

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The goal of language use in every situation is not just to communicate but also to make a significant impression on the listener or reader. The linguistic situation in Nigeria is locally plural but globally dual. By this, it is meant that there are hundreds of Nigerian languages acquired unconsciously and spoken as First Language (L1) in different geographical boundaries, while only two languages – the English Language and Nigerian Pidgin (hence forth NP) - are widely spoken across all boundaries in Nigeria. Similarly, Dan Sperber claims that the English Language and NP share a co-existence in Nigeria: “English constitutes the H variety, as it is the language of most public/formal communication, while NP is the L variety, being associated primarily with private/informal domains of language use” (24). However, while English has to be acquired consciously, essentially in the classroom, NP can be acquired unconsciously, especially in South-Eastern Nigeria or consciously, though informally on the streets, through interactions with the speakers. Although NP is usually considered an English-derived contact language, according to Faraclas, “its identity could be traced to Nigerian languages spoken along the coast before the coming of European traders (in the fifteenth century): linguistic contacts between Nigerians and European traders; European incursion into Nigeria via missionary work” (9). Without doubt, NP is derived from many European languages, (especially English, Portuguese, and Dutch) and various Nigerian languages. Because Nigeria was eventually colonized by the British, the English

Language became NP's main lexifier, prompting the alternative nomenclature, Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE).

Classifying NP's status has been a bit of a problem. Over the years it has been hovering, essentially, between "pidgin" and "creole", especially in the South-Eastern and South-Southern parts of Nigeria. According to Faraclas, NP could be pidginized, creolized, and/or decreolized, depending on the social context of its use: acrolectal (decreolized) varieties which show significant influence from Nigerian Standard English, basilectal (pidginized or repidginized) varieties which show significant influence from other Nigerian languages, and mesolectal (creolized) varieties which typify the speeches of those who use Nigerian Pidgin in most of their daily interactions or who have learned Nigerian English as a first language (3). As such, a linguistically-versatile Nigerian could use any of these varieties to achieve different interactional goals and in different contexts. The Nigerian stand-up comedy arena is an admixture of the three NP sociolectal varieties, although tending towards the mesolectal, probably because most of the comedians are of the South-Eastern Nigerian extraction. NP's major appeal lies in its lexicon. Essentially, old words acquire new meanings (e.g. "mouth" and "bottom power" mean "influence"), hitherto non-existent words are coined (e.g. "kpai" means "die"), and many NP words are close approximations of English equivalents ("siddon" means "sit down").

However, NP falls short in the area of orthographic standardization. Probably because of its relatively fledgling status, NP is yet to have standardized morphemic and phonemic symbols. Thus, most NP words are spelt as closely as they approximate English, as they are

“distanced” from English, or as they reflect the conventions in the user’s indigenous language, all determined by the context of use.

Almost every Nigerian can speak or understand NP, and so, it has become the unofficial or de facto language of advertisement, entertainment, and any other forms of information intended for mass consumption. Most Nigerian stand-up comedians have tactically appropriated this linguistic resource for their profession. They mostly perform in Nigerian Pidgin because they realize that executing in Standard British English would decrease the liberating effects, the size of their audience and make the jokes mechanical. They believe that Nigerian Pidgin helps in creating the amusing effects they so desire and putting across the message better. This is because in stand- up comedy, the feedback of the audience is instant and crucial for the comedian’s act. An audience expects a stand-up comedian to provide a steady stream of laughs and a performer is always under pressure to deliver.

Stand-up comedy is a comic style in which a comedian performs in front of a live audience, usually speaking directly to them. The performer is commonly known as a comic, stand-up comedian or simply a stand-up. The comedian recites a grouping of humorous stories, jokes and one-liners typically called a monologue. Some stand-up comedians use props, music or magic tricks to enhance their acts. Stand-up comedies are often performed in corporate events, comedy clubs, bars and pubs, night clubs and theatres. Outside live performance, stand-up comedies are often distributed commercially via television, DVD, CD, YouTube and the Internet.

Stand-up comedy in Nigeria is traced to 1993, when its progenitor, Allelujah Atupota Akpobome (Ali Baba) performed regularly at a Lagos nightclub. Ali Baba began professional stand-up comedy in Nigeria and incidentally, he was the favoured comedian of Nigeria's former president, Olusegun Obasanjo. He has since mentored many comedians, most notably, Ayo Makun (AY). Other successful Nigerian comedians include, but are not restricted to, Basketmouth, I Go Dye, Klint de Drunk, Lepacious Bose, and Gordons (all stage names). The most popular source of Nigerian stand-up comedy is "Night of A Thousand Laughs" (NATL), a National road show, produced since 1996 and staged at unspecified intervals in the country's major cities. In any instance of NATL, a comedian is given 10-15 minutes to make a seated audience laugh after monologues interspersed with musical performances, mimes, and pantomimes. Apart from the institutionalized NATL, specific national and international events or holidays - National Democracy Day (May 29), Independence Day (October 1), Valentine's Day (February 14), Christmas (December 25) - provide opportunities for stand-up comic shows. Still, a number of nightclubs, especially in the major Nigerian cities of Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt, serve comedy as a part of their menu on specific, sometimes previously, publicized nights. For example, Osakioduwa hosted MNET's (a cable network's) weekly comedy show, "Comedy Club Live in Lagos".

Finally, the established comedians sometimes organize self-sponsored shows, where the sponsor performs for most of the period but allows other comedians to add some variety to the performance. Live stand-up comedy as stated earlier is often performed in a wide range of venues: from historic theatres and sports arenas to small restaurants, coffee shops, and comedy clubs. Based on the range of performance spaces, the identifying feature of stand-up

comedy is not the location of performance but its specific attributes that make it a subgenre of solo performance.

A solo performance, sometimes referred to as a one-man show or one-woman show, features a single person telling a story to an audience, typically for the purpose of entertainment. This type of performance comes in many varieties, including autobiographical creations, comedy acts, novel adaptations, vaudeville, poetry, music, and dance. Solo performance is used to encompass the broad term of a single person performing for an audience. The backgrounds of solo performers over the decades range from vaudeville, comedy, poetry, music, the visual arts, magic and theatre and dance. Modern stand-up comedians have transcended the hurdle of uselessness, that is, having problems to solve rather than mere entertainment. Ulrich Beier tagged modern day comedian as a folk artist in his article on visual arts in Nigeria. He considers the folk artist as lacking seriousness in works, and his works characterized by austerity and intellectual criticisms. The folk artist is profane, carefree, and abandoned (19). These assertions cannot be true of contemporary stand-up comedians. According to Ali Baba in one of his interviews, he said “Stand-up comedy is a serious business, as an entertainer, the comedian is also a social commentator”. The choice of Nigerian Pidgin as the language of the business partly accounts for its success, and also for its popularity.

Biography of the Selected Stand-up Comedians

Bright Okpocha

Bright Okpocha was born 14 September 1978. He hails from Abia State, Nigeria. Bright completed his primary and secondary school education in Apapa (Lagos, Nigeria) and then moved on to pursue a degree at the University of Benin where he studied Sociology and Anthropology. He is known by his stage name, **Basketmouth**. He has organized popular stand-up comedy concerts like *Basket Mouth Uncensored* across the globe. Basketmouth hosted a comedy challenge on Instagram, called *Two Things Challenge*. This show sparked off uproar from the fans, after a young fan posted a video of him saying obscene things relating to sex, as a child stood close by.

In 2005 and 2006, he won the National Comedy Award and the Award for Best Stand-up Comedian of the Year. To mark the Valentine's day of 2017, Bright had a sold out concert in the famous Wembley arena, and this made people consider him one of the greatest comedians to come out of Africa. He appears in the Africa Magic show, 'My Flatmates' (2016).

He discovered his skill in drumming in 1991 and rapping in 1994. He then formed a group called "*Da Psychophats*" which had 7 members. They started going for shows and rapping in 1995. However, they broke up before releasing any material. He went on to form another rap group known as "*Da Oddz*" with his brother Godwin and Muiyiwa Osunrobi, they performed a couple of shows but did not achieve any breakthrough, as their brand of rap was not accepted in Nigeria.

Atunyota Alleluya Akporobomerere

Known for his stage name, **Ali Baba** is one of the first and most sought after Nigerian Stand-up comedians and also known as the father of stand-up comedy in Nigeria. Ali Baba is born in Warri, Delta State, on June 24, 1965 to the Royal Family of Agbarha Otor, Ughelli North Local Government Area. He spent the first 8 years of his life in Warri (Delta State, Nigeria). His father is a retired soldier who served in Lagos. He did his primary and secondary education at Ojo Primary School and Command Secondary School, both in Lagos. He furthered his education at Ibru College in Agbarha-Otor and then went on to the now Bendel State University now known as the Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma where he studied Religious Studies and Philosophy. After acquiring a degree from the then Bendel State University, Ekpoma in 1990, he relocated to Lagos, having discovered his comic talent and funny bone in his 3rd Year in the University. He had planned to return to Ekpoma to study Law, but that was not to be, when he discovered that he could make more money from making people laugh than defending them.

He began his professional career with corporate events, appearing on television shows with the likes of Patrick Doyle, Charly Boy and Danladi Bako. He also made cameo appearances on radio shows with Bisi Olatilo, Sani Irabor and Mani Onumonmu. He also worked briefly with Dapo Adelegan of DP Lekki Limited as Executive Assistant in 1991. Through guts, sacrifice and creative dynamism, Ali Baba carved a niche for himself as a comedian for both corporate and non-corporate events. In less than four years, he had also become the preferred Master of Ceremony at some events. These days no event is considered complete without a comedian to MC that event. In 1993, he registered his company, Ali Baba Hicuppuray 3rd

and, in 1998, he hired billboards in strategic parts of Lagos Ozumba Mbadiwe Street, Victoria Island; Osborne Road, Ikoyi and the Marina and paid for two years. He has been a professional stand-up comedian for the past 22 years and has, in the last 13years, received several awards. He was inducted into the Johnny Walker ‘Striding Man’ Society in 2009 which recognizes men who have achieved great strides in their chosen fields of endeavour and who shared the strides they have taken to motivate and encourage others.

In 2012, he was given the privilege of ringing the Year End Closing Bell of the Nigerian Stock Exchange, the first Nigerian comedian to do so. He is also a Special Marshal of the Federal Road Safety Corps. Ali Baba is an entertainer, a comedian, a Master of Ceremonies, a Radio Show Host, a Motivational Speaker, a Photographer, and a Writer. He has a strong flair for Creating and Developing Ideas. He is an avid reader and constantly seeks information.

Bovi

Bovi Ugboma was born in Benin City, where he attended UNIBEN staff schools. He attended secondary school at Ughelli North in Delta State, and proceeded to Delta State University where he studied Theatre Arts. He is a Nigerian comedian, actor, and writer. He has organized popular stand-up comedy concerts like “Bovi Man on Fire” across the globe. Bovi began his career in April 2007, starring in the sitcom *Extended Family*, which he produced, wrote, and packaged. The show was very popular, and, by 2008 Bovi, was leading comedy shows and events throughout Nigeria. He participated in *Night of a Thousand Laughs* organized by Williams Opa . Bovi began a series titled "BACK TO SCHOOL" in

2018 and uploaded this in his YouTube channel. Bovi has worked alongside other Nigerian comedians, such as I Go Dye, I Go Save, Basketmouth, Buchi, Odogwu, Okey Bakassi, Julius Agwu and others.

Francis Agoda

Francis Agoda was born on 4 April 1979 in Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria. As a young child, he grew up at Okpara waterside with his grandmother, Queen Agnes. Here, he witnessed the numerous challenges facing rural settlements in Nigeria. This insight motivated him to address some of these issues through his comedy and publications. A review of his creativity dates back to his elementary school days at Ighogbadu primary school and College of Commerce, Warri Delta State. During his school days he was a member of the Junior Engineering Technical Society and was made the zonal project manager to represent Delta State in 1992. Popularly known as **I Go Dye**, he is a Nigerian visionary comedian. He is a motivational speaker, writer and social crusader. However, through his artistry, he has continued to promote global peace and child welfare. He has organized several international comedy shows such as "I Go Dye standing."

As a young kid, he met the first executive governor of Delta State Olorogun Felix Ibru, after he exhibited an unusual creativity, by constructing an Hovercraft ship, radio transmitter, hair dryer, projector, electric solar table fan and flying helicopter. These made him the first Africa child to have built a flying helicopter and moving Hovercraft ship. He was awarded a scholarship to study structural engineering at New York University. This passion for comedy brought him wider acceptance and popularity. He addressed mitigating factors affecting

young children and many unprivileged people, as he witnessed growing up in the village as a young kid. He imbibed the name 'I Go dye' from the similarity of the sound of his surname, Agoda, 'I GO DYE', translated to mean (Initiative guide on developing youth endowment). He got a contract as a Stand-up comedian at Prest Motel in Benin City, where he was paid one thousand naira per show. Here, he also expanded his profile across different events in Nigeria.

After years of exploring his creativity he featured in an Africa biggest comedy show, *Night of A Thousand Laughs*, 2000 year edition. He made the comedy show and the VCD become the most saleable comedy CD, according to the marketer, Mr Obino Music. He performed for a decade and he was eventually honoured by the producer of *Night of a Thousand Laugh*, Mr Williams, as the most outstanding comedian to have been on Night of a Thousand laugh stage for ten years. His first European tour was with Ehizoya Golden Entertainment, 2005. This took him round seven countries. He was later contracted by NIDOE, France to perform at the UNESCO Cultural Week in Paris, France and was presented an award for his contribution to the upliftment of Nigeria Cultural value by NIDOE, Spain. He has featured in the MTV Africa Music Awards. He has also performed in opening and closing shows of various notable musicians, including Akon, Boyz II Men, 50-Cent, Rick Ross, The Game, and Kelly Rowland.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Comedians use their artistic skills to manipulate human language to create comedy. This creates medicinal and perlocutionary effects on the audience. They achieve this through the skillful use of Nigerian Pidgin. Comedians use NP creatively and artistically to create

comedy and entertain the audience. Their patterns and choices of NP can sometimes have hidden meanings that depict Nigerian ways of life and their tone of utterance can sometimes be inappropriate. One will begin to ask what sort of language comedians use and what perlocutionary effects does it have on the audience?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study focuses on Speech Acts and Conversational Implicature found in the comedies of the selected stand-up comedians in Nigeria - Ali Baba, I Go Dye, Bovi and Basketmouth, their hidden meanings and the effects they have on their audience. It is expected to reveal the various Speech Acts and the implicata discernible in these comedies in order to show how meaning is constructed through language; to find out if communication actually takes place between the comedians and the audience as well as to examine the perlocutionary effects on the audience. This work also analyzes some of the pragmatic strategies comedians use in carrying out comedies, their patterns and choices of language used to create comedy to entertain the audience. It seeks to explain the functional significance of the speech acts and the implicata found in the use of NP by these comedians.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Given the interdisciplinary quality and posture of the data to be analyzed, scholars in other fields will find the analysis of the language of the comedians a useful resource for further research. The professionals that would find the outcome of this research worthwhile include: scholars, literary critics and students. This study is relevant to these scholars and literary critics as it will enable them to know the true meaning behind words uttered by these comedians. Comedians are there to entertain, but besides entertainment, what other messages

are they trying to communicate or put across? It will also help the students to look out for those hidden meanings behind every word uttered by the stand-up comedians as they deliberately employ NP not just for entertainment. Finally, it will help both scholars and students to examine the use of NP by comedians for analytical purposes

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study comes under the purview of pragmatics. However, pragmatics is a broad field which covers a lot of subfields or subjects. This study is delimited to investigating the use of NP in comedies, the various speech acts and implicate indentified with specific reference to selected four stand-up comedians in Nigeria – Bovi, Basketmouth, I Go Dye and Ali Baba. To achieve this, the researcher studies the selected comedies of the four stand-up comedians downloaded from YouTube and other Internet sources.

1.6 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the types of illocutionary Speech Acts found in the language of the comedians?
- ii. How can the audience decipher the hidden meaning in these comedies?
- iii. In what ways do these comedians manipulate Nigerian Pidgin in a comic way to put across information to their audience?
- iv. What perlocutionary effects do these comedies have on the audience?
- v. What are the prominent pragmatic strategies employed by Nigerian stand-up comedians to achieve interaction in the production and consumption of comedy?

