM stations for revenue from advertising (Akoh & Jagun, 2012) even when the corporation receives subventions from the Federal government.

3.2 The Politics of Language in Nigerian Radio Broadcasting

There have been continual struggles around the role of language in the formation of the Nigerian identity. These struggles have continued to be central in Nigerian broadcasting since the introduction of radio in 1932. British colonisers used radio ideologically to represent the interests of the colonial class and advance their ideas about culture and the political order to the indigenous majority. Radio also provided a powerful channel for state propaganda in order to constitute differing levels of political identity (Larkin, 2008).

Indigenous languages were permitted for broadcast on radio stations, perhaps to reinforce tribal identities, which aligned with Britain's divide and rule mode of governance, to prevent the propagation of a national identity. Although broadcasts on the Rediffusion Service were in English, news was translated to Nigerian languages (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979). The prioritisation of languages in broadcasting continued in 1952 when public service broadcasting started, with the establishment of the National Broadcasting Service (NBS). The debate continued when the broadcasting service became incorporated as Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) in 1957. A deliberate policy to increase the use of local languages was put in place at the onset of the incorporation of the NBC in 1957. (Akingbulu, 2010; Atoyebi, 2002; Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979).

Structurally, a three-tier⁵⁸ system of broadcasting which consisted of national, regional and provincial levels of operation and management functioned at the NBS, and continued with the NBC. The National Programme used nine Nigerian languages and the State Programme⁵⁹ broadcast twenty-five other languages⁶⁰; (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979).

In the News Directorate, "seventy four different bulletins were produced in English and ninety in the Nigerian languages on the combined National and Regional Programmes"

⁵⁸ The creation of states in 1967 and 1976 reduced the tiers to two, because most of the provincial broadcasting houses then became full fledged broadcast stations for the newly created states (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979).

⁵⁹ A state was free to opt out for its own programmes, the exception being where Network programmes were concerned.

⁶⁰ By February, 1978, stations were instructed to broadcast mostly in the Nigerian languages spoken in their respective states, 90% of the time (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979:159).

(Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979:50-51). By the end of the first year of incorporation, “twenty two Nigerian and Cameroonian languages” were used in programming (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979:51,156). However, the agitations about the exclusion of regional governments by Nigeria’s colonial central administration, led to the development of regional broadcasting and the transformation of broadcasting in 1959 (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979). The Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) started in 1959, followed by the radio arm, Western Nigeria Broadcasting Service (WNBS) in 1960 (Uche cited in Ariye, 2010:416; Ejiolorun, 2002 cited in Atoyebi, 2002:7). The Eastern Broadcasting Service (EBS) started in 1960 while the Northern region followed suit with (BCNN) in 1962 (Saulawa, 2001 cited in Atoyebi, 2002:7).

Regional governments had immense power and engaged in tribal invectives. This was the case until the civil war broke out in 1967. States came into being later in order to “wither the powers of the regional governments and limit the use of regional broadcasting services for propaganda and politics” (Atoyebi, 2002:7). Twelve states were created, and each of them established their respective radio and TV stations (Atoyebi, 2002). Nigerian radio thereafter transformed from regional tools in the hands of colonial masters to state apparatuses used by the Federal Government (Larkin, 2008).

In most developing nations across the world including Africa, the diversification of radio from the monopoly of state broadcasters is closely “tied to processes of political and economic liberalisations” (Fardon and Furniss, 2002:3). This has created an array of local community radio stations, where local issues are prioritised and local languages are used. In Nigeria, however, this has been achieved through commercial radio stations. The enabling law and NBC code stipulates a 60%-40% local to foreign content ratio to safeguard the national culture. It was also to ensure that the quality of imported programmes does not outstrip the nationally originated material (Atoyebi, 2002). I believe the national culture in this context included the preservation of the country’s languages.

Indigenous radio stations offer governments the opportunity to communicate their actions and policies to the grassroots, the un-educated and the semi-urban population outside the capital cities in their languages. Since cities in multilingual Nigeria reflect the heterogeneous nature of the country, NigP radio stations are the closest to indigenous language radio stations which intra-national migrant populations can access and identify with.

In Lagos, there are four radio stations broadcasting in indigenous languages. They are: Radio Lagos-Tiwantiwa⁶¹, FRCN's Bond FM⁶², FRCN's Choice FM and lastly Raypower's Faaji FM. In addition, there are two NigP radio stations bringing the number to six non-English language radio stations out of the 26 radio stations (NBC List, 2013⁶³) in Lagos city. It appears that there is plurality in the Lagos radio broadcast terrain. The Assistant Head of Research in Wazobia, Oluwaseyi Ilesanmi, says:

“Now local language is getting sort of popular but before, they were used on AM radios. FM is basically music and then Queens English, but now you can see Pidgin English gaining popularity, programmes from beginning to the end having Pidgin English as their content... those are the things that Wazobia has been able to do” (Ilesanmi, cited in McAnderson, 2013:17).

Radio is particularly relevant to the needs of the rural, marginalised and disadvantaged poor (Soola, 2002). It has thus been used as a tool for development across Nigeria, similar to its use in other developing nations with a large illiterate population (Larkin, 2008).

NigP radio stations, which developed in Lagos, a city originally populated by Yoruba-speaking Nigerians, caters for the needs of non-Yoruba-speaking indigenes in the metropolitan city. They also address people from the different ethnic groups in Nigeria, who are not necessarily educated. These NigP radio stations have thus become quite popular and have expanded from Lagos to other major cities in Nigeria. What Wazobia FM perhaps activated is a “community-specific and situation-relevant” radio station which is also “dialogic and participatory” (Soola, 2002:24). The station thereby may have liberated a previously marginalised majority through its language of communication.

3.3 The Origin and Evolution of NigP in Radio Broadcasting

NigP was first used on radio in 1959 on the National Programme Service of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. It was the medium of communication used in the popular *Save Journey*, a comedy sketch series which aired for ten years and reportedly “thrilled majority of listeners” (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979: 131). Quite significantly, the drama series⁶⁴

⁶¹ Radio Lagos-Tiwantiwa is owned by Lagos State; see section on state ownership of radio stations.

⁶² Bond FM has indigenous language services in Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and NigP

⁶³ See Appendice 3a

⁶⁴ Created by Ralph Opara and Ikpehare Aig- Imoukhuede

revolutionised radio drama and established the marginalised NigP as a “respectable medium of expression for broadcasting”⁶⁵ (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979: 131).

By the mid 1960, NigP had established itself as a commercially viable language within public service broadcasting. This was primarily because the provincial broadcasting house in Benin, created in 1966 to cover the newly formed Midwestern Region⁶⁶ (Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979) adopted the language for commercial purposes. Midwest Nigeria is a geographical area where many languages were spoken (Kolade, 2012). The language in which commercial programmes would be conducted in the region thus became a challenge. The norm in broadcasting would be to hire two translators per language, but given the linguistic diversity of that area, it would be “inordinately expensive” (Kolade, 2012: 92). Christopher Kolade, the Director of Programmes then, recalls that the person who suggested the use of NigP at a meeting of top management was “firmly and brutally put in his place” (Kolade, 2012:92). This is because within the broadcaster that modelled itself after the BBC, and used Queen’s English, the suggestion “was the equivalent of blasphemy” (Kolade, 2012: 93). At the same time he recalls:

“We were not inventing it, more people in the region spoke and understood Pidgin than any other language. Thus it came about that Pidgin was awarded recognition by the NBC, and became a ‘language’ in its own right, for commercial as well as other programmes” (Kolade, 2012: 93).

The choice of NigP was therefore informed by the need to offer advertisers “. . .the largest audience possible” (Kolade, 2012: 93). That was the second episodic achievement of NigP in broadcasting in Nigeria. Since then NigP has been continually used on the Radio Nigeria network across Nigeria.

In the 1970s’ particularly, radio drama produced in NigP flourished. They included drama series like ‘Gandu Street’, ‘Join the Band Wagon’ (Baba Willy, 2012) and ‘Njakiri Man⁶⁷’. As noted in the previous chapter, Nigeria’s musician – activist, Fela Anikulapo, made his debut on radio using NigP as an oppositional tool to criticise bad governance and as a language of wider communication. It was a significant decade, during which NigP enjoyed prominence in popular expressions through radio and was used in a counter cultural manner to speak truth to power.

⁶⁵ The success of the radio drama resulted in a host of imitations on radio and television(Ladele, Adefela & Lasekan, 1979:131)

⁶⁶ The midwestern region comprised people and languages in present day Edo and Delta States of Nigeria.

⁶⁷ This means, a man that makes people laugh

Mainstream usage of NigP began thereafter in the 1980s, when news broadcasts were introduced by state government-owned stations⁶⁸ in the Niger Delta area and where NigP creolised. Radio Rivers and Bendel Television were front runners (Agheyisi, 1988; Elugbe & Omamor, 1991; Shukul & Marchese, 1983).

3.3.1 Radio Rivers Pidgin English Service

Radio Rivers is domiciled in Port Harcourt City, the capital of Rivers⁶⁹ State in the South-South Region of Nigeria. It is home to three main ethnic groups: Igbo⁷⁰, Ijaw, Kalabari and Ogoni. Radio Rivers is a public service radio station owned by the Rivers State government. The station's former Controller of Presentation, Bernard Graham-Douglas (2012) states that a former Military Governor of Rivers State, Fidelis Oyakhilome⁷¹, pioneered the use of NigP on Rivers State radio. The project was borne out of the Military Governor's need to reach the grassroots communities, to ensure that the government's policies and actions could be better understood (Graham-Douglas, 2012). The former General Manager of Radio Rivers, Florence Ekiye says the Military Governor's "desire was to create something the market woman and the man on the street could appreciate [on radio]" (Ekiye, 2012:1).

Radio Rivers referred to NigP as 'Special English' and created a belt⁷² for it, which preceded FRCN's pidgin service by three years. The 'Special English' news and a request programme entitled 'How Una Dey o Country Man?' became popular (Ekiye, 2012). As a result of the project, Boma Erekosima became an iconic radio personality. More people were subsequently recruited to write adverts and public service announcements in NigP to complement the programming and news content of the Pidgin Service (Graham-Douglas, 2012). Two decades later, Radio Rivers still has a 'Special English' belt (Ekiye, 2012). Graham-Douglas asserts that "other radio stations came to Radio Rivers to learn how to do Pidgin English our Nigerian way" (2012:1). It is, however, contentious whether other radio stations in the Niger Delta or elsewhere in Nigeria took a cue from Radio Rivers.

⁶⁸ Nigeria is a Federal Republic, it operates the Presidential system of government guided by the principles of separation of powers, modelled after the United States' system. 36 states make up the Nigerian federation, and each state is independently administered (Lang, 2005:6).

⁶⁹ The state was named after the many rivers that border its territory.

⁷⁰ The River's Igbo choose to be identified as Ikwerre.

⁷¹ He was a police officer who administered the state from 1984 to 1986. Perhaps the use of NigP within the armed forces as a lingua franca (see the previous chapter) may have propelled him to experiment with it on radio.

⁷² A belt is an allocation of time given to a specific radio programme, for instance a daily 3 hour slot.

Nevertheless, the station's use of NigP was definitive in the history of radio broadcasting in Nigeria. Amongst other things it contributed significantly to the gradual leap of NigP from the margins to the centre in Nigeria of the 1980s.

3.3.2 Radio Nigeria 3 Pidgin Service

The FRCN radio network has FM stations across the country, one of which is Radio Nigeria 3, also called RN3 (FRCN, 2013). It is a community-oriented, multilingual radio station under the Lagos Operations of the Corporation. It was set up in 1987 to complement the mainly English-medium stations, Radio Nigeria 1 and 2, which were also under the Lagos Operations. It broadcasts in Yoruba, NigP, Hausa and Igbo (Deuber, 2002: 196), and was the first station to broadcast in NigP in the Lagos metropolis. According to Omagbemi (2013), the creators⁷³ of the "Radio Nigeria 3 experiment" (Omagbemi, 2013:6) then were largely from the minority tribes of the Niger Delta. Although the initial plan was for a twelve-hour broadcast in NigP, they decided against it later because "they thought it may be boring" (Omagbemi, 2013: 6). The hours were thus ultimately divided between NigP and the three major Nigerian languages (Omagbemi, 2013; Deuber, 2005).

When RN3 started operation, Radio Nigeria relied on grants from the Federal Government. This influenced the decision to divide and allocate specific hours daily for each of the services. Significantly, when the funding model was changed to rely more on advertising in 1990, RN3 generated the most revenue out of the three Radio Nigeria stations, which operated in Lagos then. The station's (RN3) ability to generate revenue was attributed to its use of indigenous languages and NigP as opposed to the English language medium used by its sister stations⁷⁴ (Omagbemi, 2013).

3.4 Radio Nigeria and Use of NigP in Eastern Nigeria

Radio Nigeria, also known as Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) is Nigeria's public broadcaster which metamorphosed from the Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). In this section, I shall consider how well the stations operating under the Eastern Nigeria regional hub of Radio Nigeria, a stronghold of NigP, engaged with their audiences in NigP.

⁷³ They were a generation of broadcasters including Stella Bassey, late Eno Irukwu, Late Maria Irikefe, Stella Awaani, Martins Okoh, Marius Ughada, Victoria Madukife, Late Zeal Onyia formed the committee that established RN3.

⁷⁴ These were Radio Nigeria One (RN 1) and Radio Nigeria 2 (RN 2) which metamorphosed into Metro 97.7 FM.



Figure 1: Radio Nigeria(FRCN)'s logo showing its slogan.

The FRCN reaches more than a hundred million listeners, broadcasting in fifteen languages, and catering to the diverse broadcasting needs of multi-ethnic Nigeria. In each of the national stations, there are urban-styled and community-oriented radio stations (Radio Nigeria, 2013). Radio Nigeria Enugu National Station, the regional hub for the network's radio stations in Eastern Nigeria, which includes parts of the Niger Delta, has seven FM radio stations located in the seven states in the region.

One can infer (See Table 3.1), that all of these stations cater to a NigP audience, and that airtime is consciously allocated to NigP programmes. The title of each NigP programme is indicative of the issues addressed to this audience. The programming in NigP is interactive and seen to create public awareness, entertain and mobilise support for social, safety and developmental issues. It is pertinent to note that majority of these radio stations started operation in the millenium. This shows that NigP is a living language which resonates with the people of that region. This further indicates that Radio Nigeria understands the significance of NigP in the region and attempts to engage with this audience.

3.5 The British Broadcasting Service World Service Trust (BBC WST) & Use of NigP

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) birthed the radio broadcasting system in Nigeria. In contextualising its return as BBC World Service Trust, it is important to foreground that the British broadcaster already knew that radio drama in NigP would be successful for a developmental approach to broadcasting. The drama section of the National Broadcasting Service (NBS) in the 1950s pioneered the use of NigP on radio. It was first headed by John Dunn who was from the British Broadcasting Corporation.

It is unsurprising that the BBC strategically chose drama in NigP when it returned to Nigeria in 2004. It is pertinent to note that this was a consolidation of its use of NigP in the 1950s. As they must have projected, it has been successful. *Story, Story*, a NigP radio soap

has been on air since 2004 because of its popularity. It is produced by the BBC Media Action⁷⁵ and broadcast on 94 partner stations in Nigeria.

BBC Media Action research (2012) in eight Nigerian states found that *Story, Story* was listened to by 26% of the sample population, equivalent to an estimated 20 million people nationally. It reaches audiences beyond Nigeria as it is also broadcast on the BBC World Service (BBC Media Action, 2012). This is a landmark achievement for NigP, one that signifies a further move away from the national and regional margins, this time to a continental platform. The success of *Story, Story* may have propelled the BBC Media Action to create another weekly NigP programme titled, *Talk Your Own* which focuses on perennial governance issues. Wazobia FM started operations in 2007, three years after. It is probable that Wazobia FM rode into prominence through the ready audience guaranteed by the popular radio soap.

3.6. Commercial Broadcasting in Nigeria - Background

Focus has been only on commercial broadcasting since the liberalisation of the broadcast sector in 1992 (Akingbulu, 2010) and licenses for community stations were approved only recently. Although operators of commercial radio are spread across Nigeria, they are highly concentrated “in the commercial centres of Lagos, Port Harcourt, and the administrative capital of the country, Abuja” (Bolarinwa, 2011:1). There is therefore competition for revenue between government and privately owned commercial broadcast stations in the cities (Akingbulu, 2010).

Relatedly, most of the commercial radio stations “serve the plumb tastes of the elites and have basically transformed communication into a commodity” (Aina, 2002:67); “their programming is mainly in English and they do not communicate in indigenous languages” (Akingbulu, 2010:112). This perhaps was in the bid to generate enough to keep their businesses afloat. This practice resulted in the exclusion of certain voices and left “over 64% rural folks with huge economic potentials excommunicated from broadcasting” (Aina, 2002: 67).

⁷⁵ It was formerly BBC World Service Trust, it uses media and communications to reduce poverty and promote human rights. It enables people to better their lives. The name change took place on December 16, 2011. <http://www.bbcmmediation.org>

Commercial radio licenses are in two categories: “regional and nationwide” (Akingbulu, 2010:40). Despite exorbitant license renewal fees since the onset of liberalisation, the number of commercial radio stations has increased steadily across the nation (Akingbulu, 2010). Statistics from the broadcast regulator indicates that broadcast stations in the country rose in number from less than 30 before deregulation to 394. Although “entertainment dominates with little attention to news” (Akingbulu, 2010:40), the commercial media market is increasingly healthy and competitive consequent upon the rapid growth of the mobile telecom sector and patronage from the firms for advertising revenue (Akoh & Jagun, 2008).

In advocating reforms in the Nigerian broadcast industry, Akingbulu (2010) suggests that commercial broadcasters should introduce more programming in indigenous languages and re-orientate their programming to include more public interest programmes which will cater for the broader needs of the public (Akingbulu, 2010). This is perhaps, the gap that commercial stations that broadcast in indigenous languages, including NigP, fill.

3.7 Nigerian Pidgin Radio Stations - Wazobia FM

There are two NigP radio stations in Nigeria: Wazobia 95.1 FM, the first station of its kind, and Naija FM⁷⁶, both being privately owned. Wazobia FM started operations in Lagos in 2007 (Wazobia, 2012) and has been a hit since then (Global Post, 2011). The 24-hour commercial station has changed the radio broadcasting landscape increasingly in five years. A 2010 survey by Media Planning Services notes that, “..in Lagos, the top two stations are Wazobia, which broadcasts mainly in pidgin English, and Radio Lagos (Tiwantiwa), which broadcasts mainly in Yoruba” (Akoh & Jagun, 2012:19). Furthermore it states that , “Wazobia Port-Harcourt (a branch of the Lagos-based station) is also the most listened to station in the south where pidgin English is widely spoken” (Akoh & Jagun, 2012:19).