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT SCHOLARSHIP

2.0 Conceptual Framework

This chapter centers on review of related literature. It discusses the concept of pragmatics, the role of context in pragmatics, speech acts in pragmatics, comedy and pragmatics, the place of humor in comedy and Nigerian Pidgin, the development of stand-up comedies in Nigeria, Nigerian Pidgin, and empirical studies.

2.1 The Concept of Pragmatics

Pragmatics studies the ways in which context contributes to meaning; how the transmission of meaning depends not only on structural and linguistic knowledge of the speaker and listener, but also on the context of the utterance, the inferred intent of the speaker, and other factors. In this respect, pragmatics explains how language users are able to overcome apparent ambiguity since meaning relies on the manner, place and time of an utterance.

Morris Charles considers pragmatics as “The study of the context-dependent aspects of meaning which are systematically abstracted in the construction of logical form” (4). In the semiotic trichotomy developed by Morris, Carnap, and Peirce in the 1930s, syntax addresses the formal relations of signs to one another; semantics addresses the relation of signs to what they denote, and pragmatics the relation of signs to their users and interpreters. Morris attempts to separate semantics, pragmatics and syntax in the evaluation of linguistic meaning by also noting their point of convergence. According to Morris, “Syntax studies the relations signs bear to other signs, semantics the relation between signs and objects, and pragmatics

the relation between signs and their interpreters”(2). Of course, there were and are differences of opinion on where exactly to draw the line between semantics and pragmatics. Thirty years elapsed before pragmatics finally made its way into modern linguistics in the late 1960s, when linguists began to explore the performance phenomena. To this end, they adopted ideas developed and advanced by Wittgenstein, Ryle, Strawson, Austin and other eminent language philosophers. It seems safe to claim that the ensuing ‘pragmatic turn’ was most notably induced by John Austin, J.R. Searle and Paul Grice, who were interested in utterance meaning, rather than sentence or word meaning, that is, in studying unique historical events created by actual speakers to perform linguistic acts in actual situational contexts in order to accomplish specific goals. Other scientific movements that nourished pragmatics include anthropology, contextualism, functionalism, ethnomethodology and European sociology. Since the pragmatic turn, pragmatics has developed more rapidly and diversely as a linguistic discipline. Since the 1970s, the early Anglo-American framework of pragmatic-linguistic study has been immensely expanded and enhanced by research in Continental Europe and elsewhere. With historiographical hindsight, it can be seen that the broadening, that is, the interdisciplinary expansion, of the field of pragmatics has been a cumulative process; the broader conception of pragmatics chronologically and gradually followed the narrower one.

Despite its scientific acclaims, the notion of pragmatics remains somewhat enigmatic and is still difficult to define. This holds for its readings in everyday discourse as well as in scholarly contexts. Nonetheless, when people refer to attitudes and modes of behaviour as

pragmatic, they mean that they have a factual kind of orientation in common. According to Grice Paul,

People who act pragmatically or take a pragmatic perspective generally have a preference to a practical matter of fact and realistic rather than a theoretical, speculative and idealistic way of approaching imminent problems and handling everyday affairs (35).

To put it differently, they share a concrete, situation-dependent approach geared to action and usage rather than an abstract, situation-independent and system-related point of view. To assume a pragmatic stance in everyday social encounters as well as in political, historical and related kinds of discourse means to handle the related affairs in a goal-directed and object-directed, common-sense and down to earth kind of way. Such an understanding of pragmatics as an attitude in non-scientific discourse has obviously left its traces in scientific definitions of the term. By and large, one can say that in semiotics and philosophy, pragmatics characterizes those theoretical and methodological approaches that are oriented toward use and context rather than toward some system and that they regard use and context as creating a high degree of analytical surplus.

While the same is true for linguistics in general, there is no commonly accepted definition of pragmatics in linguistics which would refer to a single, unified and homogeneous field of study. In contemporary linguistics, scholars can identify a narrow and a broad way of delineating pragmatics (of which the former is sometimes allocated to an “Anglo-American” and the latter to a “Continental European” tradition of pragmatics (Huang Yang 7). According to the narrow view, Wolfram and Morris observe that pragmatics is understood as

the systematic investigation of what and how people mean when they use language as a vehicle of action in a particular context and with a particular goal in mind (2). Thus, the context-dependency of utterance meaning is the central component of more narrowly defined accounts of pragmatics, which focus on a few key issues that can be juxtaposed with related issues in other modules of language theory such as grammar and semantics. Those issues include indexicality/deixis (versus anaphora), presuppositions, implicature (versus entailments) and speech acts (versus types of sentences).

According to Wolfram and Morris, in a much broader point of view, “Pragmatics is the scientific study of all aspects of linguistic behavior” (4). In particular, pragmatics includes patterns of linguistic actions, language functions, types of inferences, principles of communication, frames of knowledge, attitude and belief, as well as organizational principles of text and discourse. Wolfram summarizes the “Thrust of pragmatics as a discipline which deals with meaning-in-context, which for analytical purposes can be viewed from different perspectives that of the speaker, the recipient, the analyst” (3). It bridges the gap between the system side of language and the use side, and relates both of them at the same time. Frequently, the meaning of discourse is context-dependent. Pragmatics examines the devices used by language users, for example, deictic expression or anaphora in order to express the desired meaning and how it is perceived. The interpretation of what the speaker wanted to convey using words is often influenced by factors such as the listeners’ assumptions or the context.

2.2 The Role of Context in Pragmatics

Context as the part of a discourse that surrounds word or passage can throw light on its meaning. Akmajian, Ann and Richard throw more light on context:

The ‘context’ of an utterance is an expandable notion; sometimes the relevant context is linguistics - just the previous and anticipated utterances in the discourse or conversation. But context can extend to the immediate physical and social environment as well; and finally, it can encompass general knowledge. Each of these concentric circles of ‘context’ can play a role in the interpretation of an utterance. Our contributions to conversations both reflect and affect the linguistics and non-linguistic context of utterance (388).

In pragmatics two types of context can be differentiated: linguistic context and physical context. Linguistic context, sometimes called co-text, is the set of words that surrounds the lexical item in question in the same phrase, or sentence. According to Yule George, “it is the set of other words used in the same phrase or sentence. The surrounding co-text has a strong effect on what we think the word means”(129). The physical context is the location of a given word, the situation in which it is used, as well as timing, all of which aid proper understanding of the words. Yule adds: “Our understanding of much of what we read and hear is tied to the physical context, particularly the time and place in which we encounter linguistic expressions” (129).

There are numerous frequently used words that depend on the physical context for their correct understandings: there, that, it, or tomorrow. Terms like that are known as deictic expressions. Depending on what such words refer to, they can be classified as person deixis: him, they, you; place deixis: there, here, and time deixis: then, tomorrow etc. Comedians often use these deictic expressions while entertaining their audience. Therefore, context plays a very important role in determining the intended meaning of these comedies and what helps the audience in finding out the meaning of the language used by these comedians is the knowledge of shared assumptions and language used in cracking these jokes. Jazolt Karma states that “Pragmatics has been claimed to study the contribution of the context (that is linguistics and situational context) to the meaning” (1). This is because pragmatics is more interested in language use rather than linguistic structures. This is emphasized by Levinson Stephen:

...pragmatic theories, in contrast, do nothing to explicate the structure of linguistic construction or grammatical properties and relations...They explicate the reasoning of speakers and hearers in working out the correlation in a context of a sentence taken with proposition. In this respect, a pragmatic theory is part of performance (8).

Therefore, it will be difficult to separate context from pragmatics because, basically, meaning is often determined according to the context of use. In that regard, Leech and Short state categorically that

...the pragmatic analysis of language can be broadly understood to be the investigation into that aspect of meaning which is derived not from formal properties of words and constructions, but from the way in which words are used and how they relate to the context in which they are uttered (290).

Based on this, it is obvious that pragmatics is more interested in meaning of utterance as it relates to the context of use.

2.3 Speech Acts in Pragmatics

Pragmatic theory draws inspiration from logic. It draws this mainly from philosophy of language and “the theory of speech act”, in particular, as well as the analysis of conversations and of cultural differences in verbal interaction. Just as the rules governing semantic interpretation respect the classes of syntactic structure, the operation that turns discourse into acts might also be called a “Pragmatic Interpretation of Utterances” (Dijk 97).

Blakemore Diane also states that “Pragmatic theory is concerned with the mental structure underlying the ability to interpret utterances in context” (18). The suggestion that pragmatic theory involves abstracting away from the particular properties of the situation in which it is put to use is not meant to conflict with the generally accepted view that pragmatics is the study of utterances or sentences in use. The whole point of pragmatic theory is to explain how the context is used in the interpretation of an utterance (Abisola 133). According to Kempson Ruth, “Pragmatics is the study of the general cognitive principles involved in the retrieval of information from an uttered sequence of words”(561). Lawal Rees sees pragmatics as evolving as a result of the limitations of structural semantics to capture

satisfactorily the sociological and other non-linguistic dimensions of verbal communication (55). What is usually meant by saying that we do something when we make an utterance is that we accomplish some specific social acts (for example, making a promise, request, giving advice, etc.) usually called speech acts or, more specifically, illocutionary acts (Dijk 195). He adds that a global differentiation between the various kinds of acts involved is made by the distinction between a locutionary act, a propositional act, and an illocutionary act, and in some cases, a perlocutionary act.

Speech Act theorists have classified speech acts in different ways. Austin John, the forerunner of this field, classifies them into five categories of 'verdictives,' 'exercitives', 'commissives', 'behabitives' and 'expositives'. John Searle's categories are based on the argument that Austin's classification is deficient, in that there is too much overlap in Austin's classification based on that observation and some others. Searle comes up with the classes of assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives, with various sub-categories and definitions (Abisola 134). In Sadock's view, the most straight-forward way in which our intended locution can be communicated is to mention directly what we are doing in making a particular utterance. He adds that the factors that determine whether a particular illocutionary act succeeds are termed felicity conditions, maintaining that in the majority of cases, the illocutionary force of an utterance is not signaled by a performative formula (67).

Bach and Harnish criticize certain aspects of earlier theories, claiming that intention and inference are basic elements to understanding (197). They also offer the notion of presumption. In their opinion, both linguistic and communication circumstances are

presumed. They recognize two main categories of illocutionary acts: communicative, with four main categories of constatives, directives, commissives and acknowledgements; non-communicative class with two subcategories of effectiveness and verdictives.

Traugot and Pratt classified illocutionary acts into Representatives, Expressives, Verdictives, Directives, Commissives, and Declaratives, the sub-categories of which they also define and explain. The center-point of their theory is that “A speaker’s communicative competence includes not just knowledge of what illocutionary acts can be performed in the language, but also, how, when, where and by whom they can be performed” (134).

Adegbija Edward’s grouse with previous speech act theories is that they relegate the pragmatics of a situation of social interaction to the background. He states that at every stage of discourse, both speaker(s) and hearer(s) have to mobilize appropriate areas of the pragmatic, social, syntactic, semantic, and lexical competencies in order to be able to participate effectively in the interaction at hand (qtd. in Abisola 134). Geoffrey Leech, writing under “Varieties of illocutionary function”, classifies illocutionary functions into four types of competitive, convivial, collaborative and conflictive (183). To Geoffrey, a perlocutionary act is performed by saying something. Allan Kate, relying heavily on the works of Austin, Searle, and Bach and Harnish, observes that language comes into existence only because someone performs an act of speaking or writing. She presents a scheme for analyzing the meaning of a speech act, in which there is a hierarchy among the acts, and, that is, the perlocutionary act presupposes a denotational act which presupposes a locutionary act which presupposes an utterance act (182). Allan’s classification follows Bach and Harnish’s

work in terms of identifying ‘interpersonal acts’ and ‘declaratory acts’. Allan, however, justifies the major category distinction between interpersonal and declaratory acts by subclassifying interpersonal acts into constatives, predictives, commissives, acknowledgements, directives, authoritative, and declaratory acts into effective and verdictives, totaling eight categories of speech act, as against five found in Austin, six in Searle, and four of Bach and Harnish.

Lawal, on his part, identifies the pragmatic mappings of general factual knowledge of the world: “Local factual knowledge, socio-cultural knowledge, and knowledge of context as useful for constructing meaning out of an utterance” (192). He adds that an understanding of the maps helps to illustrate that a pragmatic interpretation of utterances goes beyond the meaning of lexical components and the structural semantic relations among them. Lawal’s ‘Aspects of Pragmatic Theory’ focuses on both the surface structure of an utterance as well as the background structure. Abisola’s work is able to espouse the aspects of pragmatic theory captured by Lawal and how these can be applied to texts. He notes that illocutionary acts, typically, do not come alone. They are part of a sequence of actions in general, or of a sequence of speech acts in particular. This sequence must satisfy the usual conditions for action sequence. Thus, it may be required that the final state of some speech act is a necessary condition for the success of a following act. In this sense, an illocutionary act may be an auxiliary act (135).

Dijk shares that speech act sequencing requires planning and interpretation (138). In other words, certain sequence of various speech acts may be intended and understood, and, hence,

functions socially as one speech act. Such a speech act performed by a sequence of speech acts is called a “global speech act” or “macro speech act” (Dijk 136).

Sequences in monologue or dialogue conversations may be assigned a global speech act through some conditions. Firstly, as Dijk says, by “Deleting irrelevant or predictable information”(239). For such speech acts as well as for actions in general, this would mean that preparatory and auxiliary speech acts may be deleted, as well as those component speech acts which, taken together, desire the essential component of the resulting global speech acts. Similarly, Dijk adds that expressions of mental states and context descriptions may be deleted, although they may determine the acceptability of the speech act. Finally, the speech acts establishing, maintaining and concluding the sequence, that is, the communicative interaction in general, may also be dropped in macro-interpretation.

2.4 Comedy in Pragmatics

Comedy, according to Xavier Riu , refers to any “Discourse or work generally intended to be humorous or amusing by inducing laughter, especially in theatre, television, film, *stand-up comedy*, or any other medium of entertainment” (3). Comedy can be used to easily engage in social interaction by taking away that awkward, uncomfortable or uneasy feeling of social interactions. Others believe that the appropriate use of comedy can facilitate social interactions. Comedy is a ubiquitous, highly ingrained and largely meaningful aspect of human experience and is therefore decidedly relevant in organizational contexts, such as the work place (Wiles 32). The significant role that laughter and fun play in organizational life has been seen as a sociological phenomenon and has increasingly been recognized as also creating a sense of involvement among workers. Sharing comedy at work not only offers a

relief from boredom but can also build relationships, improve camaraderie between colleagues and create positive effect. It may also relieve tension and can be used as a coping strategy. Sharing a laugh with a few colleagues may improve mood and bring out quality of work.

Raskin Victor says that “comedy has a medicinal effect of decreasing stress, reducing tensions, killing boredoms and prolonging people’s life span” (25). Rich comedians are making a living off cracking jokes in Nigeria today, among which Bovi and Basket Mouth have made names for themselves. Comedy can be made out of the most serious events or situations. For instance, Nigerian stand-up comedians today make jokes out of national situations or ridicule public figures to create jokes. A case in point is the former first lady, Dame Patience Jonathan, whose idiosyncratic language use has provided much reference points for Nigerian comedians at all levels. However, some of the jokes created out of this language situation have not been taken into consideration. This explains the strained relationship between the former first lady and veteran stand-up comedian, Ali Baba.

In literature, comedy is mostly satiric as writers try to lampoon, satirize or use sarcasm to change certain societal excesses. The “Driving force of every comedy is language or one of the basic aspects of comedy is language” (Trypanis 33). Language can be manipulated for stylistic and humorous effect. However, a joke made or words spoken as humorous must be context based. Jokes and humorous statements can stir up trouble if not applied to the right context. Therefore, the place of comedy in pragmatics will be the application of humorous languages in their appropriate social context.

2.5 The Place of Humor in Comedy and Nigerian Pidgin

Comedy is more formal in the sense it is performed in front of an audience, but humour is the ability to make people laugh. A comedian can do comedy and have humour but a funny person (person with humour) may not necessarily do comedy or be a comedian. A sense of comedy may be one's ability to create comedy (writing plays, being a comedian etc.). A sense of humour is one's ability to be affected by or to create humour (Carrell 23). That I have a good sense of humour does not mean I have a good sense of comedy this might conceivably be said, for example, in praise of someone who has written a good play that makes people laugh.