In 2010, Wazobia FM topped the ‘Most Listened Radio Station’ in Lagos in surveys conducted by Media Planning Services Limited and omdMedia Reach beating old time favourites and about 23 other radio stations to the position. A total of 9,965,939 individuals in Lagos⁷⁷, 24.2 percent, claim to have listened to Wazobia FM making it the number one station in Lagos, followed by Radio Lagos (indigenous language) with 19.47 percent, and Brilla 88.9 FM (Sports) with 10.34 percent (media Reach oMD, 2010:33). The station’s huge

⁷⁶ The new -comer station which started operations in 2010, trails behind Wazobia FM in terms of listenership and popularity.

⁷⁷ Lagos is a city with a population of about 12 million people. See previous chapter.

audience has continually attracted attention in the press abroad (Ibukun, 2010; Asokan, 2011; Mark, 2012).



Figure 2: Showing four frequencies of Wazobia FM in Nigerian Cities

The radio station's name was taken from a 1960's song titled 'Wazobia' by famous musician John Akintola aka Roy Chicago (Idonije, 2012), which became popular, perhaps due to post independence sentiments of a new Nigeria. The notion of 'WAZOBIA' was proposed as a new language in the 1980s, to integrate the languages of Nigeria's three major ethnic groups. The syllables "WA", "ZO", "BIA" are Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo words respectively which mean "come". The idea was, however, rejected by scholars and commentators (Ojo, 2010) because of the struggle for inclusion, dominance and supremacy amongst Nigerian languages. Wazobia FM's adoption of the name 'Wazobia' is thus seen as a populist move based on the familiar national yearning and sentiment for a language distinctively Nigerian.

3.8 Wazobia FM - A Profile

Wazobia FM is owned by Globe Broadcasting Corporation, registered in Florida, USA. It is owned by Engineer Amin Mousalli⁷⁸, a Lebanese whose wife is a fourth generation Lebanese in Nigeria (Omagbemi, 2013). Her lineage has resided in Nigeria since 1886⁷⁹ (Olesin, 2013) so they are regarded as Nigerians (Omagbemi, 2013). He has a staff strength of 1,200 Nigerians spanning his network of businesses, which include 11 FM stations (Omagbemi, 2013).

⁷⁸ He is an honouree of one of Nigeria's national honours, Member of the Federal Republic (MFR).

⁷⁹ "Her grandfather was the first Lebanese to come to Lagos" (Mousalli in Olesin, 2013:2)



Figure 3: Amin Mousalli. Owner, Wazobia FM-Cool FM-Nigeria Info radio brands⁸⁰

The idea to start Wazobia FM came from Evita, Amin Mousalli's daughter who doubles as the COO⁸¹ of Aims Engineering. Mousalli says "She made me realise I have been an alien all along in the broadcasting industry. She explained to me that pidgin was the nearest language everybody could understand. She suggested having the new frequency coming on board to be in pidgin" (Olesin, 2013:2). The idea, however, met with resistance from Mousalli's team.

According to the Director General of NBC⁸², Yomi Bolarinwa, while Wazobia FM was licensed as a commercial station, its license did not stipulate that it could broadcast in NigP (Bolarinwa, 2012: 1). The station chose to broadcast in NigP nevertheless, and the broadcast regulator has not sanctioned it for broadcasting in this language, "because a large population of Nigerians speak NigP, it has a huge followership..." (Bolarinwa, 2012:1). Wazobia 95.1 FM has been described as a music, news and entertainment station. The major competitors of Wazobia FM in Lagos are FRCN's Bond FM and Radio Lagos-Tiwantiwa⁸³ which broadcast in NigP and Yoruba languages respectively.

Wazobia FM stations in Abuja and Port Harcourt took off differently in 2009, as Mousalli says "They are independent... For instance, in Kano, the content is 55% Hausa and also 25%

⁸⁰ Source: Olesin, 2013.

⁸¹ Chief Operating Officer

⁸² The Telephone interview held in October, 2012. A new Director General for the National Broadcasting Commission was appointed in May 2013.

⁸³ Both stations are owned by the Federal and State broadcasters respectively.

pidgin (Olesin, 2013:2). Mousalli states that the percentage of pidgin content was to cater for the “half a million” Yoruba and “one million” Igbo ethnic population in Kano (Olesin, 2013). What Amin Mousalli is thus seen to have done is to tailor the content and profile of these independent Wazobia FM NigP stations to their host cities.

According to the Head of Research, Mckevin McAnderson, “As at December 2012, the cumulative average for Lagos is 5.8 million regular radio listeners, Wazobia alone controls 2.4 million radio listeners” (McAnderson, 2013:15). He says, “24% of the audience share is being captured by Wazobia FM alone” (McAnderson, 2013:15). The economic implication is that “...if you place an advert on Wazobia FM, you can be sure that two million people are listening” (McAnderson, 2013). This corresponds to what an ardent listener reasoned was responsible for the deluge of adverts on the station, “... the advertisers have simply flocked to where their audiences are” (Obe cited in LinkedIn-Everything Journalism, 2012:1)⁸⁴.

Consequently, adverts⁸⁵ on the station sometimes run for five-seven minutes, such that presenters have little time for extended talk time. In an analysis of ‘Yaw’⁸⁶, the breakfast show host, the research department discovered that 200 minutes out of his allotted 300 minutes on the morning time belt was:

“practically commercials back to back...60 minutes out of that balance of 100 minutes was a sponsored programme belt by Etisalat ... Out of the remaining 40 minutes, 25 minutes were spent on “hypes, infomercials and all that ... at the end of our analysis, we discovered that out of 5 hours, Yaw had only 15 minutes to relate with his audience” (McAnderson, 2013:10).

This deluge of advertisements on Wazobia FM is seen as an indication of the acceptance that NigP enjoys, and the evolution of the language (Omagbemi, 2013). It has also been attributed to the station’s popularity, programme delivery, the best of Pidgin English presenters, and programmes designed to continually appeal to the audience (McAnderson, 2013). Unlike Radio Rivers which adopted the ‘Izon -Warri’ mix of NigP (Graham Douglas, 2012), in Wazobia FM, presenters speak the most common variety of NigP. While the station’s breakfast show host acknowledges the unique ‘swag’ and composition of the Warri variant of NigP, he says, “I blow my pidgin, just normal pidgin” (Onu, 2013:3).

⁸⁴ <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Rise-Popularity-Pidgin-English-Radio-3766250.S.111035631>

⁸⁵ Indigenous language adverts are also placed on the station quite frequently.

⁸⁶ Of all the star presenters, ‘OPJ’⁸⁶ has the largest sponsors and adverts (Omagbemi, 2013).

Presenters

The first presenters on Wazobia FM were cleaners working at Cafe Royale⁸⁷, Lagos.

The professionals took over shortly after (Omagbemi, 2013). The majority of the presenters⁸⁸ in Wazobia FM have bachelor degrees (Adaba, 2013). Anchors work on one of Wazobia's five time belts. The morning belt from 5am to 10am is anchored by 'Yaw', followed by 'Lolo' from 10am to 3pm. 'Kodi' resumes at 3pm and hands over at 6pm to OPJ, who finishes at 11pm. Femi takes over and runs the night shift till 5am and each presenter has a subordinate presenter who co-anchors on a belt (Mcanderson, 2013). The station's format is built around these personalities. Dotun Adekanmbi, a Public Relation strategist says:

"I was attracted to Wazobia FM by the uniqueness of the station's presentation: a good mix of entertainment and information but somewhat deficient in education. The presenters sure know their stuff in arousing audience participation: the bottle breaking antics, extraordinary flogging, (hot or cold) water-pouring, etc... One will greatly enjoy the station for its light-hearted presentation especially the banter amongst the presenters: Yaw, Uzo, Koddy, Diplomatic OPJ, Twi-Twi and my main guy: Nedu, the newscaster (Adekanmbi, cited in LinkedIn -Everything Journalism, 2012:2).

The presenters are multiple award winners because of the acceptance and popularity of the radio station (Onu, 2013; Adebowale, 2013). The morning host, Christian Onu, known on radio as 'Yaw', has won 40 awards, which cut across national and international organisations. He was invited to light the 2012 Olympic torch in London, UK, on the basis of his performance and popularity on Wazobia FM (Onu, 2013). There are only two newscasters in Wazobia FM yet "the news belts are the most entertaining" (McAnderson, 2013:15). This is due to the drama, humour, the use of transliterated proverbs and pidgin delivery. "If you are driving along in traffic, and Nedu is casting news, look through the windows of cars, you will see drivers and everyone, people chuckling and laughing aloud. Just go closer, they are tuned to Wazobia (McAnderson, 2013: 15).

Programming

Commercial radio's programming is dependent on the market for broadcast genres such as drama, documentaries, investigative journalism or urban contemporary music (Lewis & Booth, 1989). The general run of radio programming for mass audiences, however uses "popular hits, supplemented with studio chat by presenters and guests" (Lewis & Booth, 1989: 5) in addition to responses to listeners phone calls. Despite this, the market ultimately determines "the type, volume and timing of the supply of programming" (Lewis & Booth,

⁸⁷ Mousalli's confectionary outlet which shares the same location with the radio stations run by him.

⁸⁸ Wazobia FM's presenters use pseudo names.

1989: 5). This analysis is decipherable in Wazobia FM's profile. It is a music, news and entertainment station with its own unique broadcast delivery in pidgin format (McAnderson, 2013:3).

Although Wazobia FM is not a community radio station, its content targets the needs of the grassroots, as it gives the working class inclusion through NigP and by addressing issues that concerns them. Wazobia FM engages its audience with interactive programmes (Appendice 3h⁸⁹), by incorporating a phone-in during drive time on weekdays, which appeals to many people. There are two toll free lines for each of the stations⁹⁰ including Wazobia FM (McAnderson, 2013).

Femi Sowoolu, a senior media consultant says:

“As a strong advocate of development media strategy, I strongly believe that those special attributes that such stations as Wazobia have, should be employed for the purpose of mass mobilisation, national regeneration and awareness, and not for amusement, slapstick and comedy, as is being done. Their services have no business being commercialised!” (Sowoolu cited in LinkedIn -Everything Journalism, 2012:3).

Nevertheless, the impact and influence of Wazobia FM's choice of NigP for broadcast is noticeable in the number of NigP programmes now being provided by radio stations that broadcast in English language in Lagos State.

3.9 International Recognition

The long history of the use of NigP in broadcasting has recently been consolidated and endorsed elsewhere on the continent. Supersports⁹¹, South Africa's leading pay TV operator, launched its website for football news in Pidgin⁹². The General Manager Portals at Supersport, Graeme Cumming says the decision was borne out of their experience as producers of Big Brother Africa, the biggest reality show in Africa. He points out that the number of Pidgin English comments on the Big Brother website and Facebook page informed the understanding and decision behind “... experimenting with original Pidgin content” (Van-Zyl, 2013)⁹³.

⁸⁹ Wazobia FM's programme schedule

⁹⁰ This is not the case with other commercial stations in Lagos. It is novel to the three radio brands run by Amin Mousalli.

⁹¹ A group of television channels owned by Multichoice, a leading sports content provider in South Africa, Africa and the world. It airs on the DSTV platform, and has the largest variety of sports on a single sports broadcaster

⁹² ng.supersport.mobi the website has both standard and NigP editorial content on all major football leagues and the Nigerian football league.

⁹³ www.linkedin.com/.../Our-new-mobi-site-Nigeria-3766250.S.20876633

3.10 Conclusion

It is pertinent to note that the use of NigP started in the 1950s from the network service of the National Broadcasting Service (NBS). After the service transformed into NBC, NigP programmes sprung up on the various outstations of the national network. In the mid-1960s, the use of the language was reinforced regionally in Benin, following its adoption as the language for commercial broadcast, a need that arose from the challenge to generate revenue in a multi lingual region. The use of NigP on radio had a double impact in Nigeria of the 1980s. It popularised Radio Rivers FM in Port Harcourt city and put the station on the broadcast map in Nigeria. Through the station's 'Special English belt', NigP became even more popular on radio and gained currency in South South and South West Nigeria. The success of Radio Rivers is thought to have had a ripple effect and given impetus to other radio stations in that region to also introduce news and programmes in NigP.

Although Radio Nigeria 3 (RN3), now known as Bond FM, pioneered the NigP service in Lagos City, FRCN has been half-hearted in giving the NigP service deserved attention by upgrading its pidgin service to a NigP radio station. Despite its pioneering use of NigP in radio drama in the 1950s and the use of NigP for commercial purposes, the state broadcaster failed to capitalise on the increasing currency of NigP in Nigeria. This failure by the public broadcaster, and the vacuum in innovation was what Amin Mousalli, the owner of Wazobia FM plugged into. Although Radio Nigeria's Bond FM pidgin service preceded Wazobia by a twenty year margin and still operates, it is today seen as inadequate in interpreting the growing identity and needs of the contemporary NigP speaker in Lagos compared with Wazobia FM's cutting edge entertainment package.

Meanwhile, despite its marginalisation by the elite and the educated of Nigeria in the past, NigP continues to occupy an incongruous space in the nation's varied communicative platforms. The once-marginalised language, which had been used extensively by the public service radio of both the Federal and State governments in Nigeria since the 1950s, continues on an unprecedented rise to reckoning on privately owned commercial radio stations. This is the context of the use of NigP in radio broadcasting in Nigeria.

Chapter Four: Literature Review – Cultural Studies

*Language is culture and in language we carry our identity and culture.
(Simpson, 2008)*

4.0 Introduction

The British variant of Cultural Studies underpins the theoretical framework of this research with particular reference to theories relating to culture, language and identity. I focus on the ‘ethnographic turn’ (Moore, 1993) in Cultural Studies which privileges the text, reading and lived culture moments within the circuit of culture. Hall’s concept of identity constitutes an analytical tool in explaining the NigP radio station phenomenon as it encompasses ethnic and national identities in Nigeria. Tajfel’s social identity theory is used to unpack the notion of group identity which feeds Barthes’ notion of boundary formation. These concepts are critical in investigating why NigP radio stations are popular and on the rise in Nigeria.

I apply the concept of counter-culture to the evolution of NigP as it metamorphoses from the margins to the centre in Nigeria while I use the concept of popular culture to explain the popularity of NigP radio stations. Gramsci’s hegemony theory is utilised to examine the struggle for social power, and the ruling class’s late adoption of NigP in business and entertainment. Lastly, NigP as a language is de-constructed through Post-Colonial Studies, a tributary of Cultural Studies, using concepts such as hybridity, margin-centre periphery, abrogation and appropriation. These theories and concepts inform my findings in this study.

4.1. Cultural Studies

The key theme within Cultural Studies is that culture is a bearer of social power. The fundamental concern is that culture is a central concept for understanding features of our contemporary and historical conditions. The social construction of meaning and self is consequently a pervasive concern in Cultural Studies, given that meaning is the site of contestation in Cultural Studies and societies are characterised by power struggles (Dahlgren, 1997; Fiske, 1987).

There are a number of foci within Cultural Studies. There is the focus on how individuals and social groups, despite social differences and struggles, define their needs and negotiate them; and how they ascribe meaning to their lived conditions of existence. Cultural Studies is also centred on popular cultural discourses, for instance, it re-evaluates popular culture as a

worthy discourse and a relevant social resource (Storey, 2003). In addition, within studies of audience/text relationships, Cultural Studies theorists “attempt to uncover clusters of readings, which correspond to significant axis of power within particular social contexts” (Moore cited in Strelitz, 2000:37). I draw on the British variant of Cultural Studies as developed at the University of Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), which foregrounds the relationship between culture and ideology (Turner, 1990). Underpinning this is an anthropological understanding of culture as a process of meaning production rather than canonical works.

4.2. Circuit of Culture

The circuit of culture is a useful metaphor for understanding the multiple values and meanings of any cultural artefact. It describes the five interrelated perspectives from which we can examine the processes of production, interpretation, and use of cultural artefacts (Johnson, 1983). Cultural meanings are produced at each level or moments of the circuit (Barker, 2000; Hall, 1997).

In Cultural Studies, the question of meaning is central in the construction of identity, the delineation/marketing of differences, production, consumption and the regulation of social conduct (Hall, 1997). Du Gay and Hall (1997) reworked Johnson’s (1987) circuit from four to five critical moments: identity, production, consumption, regulation and representation. In the new circuit: text, lived culture and readings became *representation, identity and consumption* respectively. These moments are my focus, as this research draws on the conditions of reading and the meanings generated at the moment of textual consumption (Johnson, 1987) as part of an audience study outlined in the next chapter.

4.3. Culture and Language

Culture is about ‘shared meanings’, language is the medium in which meaning is produced, exchanged and circulated; and in which we ‘make sense’ of all things (Hall, 1997). Through language, thoughts, ideas and feelings are represented in culture. Language is therefore central to ‘meaning making’ and culture. Language sustains dialogue between participants, enables them to build a culture of shared understandings and interpret the world through almost the same lenses. It is thus seen as a repository of cultural values and meanings (Hall, 1997).

Language expresses, embodies and symbolises cultural reality (Kramersch, 1998). Language is the principal means through which we conduct our social lives, therefore in the context of communication, “it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways” (Kramersch, 1998:3). Members of a speech community or social group express and create experience through language. A standard language establishes a hierarchy for measuring individuals and controls the elements of an individual’s identity that are available for interpretation in language (Joseph, 2004).

Language “overlays a great amount of dialectal variation” (Joseph, 2004: 225) when it is construed, ‘nationalistically’. Thus one of the things that a national culture helps create is a “generalized single vernacular language as the dominant medium of communication throughout the nation” (Hobsbawm, 1990:51). National languages then assume a central importance and are often used as attempts to devise a standardised idiom out of a multiplicity of actually spoken idioms which are downgraded to dialects...” (Hobsbawm1990:51; Joseph, 2004:120). The choice of language that a radio station adopts as a language of address therefore signifies identification with a group over another and may be seen as “a symbolic mark of inclusion into a state, region, or nation” (Fardon and Furniss, 2002:4).

Cultural studies thus sees language as intervening between the individual and the socio-cultural fields that construct his/her identity (During 1993: 10-11). It also sees language as a source of meaning and identity and places it in a key position in the analysis of culture (Chibita, 2006).

4.4. Language and Identity

Language is a symbol of social identity because speakers identify themselves and others through the use of language (Kramersch, 1998). The form and content of linguistic production as well as its comprehension and interpretation are shaped and driven by the importance of identity (Joseph, 2004:224). Language inscribes an individual within national and other identities; it constitutes a text of a person and what s/he says; this forms the base from which others read and interpret his/her identity (Joseph, 2004). Language functions as a marker of identity at both the personal and collective level. It is thus understood to intervene between the individual and the socio-cultural fields that construct his/her identity (Edwards, 2009:21; During cited in Chibita, 2006). This is understood to be a constructivist analysis of identity, which assists in explaining the status of NigP within popular expressions.

Language is an important symbol of group identity as it stimulates a sense of solidarity among communities sharing a single variety of speech. The contribution of social psychology of categorisation and identity is valid here. The social identity theory (Tajfel,1978;1982) assumes that beyond a personal sense of self, social identities are based on the various groups to which we belong. Tajfel (1978) interrogates inter-group relations and social change with regard to divergence and asserts that boundary creation leads to a sense of membership and group identity, thus the creation of boundary is important in group formation.