Alexander Richard attempts to explain humour: “Humour is the tendency of particular cognitive experiences to provoke laughter or provide amusement” (8). The term derives from humoral medicine of the ancient Greeks, which taught that the balance of fluids in the human body, known as humours, controlled human health and emotion. People of all ages and cultures respond to humour. Most people are able to experience humour - to be amused, to smile or laugh at something funny – and, thus, are considered to have a sense of humour. The hypothetical person lacking a sense of humour would likely find the behavior induced by humour to be inexplicable, strange, or even irrational. Though ultimately decided by personal taste, the extent to which someone finds something humorous depends on a host of variables, including geographical location, culture, maturity, level of education, intelligence and context. Humour is essentially amusing and generates laughter. The language of humour therefore has to be amusing, freely expressed with little or no formalities and capable of appealing to the audience’s emotion in order to generate laughter (Ferge 20).

While discussing Nigerian Pidgin, Wilkinson asserts that the “Nigeria Pidgin is the language of realism and relaxation; the vehicle of expressing emotion, disorder and for discussing sex; and particularly, the language of comedy and satire” (122). She also observes that the comic effect of Pidgin is due to something a little more complex than the normal flattering of the ego that derives from watching the ridiculous antics of a being that is different from the self. Within the past or present experiences of at least part of the public is the constant and often oppressive effort to speak correct English and to inhibit the urge to use either the mother tongue or Pidgin. The vicarious adoption of Pidgin made possible through the presence of Pidgin speaking characters on stage represents a considerable release of tension. Inoue Chad observes that “in Pidgin-English translation jokes, a Pidgin and an English text are juxtaposed. While the core meaning of the texts is kept roughly the same, the inter-textual gap is manipulated for comic effect”(25). Inoue also observes, in the translations, that the English language makes use of euphemism to express some terms which Pidgin expresses in a raw form, such as ass, butt, death, etc. In the light of this, Pidgin can be said to be a dysphemistic language and the rawness in its expression accounts for its ability to express jokes and humour better than the English language which is highly euphemistic.

2.6 Stand-Up Comedy and Theatrical Solo Performance

Theatrical solo performance that belongs to the comedy genre and stand-up comedy differ in a number of ways. A solo performance usually includes the design elements of sound, costume, and lighting throughout the performance. Conversely, in a performance of stand-up comedy, music is played when the stand-up comedian enters and exits. Stand-up comedians usually wear their own clothes, and the lighting design serves the practical purpose of

illuminating the stand-up comedian on the stage. All of these aspects can be read as performance since they seek to promote the idea of the improvised and unrehearsed. In the theatre, all aspects of design ideally aim to communicate something to the audience or to promote the director's conception of the work. In other words, in theatre, more complex ideas are being communicated through design than the general promotion of the illusions of improvisation and the signs of the live performance. A solo performer in theatre also frequently plays a character (even if that character is autobiographical) or several characters and "becomes" those characters. A stand-up comedian, on the other hand, imitates or mimics the accents of others, or what other people in their stories say or do, in a very Brechtian fashion. By Brechtian, the stand-up comedian remains in his or her primary stage persona – usually an extension of his or her own personality and individual identity –and "quotes" the other characters rather than "becoming them". Moreover, a solo performance in theatre often has a fixed written text that remains consistent across performances. There is a degree of re-writing when a new show is developed, but once the workshop stage is complete, the written text is established and, usually, it is not intentionally altered. In contrast, the emphasis in stand-up comedy is placed on the performance text, which actively promotes the feeling of improvisation by including improvised bits between and during rehearsed bits. A stand-up comedian's routine comprises bits or short monologues focused on a particular topic; these can be rearranged, cut, or extended depending on both audience composition and the audience reception. Often, improvised bits occur during the stand-up comedian's interactions with the audience. Due to the use of improvisation, there is usually a lack of consistency across longer performances of live stand-up comedy even though rehearsed bits do become rather fixed, once perfected.

A contemporary stand-up comedy routine is not reproduced in writing for the purpose of distribution by the performer and is usually only performed by the stand-up comedian who creates or first performs the material. Stand-up comedy material can be stolen due to the lack of a written text, which means that live stand-up comedy performances cannot be “copyrighted” (Aulander 133). Stand-up comedy further differs from solo performance in theatre, since it is not possible for stand-up comedians to protect or profit from the reproduction of their work as a written text in the manner that playwrights do. The concept-driven design, the varied character depictions, and the production and circulation of a written text combine to construct a frame of theatricality, which is present in comedic solo performances created for the theatre. The frame of theatricality produced by these elements is most often observed in theatre spaces and, for that reason, stand-up comedy performances can borrow the frame of theatricality simply by taking place in the theatre. Borrowing the frame of theatricality is advantageous because it allows the cultural economy of stand-up comedy to align with the cultural economy of the theatre. The overlapping of location allows stand-up comedy to borrow the theatre’s expectations regarding audience etiquette, audience participation, ticket prices, and performance length.

Furthermore, performances of stand-up comedy that use the frame of theatricality can professionalize and institutionalize stand-up comedy, which contributes to stand-up comedy being elevated socially as it is regarded as an art form. Ultimately, while the occasional overlap in location can cause stand-up comedy and comedic theatrical solo performance to be viewed as interchangeable, the difference between the two is based on the elements that

construct the frame of theatricality. Therefore, the difference between stand-up comedy and theatrical comedic solo performance is in practice, despite similarities in their venues, their use of a single performer on stage speaking to an audience, and their aims to make audiences laugh.

2.6.1 Connection between Comedy and Solo Performance

The practical connection between the two is the use of language. The Nigerian Pidgin is frequently used when performing and today, the use of NP has pervaded all aspects of the traditional, political and socioeconomic life of Nigeria. Majority of Nigerians knows how to speak or understand NP. Hence, it has come to be the unofficial language of commercials, showbiz, music, literature, comedy and other forms of information projected for utilization and use by the masses.

One of the major approaches Nigerian stand-up comedians use to capture their audiences in humour creation and amusement is the use of Nigerian Pidgin. They mostly perform in Nigerian Pidgin because they realize that executing in Standard British English would decrease the subversive and liberating effects the size of their audience and make the jokes mechanical. The choice of NP by most of these comedians who are university degree graduates is seen “additionally as an affinitive resource, an index of a desire to speak with, rather than to their audiences” (Adetunji 3). For instance, “I Go Dye” caricatures the bias of Nigerian females’ exaggerated and synthetic make-up, predicting his argument on a premise for which he seeks out the audience’s agreement: Nigerian women are greater liars than Nigerian men. Additionally, experience has proven that guests at parties, whether formal, semi-formal, informal or personal, look forward to the slots of comedians for amusement and

refreshment for the sake of their rib cracking jokes. Worthy of mentioning here is that partying in Nigeria is an agenda for socialization and a valuable part of socio-political life in Nigeria that bisects the rural and metropolitan population.

MUSIC

Another level in which solo performances are used with NP is in the Nigerian music industry, particularly with the emergence of Nigerian Hip hop. None of the national languages in Nigeria has as much efficacy and power as NP in hip-hop. When Nigerian hip-hop artistes' lyrics move beyond Nigeria, NP gains more significance because non-Nigerians understand it better than they would understand Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa or any other Nigerian languages (Akande 12). The reason for this is that the vocabulary of NP is drawn largely from English. Moreover, many of the languages in Nigeria can go into extinction because they have restricted geographical spread and numerical strength, but NP, which has the widest geographical spread and highest numerical strength, is not likely to die soon. Edris Abdukareem (a Nigerian rap music star), African China and Daddy Showkey use music to move people into action against oppressive rules, bribery and corruption, looting of the nation's treasury, amongst other things. An example is Edris Abdukareem's "*Nigeria jagajaga, everything scatter scatter, poor man dey suffer suffer, Gbosa gbosa, Gunshot I dey hear*" An extract from Edris' song (Olatunji 2009)

POETRY

Another level in which solo performances are used with NP with regard to Nigerian poetry is the emergence of literary writers like Wole Soyinka, JP Clark, Cyprain Ekwensi and other literary writers. Ezenwa-ohaeto attests that

Nigerian Pidgin sustains the works of literature and at the same time is a language that bridges orality; absorbs several cultural elements as it communicates, gives the Nigerian writer the ability to speak with the knowledge of an insider as well as making the writer a real nationalist (69).

Chinua Achebe, Cyprian Ekwensi and Wole Soyinka argue that NP is used for humour as well as for character portrayal and can also be employed to explore deeper meanings, to explain the reasons behind a character's actions, and to project and foreground certain themes that are central to the plays concerned. For example, *The Trials of Brother Jero* and *Jero's Metamorphosis* illustrate the stylistic effect of NP in Soyinka's writing. In writing a sizeable portion of plays in NP, Soyinka raises the language beyond the level of usual decorative functions and recognizes it as a crucial element of the play. For Soyinka, "NP is no longer animal babble. He has discovered its full potential and now even those who do not understand the language are shown to be missing a lot" (20).

Sometimes, Soyinka's prose style in NP is used satirically to demonstrate the social class of a character. Interestingly, Soyinka also writes songs in NP performed by musicians with the goal of satirizing a then Nigeria's Head of State for his wasteful spending, his failed

manifestoes, and the crooked practices of his government amidst the protest of a typical Nigerian ordinary civilian.

PROVERBS

Proverbs are sayings that contain treasures of traditional wisdom which are passed from generation to generation. They reflect practical knowledge, profound thinking and truth gained through experience which reflect people's way of life and are deeply rooted in the people's cultural tradition.

The use of NP in proverbs and tales no doubt is a vital ingredient and tool because it injects humour into the proverbs alongside the lessons to be learnt from it. For example, "Who dash monkey banana?" (There are no free lunches or freebies) and "Wetin concern fish with raincoat" (What has the fish got to do with raincoat) are examples that demonstrate that saying in proverbs enables speakers to succinctly communicate a lot of vital and valuable information. The neutrality, flexibility and simplicity of NP cut across various performances both comedy and solo performances.

2.6.2 The Development of Stand-up Comedies in Nigeria

Stand-up comedies have existed in Nigeria from time immemorial in the form of village spokesmen, especially at ceremonial occasions. They usually add colour to social occasions to the admiration of those gathered for such events. Some people show appreciation by giving such spokesmen 'dash' money. Sometimes, they solicit for such 'dash money', threatening not to talk again, unless somebody 'opened' their mouths. Their performances

are so recognized that people ‘charter’ them for their events. The absence of such village MCs in ceremonies weakens the programs, as people would not be entertained with rib-cracking jokes.

Radio and television as forms of electronic broadcasting also contribute to the development of contemporary stand-up comedy in Nigeria. Here, the popular Mazi Mperempe programme on Radio Nigeria and the old Anambra State Television, Enugu, in the ‘70s and ‘80s readily come to mind. This was a 30-minute programme featuring Mazi Mperempe telling various rib-cracking jokes. He always started with his call-and-response slogan: “Oluo n’omume... onye agbana oso!” Translated literally, it means, “The time for action has arrived... nobody should run away!” Amor Dan recalls that it was the business of Mazi Mperempe to be “as funny as possible physically, without the help or hindrance of words.” He states that he could

look vague like a sit-tight dictator, smile like a deceitful angel who uses God as an excuse to perpetuate a hidden agenda, roll up his eyes, lace his fingers, thrust his hands palms downward as far as they would go, hunch his shoulders, rise on tiptoe, prance ecstatically in narrowing circles until, with tallow knees, he sank down the vortex of his dizziness to the floor, and there, signified nirvana by kicking his heels twice, like a swimming frog (1).

However, comedy did not become serious business until Alleluyia Atunyota Akporobomeri, alias Ali Baba, a 1990 graduate of Religious Studies/Philosophy from the,

then, Bendel State University (but now Ambrose Alli University), Ekpoma, came on the scene. He had done his first show in 1988 at the pavilion of the, then, Bendel State University, Ekpoma, for a paltry fee of fifty naira only (Umukoro 4). Ali Baba dared the odds of negative public perceptions to have a breakthrough in comedy. He has, since, dimmed the impressive record of his precursors, such as the late John Chukwu (JC), Tony St. Iyke, and much later, Jude Away, who were good, great men that were into stand-up comedy, but did not take it to the level Ali Baba has done. Nwanne Chuks informs that by 1998, Ali had already registered a company, 'Ali Baba Hiccupurathird'. That year, he erected three billboards in strategic locations in Lagos: Ozumba Mbadiwe Street, Victoria Island; Osborne Road, Ikoyi and Marina, and was paying N150, 000 for each billboard per year. The billboards carried a simple message: "Ali Baba – Being Funny is Serious Business" and it signaled the transformation in the business of stand-up comedy in the country (1).

Ali Baba had featured on Charly Boy Show, Friday Night Live, and Night Train with Bisi Olatilo, on the network service of Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) programs. This made him popular with viewers. The highpoint of his career was when Guinness Brewer launched Satzenbrau beer in Nigeria and embarked on nationwide tour with Ali Baba: This contract put the first N1.5million in his hands (Nwanne 3). Ali Baba recalled that "The appreciation level then was very low or non-existent because a comedian was last on the list of an event planner and the first to go if they decided to cut cost." As it were, the King of Comedy has maintained his status as a front-liner in the comedy business, not bothered by the number of up-coming comedians. He has not retired because of the need to put adequate structures on ground. His vision then was to put in place an institution that "will regulate,

promote and punish erring comedians, and help to improve creativity.” It is, thus, Ali Baba’s desire to ensure that there is reward for hard-work in the industry, including the setting up of a 24 hour Comedy TV channel, as a platform to promote and encourage comedians. This is all in a bid to justify his promotional catchphrase: “Ali Baba – Being Funny is Serious Business.” But it is not serious business as far as his children are concerned because, according to Nwanne,

They think that I don’t have a job; they say it all the time. For them, it’s their mum that goes to work. They say things like, “You just sit down there, watching TV. In the evening, you wear your suit and say you are going to work. What kind of work are you going to when people are coming home?” But in all, I’m really happy with nearly everything that happens in my life (6).

Today, it is generally agreed that Ali Baba gave comedy “the beautiful face” it wears in Nigeria. He became the first comedian to be well paid in the country, driving a Monster Truck, with a personalized plate number, “Ali Baba 1,” and a Dodge Ram, acquired as showbiz apparatus, registered as “Ali Baba 2” (Nwanne 2).

Odutola Abiola observes rightly that stand-up comedy, once regarded as a pastime of the unserious and the uneducated, has transformed into a big business, turning its practitioners into millionaires and throwing up a huge industry with several direct employment opportunities and support services. Embarsy Lounge, an upscale ultra-modern discotheque,

bar and lounge, has become the toast of fun-loving Nigerians. Shortly after it started business, it became the choice fun spot for entertainment artists, partly due to its vantage location near Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH) and University of Lagos (UNILAG), and partly because it is owned by Bright Okpocha, popularly called Basketmouth. Nigerians, young and old, throng the multi-million naira lounge/bar daily to unwind with choice drinks and be treated to good music and, on special days, performances by established and up-coming comedians. According to Odutola, “The dreadlocks-wearing comedian from Abia State is believed to have invested several millions of naira in it” (8)

Basketmouth also owns Barons World Entertainment Limited, an Events Consulting and Management Company based in Surulere, Lagos. The company, which has been in operation since 2006, has provided gainful employment for close to 15 persons, but employs up to 100 ad hoc staff during special events. He also hosts “Laffs ‘n’ Jamz,” a comedy show that has so far recorded more than 48 editions, over a four-year period, thus, becoming a veritable platform for grooming comedians and musicians. He feels it is his responsibility to create various means whereby people who have talents in comedy, music, or even poetry, can express themselves better. Basketmouth, who is, today, arguably, one of Nigeria’s biggest comedy brands, has an endorsement with Globacom, Nigeria’s telecoms giant, a deal that makes him one of Glo’s ambassadors, fetching him about N70million (Odutola 1).