Barthes (1969) opines that boundary creation arises ‘once a group has coalesced through individual’s inter-relationships due to common interests. It states that groups in contact make comparisons and see themselves as distinct, ‘positively valued entities’ (Barthes,1969). This creates the ‘us and them’ boundaries. Such subordinate group members strategically move to refine negative qualities as positive e.g a non-standard dialect (such as NigP) is re-assessed in a process of revitalised group pride or a new evaluative dimension that favour the group may be created. This theory will be critical in discovering whether the use of Barthian borders boosted the use of NigP in the media and popularised Wazobia FM as the leading radio station in Lagos, Nigeria.

4.6. Culture and Identity

Cultural identities are aspects of our identities which arise from our belonging to distinctive ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious and national cultures. A distinct type of structural change has, however, impacted modern societies leading to a break up and fragmentation of the cultural landscape. This led to shifts in personal identities, and what hitherto gave individuals a firm location in the society. Mercer says an identity crisis occurs “when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty” (1990:43). This is “the de-centering of individuals from their place in the social and cultural world; and from themselves” (Hall, 1992: 597).

For the sociological subject, identity is formed through the ‘interaction’ between self and society (Hall, 1992; Billig, 2005; Campbell and Rew, 1999). In this conception⁹⁴, the inner core of the subject is “formed in relation to ‘significant others’ who mediated to the subject the values, meanings and symbols – the culture – of the worlds he/she inhabited” (Hall et al, 1992: 597). This sociological conception informs this research, because as Hall notes, the

⁹⁴ The three conceptions of identity are Enlightenment, Sociological and Post-modern subjects. (reference)

individual 'subject' is constructed through continual dialogue with the cultural worlds 'outside' and the identities they offer (Hall, 1992:276).

This is pertinent given that a person's ethnic group is "a powerful identifier which cannot be denied, rejected or taken away by others" (Ashcroft, 2000:75). The concept of identity, frames the socio-cultural milieu within which NigP has continually gained currency and increasing utility in contemporary Nigeria. This is against the backdrop of the constitution of the Nigerian identity which is continuously problematic.⁹⁵ It is also useful in examining how the context of exclusion of minority languages within the national linguistic landscape frames the emergence of NigP as a medium of broadcast for radio stations.

4.6.1. Culture and Representation

Related to the question of identity is Hall's (1992) concept of representation, which will be used in explaining the shift in the dominant representation of the NigP speaker in the media from objectified to subjectified spaces. This points to representations which have shifted from one predicated on negative figuration of low status speakers of NigP to users who are celebrities, politicians and leaders. This resonates with Egbokhare's submission that, "the fortunes of a language are tied to the fortunes of its speakers" (Egbokhare, 2001:105). Put differently, Liberson says "languages change due to users power positions which is dependent on the socio-political and historic forces at play in the environment" (1982:4). This will be analysed in the context of Bourdieu's assertion on the struggle over representations with the "aim to manipulate mental images" (Bourdieu, 1991:221).

4.6.2. Imagined Community

An important approach to the understanding of identity formation is provided by Anderson (1991) through his notion of the 'imagined community' of nationalism (also see Radhakrishnan, 1993). It suggests that "the nation depend (s) on continual acts of imagination for its existence" (Billig, 1995:70). In Anderson's model, the media plays a crucial role in the process of imagining and constructing of a nation (Anderson, 1991). The centrality of language within the discourse of imagined community is acknowledged by Hobsbawm (1990). This is because linguistic identity incorporates ethno-symbolism, which is crucial to the construction of imagined community (Joseph, 2004; Smith, 1998; Poole, 1992). The role

⁹⁵ This is due to its complex heterogeneity typified by multiplicity of language, ethnicity, diverse minority groups and cultures, and the growing thirst for a home-grown and unifying lingua franca by Nigerians.

of the media in kindling the sense of imagined community in Nigeria through NigP will be examined.

The notion of a national culture and unification is related to the imagined community and particularly important to this study of post-colonial Nigeria, where there are a multiplicity of languages and more than 250 ethnic groups. Hall states that “the national cultures into which we are born are one of the principal sources of cultural identity” (Hall, 1992:9). He, however, questions the framing of national cultures as unified, and argues that national cultures are cross-cut by deep internal divisions and differences, and “unified” only through the exercise of different forms of cultural power. The role and popularity of NigP in bridging this differences and divisions in the Nigerian context, is, I will argue, the foundation on which the phenomenon and emergence of NigP radio stations is built in this research.

4.7. Culture and Popular Culture

The term ‘popular’ within popular culture etymologically means ‘people’, there are however distinctions and classifications (Dahlgren, 1992:5). In the revision of Marxian class analysis, ‘people’ meant the majority of the population who fall outside the power bloc (Fiske, 1989a). Popular culture is “an arena of consent and resistance where hegemony partly arises, and where it is secured” (Storey, 1998:453). It reflects the constant struggle between domination and subordination; between power and the evasions and/or resistances to it (Fiske, 1989). It is viewed in two competitive yet complementary ways within Cultural Studies: one is anthropological, that which emphasises shared meanings and community, while the other is a critique of ideology and domination.

Fiske (1989a) unpacks the ideological base inherent in popular culture. He explains that all meanings produced in a culture are *in context* of a stratified social system. This means that societies are dominated by certain groups who have relatively more power: whites, males, wealthy capitalists⁹⁶. He notes that oppositional ideologies from social categories are ranked near the bottom of a society’s social stratification system: minority groups, women, the poor, etc. Fiske’s assertion about the ‘cultural economy of consumption’⁹⁷ and its location as the site of cultural meanings, pleasures and social identities (Fiske,1989a), is cogent in this study.

⁹⁶ In Nigeria the dominant group will include the military and politicians who constitute the ruling class. The dominant ideologies of our society emanate from these categories more than others and their ideologies affect the preferred or dominant-culture readings of media texts.

⁹⁷ Fiske describes two separate economies in his alternative articulation of the circuit of culture. Financial economy of production is the second (Barker, 2000:54).

In earlier studies of popular culture, the division between popular (or low) and high culture was a subject of debate. The eventual separation of the upper and lower classes in the 16th and 17th century confined popular culture to the domain of the lower class (Burke, 1978; Shiach, 1989). Popular culture then increasingly became a threat to cultural and social standards from the perspective of the upper class and refined high culture (Bratlinger, 1983).

The various definitions of popular culture incorporate its quantitative dimension (Storey, 2003). These include “well-liked by many people; inferior kinds of work; work that deliberately sets out to win favour with the people; and culture made by people for themselves” (Williams, 1983:237). In this study, I use the term , ‘popular culture’, in its quantitative dimension, its perception as the authentic culture of the people, and as Bennet (1980) notes, in its construction as the major source of symbolic protest within contemporary capitalism. Furthermore, I look at how the use of the central processes in popular culture, namely ‘excorporation’ and ‘incorporation’, elevated NigP into a language that moved from the margin to the centre and the domain of the media. While ‘ex-corporation’ allows subordinates to make their own culture out of the resources and commodities provided by the dominant system (Fiske, 1989: 114), incorporation on the other hand is a form of containment, which concentrates on “the power of the dominant group to maintain the system that advantages them” (Fiske, 1989: 114).

Kellner (1995) , however, argues that since the media dominate leisure and culture globally, media culture as opposed to popular culture is the dominant form and site of culture in contemporary societies, where battles are fought for the control of the society (Kellner, 1995). This argument is important in the debate about the influence of the Nigerian Media in progressively changing NigP’s representations through media forms over the last six decades.

4.7.1. Counter-Culture

The concept of "counter-culture' gives fresh contexts for the understanding of terms such as "power" and "resistance" which are central to Cultural Studies (Desmond et al,1992; Umberto Eco,1967; Dessaur et al,1974). Counter-culture is a coherent system of values that differs substantively from the mainstream, one which calls for change, and implies a conscious critical self-awareness (Dessaur et al, 1974). It operates as “an active critique or transformation of the existing social, scientific or aesthetic paradigm” (Eco, 1994). It is rooted in ideas of identity and its formation, in relation to another within the Hegelian perspective (Desmond et al, 1972). The study will refer to the argument that popular culture

can play a significant role in the construction of counter-culture, through the meaning people make from their active consumption of texts and practises of the culture industries (Storey, 1993:38). This is critical in tracking NigP's ultimate metamorphosis into a popular language for broadcasts and the second preferred language in Nigeria today (Akande &Salami, 2007; Ashokan, 2011).

4.8. Culture and Hegemony

Culture is not a neutral terrain, it is political. This is because it is expressive of relations of power; it is also the consequence of a historically specific mode of production. The place of culture in social formation and its relationship to economics and politics amongst other practises has therefore been of importance in Cultural Studies (Marx, 1961; Barker, 2000). The context of Marxist legacy in Cultural Studies, the base - super structure model, however, obscures the ideological nature of culture (Althusser,1969;1971); and necessitates the movement of the narrative of culture inevitably, to the "autonomous logics of language, culture, representation and consumption" (Barker, 2000: 50).

Gramsci asserts that culture is constructed "in terms of a multiplicity of streams of meaning and covers a range of ideologies and cultural forms" (Barker,2000). In the Gramscian perspective, ideology is understood as ideas, meanings and practices which are maps of meaning that support the power of particular social groups. The British Culture tradition's notion of ideology aligns with this assertion. Hegemony arises when a 'historical bloc' of ruling class exercises social authority and leadership over the sub-ordinate classes through a combination of forces (Gramsci, 1971) (See also Storey,1993; Kellner, 1995; Barker, 2000). Gramsci's theory of hegemony foregrounds the notion of ideological struggle, it "posits a constant contradiction between ideology and the social experience of the subordinate which makes the interface an inevitable site of ideological struggle" (Fiske, 1987:259). Although, NigP is not a hegemonic language, in this study, I examine the hegemonic interface in the use of NigP for broadcast on radio and the consequent emergence of NigP radio stations.

4.8.1. Hybridity

Bhaba (1994) uses hybridity in the analysis of coloniser/colonised relations where inter-dependence and the mutual construction of subjectivities are highlighted. It refers to "the creation of new cultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonisation" (Ashcroft,

2000:108; Radhakrishnan, 2000). It is observable in linguistic, political and cultural forms amongst other expressions. Pidgins and creoles are examples of linguistic hybridisation. Bhaba contends that cultural statements and systems are constructed in the ambivalent space called ‘The Third Space of Enunciation’⁹⁸ (1994: 37). It is “through the exploration and use of hybridity, as disclosed in the third space, that the subversion and renegotiation of hegemonic systems of power and signification become possible” (Junka, 2013:2). Since cultural identity emerges in that space, it is important therefore to recognise the “empowering hybridity within which cultural difference operates” (Bhaba cited in Ashcroft, 2000:108). This will inform the analysis of the socio-cultural milieu which aided the emergence of NigP as a language of broadcast on radio.

4.8.2. Centre-Margin (Periphery)

The centre–margin dichotomy/binary in post-colonial studies define “what occurred in the representation and relationship of peoples as a result of the colonial period” (Ashcroft et al, 2000:32). In Nigeria, a binary⁹⁹ was established with English Language and NigP, one that differentiated the superior and inferior; educated and uneducated; literate and non-literate; formal and informal divides. The centre/margin (periphery) models of culture punctures the claims of cultural homogeneity and shows that all cultures are historically constructed. It is used in this study to track the movement of NigP from the margin to the centre and how the binaries assigned to both languages have increasingly crumbled in contemporary Nigeria.

4.8.3. Abrogation and Appropriation

Abrogation is “an important political stance, from which the actual appropriation of language takes place” (Ashcroft,2000:4). It counters the theory that the use of the colonialist’s language imprisons the colonised within the coloniser’s conceptual framework. Appropriation is described as a situation¹⁰⁰ in which post-colonial societies use aspects of the imperial culture that is useful to them, in articulating their own social and cultural identities. The dominant language and its discursive forms are appropriated to express widely differing

⁹⁸ This a space of hybridity and ambivalence, which presents a permanent threat to the fixity of meaning and thus to binary structures of power and knowledge (Junka,2006:2)

⁹⁹ Oppositions to the use of the colonial language, (Ngugi, 1981a) are based on the premise that “access to English in post-colonial societies is often restricted to an educated élite, or restricted to the comprador class within the society (Ashcroft: 2000:16).

¹⁰⁰These include language, forms of writing, film, theatre, even modes of thought and argument such as rationalism, logic and analysis.

cultural experiences, and to interpolate these experiences into the dominant modes of representation to reach the widest possible audience (Spurr, 1993:28; Ashcroft et al, 1992).

4.9. Conclusion

Scholars of media have pointed out that radio represents a sphere which is fundamentally defined by the politics of language. It is described as an arena in which ideas about the status of languages and aspects of linguistic identity are continuously contested (Chibita, 2011:1). This study proposes that the emergence of NigP stations within the Nigerian FM radio landscape can be better understood in the context of the acknowledgement of such contestations. The success of such stations can, particularly, be explained in the context of the progressive socio-historical currency of NigP, and the collective socio political shifts in the status and agency of its speakers.

In the social constructionist approach, culture is “conceptualised as a ‘constitutive’ process, it is therefore important as the economic or material base, in the shaping of social subjects and historical events (Hall, 1997:6). A media text is popular when it is “read and enjoyed by a diversity of social groups” (Fiske, 1987: 66). Commercially produced mass culture has thus largely been successful “because commercial culture industries pick up on numerous elements of popular cultural expression” (Jesus Martin - Barbero, 1993:120-147).

It is pertinent to note that popular culture is larger than oppositional culture yet oppositional culture draws on and contributes to popular and mass culture (Downing, 2005). In conclusion, I echo the submission that “popular culture is popular only because people find in it channels of desire, pleasure, initiative, freedom” (Gitlin, 2007:33).

In the next chapter, I continue with the Cultural Studies approach, in discussing literature about the relationship between texts and audiences and how audiences engage with texts. This will enable me to deconstruct the audiences of the popular NigP radio station, Wazobia FM, Lagos and the meaning (s) the station’s audience make(s) out of listening and engaging with its programming.

Chapter 5: Literature Review - Audience

Media and their audiences depend on one another for definition and identity. The study of media audiences is therefore central to understanding the roles played by the media in the society. (Gunter & Machin, 2009: xxi)

5.0 Introduction

In the last chapter, I reviewed literature on culture and its relationship with language.

I discussed how such concepts as identity, ideology, hegemony, popular culture, counter-culture, and imagined community influence language. I also examined how concepts from post-colonial theory influence the status and use of NigP in Nigeria.

In this chapter, using a Cultural Studies approach, I engage with literature surrounding audiences in order to deconstruct the audience of Wazobia FM. I privilege the consumption, identity and lived experience moments in the circuit of culture (Du Gay, 1987; Johnson, 1983), in explaining the relationship between text and audience. I also discuss literature on media audiences, and engage particularly with scholarly works that speak to how audiences engage with texts (Hall 1980, 1981; 1982; Fiske, 1987; Moores, 1993; Livingstone, 1998).

I include the concept of interpellation by Althusser (1969; 1971), which speaks to the recognition of self in media texts. This is pertinent in the analysis of how speakers relate to texts in NigP.

I build on this by explaining pertinent issues about media and audiences such as the interpretive freedom of audiences and the determining power of the media (Strelitz, 2000), audience autonomy, resistance to dominant readings of text, the sense of individual and collective identity that influences the decoding of media texts; and the meaning audiences make from the interactivity provided by social media. Furthermore, I link social movement to my discussion of the notion of audiences, given that the present currency of NigP has progressed socio-historically. I examine the notion of “taste publics” (Bourdieu, 1984), pleasure and entertainment, and what identities texts propose to audiences. These concepts will help me make sense of my findings in the following chapter.

5.1. Interpretive Communities

Interpretation is the result of the process of negotiation between texts and readers within specific cultural and social contexts. It is dependent on audiences’ engagement with text and

its reproduction in the contexts of their everyday worlds. The interpretive freedom of audiences or the determining power of the media cannot be decided in the abstract “because they vary considerably between people, social circumstances, and media output (Dahlgren, 1998; Strelitz, 2000). The activity of the audience is conceived as interpretive and political (Ross and Nightingale, 2003). Theories which focus on interpretive freedom therefore cluster around the readings and lived culture moments of the circuit of culture (Strelitz, 2000:38).

The encoding and decoding model opened up the possibilities of investigating audience talk and communities. It precipitated the prioritisation of the site where the “talk is produced and ‘normalised’” (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:38). It ultimately led to focus on audience groups and communities, particularly marginalised or disadvantaged groups (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:38). These include ethnic communities who use media materials in peculiar ways, by creating media materials that “express their socio-cultural location” (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:38).

Language plays a pivotal role in the process of investigating audience communities. It is the over-arching symbolic environment in which audiences live, and it influences the creation of their communicative repertoires through cultural positioning and interactive communities (Newcomb, 1984). Consequently, the interpretive repertoires of a media user are seen as a product of the language community, its cultural positioning, established in the course of the individual’s life history, the communicative interactions in the interpretive and social communities of everyday life, and finally the unique assemblage of these influences constructed by that individual from moment to moment (Schroder, 1994).

Put differently, the socio-historical contexts in which audiences operate represent a social system of practises that mediate the flow and interpretation of communication. This is enabled by structures such as gender, class and ethnicity. Thus, social systems generate the interpretive strategies shared by individuals in the same audience groups referred to as interpretive communities (Ross and Nightingale, 2003).

5.2 Cultural Studies Approach to Audience Studies

The ‘ethnographic turn’¹⁰¹ in Cultural Studies shifts focus from the moment of textual interpretation, to the contextualisation of that moment (Jensen and Rosengren, 1990). The Cultural Studies tradition in audience study therefore combines “text centred perspective with

¹⁰¹ This involves the detailed analysis of the *culture of the everyday*, an analysis of the ritual aspects of culture and communication (Carey, 1975) and the practices by which meanings are re/produced in daily life (De Certeau, 1984).

a social systemic conception of reception” (Livingstone, 1998:11). Media messages are thus seen as generically structured discourses that are relevant to audiences. Important issues and themes in the Cultural Studies approach¹⁰² to audience include the polysemic nature of texts, preferred reading model (Hall, 1980), the social character of media use and the narrative model (Burke, 1970). It also includes the notion of contextualisation, the context within which media use takes place (Reiner, 1998).

5.3 Active Audience

Active audiences are social subjects who live in social formations and are constituted by a complex socio-historical trajectories that draw on what is both textual and social (Fiske, 1987; Ross and Nightingale, 2003; Brooker and Jermyn, 2003). Meanings are therefore determined socially and its production is similar to how subjectivity is constructed in the society. Meanwhile, audiences’ subjectivity¹⁰³ is derived from mediated and real social experiences¹⁰⁴. As a result, the reader produces meanings derived from “the intersection of his/her social history with the social forces structured into a text” (Fiske, 1987: 82). The active audience is thus involved in a discursive, social process of negotiating meanings that offer a semi-controlling role (Grossberg cited in Fiske, 1987: 82).

Media texts must provoke a diversity of readers/audiences to the production of meanings and pleasure; there must also be a corresponding provision of textual space for these meanings to be articulated with their social interests. When this occurs, a media text or media form becomes popular. Essentially however, it is only when readers or audiences can articulate their interests with the textual meanings on offer that the texts become pleasurable.

Naficy (1993) uses the notion of active audience to also explain how identity groups, even when dispersed within the audience, can “cultivate shared interests, define agendas for the production of particular media events, produce the required media materials and identify

¹⁰² The encoding-decoding model of reception developed by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies is referred to as the Cultural studies approach

¹⁰³ Subjectivities are made up of the different discourses used in making sense of the “social domains that constitute our social experience” (Fiske, 1987:66).

¹⁰⁴ Morley’s work is particularly significant in shifting emphasis from “textual and ideological construction of the subject to socially and historically situated people” (Fiske, 1987:63).

exhibition strategies to secure participation in the ... mediascape¹⁰⁵” (Naficy cited in Ross and Nightingale, 2003:67) .

5.4 Audience Power in Broadcasting Context¹⁰⁶

Audience power is derivable from their “participation in three interlocking spheres of activity: the public sphere, consumption, and the media sphere” (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:53) and the link it has with the market, advertising and broadcasting. This is manifested at two levels; at level one, commercial broadcasting is set up around the educated middle class referred to as the ‘consumerist caste’ ¹⁰⁷ (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:53). At level two, practices such as audience targeting, niche advertising and audience segmentation are developed around those who can afford advertisers products. These practices are then increasingly created around the favourite product. In this instance, Nigerian Pidgin stations and their programmes are the favourite products (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:53).

The third source of audience power is the power inherent in people’s activities as audiences. Broadcasters depend on audiences for listenership, they therefore use programming to attract the kind of audiences sought by advertisers and sponsors (Ross and Nightingale, 2003; Downing, 2001). This concurrently constitutes broadcast audiences as both “consumers of broadcasting services’ and commodities sold to advertisers” (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:55).

Audience autonomy refers to the control that contemporary media environments provide audiences, the manner of consumption and the extent to which audiences can transcend media consumption to become contributors to the media environment (Napoli, 2008). Audience became interchangeable as subjects and objects, consumers and producers through increasing interactivity¹⁰⁸ (Ross and Nightingale, 2003). This phenomenon, helped by broadcast technology and new media, crosses media forms and thrives on the process of ‘cultural’ and ‘media’ convergence (Brooker and Jermyn, 2003).

5.5 Audiences and Pleasure

¹⁰⁵ Mediascapes “provide...large and complex repertoires of images, narratives and ethnoscapas to viewers throughout the world, in which the world of commodities and the world of news and politics are profoundly mixed”(Appadurai,1997:35). This term originally used by Appadurai (1997:35) .

¹⁰⁶ This title was taken from (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:52) because it captured the context of this thesis.

¹⁰⁷ This is because of their large disposable income, literacy and self-discipline needed for answering surveys

¹⁰⁸ Callers to phone-in programmes contribute to the content of a programme, they can be considered as producers of meaning.

Pleasure is produced when readers/audiences articulate their interests in media forms such as a radio station or its programmes. A text produces two types of pleasure, 'jouissance', the intense physical pleasure which operates beyond culture and ideology; and 'plaisir', a cultural, more mundane variation (Barthes, 1973; 1975; Fiske, 1987). Barthes sees pleasure as cultural¹⁰⁹, he notes that "the more culture, the greater, more diverse, the pleasure will be" (Barthes, 1975:51). He states further that a text that gives pleasure kindles an encounter with one's individuality and historical subject¹¹⁰. It has been noted that experiencing one's cultural heritage in the media lends authority that takes the story to the realm of the historical-social (Ross and Nightingale, 2003¹¹¹). Pleasure can be found by conforming to dominant ideology or in negotiating or rejecting the dominant ideology (Kerr et al, 2006).

Fiske associates the obtaining of pleasure with resistance to structure of domination because "pleasure requires a sense of control over meanings and active participation in the cultural process" (Fiske, 1987b:19). The pleasure involved in sense-making means meaning has rational, cognitive and affective dimensions (Dahlgren, 1998: 299). Morley (1981) thus addresses the issue of 'taste publics', by specifying the inter-discursive articulations in the production of salience and pleasure; and stressing the need to see the diversity of tastes and cultural competencies as socially organised and patterned. He argues for a shift away from the political dimensions of communication and the well-being of the ideological propositions of the text; to the relevance and comprehension dimensions of decoding (Morley, 1981b; Strelitz, 2000; Moores, 2003).

Pleasure is, however, both a concept and an experience which is constructed in relation to multiple sources ranging from textual to social and contextual (Kerr et al, 2006). It is "an open ended, multi-faceted and an exceedingly complex concept" (Salen and Zimmerman, 2003: 355).

5.6 Interpellation

Althusser refers to ideology as the process that reproduces and reconstitutes individuals, as concrete subjects in actual practice. He refers to interpellation as a change mechanism and asserts that when subjectification occurs through interpellation, the cultural power of the

¹⁰⁹ Barthes categorises bliss as non-cultural. He notes the contradictory interplay of pleasure and bliss and influence on the historical subject (Barthes, 1975:62).

¹¹⁰ Barthes sees the historical subject as the "the conclusion of a very complex process of biographical, historical, sociological, neurotic elements (education, social class, childhood configuration, e. t. c" (Barthes, 1975:62).

¹¹¹ See page 67.

subject is activated (Althusser, 1969; 1971; Jarre, 2007). He further states that there is a resultant “projection of force when such power is used in a mass mediated environment” (Jarre, 2007:1). Interpolation starts with ‘hailing’, this is a “heralding to join in on the proposition at hand” (Jarre, 2007:1). It is also described as the rituals of ideological recognition (Felluga, 2002). When ‘hailing’ occurs through media text, the attention gathered solidifies, and subjectifies the listener “through their total acceptance of the ideological proposition, and in doing so interpolates them into the ideological system” (Jarre, 2007:1).

In the process of hailing or interpellation, “the power of the media to shape messages of popularity, of the arts, and of war” (Jarre, 2007:1), is at once evident. This is so because individuals rely on language to establish their ‘reality’ which positions them within ideology (Jarre, 2007:1). Felluga (2002) in his analysis of Althusser’s work on interpellation, submits that the “performance of our relation to others and to social institutions ... continually instantiates us as subjects.”(Felluga, 2002:1). Jarre avers importantly that, “successfully interpolated subjects do not realize their subjection” (Jarre.2007:1), rather they think, they have freely chosen to become part of the dominant ideology (Jarre, 2007).

5.7 Conclusion

Gunter & Machin (2009) state that “the notions of audience as defined by media functionality and the nature of an individual’s engagement with a medium have become more acutely important” Gunter & Machin (2009: xxv). This has necessitated the continual examination into how the micro-level processes of audience reception are of importance for macro-level societal and cultural processes. This is important to this study as I examine how the NigP radio phenomenon has made such huge impact in Nigerian cities, considering and using Wazobia FM Lagos as my point of departure. In this chapter I have outlined some of the approaches to understanding the relationship between texts and audiences. This will provide the framework for my examination of Wazobia FM’s audience and the meanings they make of their engagements with the station’s programming.

Chapter Six: Research Methodology

6.0 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the theoretical framework of this research which will be linked to the study's findings in chapter seven. In this chapter, I discuss decisions about the research design, methodology, methods, and sampling choices. I also highlight the reasons for adopting a qualitative methodology framework for this research, and justify my choice to utilise the quantitative research method of survey. These underscore the ontological and epistemological positions underpinning the research. Lastly, I capture the limitations experienced in the course of the fieldwork and the data analysis procedure.

6.1 Research Design and Procedure

The goal of this research is to investigate how the audience of Wazobia FM, engages with its programming. In particular, I investigated whether the prioritisation of NigP within the station's programming influenced the audience's response to the station. The central research question explored the importance of the use of NigP as a broadcast language, in explaining the popularity of radio stations such as Wazobia FM in Nigeria's multilingual society. In order to do this, a research design was developed to collect the necessary data required to address these research concerns.

6.2 Methodology

The primary orientation of this study is qualitative research which involves "an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000:3). It is concerned with "understanding the meanings which people attach to phenomena (actions, decisions, beliefs, values, etc.) within their social worlds" (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:3). Bryman says "the way in which people being studied understand and interpret their social reality is one of the central motifs of qualitative research" (Bryman, 1988:8). This study thus adopts the 'emic'¹¹² perspective which underpins qualitative methodology, and views social life in terms of processes as opposed to static terms.

¹¹² This emic perspective is the perspective of the people being studied that penetrates their frames of meaning.

The qualitative methodology was chosen because it yields “data which are detailed, information rich and extensive” (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:5); “provides in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants” (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:3), while its analysis is open to emergent concepts and ideas (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). However, because this study locates itself in audience research, I used mixed-methods and drew on both qualitative and quantitative methods, primarily focus groups and surveys. In further exploring the research goals, my target is to use the “rich harvest bound to come in once the necessary transubstantiation of valuable qualitative insights into quantitative descriptions and explanations based on representative samples has been carried out” (Rosengren 1996: 140). In this study, both methods were combined, their strengths and limitations complementing one another in ‘a unified research design’ (Wolff et al,1993:119).

6.2.1 Qualitative Methodology

This methodology sees the social world from “the actor’s point of view” (Bryman,1984). It targets an understanding of the particular and discloses a variety of meanings in order to generate a variety of limitless insights directly about these particulars (Willis, 1978). There is thus a preference for a contextual understanding of a situation, such that behaviour is understood within the context of meaning systems employed by a particular group or society and the material reality that provides its context. The philosophical underpinnings of qualitative methodology are attributed to phenomenology and symbolic interactionism¹¹³ (Bryman, 1984)¹¹⁴. The point about phenomenological position is that the actor’s point of view is its empirical point of departure.

6.2.2 Quantitative Methodology

This is a form of research which privileges numbers in communicating how often a variable is present in the investigation of a phenomenon, thus allowing for high precision in reporting results (Wimmer and Dominick, 1991). Scientists are unconcerned with the individual case. Rather they seek laws and systematic relations in the explanation of phenomena, thereby arriving at statistical results (Kerlinger, 1979). Quantitative research “permits the use of powerful methods of mathematical analysis” (Wimmer and Dominick, 1991:46). Although

¹¹³ This is the exploration of behaviour and social roles to understand how people interpret and react to their environment.

¹¹⁴ The epistemological roots are in a hermeunetic and phenomenological conceptualisation of the social production of meaning in a discursively constructed social reality (Schroder et al, 2003).

the approach to this study is interpretive, it also has elements of positivism because of its use of survey, a quantitative method of data gathering.

6.3 Research Methods

I employed a two-stage research design to investigate the rise and popularity of NigP radio stations in Nigeria:

- An online survey was conducted to determine the nature of the listeners of Wazobia FM who engage with the station's content and programming online. It examined the attitudes of Nigerians to NigP and how issues of language and identity play out in the popularity of Wazobia FM.
- Four focus group interviews were conducted with traditional radio listeners. The focus was on how they engage with the station's programming, what meaning they make from the content provided by Wazobia FM, their views of the prioritisation of NigP and whether the station's choice of language speak to their sense of identity.

This research thus drew on “a triangulated research strategy” (Tellis, 2007:1), which can occur with data, investigators, theories, and even methodologies (Snow and Anderson cited in Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg, 1991). I adopted *methodological triangulation*¹¹⁵, by incorporating focus groups and surveys in order to increase confidence in the interpretation. Triangulation arises from the ethical need to confirm the validity of the processes (Tellis, 1997:2). I used five distinct stages - design, pilot study, data collection, data analysis and report writing (Wimmer and Dominick, 1991). I constructed a study protocol (Appendice 6a) which contained the procedures for the study, the data gathering instruments, procedures necessary for gaining access to a particular person or organisation.

6.3.1 The Questionnaire

I chose to use an analytical survey which “allows researchers to examine the interrelationships among variables” (Wimmer and Dominick, 1991:107), from which explanatory inferences are drawn. I administered the questionnaire online. Online surveys are often created as web-forms with a database to store the answers and statistical software to provide analytics. They are used to gain a deeper understanding of customers' tastes and

¹¹⁵ Other triangulation options are data, investigator and theory triangulation. The methodological triangulation approach allows other approaches to be used with the case study (Denzin, 1984).

opinions; and also to provide more data on customers including basic demographics and social data (Techopedia, 2013¹¹⁶).

My use of an online survey is justifiable considering the “increasingly interactive nature of the media environment” in contemporary times (Napoli, 2010:86). This has been catalysed by access and usage of new media technology and platforms by media audiences. Furthermore, the internet is measurable in terms of audience delivery and audience interaction (Jaffe cited in Napoli, 2010:86) and it is possible for media researchers to “record data about individual consumers at an unprecedented level of detail” (Mullarkey cited in Napoli, 2010:86).

The questionnaire was designed with ‘Google Form’, a survey tool. Arrangements were made with the management of Wazobia FM, that the survey will be embedded on the website of Wazobia FM 95.1, Lagos. Its On-Air Personalities were supposed to drive online traffic to the site during their live radio broadcasts, through word of mouth, Twitter and Facebook social media platforms. Although, the management agreed during fieldwork and data gathering, this plan failed eventually, perhaps because the station thought I was investigating Wazobia on behalf of my Corporation (Radio Nigeria). I eventually administered the on-line survey to general listeners of the station, without Wazobia FM’s support.

The survey enabled me to compare the responses of the station’s audience accessed online with the traditional audience offline, in order to understand what factors are prioritised by both categories of audiences in the popularity of NigP radio stations. Mixed methods enhance the quality of research, and allow researchers to “crosscheck results for consistency and to offset any bias of a single research method” (Spicer, 2004: 297). This enabled me to “closely re-examine” my data (Spicer, 2004: 298).

6.3.1.1 The Pilot Survey

Two pilot surveys were conducted prior to the administering of the actual online survey. In the first, thirteen respondents were chosen in order to test the survey instrument. The survey was administered face-to-face in Voice of Nigeria (VON) and Radio Nigeria, Lagos, amongst broadcast journalists who are knowledgeable about radio broadcasting, familiar with the programming and on air personalities of Wazobia FM. It afforded me the space to note the attitude of respondents to the questions, the length of time it took to finish filling the forms, ambiguous questions and how the respondents responded to the open ended questions.

¹¹⁶ Source: Techopedia website.

The second pilot was administered online to test the applicability of the instrument. The two pilot surveys offered the opportunity to investigate which questions needed to be prioritised in the main survey. The pilot studies thus helped to refine the design of my questionnaire and the field procedure. I also listened to the station for three months to expose myself to its daily programming diet. The online survey (Appendice 6b) was created using Google Form, a data capturing programme which collates the answers and also provides the means of data analysis.

6.3.1.2 Sampling

The online questionnaire was administered to a sample population of Wazobia FM listeners online. This virtual sample population is unique because it captures listeners who also engage interactively with the station. This is particularly important in getting the demographic of listeners of the stations who engage with its programme and are accessible online. It tracks their perceptions, locations and preferences, necessary information in investigating the reasons behind the huge listenership and popularity of the radio station.

6.3.1.3 Limitations

The survey could not be conducted in NigP because there is no standard orthography for the language yet. The online survey may have appealed to educated and youthful listeners alone and excluded listeners who are not technologically savvy but are active listeners and contributors through text messages and phone calls. These two platforms are particularly popular as interactive outlets of audience engagements with the radio station. This may result in a biased survey result. Another limitation is that data collated from the survey is limited to online respondents, it is therefore not generalisable. It is, however, situated within qualitative research, where “addressing validity is seen as methodologically sufficient” (Hoijer, 2008: 252). The sample population online also raises questions about how social class distinctions regulate access to the internet. It may be argued that the internet is predominantly used by the upper and middle class in the society. The limitation of the online survey option, however, was remedied in the focus group discussions where interviewees were purposely selected based on social class.

6.3.2 Focus Group Discussion

The focus group is a data collection method, a “popular means of analysing media audiences and highlighting the social contexts of media consumption” (Deacon et al,1999:55). It is a

research strategy for understanding audience, consumer attitudes and behaviour. It is a controlled group discussion which is employed in the gathering of preliminary information for a research project (Wimmer and Dominick, 1991).

In these group discussions, “data are generated by interaction between group participants” (Finch and Lewis, 2003: 171). Participants share views and opinions about an issue, listen to others, “reflect on what is said and in the light of this consider their own standpoint further” (Finch and Lewis, 2003:171). It is synergistic (Stewart and Shamdasi, 1990) in that in responding to each other spontaneously, a stronger social context arises, and “participants reveal more of their own frame of reference” (Finch and Lewis, 2003:171) on a phenomenon and their “perspective is less influenced by interaction with the researcher than it might be on a one-on-one interview” (Finch and Lewis, 2003:171). The results, according to Bloor *et al* (2001) reflect the social constructions¹¹⁷ which constitute the integral part of the way in which we perceive experience and understand the world around us.

In this study, three focus groups were constituted around the three major national languages in Nigeria: Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. Each focus group comprised four Nigerian citizens homogenous to each ethnic group. Participants in the fourth focus group were selected from the main minority tribes in Nigeria and were constituted according to Nigeria’s geopolitical zones¹¹⁸. This makes the Yoruba speaking people in Kwara state a minority group¹¹⁹ and considered Northerners¹²⁰. Other ethnic groups represented included Edo in Midwest, Nigeria; Jaba in Southern Kaduna¹²¹, Idoma from Benue¹²², in North Central Nigeria. The constitution of the group along geo-political zoning was also to further tease out the reason (s) behind the popularity of NigP radio and find out how a group of people from different ethnic backgrounds in the multilingual environment of Lagos city interpret the phenomenon. Each of the stages are discussed below.

I moderated the group using an interview guide (Appendix 6c¹²³). Shomolu, the site of focus group discussions for the Yoruba ethnic group is predominantly populated by the

¹¹⁷ These social constructions include normative influences, individual and collective sense of identity as well as shared meanings (Bloor et al, 2001).

¹¹⁸ Nigeria is compartmentalised into six geo –political zones and further sub divided within the zones.

¹¹⁹ Kwara State consists of different tribes and languages including Yorubas in Igbomina Local Government, Fulanis, Hausas, and the Tapas.

¹²⁰ This constitutes one of the complexities and paradoxes of the Nigerian nation.

¹²¹ Nigerians from Southern Kaduna are not regarded as core Northerners

¹²² Benue state occupies the middle belt of Nigeria and has been included for more diversity

¹²³ This is the interview guide for the focus group together with a copy of the consent forms for participants.

working class, a discussant was chosen from that social class, along with an upper class and two middle class entrepreneurs. The Hausa language focus group had two young semi-educated males who could not speak English Language fluently¹²⁴, they were chosen from Obalende, populated by the working class. The other respondents were civil servants. In the Igbo group, a driver and junior administrative personnel in the civil service were interviewed. The other two can be classified as lower middle class. These provide a balance of views and opinions from different social classes which constitute Wazobia's FM's audiences.