It is said that for accepting to be a master of ceremony for an event, Basketmouth charges between N700, 000 and N1million, depending on the client (Odutola 1). Yet, the business exploits of the University of Benin graduate of Sociology/Anthropology are not limited to the local scene alone. He has since become a major export, entertaining foreign audiences

and earning huge foreign exchange in the process. For instance, he recently hosted his “Nigerian Kings of Comedy” show at Indigo, Peninsula Square, London, and Birdcage Withy Groove, Manchester, United Kingdom. He has also performed in Vienna, Austria, among other countries across the globe. Tickets for these events go for between N6, 200 and about N18, 500. Only recently, Basketmouth made history as he was contacted to host ‘Comedy Central Presents’ a television comedy show, on Wednesday, 24th April, 2013, live at Parker’s in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Basketmouth is not the only stand-up comedian in the exclusive club of brand ambassadors earning double-digit money from endorsements. Ayo Makun (AY) also signed an endorsement, worth N60million, with Haven Homes, a Nigerian real estate developer and another deal with Coleman Wire and Cables Nigeria, manufacturers of wires and cables (Odutola 2). His Corporate World Entertainment, an outfit that packages events and provides contents for radio and television, powers “AY Live,” his comedy and music concert; “AY Show,” a television programmer; and the “Open Mic Challenge,” a monthly talent-hunt programmer. The Open Mic Challenge, which holds every third Sunday of the month at the National Theatre, Iganmu-Lagos, and later at The Marquee of Federal Palace Hotels and Casinos, Lagos, has since produced many notable comedy brands.

AY, who gained fame by mimicking Rev. Chris Okotie, Pastor of Household of God Church, Lagos, has positioned AY Live among one of the best in the country. For instance, in 2007, the second edition of AY Live, “Lagos Invasion,” held Lagos audiences spell-bound, drawing a record crowd that forced him to do two shows, instead of one (Odutola 2). Two years later, a similar feat was re-enacted in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, for AY

Live, “Abuja Invasion.” Today, the show by the multi-talented humour merchant, a 2003 Theatre Arts graduate of Delta State University, Abraka, still ranks as Abuja’s most attended entertainment event. The show won the Best Television Comedy Show in 2008 and is broadcast on Africa Magic and Nigerian Television Authority International (NTAi). It is arguably one of the most attended annual concerts in Nigeria and London. In Nigeria, for example, tickets for most of the shows range from N5, 000 (Regular), N20,000 (VIP), and N400,000 (Table for eight persons).

AY and Basketmouth are just two out of several stand-up comedians who have carved a niche for themselves in the booming comedy industry. Apart from veteran stand-up comedians such as Tunde Adewale, aka Tee A, Gbenga Adeyinka, aka, ‘CFR’ (Comedian of the Federal Republic), Okechukwu Onyegbule (Okey Bakassi), and Julius Agwu, aka Julius ‘D Genius’ Agwu, a new crop of young talents has since emerged and this crop is creatively taking the comedy industry to the next level. Some of them include Teju Oyelakin, aka Teju Babyface, Bosede Ogunboye, popularly known as Lepacious Bose, Idowu Nuel, aka Koffi, Francis Agoda, aka I Go Dye, Godwin Komone, aka Gordons (who was a member of DC Envoys, a Gospel Acapella group), Mike Ogbolosingha, Omo Baba, MC Shakara, Elenu, I Go Save, Gandoki, Emeka Smith, Bovi Ugboma, simply called, Bovi, MC Basketmouth, and Seyi Law, to mention this number.

Financial rewards from numerous international engagements, as well as revenues from ticket sales for shows, sale of comedy CDs, events and endorsements, have kept many of these comedians on their toes as some of them continue to device other means of increasing their revenue. For instance, Bovi, a Theatre Arts graduate of Delta State University, combines

stand-up comedy with scriptwriting and other activities. The fact that he became an instant hit barely three years after becoming a humour merchant is an indication that he has made a commercial success of his career as an entertainer. Bovi's hilarious and popular television sitcoms, the "Extended Family", and the "Bovi Ugboma Show" enjoy huge following. The Bovi Ugboma Show alone, with cast and crew of between 20 to 25 persons, has become a must-watch on Africa Magic and MyTV Africa. The young and hardworking comedian, who cut his teeth in the comedy industry, as Personal Assistant to Richard Mofe-Damijo (RMD) and understudied Basketmouth from 2005 to 2008, says the secret of his success is consistency, as one show cannot propel a comedian to the top (Odutola 3).

2.6.3 Interface of Stand-up Comedy and Nigerian Pidgin

A major factor, among others, that brought travelling theatre to disrepute in Nigeria was the language of production. The Alarinjo, for instance, mainly employed the Yoruba language and English. It was regionalized and could not reach a wider audience. Oct. 1st, 1995 marked a turning point in the theatre industry with the display of *Night of a Thousand Laughs* comedy show by Williams Opa in Lagos. The show featured many comedians who communicated their comic dexterities in Nigerian Pidgin. The language used was accessible to the audience regardless of its social status. In fact, the recorded version of the show on VCDs sold at a blockbuster. Different comedy concerts by different comedians have, since then, been staged, and all have been witnessing a large turnout. The AY live show, Bovi comedy, Akpos and Akpororo comedies are few examples. These new comedians have developed stand-up comedy to a professional business enterprise. They have also incorporated music and acting into it. Whenever a comedian speaks his joke in Standard

English, no matter the type of histrionics or gesticulations accompanying it, laughter is not induced, or where present, very minimal. But when such joke is spoken in Pidgin, even with little gesticulation and histrionics, it turns out to be a laughter galore. For example, Gandoki lampoons the Nigerian police force in this joke: *One day na im I see dis mad man dey mimick officers wey dey do parade, the commander see am an con ass am if he go join police? See how de man vex ansa am, (histrionics inserted) I dey crase wey I go join police?* (comedy in excess, vol. 1). The excerpt if said in English may not have induced laughter. Let us consider this transcription: “I saw a mad man mimicking police officers on parade, the commander saw him and asked if he would like to join the police force? The mad man got angry, and said to the commander, am I crazy that I would join police force?”

2.7 Nigerian Pidgin

Many scholars have tried to define pidgin based on its origin, use and status. Thus, pidgin has been defined in various ways by different scholars. La Page states that, “A Pidgin is a combination of two or more languages which sometimes occurs in trade contact, multi-ethnic or refugee situations, where participants need a functioning common language” (1). In describing Pidgin, Elugbe and Omamor posit that, by definition, “Pidgin is assumed to be some kind of a marginal language that arises to fulfill specific communication needs in well-defined circumstances” (45). Edward sees pidgin as “A baby talk and rather superficial repetition associated with trade communication” (42). He asserts that this definition is as a result of the fact that the word has Portuguese origin. He first traced this Portuguese word, “Ocupacao”, which means business or “Pequeno”, baby talk” or simply ‘baby’. Hymes however disproves the assertion that Pidgin is baby talk. He emphasizes that “Pidgin and

creoles are real languages not baby talk, they are used for serious purposes” (81). Todd on his part sees pidgin functionally as “A marginal language which arises to fulfill certain restricted communication needs among people who have no common language” (1). From this original modest outset of pidgin, it develops into an extended type, characterized by the extension of the social functions of pidgin. One of such situations is where it is used as a means of communication not just among black and white speakers but among native speakers themselves who however have different native languages. This is the major reason for the survival of Nigerian Pidgin in West Africa. De Camp describes Pidgin as an incidental communicative language within a multilingual setting which “is the native language of nobody.” Its vocabulary, according to Camp, is donated by the sociopolitical dominant language “in the original contact situation, most especially, with the European imperialists” (175). He also claims that Pidgin “functions only as an auxiliary contact language” used in trading or any situation requiring communication between persons who do not speak each other’s languages.

The different opinions above show that Pidgin is an auxiliary language that develops when people speaking different languages are brought together and forced to develop a common means of communication without sufficient time to learn each other’s native language properly. In the words of Wardhaugh, “A pidgin is a language with no native speakers; it is one’s first language but is a contact language” (57). Wardhaugh explains that pidgin is a product of a multilingual situation in which those who wish to communicate must find or improvise a simple language system that will enable them to do so. He points out that the development of Pidgin usually requires a situation that involves at least three or more

languages, one of which is clearly dominant over the others. Direct struggle for dominance is usually the case when only two languages are involved but when three or more languages are involved and one is dominant, the speakers of other languages that are inferior play a critical role in the development of a pidgin. They do not speak only to those who are in the dominant position but also to each other. In so doing they simplify the dominant language in certain ways. The dominant language usually contributes most of the vocabulary of the Pidgin; this is called the “superstate language”, while the other languages that contribute to the Pidgin are called “substrate languages”. Based on this, Wardhaugh argues that Pidgin arises from a simplification of a language when that language comes to dominate groups of speakers separated from each other by language differences. According to him, the above explains firstly the origin of Pidgin in slave societies comprising slaves deliberately drawn from variety of language backgrounds. Secondly, its origin on sea coasts where a variety of languages might be spoken but the trade language is Pidgin; thirdly, it explains why Pidginized varieties of languages are used much more as Lingua Franca by people who cannot speak the corresponding standard languages (102).

Three issues are prominent in the foregoing - Pidgin is a trade language, it is a simplified language and, according to Akamajian, Ann and Richard, Pidgin has a reduced vocabulary and grammatical structure (27). Finch Max observes that “It is an auxiliary language which arises to fulfill certain limited communication needs among people who have no common language” (229). Onuigbo and Eyisi hold the view that, “sometimes, Pidgin is also described as “Broken Language” probably because of its simplified structured and reduced grammar”

(115). However, Jowitt draws a clear cut distinction between “broken” and Pidgin when he writes:

Pidgin and ‘Broken English are not at all the same thing. Language may be defined as a ‘broken’ variety when it shows extreme deviation from the standard norm, especially in syntax. ‘Broken English’ is a highly deviant... it is the language of learners, or users, who have reached only a low level of proficiency, and its syntax tends to be idiosyncratic. Pidgin, on the other hand, has a standardized syntax (54)

Unlike pidgin, Wardhaugh says that “A creole is often defined as a Pidgin that has become the first language of a new generation of speakers” (59). Creoles often result when the children of speakers of Pidgin develop them into complete languages with larger vocabularies and more complex grammatical systems. In defining creole, Crystal writes that it is a contact language, often a Pidgin, which has become the mother tongue of a community – a definition which, according to him, emphasizes that

Pidgin and creoles are two stages in a single process of linguistic development; first within a community, increasing numbers of people begin to use pidgin as their principal means of communication. Consequently, their

children hear it more than any other language, and gradually, it takes the status of a mother tongue for them (346).

Taylor on his part writes that when a Pidgin develops beyond its role as a trade language and becomes the first language of a social community, it is described as a Creole. Holmes sees a Creole as “A Pidgin which has expanded in structure and vocabulary to express the range of meanings and serve the range of functions required of a first language” (6). Some of the West African Pidgins like the Nigerian Pidgin can serve as Pidgin as well as Creoles. When a Pidgin becomes a native language for some of its speakers, it is said to have become a Creole. This means that Creole is a language which has passed through a Pidgin stage and has now become the language of a community. Children growing up in that community speak creole as their native language. A Creole develops as the first language of the children of Pidgin speakers. When Pidgin which has become the mother tongue of the people consolidates and develops to the extent that it is being used in all functional settings by generations, it ceases from being a Pidgin to Creole. ‘Tok Pisin’ (which comes from the English words “talk pidgin”) is the variety of Melanesiana Pidgin English in Papua New Guinea and surrounding Islands. It began as a Pidgin but developed into a Creole.

However, Pidgin in different countries varies: NP as spoken in the areas around Warri and Sapele has acquired that one feature that makes a Pidgin a ‘creole’, rather than a ‘Pidgin’. The linguistic diversity of the substrate situation ensures that there will be different dialects of NP, even if they are all mutually intelligible. Every speaker of a Pidgin necessarily has

another language, his ‘native language’, at least, that he is equally proficient in. NP is not restricted exclusively to any particular class or group, or to any specific social settings.

Agheyisi describes typical speakers of NP as

...the majority of people who have little or no formal education. She goes on to define this group as ...generally made up of unskilled laborers in government projects or agencies, such as the public workers department: petty traders, store keepers, market women, taxi and lorry drivers (30).

Obilade describes typical speakers of NP in essentially the same terms as Agheyisi when he describes the language as “...restricted almost exclusively to the less privileged or those who consider themselves underlings for the purpose of particular occasions” (55). Elugbe and Omamor insist that a clear distinction be drawn between NP and ‘Broke English’, which results from inadequate mastery of English. They conclude that

- I. NP as a language is generally associated with specific areas in Nigeria where it is in fact the ‘first language’ of the bulk of those aged about 40-45 and above
- II. The speakers of NP referred to in (i) above cut across all social classes and backgrounds; and
- III. They do not usually see NP as a special kind of tool for fighting any kind of battle, whether psychological or socio-economic. It just happens to be the one language with which they feel most comfortable in informal conversation (55).

Variation in Nigerian Pidgin

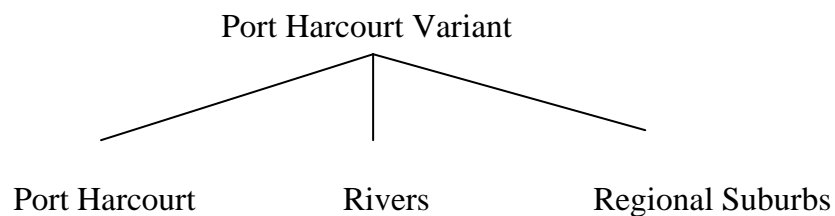
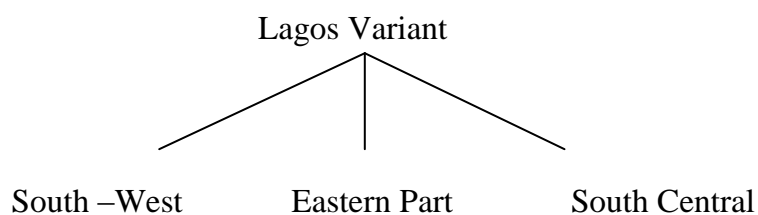
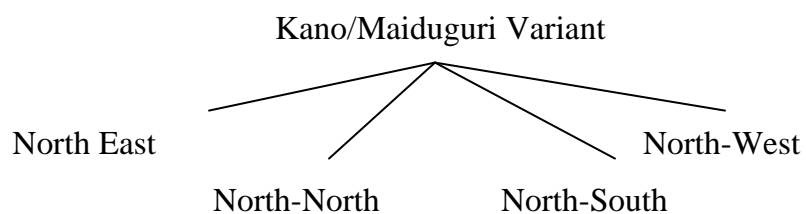
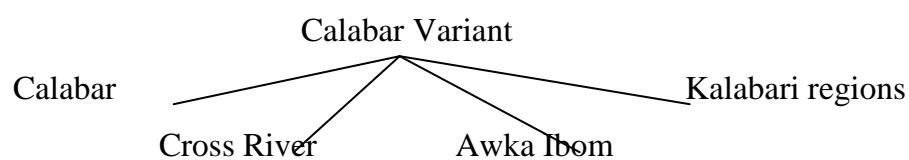
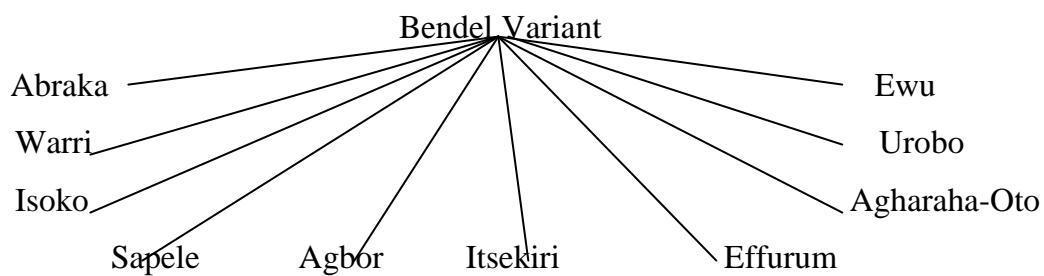
The language we daily use is remarkably varied. A close look at any language shows that there is considerable internal variation and speakers make constant use of many different possibilities offered to them. Wardhaugh opines that “Languages vary according to region, educational and social standing, subject matter, medium, attitude and interference” (149).

Linguistic variation is central to the study of language use. According to him,

Variation in language use among speakers or groups is a notable criterion or change that may occur in pronunciation (accent), word choice (lexicon) or even preferences for particular grammatical patterns (1).