Information obtained from focus groups are sometimes used in developing items for survey research. In this study, insights from the focus groups were used to rework the pilot study questionnaire, in order to probe the identity and agency of the audience of NigP radio stations. Listeners from major and minority language groups in Nigeria were interrogated on their views of the use of NigP on radio stations, how they engage with Wazobia FM's programming, the meaning they make of its existence in radio broadcasting and their perception of the station's popularity. Language defined the constitution of the homogenous focus groups. One hour per group discussion was set from the beginning, with some flexibility depending on the vibrancy of the participants.

6.3.2.1 Sampling

I used purposive sampling, which is not statistically representative. It ensures that key constituencies relevant to the phenomenon are covered. Secondly, it ensures diversity, which aids the researcher in exploring the impact of specific characteristics (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). I selected a small yet representative sample of listeners of NigP radio stations using this sampling¹²⁵ type for the focus groups. This is in addition to the randomly selected population online. There were four persons in each focus group which included both male and female listeners. (Appendix 6d)

6.3.2.2. Limitations

There was a constant need to redirect respondents to the purpose of the investigation. In the Hausa language focus group, two of the respondents, although forthcoming with their views, had limited mastery of the English language. This made it difficult for them to easily express

¹²⁴ See text of Focus Group Discussion with Hausa language group.

¹²⁵ This is also known as convenience sampling.

themselves and the researcher had to paraphrase their responses and repeat them to ensure that their intended views were adequately captured.

6.4 Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis involves examining, categorizing, creating displays, tabulating, and recombining the evidence gathered to address the concerns of a study (Yin, 1994; Miles and Huberman, 1984). Collected data are “interpreted for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on the interests, ideas, and theories that initiated the inquiry” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 101). I reviewed all relevant evidence and rival explanations used, and ensured that the analysis follows the triangulation pattern (Tellis, 2007). I used descriptive statistics in my data analysis, specifically the “data distribution method which is a collection of numbers which will be arranged in what is called frequency distribution” (Wimmer & Dominick, 1991: 203). (Appendice 6e)

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the research design and procedure employed in this study. I discussed reasons for using a qualitative research as a primary orientation for the research. I also justified the choice of a survey which is a quantitative research method and the reasons it was administered online. In the chapter, I explained the study protocol and the decisions behind the multi-method approach to the study: survey/questionnaire and focus groups discussions. The sampling procedure was also explained, as well as the limitations encountered during fieldwork.

In the next chapter, I present my findings using the analysis foregrounded in the cultural studies theoretical framework.

Chapter 7: Findings and Analysis

Benson (Minority Languages Focus Group): The growth and development of NigP has made a tremendous impact on the Nigerian populace, because the amount of people who listen to news now has tremendously increased . . . the news on Wazobia FM is made so interesting that even the educated person wants to listen to the thing, they overemphasise and personify everything and it's lovely.

7.0 Introduction

The goal of this research is to determine how important the use of NigP is in explaining the popularity of Wazobia FM in Nigeria's multilingual society. In doing this, I will examine how the radio station's audience engages with the station's programming. In this chapter, I analyse the focus group discussions and results of the online survey, from which two main themes emerged. The first theme centres on how the prioritisation of NigP by Wazobia FM propelled the station's popularity. The second is concerned with the role of NigP in the audience's engagement with the station's programming. These will be discussed in the rest of this chapter.

7.1 The Perceived Importance of NigP as a Language in Nigeria

In the four language-based focus group discussions, comprising 16 discussants, NigP was variously described as “the universal indigenous language in Nigeria”, as an “informal language”, “business language”, “a social balancer”, and the “primary language of the markets”. Other descriptions were that it is a language “commonly spoken on the streets”, that “cuts across all ethnic groups”, and one which is “predominant amongst the youth”.

Referring to its growing popularity, a respondent noted that “the way it's spreading like wildfire, very soon it will take over the whole nation”. Another participant stated that its popularity has even spread to the diaspora, because “Nigerians travel a lot to transact business or to just migrate to another locality or country. As they move, they move along with everything about them including this pidgin thing”.

The significance of NigP to everyday life was also evident in the survey results. Thirty-one percent of the 17 respondents to the online survey, who were primarily from the middle class¹²⁶, said they speak NigP with friends, 23% use it to converse with Nigerians from other regions, 18% with family, 10% use it for business while 13% of them claimed to use NigP for all communicative reasons.

¹²⁶ They were majorly professionals engaged in white collar jobs like banking, consultancy, law and so on.

7.2 The Popularity of Wazobia FM 95.1

I discuss in this section that the centrality of NigP is key to understanding the popularity of Wazobia FM. In supporting this claim, I draw on the comments of the 16 participants in the Focus Group Discussions (henceforth FGs) and the 17 participants¹²⁷ of the online survey.

One of the FG respondents linked Wazobia FM's value to the Reithian ideals of public service broadcasting: to educate, to inform and to entertain.

Adekunle (Yoruba FG): From my point of view, the reasons why these three stations¹²⁸ are broadcasting in NigP; one, it is basically to entertain, that is the major objective, they are also doing that to pass information to a particular target audience... and we can look at it from education point of view, for instance, as with public service announcement... *With Pidgin English, these stations can easily communicate with the people, it's one of the added values of broadcasting NigP.*

Wazobia FM is, however, a commercial radio station which is expected to sell audiences to advertisers (Lewis and Booth, 1989). In this way, I would categorise the owners of Wazobia FM as a 'dominant group' using the Fiskean terminology of 'power blocs' (Fiske, 1989). Although Wazobia FM as a cultural producer has taken the "form of capitalist commodity production" (Lovell, 1980:49), its cultural impact could not be predicted by its form of organisation and its relationship to the wider Nigerian capitalist economy.

The popularity of Wazobia FM is directly related to the huge number of NigP speakers in Lagos. Closely linked to this is an assertion by a participant that the use of NigP in business enterprises is "a game of numbers", and businesses, like Wazobia FM, gain advantage by directly marketing to this large population of NigP speakers. Another participant gave more insight:

Atolagbe (Minority Language FG): [NigP is] the language that is understood by the majority, which is why the stations have tapped into it. They are grabbing the opportunity, especially the adverts . . . they think it is a means of getting the information across to the majority.

The prioritisation of NigP in this context works in three ways for Wazobia FM: first, radio is popular because it is consumed by people in huge numbers (Mano, 2011:107). Second, the value of Wazobia FM as a commercial radio station is in the quantity and (if we consider the 'cross over' middle class who are also targeted) in the quality of its audience (Barnard, 2000). Third, NigP was described by all participants in the four focus groups as a 'business

¹²⁷ I have used participants' surnames in referencing their contributions.

¹²⁸ The respondent refers to Bond FM, Wazobia FM and Naija FM, the context for the three radio stations have been provided in the contextual chapter on use of NigP in Radio broadcasting.

language’, and the prioritisation of NigP by Wazobia FM has positioned the station as the destination point for corporate Nigeria¹²⁹. This positions the station as an important channel to reach a critical mass for their products.

Koko (Hausa FG): Let me tell you what these banks do now. They station one of the security men to help those who come to deposit or withdraw but cannot communicate in Queens English? They will call you, “wetin be your name?” They will fill it [a form] in for you. “How much you wan take?” They will write it for you. We all know this, and it happens in all the banks, because they know that if they rely on all those ‘neck ties,’ customers will run away.

Before being taken up by the corporate sector, however, NigP established itself as a useful tool in the informal sector:

Koko (Hausa FG): Go to areas like Mile 12 where almost all our foodstuff in Lagos is coming from, you will marvel to see how the Hausa people transact business with Yoruba’s not necessarily in English or Yoruba but in NigP. It’s the same thing with Igbo and all other ‘tribes’ and this has gone on for years.

Adeniji (Yoruba FG): If you want to negotiate properly and get good bargain for whatever you want to buy [in Nigeria], you need to know how to speak NigP . . .

For Wazobia FM, the volume of adverts in NigP on the radio station is unprecedented, such that presenters struggle¹³⁰ to present programmes and play music in between. Wazobia FM’s use of NigP, the “business language” in 21st century Nigeria has enabled it to acquire popularity with the vast majority of radio audiences, regardless of ethnic boundaries.

Ethnicity is an important factor in the politics of language in Nigeria and the use of an ethnic language is often viewed with suspicion and hostility in multilingual settings (Scotton, 1975; Deuber, 2005). In the online survey, 88% of the respondents think NigP has helped to bridge the ethnic divides in Nigeria. Although it is a language appropriated from the coloniser, NigP now competes with English language.

Wazobia FM has boosted the esteem and sense of belonging of Pidgin English speakers by privileging their subaltern language and way of life. It has validated the cultural experience, the lived culture of a marginalised section of the Nigerian population in an unprecedented manner.

¹²⁹ Corporate Nigeria constitute the station’s biggest customer(Personal Communication: McAnderson, 2013)

¹³⁰ See contextual chapter on NigP in Radio broadcasting.

A participant, who is an entrepreneur, spoke about Wazobia's audience based on her experience, noting that it cuts through different social classes:

Olanre- Alade (Yoruba FG): I think it [Listenership of Wazobia FM] does cut across social classes, educational barriers and social strata. . . I am a rich woman and I listen to it. The first time I heard about it was through my driver. I sat at the back of the car and I was always telling him to change the station after a while. It's meaningful, they are making sense. After the guy stopped working with me, my brother -in -law [who took over from him] started [tuning to the station as well]. My workers, that's the only station they listen to in that workshop. And if you want them to work well, you better leave them.

Working class speakers of the language, who are mostly found working in the informal sector, constitute the largest percentage of Wazobia FM's listeners. Participants in the Hausa Language FGD discussed the listenership of Wazobia at its peak period drive time in the evening - and asserted that the bourgeois, upper class also listen.

Binta (Hausa FG): Even the big people listen to Wazobia

Treasure: How do you prove it?

Binta: Okay, let's say now in the evening when there is hold up [traffic] on the bridge, maybe just leave your car and trek through the hold up and listen to what they are listening to, in their cars. You will hear them listening to Wazobia.

Lawal: Even in the BRT¹³¹, you listen to Wazobia

Another participant pointed out the political nature of the debate about the constitution of Wazobia FM's audience along the lines of social classes and distinctions.

Kabir (Hausa FG): . . . Even those who claim they know much in Queens English ... find themselves either listening to this NigP stations or talking to people that don't know any other language but NigP English, so I think there is nothing like class as far as NigP is concerned . . .

Although the radio station crosses class boundaries, it continually appeals to the realities and experiences of communities of NigP speakers. It adopts the point of view of the proletariat and offers them the opportunity to have their lives reflected and robustly represented in the media (Lovell, 1980).

Amadi Igbo FG: They [Wazobia FM] remember the artisans in their shops, the panel beater, vulcaniser, the tailor, and all these people. They put on their radio, working, laughing at themselves and they are thoroughly entertained. When you speak phonetics, they don't understand that. You might be doing a good job but nobody understands, except a particular class of people.

¹³¹ Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Interpellation starts with ‘hailing’, this is a “heralding to join in on the proposition at hand” (Jarre, 2007:1). This brings about subjectification which activates the cultural power of the subject (Althusser, 1969; 1971; Jarre, 2007).

Kabir (Hausa Focus Group): Whereby you are walking by, and you are listening to radio (Wazobia FM), from the way they will use it (NigP), there is action there and it will attract you, you will stop. For example if they say that ‘so-so’ thing wants to happen (mimicks a pidgin radio announcement) the way they will say it, “you sef will grab your chairs and say ‘ah’ let me just listen to this thing that is happening”.

Kabir responded, in this comment, to the interpellation of the audience by the station’s use of NigP (Althusser, 1969; 1971).

Importantly, as emerged in my FG interviews, NigP is perceived as “home grown”. Phrases such as “it’s our own English”, “our own language”, “nobody imported it”, “we manufactured it”, were used to express a sense of ownership, in contrast with English language. This is to create a dichotomy. This is what Barthes (1969) refers to as the ‘us and them’ boundaries, important in group creation. It arises once a group has coalesced through individual’s interrelationships due to common interests. NigP thus represents a common interest, in the linguistic ecology of Nigeria. In his interrogation of intergroup relations and social change with regard to divergence, Tajfel (1978) asserts that boundary creation leads to a sense of membership and group identity.

Ogbuagu (Igbo FG): I agree it’s our own English. We manufacture it, and therefore any visitor coming to Nigerian must ‘descend low’ to learn NigP . . .

This suggests that these distinctions between home-grown and imported are further extended in the distinction between high and low. This is another set of binary, which marks English as ‘high’ and NigP in a subordinate, low position. This is a historical construction rooted in the colonial history of Nigeria, one that resonates with the centre–margin dichotomy/binary in post-colonial studies, which is defined as “what occurred in the representation and relationship of peoples as a result of the colonial period” (Ashcroft et al, 2000:32).

In Ogbuagu’s comments, one gets a sense of ‘group pride’, as well as a new evaluative dimension that favours speakers of NigP. Although a clear distinction is made between the two languages, there is a re-assessment that makes the point that NigP is as valued as the English language. A demand is thus placed on the need to learn NigP in order to gain entry into the exclusive group of speakers, and then be rewarded with acceptance and interaction.

Part of the popularity of Wazobia FM is that it connects with this sense of group pride that the speakers have and their working class identity¹³². For the first time in the history of Nigerian broadcasting, working class listeners are being addressed across ethnic groups by a radio station.¹³³ The pleasure derived from this continual representation of NigP has fuelled the emergence of NigP radio stations and the popularity of Wazobia FM. Respondents in the four focus groups recognised binaries between NigP and English language and referred to them extensively in the discussions. They also noted that the binaries have consistently crumbled in the face of NigP's steady movement from the margins to the centre in post-colonial and contemporary Nigeria.

Lawal¹³⁴ (Hausa FG): Even for the educated ones, there are some places like Ajegunle [Lagos Ghetto] where lots of educated people reside. They communicate with each other in NigP, they have taken it as a general language, because people will quickly understand...

Binta (Hausa FG): Maybe you think by speaking Queens English is when people will really understand you. No. If you speak this NigP, even the educated ones, they understand you better than when you speak Queens.

This ability of NigP to collapse the boundaries between high and low is an important observation in the analysis of the currency and power that NigP wields in Nigeria presently. This factor accounts for the language's increased popularity, which is fundamental in its prioritisation by Wazobia FM because the radio station can target audiences across social classes.

Radio, as a medium, has the potential to give a listener multiple identities: it nurtures a people's sense of belonging in terms of place, language, patterns of consumption and in the shaping of trends in popular music (Hendy, 2000). The combination of language in the context of creating a linguistic identity, and radio's capacity to create an imagined community, and nurture a sense of belonging, intimacy and community has resulted in part, in the phenomenon that is Wazobia FM. Therefore, the ability of NigP to speak directly to the personal identity of individuals is also a fundamental basis for the prioritisation of NigP by Wazobia FM. This move by the radio station gives this community of NigP speakers a sense of identity and a platform to own the station and be loyal in their listenership.

¹³² Middle class listeners are ambivalent, the majority of them who are listeners to Wazobia FM have strong working class backgrounds (See Onu,2013:2)

¹³³ See Appendix 7a.

¹³⁴ Lawal is barely educated, his competence in the English Language is minimal.

Ibeuzor (Igbo FGD): The majority of the people believe that when you speak NigP, you are in agreement with them.

Ibeuzor means there is a feeling of shared experience and sense of collective identity. This is also closely related to the fact that the radio station worked with the concept of the ‘other’ (Barthes, 1969) by including the segment of the population ignored by mainstream media.

In relation to this, the radio station encourages the representation of the everyday life of NigP speakers by encouraging listeners to call in. As a result “a marginal group has now become a majority” (De Certeau, 1980: xvii).

Kabir (Hausa: FGD): Sometimes a market woman will just call [into the radio station], and say “I want to say ‘hi’ to you there and Matshe”

Language “locates us in terms of class, ethnicity and gender” (Woodward cited in Fourie, 2008). Kabir’s comment above speaks to the effect of ideology, an instance of action based on dialogue between text and the socially situated reader or audience (Volosinov, 1973; Morley, 1980a; Moores, 1993). This recognition of self, the longing to identify and the bonding which it elicits is a powerful tool used by Wazobia FM to negotiate a space for itself in the socio-cultural milieu of Lagos dwellers. This glorification of the ‘everydayness of culture’ (De Certeau, 1984) or of everyday issues of these long marginalised and excluded speakers of NigP is integral in the popularity of the station (Williams, 1961; Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1997).

Radio is part of popular cultural practices in Africa. Its popularity stems from the ability to be a medium through which ordinary people can question and challenge circumstances that oppress them. It also enables those at the margins to understand what is going on, their situation and contribute to national debates or even “fight back at oppressive authorities that ignore the popular will” (Mano, 2011:107).

Lawal (Hausa FG): Even in BRT, the other day, on our way to Ikorodu, there was hold up [traffic] around Ajegunle ... and there was this woman in the bus who shouted,¹³⁵“e ba wa fi si Wazobia jare ki a ma so nkan ti oju wa nri ninu hold up yi fun won.

One sees the cultural power of the subject [the woman in the bus] at play in the choice of the station to identify with. One can also infer from the comment that NigP enables the fulfilment

¹³⁵ The woman spoke Yoruba, the indigenous language in Lagos. Literal translation: “Please tune to Wazobia FM, so that we can inform them about our ordeal in this traffic”

of the democratic and civic rights of uneducated and semi-educated people to ‘hear and be heard’. This is due to the language’s inherent democratic value. This implicates the radio station in the formation of personal and group identity (Mano, 2011). In relation to this, Wazobia FM has essentially thrived on the use of NigP as a language soaked in democratic values. Again, this relates to the posturing of the radio station as one that identifies with the people at the periphery through the adoption of their language. It has thus created programmes which further entrench the belief that the radio station is the ‘voice of the people’.

Benson (Minority Languages FG): What is important is that the people should know what they are supposed to know, their rights, and if they can get all the information in English that a few of us who are privileged to have gone to school get, let them get it the way they understand it. It’s their right to know what is happening, and if it’s through NigP radio stations, that they are going to understand please I think they should open more of it.

Wazobia FM’s prioritisation of NigP enables the radio station to forge a close relationship with its audience by offering an empowering platform, which also offers the audience the opportunity to exhibit their humanity and citizenship rights through the airing of their opinions on issues of social, communal and national interest. One can infer that the use of NigP has thus contributed to a high level of participation from listeners and led to the consequent popularity of Wazobia FM. I elaborate on this further in the next section.

7.2.1 Participation

All the respondents in the online survey believe that the privileging of NigP on radio has made participation easier on radio while 76% of the respondents believe the language allows for more diversity of opinions. Participation is apparently made easy because of its simplicity. Participants in the FGDs particularly noted that NigP has no past tense, lacks grammatical rules and they therefore have no fear of making mistakes when they use it in conversations and on radio (see Ugot and Ogundipe, 2011:228 and Onuigbo, 1999: 205).

Amadi (Igbo FG): NigP makes for ‘easy communication’ because it does not have grammatical rules¹³⁶ and so eliminates the self-consciousness that speaking ‘pure’ English demands from its speaker (s).

¹³⁶ NigP does in fact have grammatical rules and this researcher aligns with the view. See (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991:99-102; Deuber, 2005:51).