Variability is inherent in human language. In fact, human beings speak different linguistic forms on different occasions and different speakers of a language express the same meanings using different forms. The variation is highly systematic in the sense that speakers of a language make choices in pronunciation, morphology, word choice and grammar depending on a number of non-linguistic factors. Hymes explains that some of these factors include the speaker’s purpose in communication, the relationship between speaker and hearer, the production, circumstances and various demographic affiliations that a speaker can have. Language is dynamic and it varies with the passage of time. Commenting on the linguistic variation of the Nigerian Pidgin, Idiagbon says that Obiechina, Elugbe and Egboka are unanimous in their opinion that the Nigerian Pidgin came into Nigeria through the coast and that different pidgin variants have been noticed in Nigeria. He considers Obiechina’s version of the linguistic variation because the meticulousness of the writer in compartmentalization of Nigerian Pidgin into variants is exhaustive and critical. Below is a diagram which

summarizes Obiechina's classification of the Nigerian Pidgin: the variants identified are five, namely: Bendel, Calabar, Lagos, Kano/Maiduguri and Port Harcourt Variants.



A variant is characterized by a preponderant influence of its substrate language on that variant. A variant also popularizes vocabularies from a substrata language including their pronunciation, spellings, usage, and meaning beyond the territory of the original speakers. Many factors are responsible for the linguistic variation inherent in the Nigerian Pidgin. Explaining the factors that influence linguistic behaviour, Agheyisi states that

Sociolinguistic variables like set, status, literacy level, exposure, setting, idiosyncrasies and sociocultural values, and how they influence the linguistic behavior like within the scope of sociolinguistics (112).

As people from different language backgrounds bring in certain linguistic items from their languages and join them to the pidgin they speak, this gives rise to linguistic variation in Nigeria. However, this work centers on Speech Acts and Conversational implicata found in the language of these comedians in carrying out comedy not on its variation. Therefore, the data analysis revolves around Speech Acts and Conversational implicata.

2.8 A Post-Colonial Overview of Pidgin Use in Stand-up Comedy

According to Ashcroft Bill, there are three main linguistic groups within post-colonial discourse:

Monoglossic, the first group, are those single language societies that use the English language as a native tongue. They correspond generally to settled colonies though they remain un-uniform and un-standard in speech. The second group is Diglossic. They are those societies in

which a majority of people speak two or more languages. English is generally adopted as the language of government and commerce and its use demonstrates some of the more pronounced forms of language variance. Polyglossic or polydialectics is the third group. This community occurs principally where a multitude of dialects interweave to form a generally comprehensible linguistic continuum (40).

Nigerian English falls in the diglossic category, while the Nigerian Pidgin falls in the polyglossic category. Therefore, the Nigerian Pidgin is a syncretic post-colonial model of distancing from the cultural essentialist view of the English Language as the only standard language in the colonies. It is a norm to refer to any language developed from English in any British former colonies as non-standard. Creole and Pidgin fall in this non-standard category. Therefore, once the English language has come to be regarded as the tool with which a “world” can be textually constructed, the post-colonial users therefore find a way of abrogating it. By the word abrogation, it means the rejection by post-colonial writers of a normative concept of correct or Standard English used by groups in colonies, correspondence of inferior dialects or marginal variants (Ashcroft 3). Abrogation leads to the construction, separation and almost an absence from the British metropolitan norm.

Therefore, the formation and popularization of Pidgin is an abrogation of the essentialist assumptions and dismantling of the imperialist centralism norm on the English language. Most of the literature works in Nigerian Pidgin produced in Onitsha market are good abrogation works. In fact, Achebe’s choice of English could also be regarded as an abrogation. Abrogation doesn’t stop at language rejection alone, it has also incorporated a

great range of rejection in culture, politics, mode of thought, and argument in what is to be known as appropriation. The rejection of gay marriage, lesbianism, and marriage to animals in Nigeria as a former colony is a clear one against the western standard hegemonic norms. The models of abrogation, appropriation and agency in post-colonial setting could now open door for a redefining practice in a different way, but Nigeria's mode of governance exclusive.

Not only did Williams and the Comedians deviate from stage direction and content, but they also changed the language of communication from the high Standard English to the low Nigerian Pidgin. The fusion of the society and the self is achieved here in the wisdom of the comedians to know what the audiences want. For Louis Lacan, there is no separation between the self and society. Humans to him become social with the appropriation of language (201). Once established that it is language that constitutes human being as society, this idea could also account for how Pidgin has influenced stand-up comedy. Nigerian Pidgin is a unique product of the Nigerian society. Nigerian Pidgin is the only worthy result that British - Nigeria contact has produced. Hence, Pidgin is a post-colonial language of abrogation, appropriation, which has influenced the revival of theatre arts practices in Nigeria, and popularized stand-up comedy to a point of economic success.

2.9 Empirical Studies

The researcher observed that nothing has been done on the pragmatic analysis of Nigerian Pidgin in the comedies of comedians in Nigeria. However, there are studies done on implicata and Nigerian Pidgin. For instance, Bouton explores how L2 learners come to appropriately comprehend implicatures. Bouton focuses on the effects of different types of

instructions on L2 learners' comprehension of implicatures. He examines learners' comprehension and production of conversational implicatures and identifies some potential factors affecting L2 learners' understanding of implicatures, including cultural background, conventionality, the degree of formulae in implicatures, L2 learners' length of exposure to the target context, and L2 learners' general proficiency in the target language (94). Bouton maintains that the comprehension of implicatures is mediated by the implicatures type, that is, implicatures which are more conventional and less formulaic are easier to comprehend. In contrast, less conventional and more formulaic implicatures require that L2 learners invest more processing effort and time to infer the intended meaning. Secondly, he examines the differential effectiveness of the prevalent distinctive paths (synchronous and asynchronous) of computer-mediated technology through which the implicatures instruction could take place. The results of the study show that pragmatic comprehension of all three groups of the participants improved during the instructional period as a result of pragmatic instruction, demonstrated that L2 pragmatic competence is amenable to formal instruction.

Akande and Salami conducted a study that reports and analyses attitudes to, and use of, Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) among students. The researchers conducted the study in two different universities, namely: University of Benin and University of Lagos. The specific objectives of the study were to find out the degree of NPE usage among the students of the tertiary institutions, and also to account for the student's attitudes towards the NPE. The researchers used a sample of 100 students, which were purposively selected from the two schools identified. Data were gathered through questionnaire. After an analysis of the data, it revealed that the attitude of students from the University of Benin was more favourable

compared to that of the students in University of Lagos. This shows that the NPE vitality is higher among the University of Benin students.

Shujairi looks at the “Attitude of Nigerian Pidgin English among Nigerian Students”. The researcher conducted the study using Nigerian postgraduate students of the University of Malaysia whose average age ranges from 35 years to above. The researcher used questionnaire in an attempt to elicit the attitudes and usage of the informants to NPE. The findings demonstrated that the percentage of Nigerian students who use NPE in day to day interactions is obviously high. More significantly, the attitude on Nigerian Postgraduate students in Malaysia regarding Nigerian Pidgin English is considerably positive. This may have resulted from the fact that Pidgin does not belong to any particular region among various regions in Nigeria, which facilitates its acceptability as a lingua franca of all. Hence, this empowers unity among Nigerians in diaspora. It was deduced that Pidgin is not only peculiar to non-literate individuals, but also practicable by educated elites. Therefore, students as literates are not excluded, as the result reveals that the use of Pidgin is highly accepted, despite student’s interaction with their lecturers and the other international students is in Standard English.

Ummulkhairi, Hassan conducted a research on “The Impact of Pidgin English on Students Competence in a Nigerian University”. He confirmed that the use of Pidgin as a lingua franca leads many students to use inappropriate words and shifting of meaning, including coinage, in Nigerian languages. These words cannot be defined by students as whether they are in a dictionary or not, whether the words have the meaning imposed on them or not. His findings revealed that too much use of Pidgin English among educated Nigerians affects their use of

Standard English in communicative competence because, based on the interview conducted with them, educated Nigerians cannot use purely Standard English without the influence of the Nigerian Pidgin in collocation coinage, shift and extension of meaning of words. Thus Nigerian Pidgin affects teaching and learning of correct English to a greater extent. He also observed that many of the students do not understand that the English Language is distinctly different from Nigerian Pidgin. They do not know that the grammar and vocabulary of the Pidgin are foreign and unacceptable to English. This set of students is fooled by the English Language vocabulary they use in Nigerian Pidgin to assume that the two languages are the same. He also discovered that this ignorance makes students loan Nigerian Pidgin vocabulary to the English language. As a result of the ignorance, many students impose the grammatical structure of the former on the latter in their written English. These have grave effects on their performance in English language examinations. Nigerian Pidgin is a formidable and unassailable indigenous language in Nigeria. The co-existence of the English language and Pidgin is an educational problem in Nigeria. The negative impact of the co-existence of the two languages exerts some considerable negative effects on the effective learning of English. The ignorance of some students about the distinct features of the two languages has a grave implication on the learning of the English language in the country.

A research was also conducted by Emachi Oluchi of the Department of English Language, Enugu State University on “Communicative Qualities of Nigerian Pidgin”. The research looked on the effects of NP on the university students’ academic performance. It also assessed the use of NP in its various forms via questionnaire. The questionnaire showed that the respondents speak NP, and its use plays an important role in effective communication

among students. Its instrument also revealed that the majority of the respondents accepted that NP should be made a National Language in Nigeria.

Ailende, Ativie also carried out a research on “Cultural Influences as Inputs of Development of Nigerian Pidgin”. The work describes the burgeoning sociolinguistic situation of the Pidgin Language. The work describes the inherent semantic and pragmatic usage of the substrate influences. The paper concludes that NP is not only communicative, but also constitutes a total cultural experience in Nigerian Social Milieu.

“Lexicalization of Nigerian Pidgin” is the title of a research conducted by Eyo, Offiong Mensah of the University of Calabar. This work discusses ‘The Phenomenon of Lexicalization in Nigerian Pidgin as a Veritable Medium of Multi Ethnic Communication in Nigeria’. The research discovers that the need to fulfil the enormous communicative demands placed upon Nigerian Pidgin as a developing language motivates the enrichment of its internal resources through borrowing, reduplicating, calquing, metaphor, metaphorical extension, and acronyms. It considers the continued relevance of NP as a medium of discourse in Nigeria in the wake of the country’s language policy, and proffers the implementation of a robust and explicit policy framework to protect and re-energize NP to continually meet its challenges and chart new courses in different multifunctional domains.

Akaruese, Christopher Olushola investigated the Syntax of Nigerian Pidgin with the title “An Analysis of Basic Nigerian Pidgin Syntax” in 2006. The study combined field research with samples drawn from recording of conversations, jingles, advertisement, and library research. The researcher observed that NP has limited vocabulary drawn from English lexifier. It was also observed that NP has a system that can be described to be coherent just like the English

language or any other languages. The investigation showed NP has a reduced syntax, multifunctionality, polysemy and can be classified into categories of different types, namely – Noun, Pronoun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb, Conjunction, Preposition and Interjection. The researcher concluded that NP and English are so dissimilar and the familiarity with NP will neither help nor hinder the learning of English. He urged linguists to increase its communicative power and domain of use.

From the above empirical studies, it is observed that much work has been done on NP in different domains but none has been conducted on the pragmatic analysis of NP in comedy shows. Therefore, this work seeks to explore on it, looking at how these comedians use Nigerian Pidgin in comedy production and consumption.

3.0 Summary

In summary, the review of relevant scholarship was done under conceptual framework, and the key-words that helped in understanding this study were explained. Empirical studies were also done on Nigerian Pidgin. However, none of the various studies explored was based on the pragmatic analysis of Nigerian Pidgin in the comedy shows, the kind of speech act performed and the effect it has on their audiences. These were the obvious gap in scholarship and literature which the researcher has filled. Most stand-up comedians in Nigeria employ the use of Nigerian Pidgin while entertaining because they realize that performing in Standard British English would decrease the size of their audience and make the jokes mechanical. They believe that Nigerian Pidgin helps in creating the humorous effects they so desire and passing across the message better. That is why speech act theory is important in

the philosophy of language not only for having demonstrated the wide range of meaningful uses of language, but also for yielding insight into fundamental issues such as the distinction between speaker meaning and conventional meaning, the nature of reference and predication, the division between semantic and pragmatic (use-generated) aspects of communicated meaning, and the scope of linguistic knowledge. This research, therefore, opens a new vista in the literatures by examining implicatures and Speech Act in stand-up comedians, using the Nigeria scenario to discuss Basket Mouth, I Go Dye, Ali Baba and Bovi. Particularly, it is concerned with how NP is used to sway the audience towards an intended goal. It is therefore needful to explore how Searle's Speech Acts and Paul Grice's Conversational Implicature theory fit into the analysis of pragmatic theory.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The research adopted John Searle's "Speech Acts Theory" and Paul Herbert Grice's "Conversational Implicature Theory" as its theoretical approaches. Speech Acts Theory was originally propounded by John Langshaw Austin, a British philosopher of language, following his lecture, *'How to Do Things with Words'*, at the Harvard University in 1955. In 1969, the theory was expanded by an American philosopher, John Searle. The Speech Acts theory was designed to elucidate how utterances are used in relation to the speaker's and hearer's attitudes in communication. It is in this light that what is said by the speaker generates a persuasive effect on the hearer, that is, in effect, utterances bear the actions which the presenters intend them to accomplish. It is in this expanded work that Searle located the five classifications of illocutionary speech acts adopted as the basis for analysis in this work.

Speech Act pertains to an utterance which, in its appropriate circumstances, is used to perform an action. Austin asserts that "The issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action" (6). It is evident that Austin's Speech Acts theory is significant in generating several expositions and the possibilities of discourse on how language may be viewed from the different perspectives and fields in which they are expected to create effects at different levels. Nonetheless, Austin detaches Speech Acts from truth conditions (what he terms constatives) and rather chooses to consider the performatives in relating to words and the specific actions that they are intended to perform. Therefore, rather than considering whether

the words employed relate to the true situation or circumstances, Austin prefers to view how the words are adopted to create effect.

It is seen in Austin's discovery that certain conditions in speech acts must be obtained so as to fully appreciate the intention of the speaker. Austin refers to such conditions as the felicity conditions. In the view of Austin, there are four dimensions to the understanding of the felicity conditions which make a performative act an appropriate performance:

- ✚ There should be an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect.
- ✚ The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate.
- ✚ The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and completely.
- ✚ The procedure is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings (14).

Felicity conditions are emphatic about the context of the action which the speech recollects or points to. With this interpretation, there comes a clearer view of the three perspectives of the speech acts which reveal the process of appreciating how action is accomplished. These are the locutionary act, the illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act. The locutionary act is simply the statement that has been made, the illocutionary act points to the intention, while the perlocutionary act views the effect. The illocutionary act considers the context of speech performance, while the force that is generated in the feelings, thoughts and attitudes of the audience determines the effect, which is seen as the perlocutionary act.

Searle emphasizes the non-institutionalized meaning of speech acts as it basically captures the beliefs, intentions and purposes of utterances. Hse also identifies the four conditions

highlighted above are sometimes intertwined. Since the purpose which the speaker intends to accomplish could be deciphered in the utterance, the illocutionary acts are categorized so as to make clear specifications. It is on this basis that Searle gives a further breakdown of the rules which he categorizes into the five illocutionary speech acts: assertive, expressive, directives, commissive and declaratives. By implication, Searle's speech acts also touch on Austin's locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

Assertives recollect and affirm the belief of the speaker regarding the truth value of what is presented. For example, the sentence, the sky is blue, paints the picture of the felicity condition in what is affirmed as a universally accepted or widely known phenomenon. Expressives implicitly reflect the psychological or emotional state of the speaker. Such state often is revealed in the speaker's attitude to what is presented. Such emotions as joy, hope, sorrow, anger, etc are easily expressed in the expressive. Directives basically urge the listener to accomplish a given task or assignment. This may come in the form of commands, requests, pleas, suggestions, instructions or even challenges. Niazi and Gautam gave this example of directives: 'Don't be unpunctual' (207). So, we may have such other examples as: 'Be punctual' – 'You must be punctual', 'Let us have soup for lunch'. Commissives are utterances that indicate the speaker's willingness or commitment to accomplish a future action. Commissives can be identify with 'promise, pledge, refusal and threat. (Niazi and Gautam 207). Examples that capture commissives include: 'I will not tolerate his excuses any longer', 'I have to pay your arrears this week.' Declaratives are utterances which reveal to the listener a new development, discovery, change or new state that has to be upheld or accepted. Example: 'I hereby pronounce you husband and wife'. Another example may be

seen in any statement by the judge or magistrate in a court declaring an accused either guilty or discharged and acquitted.

One key aspect of language use that relates to speech acts is its specificity to context. The implication in observing this relatedness demonstrates that the effect of each speech act on the hearer may be deduced from the context of the communication. This agrees with Austin's view of language as involving the locution (the utterance), the illocution (the intended action), and the perlocution (the effect of what is said on the hearer). The locutionary act is simply the statement that has been made, the illocutionary act points to the intention while the perlocutionary act views the effect. The illocutionary act considers the context of speech performance while the force that is generated in the feelings, thoughts and attitudes of the audience determines the effect which is seen as the perlocutionary act. The effect does go with the literary meanings and how the audience perceives or receives it, the implicature of what is being said and the psychological effect on the listeners, the distinction between what is said by a speaker of a verbal utterance and what is implicated. What is implicated might be either conventional (that is, largely generated by the standing meaning of certain linguistic expressions, such as 'but' and 'moreover') or conversational (that is, dependent on the assumption that the speaker is following certain rational principles of conversational exchange). However, this work centers on Conversational Implicature.

The theory of Conversational implicature is attributed to Paul Herbert Grice, who observes that in conversations what is meant often goes beyond what is said and this additional meaning is inferred and predictable. Most of the body of Grice's work consist in an attempt

to clarify the intuitive difference between what is expressed literally in a sentence and what is merely suggested or hinted at by an utterance of the same string of words. According to Grice, the sum of what is said in a sentence and what is implicated in an utterance of the same sentence is called “the total signification of an utterance” (41).

Implicature itself is meant to cover a number of ways in which literally unsaid information can be conveyed. Grice proposes that participants in a communicative exchange are guided by a principle that determines the way in which language is used with maximum efficiency and effect to achieve rational communication. He calls it the Cooperative Principle which he states thus: make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. This cooperative principle is an umbrella term for nine components that guide how we communicate. These nine components are grouped together into four categories, called the Maxims of Conversation: the maxim of quality (truthfulness), the maxim of quantity (informativeness), the maxim of relation (relevance), and the maxim of manner (perspicuity).

The Maxims of Conversation

QUALITY:

1. Try to make your contribution one that is true.
2. Do not say what you believe to be false.
3. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

QUANTITY:

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).

2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

RELATION:

- 1 Be relevant

MANNER:

- 1 Be perspicuous.
- 2 Avoid obscurity of expression.
- 3 Avoid ambiguity.
- 4 Be brief.
- 5 Be orderly.

Grice also asserts that Conversational Implicature is calculable, that is, capable of being worked out on the basis of

- (i) the linguistically coded content of the utterance,
- (ii) the Cooperative Principle and its maxims,
- (iii) the linguistic and non-linguistic context of the utterance,
- (iv) background knowledge,
- (v) the assumption that (i)-(iv) are available to both participants of the exchange and they are both aware of this.

Conversational Implicature is non detachable from the utterance by a replacement of the words used with synonyms, that is, expressions with the same linguistically coded content generate identical conversational implicature when produced in the same context

1. Conversational implicature is cancellable, that is, it can be annulled by certain contexts without this giving rise to a contradiction;

2. Conversational implicature is nonconventional, that is, Conversational implicature is not carried by what is said, but by saying it;
3. Conversational implicature may be indeterminate.

Austin and Searle's speech act theory and Paul Grice's Conversational implicature theory are pivotal in this research as they pertain to how language is adopted and used by comedians in Nigeria to create laughter and entertain their audience. Therefore, this work seeks to explain the functional significance of the speech acts and implicature found in the Pidgin language of these comedians, as well as to examine their perlocutionary effects on the audience.

3.2 Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this work is organized in subsections: research design, population of the study, sampling and sampling techniques, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

3.3 Research Design

The data for this research were derived from the comedies used by the four selected comedians - Bovi, Basketmouth, I Go Dye and Ali Baba on YouTube and other Internet sources. It involved playing, and watching some of the comedies and selecting the most appropriate ones for this research work. The researcher looked at their use of NP and the perlocutionary effects they have on their audience using the five research questions as guide. The researcher therefore adopted the qualitative research method.

3.4 Population of the Study

The population of the study is made up of the selected stand-up comedians - Bovi, Basketmouth, I Go Dye and Ali Baba. These four stand-up comedians were selected because they are among the core leading comedians in Nigeria. The data comprises the selected comedies of the four stand-up comedians and divided into four samples representing each of the stand-up comedians.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Random samples were used for the online comedies of the four selected stand-up comedians on YouTube and other Internet sources. It was purposively sampled and only the comedies that were relevant to this work were selected. The sampling procedure involved playing, and watching some of the comedies and selecting the most appropriate ones for this research work. The samples were numbered for easy identification and used to answer the research questions.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The data collected were downloaded from the YouTube and transcribed into texts. Only the comedies that were relevant for this work were selected from each comedian for data analysis using the research questions as guide.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The method of data analysis is descriptive. The data obtained from YouTube were used to apply John Searle's Speech Act theory and Paul Grice's Conversational implicature. The transcribed utterances were numbered for identification and analysis. Each sentence (utterance) tagged 'sample' was analyzed by stating the direct illocutionary and perlocutionary act(s) it performs. The next stage focused on Conversational Implicature. This was done to look at the hidden meanings behind the comedies, besides entertainment purposes and some of the pragmatic strategies employed by these comedians in carrying out their comedies.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Data Analysis

This chapter presents and analyses the selected comedies of Basketmouth, Ali Baba, Bovi and I Go Dye using Searle's Speech Act Theory and Grice's Conversational Implicature Theory. First, the selected comedies downloaded from YouTube were analysed stating the illocutionary act(s) they perform. Next, the conversational implicata were applied to know the hidden meanings of these comedies and the perlocutionary effects they have on an audience, not just for entertainment purposes alone. Finally, some of the pragmatic strategies employed by these comedians in carrying out comedy were analyzed. The comedies extracted from the selected comedians are tagged "sample" and are presented in "italics" for proper identifications. However, this is achieved using the research questions as guide.

4.1 Speech Acts Analysis

The analysis of data employed the following selected comedies to examine how Searle's five-fold classifications of the illocutionary speech were realized in the comedies. Therefore the analysis was subdivided into speech act classifications – assertive, commissives, directives, expressives and declaratives. The analysis involved eliciting the components of language which placed each comedy of the comedians within these classifications. However, they were analysed using the research question one as guide.

Research question one

What are the types of illocutionary speech acts found in the language of the comedians?

It has already been identified that this work adopted John Searle's five illocutionary Speech Acts. Therefore, Searle's classification formed the basis for the isolation of different speech acts in the presentation of the data. The following samples below were extracted from Bovi and Basketmouth comedies and tagged samples one to sixty.

Assertives Speech Acts

Assertives have truth value that recollects and affirms the belief of the speaker regarding the truth value of what is presented. The following samples were extracted from Basketmouth comedies

Sample 1

I know say judgment day dey sha...

Sample 2

Na dat time you go know say all men...

Sample 3

Some people here go dey shout 'wayo! Wayo'!! (Laughter)

Sample 4

'Make e be...I done enter, I don enter' (more laughter)

Sample 5

E go say 'oga, oya check with my real name, Bright...Bright Okocha' (more laughter)

Sample 6

*Them go come like see Jesus inside heaven dey stroll...maybe Jesus go dey show me round
(demonstrates a pleasurable walk) u know? (laugh) 'daz the chapel...'*

Sample 7

Dem go say 'bros J, dat guy don corrupt ooo'...

Sample 8

Yeh but I trust Nigerians sha, dem fit temper with the list

The assertives in the comedies capture complaints, accusations, condemnations, statements, agreements, sympathy and regrets. In sample 1, the comedian describes the condition under which the judgment day will look like. He states that he knows that day will be tough. In sample 2, he emphasizes that all men will realise that they are equal before God's eyes. In sample 3, he states and describes the reactions of others awaiting judgment, as soon they heard his name was found in the book of life. The comedian overlooks the people's opinion and protest concerning his making heaven on the last day in sample 4, so long as his name is found in the 'Book of Life.' He opposes and refuses to listen to the audience or others awaiting judgment. The comedian goes ahead to state how Jesus would take good care of him when he finally enters heaven: he describes the scenario joyfully. The comedian demonstrates how the audience will be informing Jesus that he is bad, and protesting why he

should make heaven. They are criticizing, judging and condemning him before Jesus. He equally knows that that day would be tough.

However, the situation of toughness is not explicitly stated to the listeners. He only describes the situation by stating that he knows how it will look like. Nonetheless, the comedian indirectly reminds or preaches to the audience about the difficulties of the judgement day. The comedian reminds all that all men will stand one day to give account of how they spent their lives on earth. He states the fact that all men will be regarded as equal by God.

Assertive speech acts are reflected at the beginning of the comedy; they are justifying what has been affirmed to be true of the situation. ‘Facts’, which in the words of Niazi and Guatam, are ‘truth value’.

Directive Speech Acts

Directives basically urge the listener to accomplish a given task or assignment. This may come in form of commands, request, pleas, suggestions, instructions, or even challenges. The following samples were extracted from Basketmouth comedies:

Sample 9

Man can cheat on their wife eee

Sample 10

But if your wife catch you eee

Sample 11

Omor na die be that o

Sample 12

When she come catch you red handed ee

Sample 13

And she say, 'no baby its fine' and she ask you 'what do you want to eat'

Sample 14

Just know say na fire be that oooo (laughter)

Sample 15

And if you say no, she go come say, 'no you have to be hungry after what you have done'

Sample 16

You go come say 'no babe I no hungry ooo'

Sample 17

'No you must eat your food, I insist because I made it with so much effort'

Sample 18

'Please na babe I say I belly full well well ooo, I go eat tomorrow'

Sample 19

'I know but you have to eat mine as well it's not poison ooo'

Sample 20

'You sure? Oya make I call my father to tell am first watin happen today before I chop' (loud laughter and clapping)

The comedian, Basketmouth, narrates how some women react to their cheating spouses. The cheating spouses become humble and at the mercy of their wives' decisions. Directive speech acts manifest in sample 17, and performs the act of command, commanding the husband to eat the food she has prepared with so much love. In sample 18, he is requested to eat it tomorrow, and he is scared that she might have poisoned it. In sample 20, he pleads that he calls his father and reports what actually is happening before eating, just in case anything happens to him.

It is obvious that the objective behind the directive speech acts in samples 13 and 17 is to teach the husband a lesson that, despite what he has done, it has no effect on her. With this, the husband becomes curious and is worried as to what might be going on in his wife's mind. This shows that wives can actually handle their cheating husband in a calm and intelligent way rather than abusive and insulting.

Expressives Speech Acts

Expressives implicitly reflect the psychological or emotional state of the speaker. Such state often is revealed in the speaker's attitude to what is presented. The following samples were extracted from Bovi comedies:

Sample 21

Why you no leave comedy for us na Okay Bakassi

Sample 22

Buhari was president 30yrs ago, he come come back to be president again

Sample 23

Okey na dey only comedian way don dey here long

Sample 24

That is why him no dey do comedy for free ooo

Sample 25

But for house, he is a house husband

Sample 26

When him come come for stage, him go dey vibrate like say him be president

Sample 27

Comedian they try, they dey entertain, dey born

Sample 28

As klint de drunk take go born bikin last year but no be him wife born am o

Sample 29

Na him wife dey rack am why him go born outside

Sample 30

Him come say na because him dey drunk, him no know when e take happen (laughter)

Bovi adopts expressive speech act in sample 21 when he told Okey Bakassi to leave comedy for young boys like himself, but Bakassi responded in sample 23 by reminding him that if Buhari could not leave the president seat for young Nigerian why would he retire. Bovi went ahead to state that comedians were trying in samples 27, 28 and 29. Despite their busy schedule, they would still find time to be intimate and humble with their wives. There is an intended transfer of emotions from the comedian to the audience. In the comedy, Bovi narrates the pain they experience as comedians: they can be loud on stage, but humble at home and show great emotional appeal to their partners.

Declarative Speech Acts

Declaratives are utterances which reveal to the listener a new development or change, discovery or new state that has to be upheld or accepted. The following samples are extracted from Basketmouth comedies:

Sample 31

'hahahahahahah...no worry yourself! You fit put yourself for Heaven later with your mouth...'

'Bright Okpocha...I say hell fire!!!' (more laughter and clapping)

Sample 32

You go come see Angel Gabriel (demonstrates a flying angel) go fly come 'don't annoy God... He will be very angry'

Sample 33

'Change of plans, if you are a Nigerian and you dey inside Heaven, come outside'

Sample 34

'I talk say na only men of God way I know go go inside heaven'

Sample 35

'So if you no be the one I know, come outside'

Sample 36

'I know, Bishop Oyedepo, I know Bishop Adeboye, I know Edeusa'

Sample 37

'Oya if you no hear your name, come outside!'

Sample 39

'I hereby pronounce all of you way no hear your name, hell fire!!!' (laughter)

Sample 40

One pastor go come dey shout

Sample 41

'Jesus no mind them ooo I go change, I don repent now'

Sample 42

'I say I pronounce all off una way no hear una name oya jump enter hell fire now now'

(more laughter)

Declarative speech act pertains to the potency of words in bringing about a change. In sample 31, the angel commands him to go to hell fire because he belongs there, irrespective of his real name or stage name. In samples 33, 34 and 35, he states a new development in the list and a change of plan that a Nigerian already in Heaven should come out with immediate effect. The comedy points to the actions that pertain to a replacement of the old list (which might have been tempered with) with the new one developed by God Himself. This shows that no matter what we do on earth we cannot escape judgement.

Commissives Speech Acts

Commissives are utterances that indicate the speaker's willingness or commitment to accomplish a future action. Niazi and Gautam identify commissives with 'promise, pledge, refusal and threat' (207). The following samples are extracted from Bovi comedies

Sample 43

American people dey like to listen to speech, na dat speech go make them know whether to

vote for you or not

Sample 44

Na speech dey convinces them whether to vote for you or not

Sample 45

MC go come introduce you, you go give your own speech

Sample 46

Oya make una listen to Nigerian speech ooo (clears throat)

Sample 47

APC candidate go come begin dey give speech

Sample 48

'We will create new job opportunities for you'

Sample 49

'Our party will target three million new jobs'

Sample 50

'We will build a network of local mobile clinic'

Sample 51

'We will triple education system over the next 10years'

Sample 52

'Our party, APC, will set a target to get Nigeria's public finances in order' (laughter)

Sample 53

'Our party will sponsor public enlightenment programmes so that we go fight gender inequality'

Sample 54

'We will ensure salaries and retire entitlements of workers'

Sample 55

'We will promote research for new building technologies'

Sample 56

'We will come ensure that our education system is improved upon'

Sample 57

But when we come vote them in

Sample 58

Even one thing wen dem say dem go do

Sample 59

They no go do again

Sample 60

So all our political leaders na big scam, dey pass yahoo yahoo boys self

In the commissive speech act, the comedian presents our Nigerian expiring presidential position how they campaign to the electorate by soliciting for their votes in the elections. In samples 52-60, in the recognition of the possibility and willingness to bring about a change, APC manifesto captures how promises are made to the electorate. The promises come as sequel to the affirmations of the state of such situations as unemployment, health facilities and the education sector. The use of ‘will’ which receives a greater force in the first person is seen in the repeated use of ‘we’ and ‘will’. According to Murthy, ‘will’ is used to express determination, promise, threat, and willingness in the first person (137). The people are persuaded to accept that the political party is determined to accomplish the promises made to them. The electorate is left to infer that it is its support that ought to bring these promises about. The key patterns of the commissive speech acts in the comedy relate to the commitment of promise, even if none of the promises is ever achieved after being voted in by the electorate.

4.2 Conversational Implicature Analysis

Research question Two

How Can the Audience Decipher the Hidden Meaning in these Comedies?

This research question is answered using Grice’s ‘Maxims of Conversation’ extracted from Basketmouth’s comedies, samples 1-8

Maxim of Quantity

I no say judgment day dey sha, dat day go tough

The comedian describes the condition of the Day of Judgment by stating that he knows the day will be tough. However, the situation of toughness is not explicitly stated to the listener(s). He only describes the situation by stating that he knows how it will look like. The maxim of Quantity is not met here because the tough situation stated or described is not as informative as is required for the current purpose of the exchange. This is because the listener(s) is not informed of the situation(s) that will make judgment day look tough. However, the speaker indirectly reminds or preaches to the listeners about the difficulties on the judgment day.