Kabir (Hausa FG): If I make a mistake, nobody will be ashamed. It's a general language, nobody can say that you made a mistake.

Participants in all four FGDs shared this popular view, which is in fact considered a critical factor, one which has encouraged live participation of the working class on Wazobia FM.

Another reason for the popularity of Wazobia FM is the humour in the language which many of the respondents in the FG's find appealing.

Amadi (Igbo FG): NigP has its own colouration and that is why most times when we speak it on radio, it is highly entertaining

This is traceable to its ability to expand in different ways, by extending the basic meaning of specific expressions, to coin new items of vocabulary. It weighs in on special events in the country to create "specific lexical items" (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991:54)¹³⁷ which are culture-specific and sometimes popularised through music (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991; Ugot, 2009). Producers of media text who use NigP know this, so in addition to using the language, the message encoded is also usually laced with humour.

The institutional posturing of Wazobia FM as a radio station conjures the notion of accessibility. Essentially, radio is seen as a pragmatic means to reach the masses, but Wazobia FM functions more so because of its prioritisation of NigP which is regarded as an investment in its local environment of operation.

Ogbuagu (Igbo FG): [NigP is a] better means to reach the masses... because it is easy to reach people both at the rural and urban areas.

A participant opined that access to stations that use indigenous languages through frequency modulated (FM) bandwidths nowadays as against confinement of indigenous stations to short wave (SW) or medium wave (MW) in the past is a critical factor.

Alade (Yoruba FG): Those of us born to low class or middle class families, our parents didn't understand too much of English, they tuned to short and medium waves where they could easily understand the languages. But now with the advent of FM stations, having to air programmes speaking in pidgin or indigenous languages – Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa -- more listeners listen to radio. These days when I board taxis, most of the radios in their cars are stationed on Wazobia FM.

As Deuber (2005) argues, NigP is the closest to indigenous languages in Nigeria, and this is reiterated in the comment below.

Ekaise (Minority FG): Certain things are said that carry certain weights, which the English language does not have. So if you say something in NigP, it is closer to giving

¹³⁷ See contextual chapter for details of the inherent humour of NigP

that exact meaning in that language and the man will now say okay, I understand it better now because in NigP, there is no hiding place. But in Queens English, there are so many clauses, that you can hide under to trick somebody or confuse him.

Alade (Yoruba FGD): Day by day, the acceptability of indigenous stations or stations that air Pidgin English is growing.

NigP is seen as a language of the city because of the heterogeneous population of Nigerian cities. In prioritising the popular language in Lagos as a medium of communication, Wazobia FM captured the essence and soul of the city thereby endearing itself to the audience base and catalysing the radio station's popularity.

Koko (Hausa FGD): NigP has helped tremendously to bridge communication in this country, particularly here in Lagos which is a cosmopolitan city...

Ibezor (Igbo FGD): Many people are leaving from the villages for the cities and there is no other means of communication than that NigP.

7.2.2 Existing NigP Youth Culture in Relation to Music

In the online survey, NigP is regarded as the 'most used language of communication among youth'. NigP has thus precipitated a youth culture

Ekaise (Minority Languages FG): Francis: I think the youth generally prefer the pidgin stations, [the undergrads], because sometimes when I pick some of them in a ride, they will say, "Ah Oga, tune Wazobia", I reply, "waz what? They say "Wazobia". They want to listen to Yaw or ¹³⁸OPJ

The lyrics of contemporary music in Nigeria contain NigP code mixed with indigenous languages and English¹³⁹. Fasan describes the use of NigP in the youth culture of hip-hop as "a deliberate rupturing of the master narrative that English represents, and an attempt at re-representation and meaning-making that reflects agency within a local economy of signs . . ." (2013:8). There is a combination of journalism and entertainment in contemporary popular songs. This is a socio-historical culture traceable to Fela's counter cultural use of NigP (as an oppositional tool), against Nigerian rulers, in 1970's (Idowu, 1986; Olorunyomi, 2005; Olatunji, 2007). This use of NigP in music was popularised by Fela. A participant notes:

¹³⁸ Wazobia FM's presenters use pseudonyms and aliases on air. See the section on the station's profile in chapter 3 of this study.

¹³⁹ Many of the performers are proficient in English, relatively well-educated, while some dropped out of university, others are university graduates "who chose to be musicians than pursue other professional callings" (Fasan, 2013:8).

Atolagbe (Minority Languages FG): Even before now, if you look at the legendary Fela, he passed his messages across with NigP and he's so loved all over the world not only in Nigeria alone.

Fela's use of NigP was in the form of appropriation because he took the coloniser's language and made it ours in music (Ashcroft, 2000; Deuber, 2005). It was revolutionary. Nigerians in that decade imagined themselves as a community united against oppressive government. In all the FGD's, participants expressed views that progressively, the youth have been instrumental to the shift in the status and popularity of NigP, and music interspersed with NigP was discussed extensively.

Lawal¹⁴⁰ (Hausa FG): Even in this our music industry now, for our musicians, if there is no pidgin in what you are singing, you are just like these foreign musicians. And we don't normally listen to foreign music again . . .

Lawal (Hausa FG): Our big artists in Nigeria now add pidgin to what they are singing, because they know when they use pidgin, people will understand. Even people who sing in indigenous languages, always add pidgin so that people can understand what they are trying to say. Pidgin is helping our communities.

7.3. NigP Radio Audience

It has always been noted that ethnic communities use media materials in peculiar ways, especially such media material(s) that "express their socio-cultural location" (Ross and Nightingale, 2003:38). Language plays a significant role in this process, because it is the over-arching symbolic environment in which audiences live; one which influences the creation of their communicative repertoires through cultural positioning and interactive communities (Newcomb, 1984). Radio also ties together unknown and utterly diverse people, to create a mass of individual listeners and an audience with some sense of community (Hendy, 2000).

Ekaise (Minority Language FG): We are talking of the voice [electronic] media generally, and they have all adopted NigP, and they get their audience, in fact they get to the root - both the educated and the illiterate, they are able to carry all of them along.

Although people listen to radio as individuals, nevertheless, there is an awareness of other people listening to the same content simultaneously. This leads to shared experience which is

¹⁴⁰ Lawal is barely educated. In the comment, he captures the trend in popular music in Nigeria whereby every hit song has sprinklings of NigP lines and slangs. He speaks of the preference for Nigerian music nowadays, as opposed to foreign music which held sway some years back.

often illusory or imagined. Wazobia FM's use of NigP builds on a sense of imagined community already existent amongst speakers of NigP, a sense which extends both spatially and temporally.

For Wazobia FM, there is a guaranteed audience of about three million listeners from ten military formations across the city of Lagos¹⁴¹. These are multi-ethnic communities, "traditionally associated with NigP" (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991:140-141). As noted in the contextual chapter, NigP is the *lingua franca* in armed forces barracks across Nigeria (Bamgbose, 1991; Simpson and Oyetade, 2008; Eze,1980). A discussion on barracks or military formations came up in two of the four focus groups. Respondents said the use of NigP as *lingua franca* in the barracks was the basis for a similar use in the larger society.

Binta (Hausa FG): Any barrack you go to, NigP is the first language before any other language. At times, when you go to a house in the barracks, instead of them speaking their own language, they speak pidgin.

Koko (Hausa FG): Barracks is a representation of the entire country. Any barracks you go, the uniformed men, be it police, customs and what have you, you see that they come from different parts of the country with their families. So how can they communicate? The easiest way to communicate is in English . . . not all of them have been to school, so NigP is the solution.

The pervasiveness of NigP in the Nigerian society is said to have been precipitated by 'soldier-citizen'¹⁴² interaction outside the barracks.

Koko (Hausa FG): These barracks are helping to propagate pidgin more because¹⁴³ 'no how, no how', those who are living inside the barracks will go to town, either to the market or other places and they must communicate.

This is a critical factor in the popularity of the radio station across the city of Lagos.

The popularity and functionality of NigP has transcended social class constraints in the Nigerian society. It was described as "classless", in the Hausa Language FGD. This means NigP is not limited to a specific social class in Nigeria. According to a respondent:

Alade (Yoruba FGD): NigP is a leveller, the small, the big, the poor, the rich, anywhere, the president speaks it.

One of the FGD participants noted, the use of NigP is dependent on location, situation and the type of cultural production involved.

¹⁴¹ Personal communication,(Major Akintoye (rtd), 2013: 1). See Appendice 7b.

¹⁴² I mean the interaction of soldiers with the civilian population outside the military barracks.

¹⁴³ 'No how, no how' is a Nigerian lingo, perhaps derived from NigP for 'anyhow' or 'no matter what'.

7.4. Listener Pleasure

In this section, I present the findings on the how the audience of Wazobia FM engages with the station's programming. The central focus here is on the role that the prioritisation of NigP within the station's programming plays within such engagement.

In the online survey, 26% of the respondent chose 'entertainment' as the reason for listening to Wazobia FM. Lovell (1980) avers that "the pleasure of the text stems at least in part from collective utopias, social wish, fulfilment and social aspirations ..." (1980:61). Engagement includes a direct involvement in community practises and concrete relationships as well as imagination (Wenger, 1998). A participant in the Yoruba FG captured how engaging with the radio station has been enabled by its prioritisation of NigP:

Adekunle (Yoruba FG): You see the issue of pidgin is purely for entertainment and that's why they [Wazobia FM] can be flexible and turn things here and there.

All participants in the Igbo language FGD support this view:

Adekunle (Yoruba FG): They said they will throw someone into the lagoon. So I thought, is this guy crazy, because someone didn't answer your question? They were so perfect about it because they had the tools. They will threaten to call [okada], "Mallam, oya come and throw this man into the lagoon"

Others: [joined in the description]... and they will do zoom, zoom...

And they will say they will flog you, and you will hear the sound of a cane.

Adekunle: and I knew they were using the console, but I find it interesting.

Garnham (2000), drawing on Bourdieu's sociology of consumption, opines that the pleasure found in media consumption is not freely defined by the user, but is rather shaped by media content, and social structuring factors extraneous to the media.

Koko (Hausa FG): I go to Wazobia just to unwind, if I want to laugh. Maybe because I have been to school, so I understand Queens English a little so I want somebody to bastardise it for me a little so that I can laugh...

Lovell notes that "cultural products are articulated structures of feeling and sensibility which derive from collective, shared experience as well as from individual desires and pleasures" (Lovell,1980:61). Media artefacts such as radio stations, also acquire their signification "in relation to the complex meanings in the socio-cultural situation in which they are produced" (Dyer, 1981:3). Words such as 'pleasure', 'laughter', 'relieves', 'de-stresses', and funny were used by the participants. One can then infer that the entertainment value of Wazobia FM

springs from the pleasure its audience derive from its use of NigP in creative and compelling ways; and the meaning they make of them.

Alade (Yoruba FG): I think it [NigP radio] is being well promoted. I would have expected that by now we would have more radio stations using NigP as a form of communication. It won't be a bad idea to have TV stations¹⁴⁴ communicating with NigP coming up.

In the online survey, presenters were the third reason given for the station's popularity. Twelve percent of the respondent chose the 'love of the station's presenters' as the reason for listening to the station, at the same time as 'issues discussed'. It was also a common reason given by participants in the four FGs. The frequently mentioned presenters were Yaw, OPJ, Lolo, Matshe and the news readers.

Alade (Yoruba FG): Yes, because it's easy for them to pick up what the presenters are saying.

Kabir (Hausa FGD): The way they use the English [NigP], that's what carries me along. The English that they use it's so easy that you can understand

Wazobia FM's presenters' collective and individual camaraderie, competence and dexterity in the use of NigP on radio are considered important in the radio station's popularity. The presenters are considered humorous because they are able to appropriate the humour in the language effectively. A story that resonated with most of the participants in the FGs was told about a personal experience of the presenters' camaraderie and the station's entertaining programming:

Adelakun (Yoruba FGD): I laughed and laughed. That night I had headache . . . And that is why a lot of people listen to the radio station, a lot of people station their button on the station.

Other participants described the user satisfaction derived from their engagements with the station with expressions such as: "It makes me laugh"; "It relieves me and I think it's good for my health"; "They are interesting because they ease your burden"; "If you are feeling bored, just tune to the radio" and "I work under a lot of pressure so... it de-stresses me".

¹⁴⁴ Towards the end of this research, Aims Consultant, owners of Wazobia FM announced the commencement of Wazobia TV. PIDGINTV, a full TV service to mobile devices, owned by Don Pedro Obaseki will make its debut in December 2013.

Wazobia FM's news is a favourite for the participants in the Hausa, Yoruba and Minority languages FGs. A participant in the Hausa Language FG affirmed this.

Koko (Hausa FG): They are so smart to take their newspaper review in NigP to 9 o' clock. That is when all other stations have virtually finished their reviews in Queens English. So if I now tune to listen to newspaper review in Queens English on other radio stations which are many in Lagos, I relax till 9 o' clock where they not only read the pidgin English newspaper review, they also comment. That comment is what makes me feel very, very okay, it makes my day.

The participant gives his reason:

Koko (Hausa FG): We that are privileged to go to school listen to Network News on say Metro FM but that doesn't stop us from listening to the translation in NigP...

The manipulations of the news schedule to create and maintain its audience base is complemented by the same approach to programme content. The maxim that a producer must 'give the public what it wants' (Lovell, 1980), thus finds expression in the programming of Wazobia FM. The station's translation and interpretation of hard news, newspaper reports, and press reviews in NigP is popular.

Koko (Hausa FG): I commend the way they break hard news into pidgin. And also the paper review, that's where my interest is. I love the way they add 'salt and pepper' so as to spice it in pidgin and also make it interesting.

Ekaise (Minority Language FG): It's very popular perhaps because of the entertainment nature of their news.

Lawal (Hausa FG): And they pass news in [an] easy language that so many people understand what they are saying.

Binta (Hausa FG): I like the news in pidgin language. You'll be able to understand everything they say. But in Queens English, at times there will be a word you'll start looking for a dictionary (laughs). But in NigP English, you will be able to understand everything.

Although the station is criticised for opinionating under the guise of translation, humour and entertainment in the Hausa FGD, its style of disseminating information was admired by the majority of the participants in the FGD's. A participant gives the reason below:

Benson (Minority Languages FG): The news in Wazobia FM is made so interesting that even the educated person wants to listen to the thing, they 'overemphasise' and personify everything and it's lovely. I think it's lovely.

The station's traffic report in Lagos city is distinct from those of other stations because of the use of humour-laced NigP, elements of tabloidisation, listener call-ins and drama embedded in the presentation of the traffic report within the evening drive time.

Binta (Hausa FG): if you are in the hold up (traffic jam) and you listen to their programmes, at least you will forget that you are even in the hold up.

Madu (Igbo FG): It gives you comfort, due to the traffic on the road. That Wazobia FM will be your 'comforter', when you listen to it. There are jokes they crack that you will forget your sorrows in the traffic until you get home.

Wazobia FM's use of NigP in its content and the goodwill it attracts from the people has therefore made it a good environment for advertisements and consequent patronage by corporate Nigeria.

Koko (Hausa FG): The companies have realised the value of that station... If it's rated number one and if companies have defied all high cost of placing adverts there, then it means it's very popular. And it's expanding to other parts of the country and it's highly welcome.

The provision of toll free lines by Wazobia FM has allowed feedback and contributions from communities of NigP speakers, who may not have been able to afford calling in to the station's live programmes. This has bridged the gap between the radio station and its target audience. It has also tremendously enhanced the popularity of the station. This audience involvement gives NigP radio the aura of a democratic platform and positions Wazobia FM as more democratic than radio stations that use English language as the medium of communication.

7.5. Conclusion

NigP's importance as a language for trade in both formal and informal sectors of the Nigerian economy and its function and currency in the entertainment industry, especially in the music, comedy and movie industries, has earned it the reputation of 'a money spinner'. It is thus a worthy attraction for a commercial station. However, "economic and political control of a people can never be complete without cultural control" (Thiong'o, 1986:93).

In the last five decades, NigP has gained cultural capital. It has moved from being a language used initially for radio drama to the official domain of a language of communication in a radio station. The development of NigP Radio is an acknowledgement of the NigP speaking community as the missing 'Other', which needed to be catered for in radio

broadcasting. Eighty-eight percent of online respondents indicated that they would like to see more Pidgin English radio stations across Nigeria.

Wazobia FM recognises and validates the voice, experiences and world views of the illiterate and uneducated. The station has used the language in an oppositional sense, different from mainstream broadcasting. The continued interpellation of NigP speakers in media texts has revitalised their ‘group pride’ and resulted in increased representation by programme makers.

As witnessed in the rise of the novel, film, television, “Every successive penetration of capital into cultural production has produced an outbreak of moral panic in its wake” (Lovell, 1980:62). Despite its popularity in Nigeria, Wazobia FM has drawn sharp criticism¹⁴⁵ from a section of the middle class because of its perceived negative influence on the learning of English language by the youth. NigP is criticised as a contributory factor to the weakening of competence in English language generally.

The existence of Barthinian boundaries has influenced the consumption pattern of NigP speakers. The exploitation of these boundaries has translated into the patronage and popularity that Wazobia FM enjoys in Lagos city. The continually positive representation in the media which catapulted NigP into popular culture fuelled the popularity of Wazobia FM, the first NigP radio station in Nigeria. The story of the evolution and development of NigP is summed up by a discussant who said, “NigP creeps in on us . . . you find out that this language you are criticising so much is a useful tool of communication” (Olanre-Alade, Yoruba FG).

¹⁴⁵ Its use of violent sound effects such as gun shots, someone being whipped et.c is seen as an encouragement of violence in the society as well.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

“The final stage in establishing a new culture, which often coincides with the shaping of home-made legends, is acceptance of – and pride in – the resources of local language” (Patridge, 1981).

8.0. Introduction

This research has used the constructivist approach to interrogate the rising popularity of Pidgin radio stations in Nigeria. In this chapter, I highlight my findings based on the theoretical framework which incorporates culture, language and identity; and assertions by respondents in both the focus groups and online survey.

8.1. Understanding the Wazobia FM Audience

I argue that the NigP radio audience was formed before the creation of Wazobia FM, due to years of cultural productions in which NigP was used in the periphery. I aver particularly the progressive currency and captive audience that NigP already had on radio with such radio dramas produced by African Radio Drama Association (ARDA) and the BBC Media Action, which were quite popular. There were pockets of popular interactive programmes in NigP which dotted programming on traditional English language radio stations in Lagos. There was therefore an existing social system of practices, generating the interpretive strategies and mediating the flow and interpretation of communication in NigP (Ross and Nightingale, 2003). The interpretive repertoire of the radio audience in terms of the use of NigP was therefore already well developed (Schroder, 1994), socio-historically. Wazobia FM plugged into this existing structure, social system and interpretive repertoire. It inevitably tapped into the cultural power of the marginal, hybrid audience group of NigP speakers (Ross and Nightingale, 2003). This catalysed its popularity and success as Nigeria’s first pidgin radio.

Importantly, NigP radio stations benefit from the three social classes, because it is at the intersection of class-based pleasures. The bourgeoisie harness the ready market that a NigP audience provides from a capitalist point of view, in a hegemonic move that gives the illusion of control and ownership to the working class. In reality, however, they own the means of production and textual power through interpolation.