Maxim of Relevance

Na dat time you go know say all men are all equal

The comedian reminds the listeners that there should be no inequality among men. The comedian is explicitly saying that all men are equal in the eyes of God on the last day. Therefore it meets Grice's maxim of relevance, which says 'state what is relevant'.

Maxim of Quality

Some people here go dey shout 'wayo! wayo!' (laughter) 'make e be... I

done enter, I done enter' (more laughter)

Basketmouth describes a situation where those facing judgment on the last day will protest the ironic situation of seeing some people making heaven. This goes to the rule of maxim of quality which states that "Do not say what you believe is false". The comedian will care less of people's opinion and protest concerning his making heaven on the last day, so long as his name has been found in the "Book of Life"

Maxim of Quality

E go say 'oga, oya check with my real name, Bright...Bright Okpocha' (more laughter)

Here, Basketmouth presents how an unsatisfied man who fails to make the list for heaven is requesting that the angel cross-checks the list using his real name (as opposed to his stage name, Basketmouth). This explains the maxim of quality “Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Maxim of Manner

You go come see Angel Gabriel (demonstrates a flying angel) go fly come 'don't annoy

God...He will be angry'

The audience needs to imagine the reactions of those who have been condemned to hell fire on the judgment day. Angel Gabriel sees the reactions of the condemned (not wanting to obey command) as tantamount to offending God. Their disobedience is further portrayed in their words as they become arrogant and unrepentant. In their state of being unrepentant, they become insulting and blasphemous. The following utterances capture this: *'them go say wetin God one do wey pass this one?' (laughter) (talking proudly) 'He done condemn us...he done condemn us, na we dey here today' (laughter)*

Maxim of Quality

Them go come like see Jesus inside heaven dey stroll...maybe Jesus go dey show me round

(demonstrates a pleasurable walk) u know? (laughs) 'daz the chapel...'

The audience needs to imagine the reactions of those who have been condemned to hell fire as they compare themselves to those who have made heaven. Those who make heaven on the last day will enjoy some privileges (taking pleasurable walk with Jesus) which will send regrets into the hearts of those who have been condemned to hell fire. This alternates the maxim of quality which asserts that “do not say that for which you lack evidence”. The comedian has no evidence as to what those who make heaven would do with God because he has no clue to what happens after death.

Maxim of Quantity

Dem go say, ‘bros J, dat guy done corrupt ooo!’ (laughter)

Basic knowledge in Nigerian Pidgin is required in understanding the slang utterance in the above sample, ‘Bros J’ is the slang name for Jesus Christ who is considered the ‘first born son of God the Father’ according to the Bible, and as such, He is considered the elder brother to everyone who calls themselves the children of God; thus, the use of the clipped form, ‘Bros’ for brother to show relationship ties with Jesus. Those who fail to make heaven are critical of the purity of those who make heaven, thus becoming judgmental and critical of God’s ultimate judgment on the last day. This goes to prove that not everyone will find God’s final judgment befitting or justified because they will only continue to be human by judging the physical appearance of men while God who sees and knows all, according to the Holy Book, will judge the hidden things of men. While the condemned continue to criticize ‘blindly’ the saints, those who have made heaven will be satisfied with God’s judgment and will care less of other people’s opinion about them. The next sentence clearly justifies this point: *‘I go just lock up, I no go answer anybody...’ (laughter)*

Maxim of Manner

Yeh but I trust Nigerians sha, dem fit tamper with the list o (laughter) I dey tell you...you go see strong men of God go come like this...them go say 'what's your name?' ... 'My name is Enoch Adeboye'

The comedian is reiterating the corrupt nature of some Nigerians in manipulating simple processes for their own selfish gain. Those who fail to make heaven justify their disobedient and sinful nature even to the point that they would attempt to manipulate the list of those who have been chosen to make heaven. The comedian likens such people to the Nigerians who are assumed by many around the world to be corrupt. Just recently, the British Prime Minister was on the news for saying: "Nigerians are fantastically corrupt." Such perceived corrupt nature of Nigerians is recreated here as they attempt to play a fast one even for heaven. While the redeemed souls are yet to enter heaven, those (especially Nigerians) who are perceived as being corrupt have used other people's names to get themselves into heaven. The following utterances buttress this idea: *'Enoch Adeboye? You have entered Heaven already' (laughter) He go say 'somebody must have used my name to enter' (more laughter) dem go say 'wait' (more laughter) neeexxt! He go come gbam (laughter) what's your name? 'David Oyedepo'... 'David Oyedepo? You have entered heaven...see we tick it good...you've submitted ID everyone...' Oyedepo go come dey say 'haa!' na dat...* This shows the cunning and corrupt nature Nigerians are perceived to possess. The comedian adopts the maxim of manner which states: be brief, orderly and avoid ambiguity.

Maxim of Relation/Relevance

Na only Jesus go come come, when him go see him servant, he go say 'What! My servant! Give me the list, give me the list'. He go look am, he go say 'haa! This is not the ...if you are a Nigerian and you are inside heaven...(demonstrate with the right hand) come outside! (more laughter and clapping) come outside we are starting again' (laughter and clap)

The comedian humorously satirizes the actions of corrupt Nigerians who exhibit their fraudulent behaviours even in heaven as they manipulate the list of the redeemed souls for their own eternal gain. Those (especially Nigerians) who fail to make heaven due to their disobedience to God's words are further being described as morally bankrupt as they attempt to manipulate the list of the redeemed souls for their own selfish gain even in heaven. It is relevant for them to know that hell fire awaits corrupt practitioners. This is in line with maxim of relevance.

However, since God is all knowing, such manipulations are detected and Nigerians who are perceived to be corrupt are asked to come out for thorough scrutiny. Ultimately, they begin to hide from being screened again and some are even busy lobbying to make the new list. The next utterance captures this absurd situation: *you go see men they dock like this...me I go done dey come out like this, God go say 'no no no you Bovi go...go back inside' (more laughter), you go come see men dey lobby say 'sir what of me?' 'What's your name?' 'Bright' 'I said go to hell!' (speaker laughs) (more laughter) hahahahahaha! 'If you're a Nigerian come outside!' dem no go one come out, (stutters) Jesus no go know wen he go vex speak pidgin "una no one come out, give me the list...if you hear your name, come out!" All this goes to show the dishonest and corrupt perceptions of some Nigerians.*

Maxim of quantity

'Ibori, come out! (laughter and clapping) Alaghmesiere, in short, all PDP members'

(beckons with the right hand to go out) (laughter/clapping) thank you (music)

Those who fail to make heaven (especially Nigerian politicians who are in PDP) are considered the most corrupt and dishonest people. Their dishonesty gets them to even attempt to manoeuvre and manipulate a list in heaven so as to gain a passage into paradise. The speaker names a few of those politicians that are indicted for corruption in Nigeria. This points to Grice maxim of quantity informativeness: the Lord made the politicians suffer the consequences of indulging in evil act.

4.3 Figurative Expressions

Research question Three

In what ways do these comedians manipulate words through the use of NP in a comic way to put across information to their audience?

Comedians often employ certain figurative expressions unknowingly, while entertaining their audience. Some of the figurative expressions are explored below.

Satire/lampoon

Comedians often cast aspersions on the subjects of their comedies. This is geared towards correcting or exposing certain behavior or merely being sarcastic for the purpose of laughter. While some comedians inform their audience by making use of positive utterance in describing the subjects of their comedy, others make use of negative utterance to drive home

their point. Ali Baba casts aspersions on rich men who spend their money on young girls in exchange for sexual gratification.

Sample 61

One thing about men...e get one man (stutters) especially aristos. Aritos them go dey form (mimics a deep voice) 'let me take care of you...I will take care good care of you' dem go dey tell all diz small small girls. Na so one aristo go dey tell one girl, the guy na 48, the girl na 21 (mimics a deep voice) 'I will take care of you' and you know all these young girls...dem still (demonstrates girlishly) get dat youthful level...energy still dey so she wants to be satisfied ...physically, emotionally and pocket wisely (touches the pocket) (laughter)

From the above, the type of act performed is criticizing, satirizing, condemning and correcting. The utterances are expressing negative reactions towards men (married men) who spend money on young girls for sexual gratification. Similarly, Ali Baba casts aspersions on the males who spend money on females without considering the worth of the females.

Sample 62

Then another thing about guys, also if you dey spend money on chick, spend money wisely. There some girls that are worth only mineral when you take them out (laughter)...now if you one spend money for woman, they fit fine but there are some packaging way deserve more things. If you take girl comot, if the packaging no too dey alright, make she just drink only mineral or water (laughter) if she no just try at all, make una just dance throughout (more laughter) well if she try, you know, you fit dey give am all those smirnof ice, Gordon Spark; if she try well well, if she too try (pause) Champaign (laughter) I dey tell you

The prelocutionary effect is immediate as could be understood from the negative reactions of the female audience who feels slighted by such a message and considers it a form of gender stereotype. The comedian also observes this negative reaction and goes ahead to immediately take control of the situation. The utterances below explain this:

Sample 63

*There are some girls that are worth only mineral when you take them out (laughter). No e
quarrel, may una never vex, the girls (laughter)*

The above is a plea for the female to try to understand why they are being stereotyped or made the object of ridicule while the men laugh at the joke.

Innuendo

To create laughter, comedians also call the subject of their jokes certain names. Name calling may drive home their thoughts and reactions in the audience, depending on whom he is referring to. From sample 61, older men who chase after young girls for sexual gratification are called “Aristos” and those girls who go after such men are called “small small girls” to point out that they are not mature for such a relationship or to deflate their personality.

Sample 64

*Dis guy dey give am money...dey show love but the physical... (demonstrates sexually) you
know (laughter) you know ...the guy cannot ...you know (more laughter) the guy don
old...nooooo action (laughter) na him one day the girl come complain ‘honey what is all
this? (Demonstrates girlishly) one minute, what is all this? You promised me you are gonna*

show me love...it was gonna be physical... what is all this? You mean you can't even do up to 10 or 15 minutes'

The above reveals that moving with older men does not bring about sexual satisfaction. He refers to those girls as “chicks”, a word which classifies them as animals (young chickens) that are naïve and immature. He is trying to educate them on the consequence of following such men who cannot give them complete happiness. The type of act performed is criticizing, satirizing, condemning and stating.

Synonyms for liars

The comedian describes the females as unnatural and fake by deceiving the males to think that they are beautiful, while, in reality, the females are not, thus making them a liar. However, the comedian does not directly call the female liars but uses certain descriptions that portray them as such. For example,

Sample 65

Some girls go come, una una know una self, una go cheat us use fake fake things. First of all, you short you go come wear high heel (demonstrates height from shortness to tallness and points finger as a sign of counting) (laughter) now we think say you tall (laughter), this thing no dey (points to the breast) you know, you go come lift am, we go think say e dey (laughter) now you done go reach, you don go reach smirnof ice now. Dem go come put all those their eye lash (demonstrates girlishly towards the eyes) wey dey make their eyes like say e dey beautiful...you done dey reach Champaign, (laughter) hair (demonstrates a weave on) you know, if you no reach the level, check the girl out.

This performs the direct act of stating, criticizing and condemning. The comedian tries to warn the men folks that not all women are beautiful as they use fake things to make themselves look beautiful. Men should therefore not fall for them because they will be left disappointed if they remove all their fake attires. This goes down to say men should not judge beauty by physical appearance alone because most girls are fake, thus deceiving them.

Hyperbole

The language of comedy makes use of exaggerations to drive home its point as some of the ideas being expressed are obviously unrealistic or exaggeration. This literary device helps to create laughter as well as present ideas for the sake of imaginative thinking. From the sample below, extracted from Basketmouth comedies, one could observe the use of hyperbole in shaping the thoughts of the audience regarding certain issues in life.

Sample 66

'Yeh but I trust Nigerians sha dem fit tamper with the list o (laughter) I dey tell you...you go see strong men of God to come like this...them go say,' 'what is your name?'... 'my name is Enoch Adeboye'... 'Enoch Adeboye? You have entered heaven already' (laughter) he go say ehmm 'somebody must have used my name to enter' (more laughter)

The above describes an unrealistic situation in heaven on the last day where some people manipulate the list of the saints to manoeuvre their way into heaven, by replacing other people's names with their own. The comedian exaggerates the situation of the judgment day to portray the corrupt tendencies of some Nigerians (especially politicians) who will not only exhibit corruption on earth but do same in heaven. The comedian is only trying to restate

what the British Prime Minister was caught on camera saying that “Nigerians are fantastically corrupt”. For one to try to manipulate ones way into heaven by outsmarting the angels is the height of corruption. To further buttress this idea, Baskmouth says:

Sample 67

Na only Jesus go come come, wen him go see him servant, he go say ‘what! My servant? Give me the list, give me the list’. He go look am, he go say ‘haa, dis is not the list...if you are a Nigerian and you are inside heaven ... (demonstrates with the right hand) come outside we are starting again’ (more laughter)

Although Nigerians are not acclaimed for being the most corrupt people in the world, the above (an exaggerated scenario) goes to prove the extent to which such an idea may not be altogether wrong - that Nigerians will manipulate any process to serve their own interest and, even, heaven may not be an exemption.

Sarcasm

Sarcastic language characterizes the language of comedy. The use of such literary device is to mock the subject of discourse and lampoon certain ills or behaviours that are considered negative to the society. From the comedy presented below, Basketmouth’s great tool for achieving laughter is the use of sarcastic comments to ridicule people or the subject of their comedy.

Sample 68

The guy don old...nooo action (laughter)..na him one day the girl come complain ‘honey what is all this? (Demonstrates girlishly) one minute ... one minute what is all this? You

promised me you are gonna show me ...it was gonna be physical.. What is all this? You mean you can't even do up to 10 minutes or 15minutes'. The man say (changes voice to bass) 'young girl (laughter) young girl... listen ...I am 48 years old (laughter) you are only 21... if I cannot satisfy you, cheat on me (more laughter) just cheat on me don't worry' (more laughter)

The above is a biting remark against older men who run after younger girls and spend lavishly on them in exchange for sexual gratification. This performs the act of criticizing, stating, condemning and reporting. Although it may not be unusual for a man of 48 to marry a lady of 21, but when a married man of that age goes to a young girl of 21 for sexual gratification, society frowns against such behaviour and considers it unconventional. As such, the sarcasm holds the effect of condemning such an act and goes ahead to portray a situation where some of these older men depend on the power of their wealth to satisfy a woman and not the emotional needs that she desires. In other instance, the comedian says:

Sample 69

And the girls, if you catch your boyfriend dey cheat on you, express your feelings the right way. If una catch una boyfriend, una dey subject una emotion because of the kind of girl wey him dey with, it's wrong. If you catch your boyfriend with girl express your feelings the same way... she just waka enter inside 'Mark... what is this? (laughter) noo noo what are you doing? What are you doing with this (pointing irritatingly to something) thing? What are you doing with this thing? No no no no no no what don't talk don't talk... what are you doing with this thing? What is this thing in your house? I say what what you are doing

(demonstrates) in my house?... can you leave my house? You this ugly...what, what...are you drunk?’ (laughter)

The above utterances satirize the females who will react differently to the same situation of catching their boyfriends cheating on them with another lady. When the other lady is not as beautiful as they are or is ugly, according to the comedian, the females tend to over react by insulting on the lady who is more beautiful than they are. Basketmouth describes this:

Sample 70

Now if the girl fine (demonstrates a solemn face) ‘Mark? (laughter) Why are you doing this (points to self) to me?’ (more laughter) am I not good enough for you?’ (Laughter continues)

Comedians make use of paralinguistic features like gesture, mimic and body movement to accompany sarcastic language in order to achieve laughter. This serves the goal of criticizing, condemning, mocking or satirizing a particular person or subject matter and helps to vividly drive home their message.

4.4 Analysis of the Perlocutionary Effects of Comedies on the Audience

Research Question Four

What perlocutionary effects do these comedies have on the audience?