The particular category of the middle class who listen to Wazobia and derive pleasure from engaging with its presenters via twitter, Facebook and mobile phones, do so because the station re-enacts a past they have left behind (Onu, 2013). This category transited from working class backgrounds to a middle class status. They are comfortable with Wazobia

FM's content, style and strategy because it speaks to their immediate past¹⁴⁶. Those who are core middle class generationally, however continually criticise the station.

Wazobia FM tackles a unique environment that addresses both the indigenous and the migrant population of city dwellers. This is in the context of NigP being a language of the grassroots and that of the migrant who is unable to either speak Yoruba, the language of the city's indigenes, or standard English, the language of the elite. In demystifying the use of English language on radio in cosmopolitan cities like Lagos, the station opened up radio to a huge audience and an assemblage of Nigerians in their ethnic diversities.

The Wazobia Pidgin radio text is infused with music, news, entertainment, games; the sentiments of a station name that elicit unity in diversity, and a language with inherent humour, to name just a few. Each of these intersects and is finely woven by presenters who are already loved for identifying with NigP. The station evokes the recognition of self in its text. It signifies the "recovery of the suppressed experience" (Lovell, 1980:50) of the silent majority that mainstream radio stations had ignored for long because they existed outside the dominant/prevaling ideological order. The resultant popularity is a complex process of meaning-making that draws on the cultural, the pleasurable and the familiar.

Audiences' participation through technology was the preserve of the educated, which were privileged by the knowledge of English language. Wazobia FM provided the incentive of toll free lines to enable participation by low income earners. This allowed feedback and contributions from this community of NigP speakers. This has also enhanced the popularity of the station.

8.2. The Prioritisation of NigP on Wazobia FM – Moving On

The thinking that indigenous languages are money spinners in broadcasting is pervasive in my audience study. When participants in the Focus Group discussions compared the three radio stations that use NigP in Lagos city, it was evident that these are the 'cash cows' in those media organisations¹⁴⁷ because they prioritised NigP. This is so because of the mass appeal of NigP as a language in Nigeria and because the radio stations have targeted this critical mass. NigP has therefore become a cultural and linguistic force which has continued to challenge existing power relations in the linguistic ecology of Nigeria.

¹⁴⁶ See personal communication with (Onu, 2013)

¹⁴⁷ The owners of these three stations - Bond FM, Wazobia and Naija FM operate other forms of radio stations.

Presently in Nigeria, those who use standard English are increasingly becoming socially alienated, while the use of NigP and the indigenous languages of Nigeria is no longer limited to the marginalised as previously viewed (Fasan, 2013). The use of NigP now represents acceptance of position, demonstration of choice and construction of social and/or ideological identity by their users (Tawake 2006; Gargesh 2006).

8.3. Wazobia FM's Popularity - Beyond the Language

Radio broadcasts are produced by educated speakers (Deuber, 2005:6). These include the highly educated, who speak NigP due to the need for social identification, informal bonding and solidarity (Adetugbo, 1992; Adegbija, 2004; Fasan, 2013). They recognise the importance of effective communication and so use any form that is appropriate at any given point (Ayegba, 2003). This steady practice of cultural production by the educated middle class has bestowed additional acceptability and popularity on NigP as a language of communication.

Radio, like other mass entertainments, is “a site of class tensions and of the pull between cultural homogeneity and diversity” (Douglas, 1999:102). The prioritisation of NigP by Wazobia FM eliminates the sense of inadequacy or in-competence in English language which the majority of people struggled with, and which had discouraged participation, on regular radio stations and in the public domain. This in turn enhanced the representation of the group on radio and prompted participatory democracy from a previously excluded people. Radio broadcasts thus is “the most important more formal domain where NigP is now used” (Deuber, 2005:5).

8.6 Conclusion

A major challenge in conducting this study was the non availability of books and archival materials on the history or operations of Wazobia FM. The materials used for Wazobia's profile in the contextual chapter of NigP in broadcasting were generated through interviews with key personnel in Wazobia FM and other resource people. This study therefore is a pioneering work, one which documents the phenomenon of pidgin radio in Nigeria. It is one of the earliest scholarly researches on the phenomenon of 'Pidgin English radio' in Nigeria and its political implication from a media studies perspective as it evolves and expands across Nigeria and possibly other multilingual countries along the West African coast like Ghana (Dako, 2002:2), Cameroon (Crystal, 1997: 340) and Liberia (Singler, 2006) where Pidgin English is predominantly spoken.

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Figures

Figure 2.1: Map of Nigeria.



Figure 2.1: Map of Nigeria ¹⁴⁸

Figure 2.2: Map showing the delineation of states in the Niger Delta as defined by the Nigerian government

Figure 3.1: Radio Nigeria (FRCN)'s logo showing its slogan.

Figure 3.2: Showing four frequencies of Wazobia FM in Nigerian Cities

Figure 3.3: Amin Mousalli. Owner, Wazobia FM-Cool FM-Nigeria Info radio brands

Tables

Table 2.1: Arab Influence and Linguistic Enrichment of Nigerian and Niger Delta Languages.

Source: Isizimotor (2010)

Table 2.2: Influence of English on NigP. Source- Researcher Table 2 – Influence of English on NigP

Table 2.3: Diagrammatic Representation of the Variations of NigP

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/nigeria.html>

Bendel Variant	Calabar Variant	Kano-Maiduguri Variant	Lagos Variant	Port Harcourt Variant
Abraka	Calabar	North East	South West	Port Harcourt
Warri	Kalabari Regions	North West	South Central	River
Isoko	Cross Rivers	North North	Eastern Part	Regional Suburbs
Sapele	*Northern River: Ogoja	Cross Ikom-	North South	
Agbor	*Cross State Ugep	Rivers Central		
Itshekiri	Akwa Ibom			
Effurun				
Agbaraha-Oto				
Urhobo				
Ewu				

Table 2.3: Shows a diagrammatic representation of the variations of NigP¹⁴⁹

Table 3.1: NigP Radio Programmes offered by Radio Nigeria (FRCN) FM stations in seven Eastern states of Nigeria including the Niger Delta. Source: Emah Ekpo¹⁵⁰ (2013).

Programmes in NigP on FRCN's Radio Stations in Eastern Nigeria

Radio Station	State	Started Operation	Programme	Focus	Days Duration	Time
Coal City 92.8 FM	Enugu, Enugu State	2003	Early Morning. (Magazine)	Breakfast	Daily 2 hours	8 - 11 am
Purity 102.5 FM	Awka, Anambra State	2007	<i>Wetin Mega</i> (Afternoon)	Road safety matters	Fridays -15 minutes	1.15pm
Unity FM, 101.5 mhz	Abakaliki, Ebonyi State	2007	<i>Yarn me well.</i> <i>How una</i> <i>Dey?</i> <i>Ify Baby</i> <i>Nothing Mega</i>	Magazine Request Drama Interactive(includes	Saturdays 30 minutes Wednesdays 15 mins	3-3.30pm

¹⁴⁹ Diagram was modified from Obiechina, 1984; varieties by (Iwuckuwu & Okafor, 2011) have been added.

¹⁵⁰ This table was created from information obtained from Emah Ekpo's fieldwork for this research.

				NigP News Summary)		
Treasure 98.5 FM	Port Harcourt, Rivers State	2003	<i>T-Junction</i> (Man must Wack) Wed edition has a segment: <i>For Women</i> <i>Dem</i> <i>Jolly Time</i> <i>EnterMarket</i>	Magazine Interactive Feat. Local pop music, Phone in, comedy, chit chat.	3- hour Pidgin Belt Afternoons, Mondays – Fridays Saturdays	1-3pm 5.30 - 6.00pm
Heartland FM 100.5 MHZ	Owerri, Imo State.	2002	<i>Day don</i> <i>Break,</i> <i>Take life Jeje</i> about ills of the society, <i>How una dey?</i>	Magazine, Breakfast , Morning, Thursdays Thursdays, Request /hilarious	Mondays – Fridays Thursday	5.30 – 7am. 5.30 - 7am 3.30 - 4pm
Atlantic 104.5 FM	Uyo, Akwa Ibom	2011	<i>Jolly,jolly</i> <i>Atlantic Fun</i> <i>House</i> <i>Tori Time</i> <i>Cross Road</i> <i>Junction</i> <i>Enter Market</i> <i>Wetin dey?</i>	Flagship NigP prog: Mon,Tue, Thur,Fri. (Wed: breakfast) Variety show-pre recorded News in NigP Audience participation. Commercials in NigP Audience participation	 On ills of the society.	11-12 noon 7.30 - 8am 11.00- 11.03am 2-2.30pm
Pacesetter 103.5 FM	Umuahia, Abia State	2006	<i>Country Man</i> <i>I Salute Una</i>	Interactive -phone in. Request	on challenges in the state.	1-1.45pm 4.30 - 5pm

Figure 2: A table of NigP radio programmes offered by Radio Nigeria (FRCN) FM stations in seven Eastern states of Nigeria including the Niger Delta. Source: Emah Ekpo¹⁵¹ (2013).

Appendices

Appendice 1 - Profile of FRCN's Network News Listener/Audience

<http://tinyurl.com/frcnnewsaudience>

Appendice 3a – List of Stations in Lagos <http://tinyurl.com/radiostationsinlagos>

Appendice 3b - Text of Telephone Interview with Yomi Bolarinwa –Director General, National Broadcasting Commission <http://tinyurl.com/dgnbcinterview>

Appendice 3c - Text of Telephone interview with Graham Douglas - Origin of Radio Rivers <http://tinyurl.com/grahamdouglasinterview>

Appendice 3d - Text of Telephone interview with Florence Ekiye - Origin of Radio Rivers (Former GM, Radio Rivers 2) <http://tinyurl.com/florenceekiyeinterview>

Appendice 3e - Text of interview with Wazobia FM's Breakfast Show Host – “Yaw” - Christian Onu <http://tinyurl.com/yawinterview>

Appendice 3f - Text of interview with Head of Research, Wazobia FM, Mr. Mcanderson <http://tinyurl.com/mcandersoninterview>

Appendice 3g - Text of interview with George Omagbemi – Quality Assurance Manager <http://tinyurl.com/wazobiafmomagbemiinterview>

Appendice 3h - Text of interview with On Air Personality – Omotunde Adebowale- David - 'Lolo' <http://tinyurl.com/lolomotundeinterview>

Appendice 3i - Wazobia FM's Programmes Schedule

¹⁵¹ This table was created from information obtained from Emah Ekpo's fieldwork for this research.



TIME BELT	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
5:00 am – 10:00 am – MAKE UNA WAKE-UP (YAW & M/YOWA)					
5:00 am – 6:00 am	Welcome and Sign In				
6:00 am – 7:00 am	Word from Abada/Traffic Report				
7:00 am – 7:30 am	Word from Abada (Sponsored by Etisalat)				
7:30 am – 7:45 am	Sports Yarn				
7:45 am – 8:00 am	Music/Gist/Shout-out				
8:00 am – 8:15 am	Una World Tori (Sponsored by Etisalat)				
8:15 am – 9:00 am	Music/Gist/Shout-out				
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Newspaper Review (Honeywell Sponsored)				
9:15 am – 10:00 am	Call-In/Sign-out				DJ Snoop/Sign-out
10:00 am – 3:00 pm – OGA MADAM OFFICE (LOLO 1 & IGOS)					
10:00 am – 10:30 am	Welcome/Boardroom				
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	Boardroom				
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Na Me And Una Time				
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Office Palava				
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Show Ur Swag	Mama's Corner	Body Mata	Wetin Dey Worry U?	
3:00 pm – 6:00 pm – KULELE ZONE (KODY & UZO)					
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Career Matter	My Pikin	Tush You Swag	Wetin We Go Listen To Next? THU; Names & Mearings FRI; Tips	
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Eko – How Una See Am?				
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Amebo Zone		Food Matter	Sabi Ur Moto	
6:00 pm – 11:00 pm – EVENING OYOYO (OPJ & TWITWI)					
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Go-slow Yarn				
7:00 pm – 7:15 pm	Una World Tori				
7:15 pm – 8:00 pm	Go-slow Yarn				
8:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Laff Time				
9:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Ogbonje News Gbedus				
10:00 pm – 11:00 pm	Klonshele/DJ Snoop				
11:00 pm – 5:00 am – NITE JOLLY (FEMI & BUNOR)					
11:00 pm – 1:00 am	Let's Go There! (Mon – Thu)		Hala Your People (Fri – 11pm-12am)		
1:00 am – 2:00 am	Pillow Talk (Mon – Thu)		Heart mechanic (Fri : 12am – 1am)		
2:00 am – 3:00 am			Club WAZOBIA [CB] (Fri : 1 am – 2am)		
3:00 am – 4:00 am	Make Me Hear Am (Mon – Thu)		Join Body (Fri – 2am-3am)		
4:00 am – 5:00 am	Morning Waka (Mon – Thu)		AUTOMATED MUSIC (Fri – 3am-6am)		



SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
6:00 AM – 11:00 AM	SATIDE FLENJO (TWITWI)	MAKE WE PRAISE BABA GOD (YAW)	
6:00 – 7:00 am	Satide Kul	6 am – 7 am	Gospel Music
7:00 – 7:30 am	Flava	7 am – 8 am	Ginger Me Level
7:30 – 8:00 am	My State	8 am – 9 am	Word From Abada
8:00 – 9:00 am	Language Zone	9 am – 10 am	Tell Us Wetin Dey
9:30 – 10:00 am	Sabi Pikin	10 am – 11 am	Top 10 Gospel
10:00 – 11:00 am	Laff Mata		
11:00 AM – 3:00 PM	MAKE WE TALK AM (IRA)	GBADUNMENT TIME (IRA)	
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Papa Mama Pikin	11 am - 12 pm	Inspirational Music Hour
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Poli Poli	12 pm – 1 pm	Wetin You Believe
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Wedding Gist	1 pm – 2 pm	Make We Check Am
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Upcoming Artiste	2 pm – 3 pm	Quiz For Children
3:00 PM – 8:00 PM	SATIDE PARIPA (DWANNA)	SUNDAY GROOVE (KODY)	
3:00 – 4:00 pm	Oyinbo Naija	3 pm – 4 pm	Africa Flavour/Shout-out
4:00 – 5:00 pm	Wazobia Mix	4 pm – 5 pm	Make We Yarn
5:00 – 6:00 pm	Only For Naija	5 pm – 6 pm	Artist Corner
6:00 – 6:30 pm		6 pm – 6:30 pm	Story-story
6:30 – 7:00 pm	Weekend Paripa	6:30 pm – 7 pm	Personal Matter Time
7:00 – 8:00 pm	Reggae Time	7 pm – 8 pm	Aproko Level
8:00 PM – 1:00 AM	SHAKE BODI (FEMI)	SKENTELE SUNDAY (DWANNA)	
8:00 – 9:00 pm	Chook Mouth	8 pm – 9 pm	Sing Am Wella
9:00 – 10:00 pm	Campus Runz	9 pm – 10 pm	Chop-I-Chop
10:00 – 11:00 pm	Street Yarn	10 pm – 11 pm	I Beg No Vex
11:00 pm – 12:00 am	Personal Person	11 pm – 12 am	Hot-Hot Gbedu/DJ SNOOP
12:00 – 1:00 am	Recuest Time/Thank God 4 Anoda Day	12 am – 1 am	Show Love Na
1:00 AM – 5:00 AM	LOVE WANTINTIN (KAY-BABA)	LOVE WANTINTIN (KAY-BABA)	
1:00 – 2:00 am	Kondi Level	1 am – 2 am	Kondi Level
2:00 – 4:00 am	Heart Mechanic	2 am – 4 am	Love Wantintn
4:00 – 5:00 am	Wee Language	4 am – 5 am	We Language

6a – Survey Questionnaire <http://tinyurl.com/onlinesurveyform>

Appendix 6b – Focus Group – Interview Guide

(For Minority Languages): Please introduce yourselves including the language you speak and what region of Nigeria your language can be found

- What is the population of speakers of your language?
- What is the status of your language in Nigeria?
- Are you satisfied with that status or not and why?

Other Questions

- How do you see the use of NigP in Nigeria?
- Do you think the use of NigP is helping your language?
- Given that few Nigerians understand your language, do you think NigP is playing the role of a national language which is enabling you to be understood wherever you go in Nigeria?
- Do you think that this wider use of NigP in speech can contribute to the death of minor Nigerian languages? Give reasons.
- Do you think NigP is a Nigerian language?
- Can you name the different uses to which NigP has been put to in Nigeria today?
- What is your view of the different ways that NigP is being used in Nigeria now?

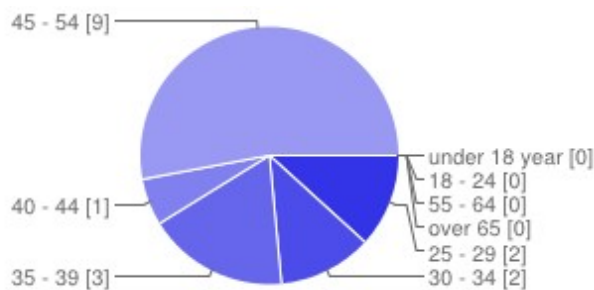
8. Given the multi ethnic and multi lingual nature of Nigeria, what is your view of NigP?
9. NigP radio has emerged in Lagos, what is your take on this occurrence?
10. Do you like the station? If yes, why? If no why?
11. Let's look at the reasons you have given more closely, can you expatiate further?
12. How do you see how the media has represented NigP in recent times.
13. Lets talk about Radio and the use of NigP on it, what is your view?
14. Do you think speakers of NigP are limited to particular social classes?
15. How often do you listen to NigP radio stations?
16. What is it you like about the stations compared to indigenous and English speaking stations in Lagos?
17. What changes would you like to see in the NigP radi stations?

Appendice 6c – Text of the Pilot Study with a Cross- Section of Nigerian Journalists, largely middle class. <http://tinyurl.com/pilotstudywithjournalists>

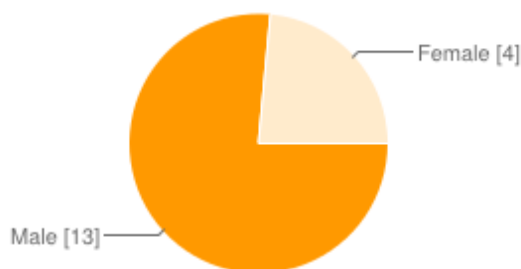
Appendice 7a – Result of online survey

Summary

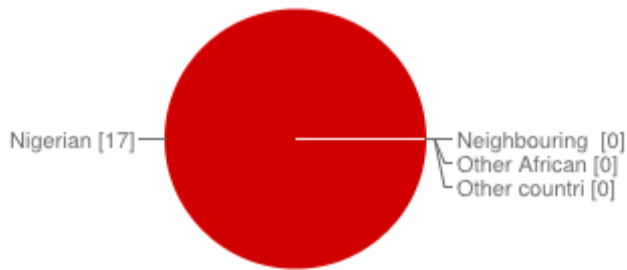
Age



Gender

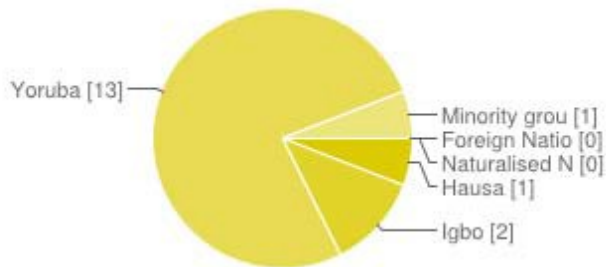


Nationality

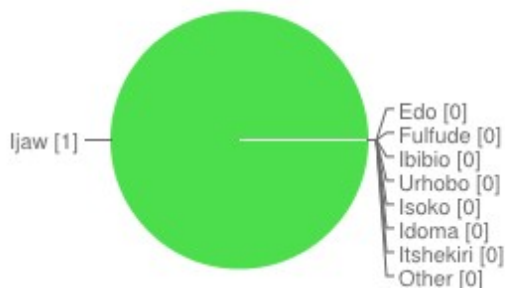


Demography

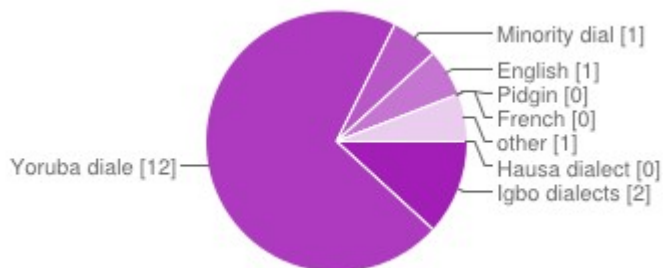
Ethnic identity



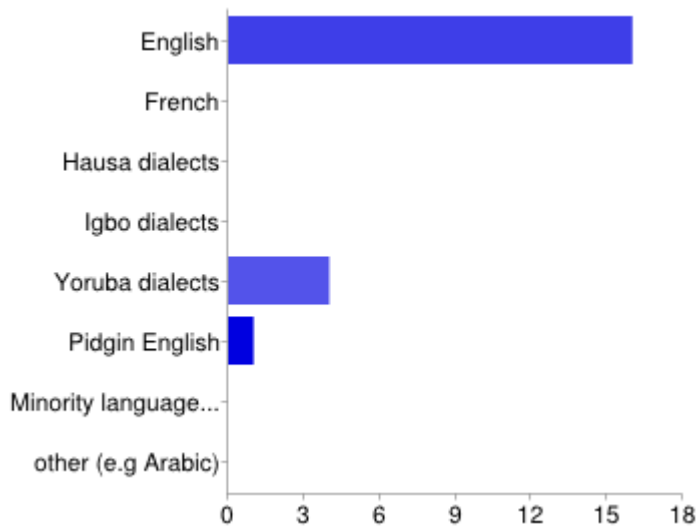
If you chose "minority group", please select one



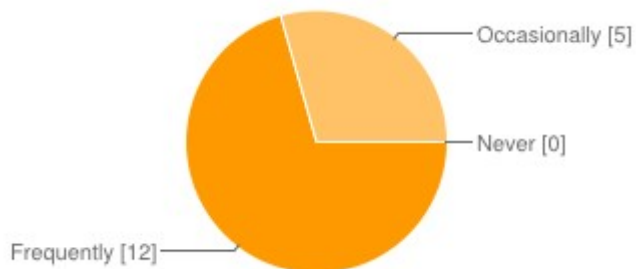
Mother - tongue



Language (s) spoken at home if different from mother tongue

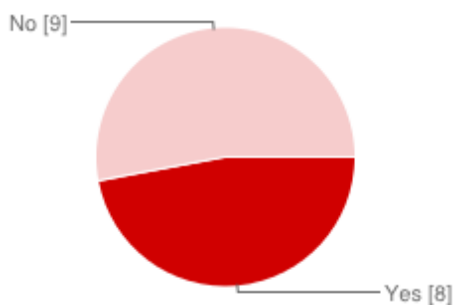


How often do you speak Pidgin English?

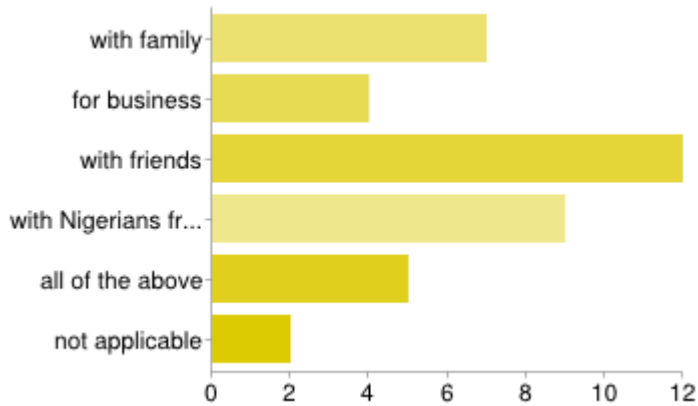


Yes 8 47%
 No 9 53%

Is this the most common way you socialise with other Nigerians?



When do you speak Pidgin English?

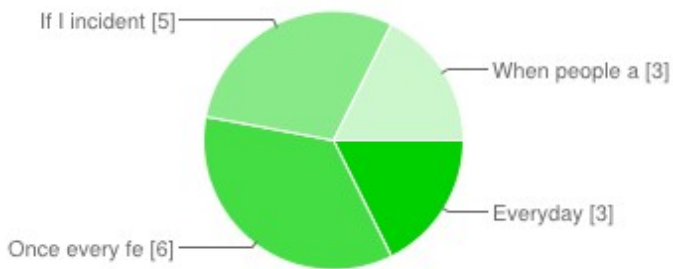


Occupation

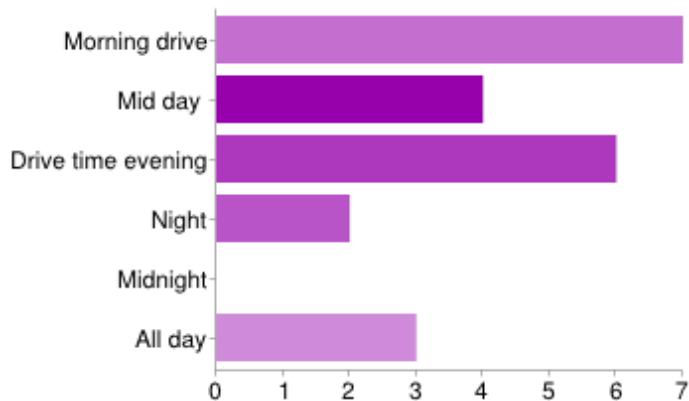
Film Producer film maker/screenwriter Banking journalist fresh graduate IT
 CONSULTANT Communication Consultant Media Consult Teacher Law Practice
 Journalist Land Surveying Journalism

Establishing listenership

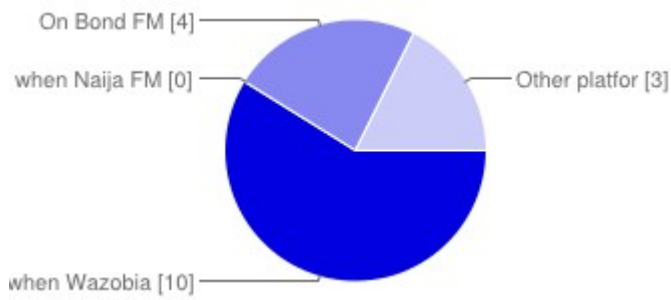
How frequently do you listen to Wazobia FM?



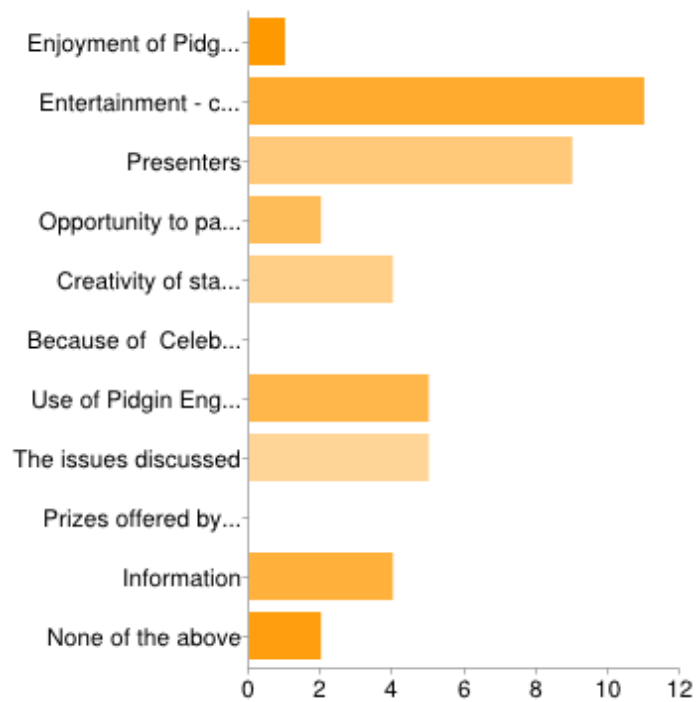
Which time/s of the day do you listen to Wazobia FM?



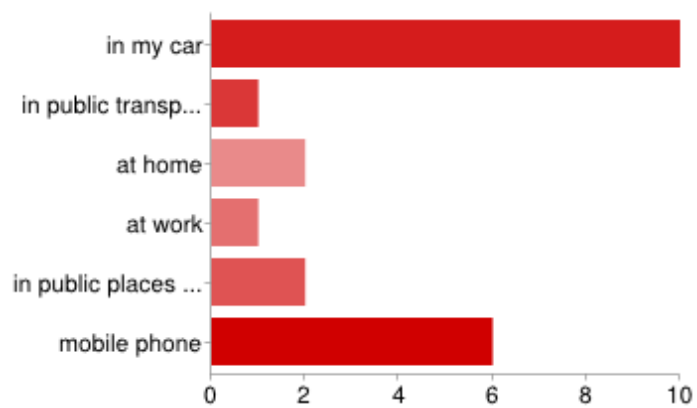
When did you first start listening to Pidgin English radio stations?



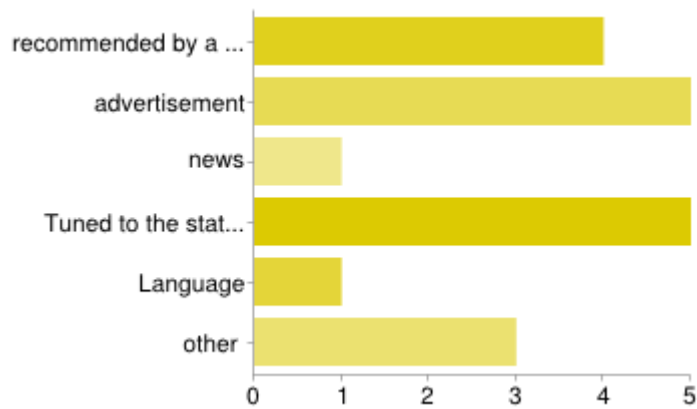
Why do you listen to Wazobia FM?



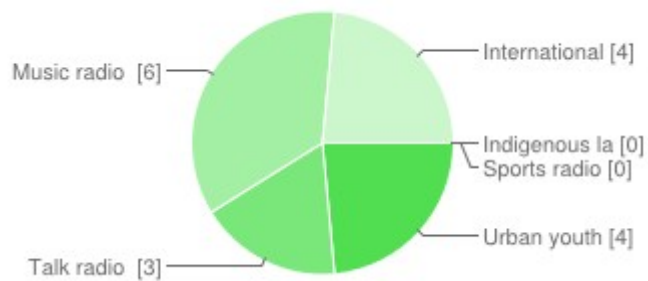
How do you listen to Wazobia FM?



How did you start listening to Wazobia FM?



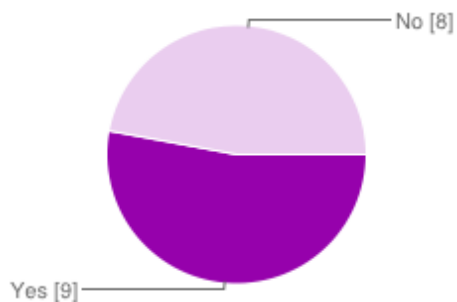
What kind of station were you listening to before Wazobia FM started operations?



Yes 9 53%

No 8 47%

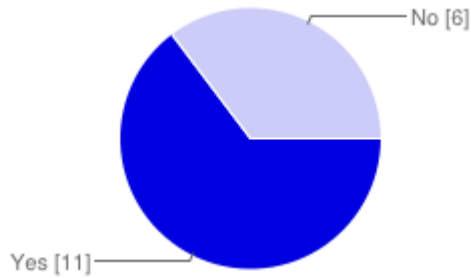
Were you listening to Pidgin English programmes on other radio station (s) before Wazobia started operations?



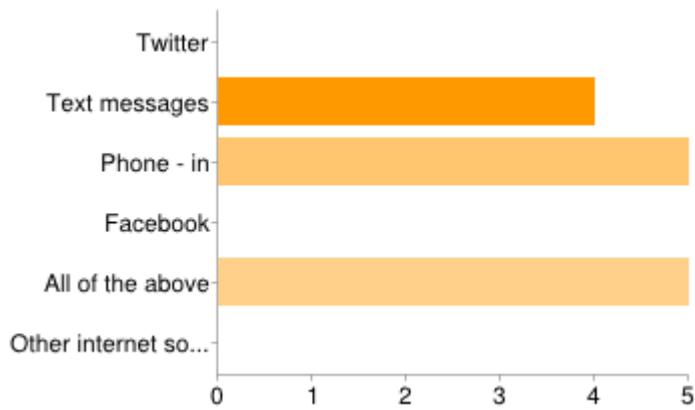
Participation

Yes 11 65%
 No 6 35%

Do you participate in programmes on Pidgin English radio stations?

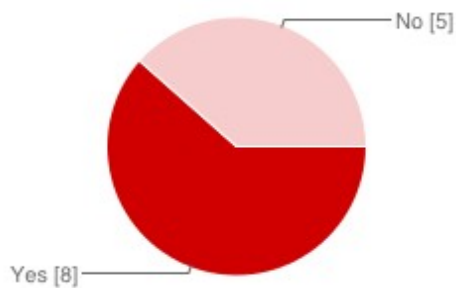


How do you participate?



Yes 8 62%
 No 5 38%

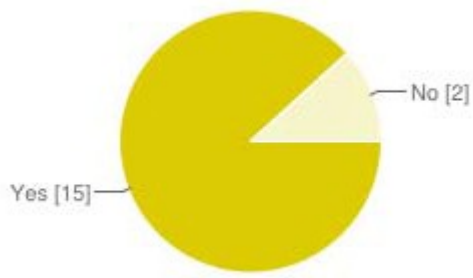
If Wazobia FM's call number was not toll-free, would you still phone in?



Discussions in Pidgin English

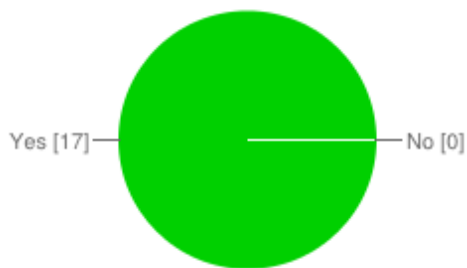
Do you think Pidgin English radio stations allow for more diversity of opinions?

Yes 15 88%
No 2 12%



Yes 17 100%
No 0 0%

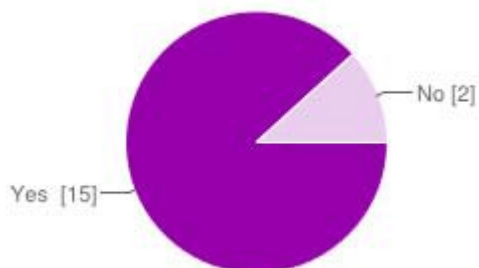
Do you think the use of Pidgin English makes it easier to participate on radio?



Popularity

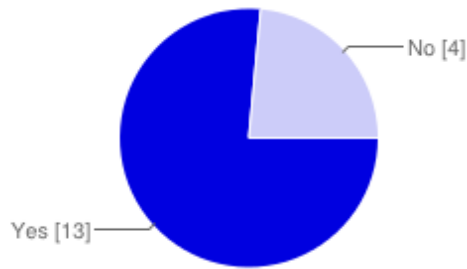
Yes 15 88%
No 2 12%

Do you think Pidgin English language has helped to bridge the ethnic divides in Nigeria?



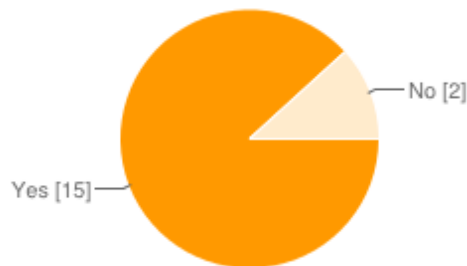
Do your friends listen to Pidgin English radio stations?

Yes 13 76%
 No 4 24%



Yes 15 88%
 No 2 12%

Will you like to see more Pidgin English radio stations across Nigeria?



Appendice 7b - Personal communication - Major Isaac Akintoye (Rtd)

Armed forces barracks in Lagos include: Military Contonment,Ikeja; Military Cantonment, Ojo; Nigerian Army Nay Town, Festac; Armed Forces Rehabilitation Centre,Oshodi; Abalti Barracks,Yaba and Dodan Barracks,Obalende. Others are Myhon Barracks,Malu Road,Apapa; Bonny Camp,Victoria Island; Air Force Base, Ikeja and a battalion in Badagry. In addition, there are no less than five police barracks in Lagos city.

Appendice 7c – Focus Group Discussion Scripts:

1. Appendice 7c Hausa Focus Group Transcription
<http://tinyurl.com/hausafocusgroupinterview>
2. Appendice 7c Igbo Focus Group Transcription <http://tinyurl.com/igbofocusgroupinterview>
3. Appendice 7c – Minority Languages Focus Group Transcription
<http://tinyurl.com/minoritylanguagesfocusgroup>
4. Appendice 7c Yoruba Focus Group Transcription
<http://tinyurl.com/yorubafocusgroupinterview>

Appendice 7d – Audio Recording of Wazobia FM (Newspaper review, news, excerpts of Yaw, OPJ, and Matshe’s belts, station’s stings and promo of a Broadway musical on late Afrobeat Legend, Fela Anikulapo Kuti)

Newspaper Review by Yaw and Nedu <http://tinyurl.com/wazobiafmnewspaperreview>

Highlights of Breakfast show <http://tinyurl.com/wazobiabreakfastshowhighlight>

Sammy Okposo’s Hail <http://tinyurl.com/wazobiasammieokposohail>

Words from Abada- Tuesday Morning <http://tinyurl.com/wazobiawordsfromabada>

Fela on Broadway + Mass Awareness <http://tinyurl.com/wazobiafelaonbroadway>

Matshe on Continuity <http://tinyurl.com/wazobiamatshecontinuity>