In sample 1, the comedian’s utterance registers into the minds of the listeners the religious stance concerning the judgment day and the difficult and ironic situations that people will experience. The next sentences provide information as to some of the awkward situations of the judgment day: *‘when the trumpet, Basket mouth dey talk am say some people hold*

condom, trumpet go sound pooooo!, *see all men go come out*. This describes, in agreement with the biblical stance, that some people will be caught unawares on the judgment day. A relationship between speaker/comedian/critic/preacher versus amused listeners exists and the listener(s) needs to understand that Basketmouth is recreating, in a humorous way, the events of the judgment day. And in sample 3, the comedian is reiterating the religious stance that all men are created equal before God, and this will be demonstrated on the last day when all men will stand before the creator to be judged. This situation of equality will be fully demonstrated as all men will face judgment together without prejudice as to class or status. The following utterances capture this stance:

Sample 71

All this title...king...queen of comedy (scoffs), that time (demonstrate a line of queue) everybody...na people go dey say 'come on feel free to enter' e say 'no stay your position'(laughter), I go jut look back like this I go come see Queen Elizabeth (laughter) I go say 'ehh Lizzy...you dey here?' (laughter), (mimicking) 'I am Queen Elizabe...' (interrupts) 'leave dat thing...you be queen na him you follow me stand?' (laughter) 'Where your son? Where Charlie?' (laughter) when una one frustrate Dina that year (laughter) 'Make una go do quee (laughs)' All this goes to prove that everybody will be judged with equity as they will account solely for their own actions. The following utterances demonstrate the idea that each man will stand alone to face judgment: 'See my turn go just reach like this gbaa!' 'I go just bounce go the table', Angel Gabriel go open my file, 'What's your name?', 'Bovi', 'Bovi...Heaven' (demonstrates a walk of swag into heaven) (laughter)

The relationship between the speaker and the listeners is that of a critic/comedian versus an entertained audience. This is evident on the audiences' laughter at the utterances and actions of the speaker. The speaker and listener share the religious stance that all men will stand before God and be judged on the last day. Knowledge of the workings of such a religious setting is required here, plus an imagination of the events of the judgment day. The comedian believes that people's opinion will not count on the last day because God's distribution of justice is justified and will be final. The ironic situation where those who have been already condemned on earth finally make heaven, according to God's own standard, is indeed shocking and will possibly cause a protest from the crowd (as was noticed in the negative reactions of the crowd), since those they expect to make heaven are been sent to hell. The following utterances demonstrate this idea:

Sample 72

*Dem go just say 'neeeext!' e go just come 'What's your name?' 'Basketmouth' 'Basketmouth
(searches through a list) Basketmouth, hell fire' (laughter)*

The tone of the utterance is commanding, demanding and wishful as the named man does not wish to go to hell and hopes that it will all be a mistake, since someone he perceives to be sinful (Bovi) has made it to heaven. This also creates an orientation of the audience that those who fail to make heaven will say and do all they can to be excused. The sentences that follow the above statement make these ideas clearer:

Sample 73

'hahahahaaahaha...no worry! You fit put yourself for heaven later with your mouth...Bright Okpocha...hell fire' (laughs) (more laughter from the audience), 'Anyhow you one turn am'

(laughs),

Sample 74

But you know say Warri boys ehhn na...other country like here all our white folk and all...when dem tell dem say go hell fire (mimics the white man) 'oh my God...I didn't make it!' (laughter),

Sample 75

Warri boys go say 'check again, me (points to himself) you know how many people I convert? (more laughter) if na so, make dem all my offering, all my tithe...tell God I need all', them go say (demonstrates) 'go to helllll'.

Sample 76

Warri boys go come go stand for the road to hell fire say so 'we one see the people way go enter dis heaven' (audience laughter)

In samples 73-76, the relationship is that of an aggrieved person(s) who does not make heaven versus an amused crowd who wants to see how the situation will play out. There is shared knowledge on the need to make, and the difficulties of making heaven and the idea that those who fail to make it will give a lot of excuses why they should have made it. The tone of the utterance is appealing and confrontational at the same time because the angel feels irritated by the unwillingness of the condemned to obey simple instruction and appeals to them to obey.

The relationship is that of a critic versus some discontented and unrepentant condemned souls. Knowledge of the obedient relationship between superiors and followers is known to have been breached. The comedian sees the actions of the damned souls as being disobedient and unrepentant; thus, the comedian protests against this behaviour while the condemned continue to revolt. While the redeemed souls will enjoy good privileges, the damned souls will feel angry, frustrated, disappointed and rebellious. They will begin to offer excuses for their situations and say rebellious words as a way of covering up their lost. The following utterances capture this: you go see Warri boys go say *'Angel Gabriel dey there dey fly dey show yourself'* (laughter) you think say *e easy to be human being?* (laughter), you think say *e easy come be human being make I be angel whether I no go do your work pass you!*' (laughter). Understanding the situations of the judgment day as described in the scriptures is needed to interpret the feelings of the redeemed souls and the condemned souls who will do and say anything to be excused into heaven. The lost souls will find God's judgment unappealing and disappointing especially when they are being condemned to hell, while those whom they feel are worse off are being saved eternally. The audience will have to suspend whatever disbelief of religious doctrines concerning God and the judgment day in order to fully interpret the utterances of the speaker and the scenario being humorously recreated about the last day.

Sample 77

Yeh but I trust Nigerians sha, dem fit tamper with the list o (laughter) *I dey tell you...you go see strong men of God go come like this...them go say 'what's your name?' ... 'My name is*

Enoch Adeboye'

The tone of the utterance is critical, condemning and sarcastic about the corrupt nature of some Nigerians. The utterances psychologically put Nigerians on the critical stage in the minds of the outside world, thus confirming hitherto held negative notions and stereotype about a typical Nigerian. The relationship is that of an informed Nigerian describing the behaviour of other Nigerians to an amused audience. The audience will have to compare whatever initial view it has about Nigerians with what the speaker says concerning Nigerian behaviour with regard to corrupt practices.

Sample 78

Na only Jesus go come come, when him go see him servant, he go say . 'what! My servants! Give me the list, give me the list'. He go look am, he go say 'haa! This is not the ...if you are a Nigerian and you are inside heaven...(demonstrate with the right hand) come outside! (more laughter and clapping) come outside we are starting again especially PDP members' (laughter and clap)

The tone of the utterance is suspicious, critical and condemning as the lost souls, especially Nigerians are considered the most corrupt people even in heaven extent that their presence on judgment day would require additional scrutiny of those who make their way into heaven. This places Nigerians at a critical stage in the minds of other people when it comes to perceiving the most dishonest people in the world. The relationship is that of the discontented saints versus some condemned Nigerian souls who try to dishonestly maneuver their way into heaven on judgment day. The audience will have to critically interpret the actions of Nigerians as being portrayed by a Nigerian and assess for itself the true nature of Nigerians, whether they are really corrupt and dishonest or just been misrepresented. The

tone of the utterance is critical and condemning as the Nigerian politicians (mainly PDP) are described as the corrupt people who are capable of giving the country and its people a bad name in heaven. This, also, unconsciously registers in the minds of the audience the idea that PDP members are responsible for the problems in Nigerians. The relationship is that of angry Jesus chasing politicians out of his divine kingdom and some corrupt Nigerian politicians trying to maneuver their way into heaven. The audience will have to interpret the negative by perceived character of Nigerian politicians, as portrayed by the comedian, and understand that their dishonesty has no limit; they will go as far as manipulating their way into heaven, if possible.

4.5 Pragmatics Strategies

Research question Five

What are the prominent pragmatic strategies employed by Nigerian stand-up comedians to achieve interaction in the production and consumption of comedy?

There are six major pragmatic strategies discernible in comedians' production - linguistic coding/pausing, stereotyping, call-and-response, formulaic expression, self-depreciation and shared experiences.

Linguistic coding/pausing

Comedians have been discovered to use code-switching, essentially to relate to their audiences (Furukawa 28). In the Nigerian Stand-up Comedy context, four broad languages are spoken: Standard English, Nigerian English, Nigerian Pidgin, and local languages (L1). While local languages are minimally used considering the multilingual nature of both

comedians and audience, English and Nigerian Pidgin are preponderantly deployed. Also, timing is tactically used by comedians to activate their audiences' responses. The reason for this linguistic choice lies, in part, with the lack of a lingua franca in a multilingual country, and also, in part, with the low level of formal education of the citizens. Realizing then that performing in English (Standard British English) would reduce the size of their audience and limit the comprehension of their messages, Nigerian comedians mostly perform in Nigerian Pidgin. And since most of the comedians are university-degree holders, their choice of Nigerian Pidgin would be seen, additionally, as an index of a desire to speak with, rather than to, their audiences. Sometimes however, NP is switched or mixed with SBE. In the following short scripts from Ali Baba's introductory statements, in one of his performances, the comedian uses NP, first, independently, and, then, as code-alternated (code-switched and code-mixed) with Standard British English.

Sample 79

Na dis kind crowd na im good to mess.

Sample 80

I bought one drum like that and hung it in my living room. One day like dat wey meat no dey to cook for the dogs, I look the pomo ... look am, look am, look am ... well, dey enjoyed it sha.

One day like that, when there was no meat ... I took a good look at the hide ... looked at it, looked at it, looked at it ... well, they enjoyed it anyway.

Pausing is also significantly linguistically coded in Nigerian Stand-up Comedy. Pausing, an aspect of "timing" a complex of "A composite built up of hesitations, false starts, repetition

is build-up along with a more rapid, fluid delivery of the punch-line ...” (Norrick 260-261)
 Research has also shown that timing (especially pausing) is an essential part of the comedian-audience relationship in Stand-up Comedy. In Basketmouth’s popular routine, he uses the significant and emphatic pause, eighteen times as a pragmatic resource, for activating shared co-textual and contextual backgrounds of the meanings of his utterances

Sample 81

Well let me tell you this.

You see, in this life we live, there are two things involved.

It is either you are a man or you are a woman.

If you are a woman you are safe but if you are a man, there are two things involved.

It is either you are a civilian or you are in the military.

If you are a civilian you are safe but if you are in the military, there are two things involved.

It is either you are in the office or at the war front.

If you are in the office you are safe ... (laughter)

But if you are at the war front, there are two things involved ... (laughter)

It is either you kill somebody or somebody kill you ... (laughter, claps)

If you kill somebody you are safe ... (laughter, cheers)

But if somebody kill you there are two things involved ... (laughter, cheers)

It is either you are being buried or your body is used for manure ... (laughter, cheers)

If you are being buried you are safe, if your body is used for manure there are two things involved ... (laughter, cheers)

It is either you are used to grow plants, flowers or you are used for trees.

If you are used for flowers, you are safe

If you are used for trees, there are two things involved.

.It is either you are used to make paper and tissue paper or you are used to make furniture.

If you are used for furniture you are safe

If you are used for tissue paper, there are two things involved

... (laughter, claps, cheers). Thank you

It is either you are being used by a man ... (laughter)

or you are being used by a woman...(laughter)

If you are being used by a man you are safe

(laughter, cheers, claps, catcalls) Thank you

But ... if you're being used by a woman, there are two things involved ...

It is either she use you from the back ... (laughter)

or she use you from the front ...(laughter)normal pause in SUC,

If you are being used from the back, you are safe ...

If you are being used from the front, there are two things involved ...(laughter, cheers)

It is either you contact gonorrhoea, or you contact HIV...(laughter)

If you contact gonorrhoea you are safe

If you contact HIV ... there is only one thing involved ... (laughter)

You will die!

The comedian - audience co-production of the joke begins essentially from the eighth turn, as marked by the comedian's use of the first significant pause and the audience's response of

laughter. From then onwards, the comedian activates and sustains the audience's response by significantly pausing at chosen intervals when he feels there is a need for response. And the audience obliges, moving from laughter to laughter complemented by other forms of applause. The comedian's pauses are quite longer (than other significant pauses) and so, emphatic in lines 21 and 25 (that's why they are made distinct turns) and these achieve the audience's uptake (the audience is loudest at these turns), most probably because of the audience-comedian shared background knowledge about tissue paper and how it could be put to sanitary uses differently by men and women. The audience echoes the comedian's repetitive utterance, "there are two things involved", from line 20, thereby revealing that they are interactively attentive and can predict, from the patterning they have noticed, when he would make the utterance. Coupled with the echoing, the audience's response of (minimal) laughter to each instance of significant pause denotes its acceptance of its responsibility in making this routine a one-shot coordinated communicative event or "joint act" (Clark 82).

Stereotyping

A stereotype is defined as "a typical feature of a kind", which may be true or false, but which individuals need to get on with the world (Reyes 181). From the social sciences to linguistics, stereotypes are considered pragmatic phenomena which are employed to position the self and the other in socially meaningful manners. Reyes identifies "typification" and "typicality" as essential to any discussion of stereotypes; the former, attributed to "means relating some aspect of behaviour (predication) to a particular social category of persons (reference)" while the latter, paraphrases particular linguistic or discursive elements (Reyes 181). Stereotyping is crucially employed in the Nigerian comedic space to categorize all sorts

of people, institutions, and ethnic groups. The comedians, in the main, make use of the stereotypes to identify a shared background with their audiences and to indicate that they (comedian plus audience) have common perspectives of the world.

Sample 82

Any Warri guy dey here?

AREA (Audience: "eh")

Sample 83

I dey wan beg people make dem hold dia fone o.

Na so dem tief one guy fone

Sample 84

After two weeks as di guy dey pass for di area, na im dem call di guy

'Oga, come here ... your fone no los?'

Sample 85

'Yeah, they stole my phone here two weeks ago.'

Sample 86

E say wait ... di guy enter, carry one Ghana

fone na im full inside travelling bag

Sample 87

Na im dem bring one Sony Erikson ...

'Na you get dis fone?'

Sample 88

'Yeah, this is my fone'

Sample 89

Na im di Warri boy say,

Sample 90

'ehhn... so na you lock "eh ehn ...

dis fone wey we no fit sell am

Open di fone now make you dey run'.

In sample 82, I Go Dye makes fun at his own people, by inferring that they are not just thieves but daring ones at that. As an ethnic insider, he finds it wholesome to “play the audience” (Double 107) by appropriating a negative stereotype as a celebratory resource, by cleverly starting with the celebratory chant before moving to the negativity. In the introductory part, the comedian begins by assigning the reference “Warri indigene” with the positively afflictive predication “to be respected” before switching to the negative (implied) predication “steals”, since people should secure their phones from “any Warri indigene”. And the same reference, contextually indexed by both “they” and “he”, has a back grounded predication, “don’t care to be identified as thieves.” In the Nigerian context, the comedian, in this act, is believed to be identifying with his people and interacting with the audience.

Sample 91

Our Nigerian girls face dey quick change.

Before I tink say na hardship

Until I come know.

Sample 92

Check your Papa and Mama, you go see say dem two don resemble each other

Why?

Sample 93

Wen di man don dey put too much

sim card for di fone,

Sample 94

Wen di tin don too full di body

E go come dey chang, di face,

Sample 95

of Mama and your papa your mother and father

Dem two go don dey look

Like brodas and sistas

Sample 96

Dat is why if woman get belle

If she born di pikin go resemble

Sample 97

di papa or di mama

Na blood

Sample 98

If girls stop to dey date different men dem go look sweet ...

Sample 99

Different men wey una dey follow

Sample 100

dey confuse una face

The fact that the comedian uses analogies in order to drive home his point implies that he is putting much effort into advising Nigerian girls and, therefore, affiliating with them.

Formulaic Expressions

Nigerian comedians also use formulaic expressions as pragmatic strategy to contextualize their performances. When they do, such verbalizations serve either as signature tunes (expressions which identify the opening or closure of a comedian's performance) or boundary markers (expressions which signal the beginning or end of a joke). For example, I Go Dye is identified by many formulas, including the (Christian) religious utterance, "Alle-lu-ya" (as pronounced), "hello ("are you still there"), and "abi I lie" ("am I lying?"), so much so that the audience anticipates any of these utterances and replies with whichever one he chooses, when he gets to the end of a joke. It must be noted, however, first, that he sticks to one formula in a given performance, and, second, that he chooses sometimes to use the formula as in-joke discourse filler. Another form of formulaic utterance, "Area", is used to precede the telling of a joke that has the Warri indigene as its butt. As such almost all Nigerian comedians chant "Area" to preface an ethnic joke directed at the people of Warri, regardless of the joke's face value (i.e. whether the joke promotes a positive or negative face), because the Warri people can handle many jokes. This formula serves both to activate the mutual entertainment background of Nigerians and to bond comedian and audience emotionally. In the following excerpt, I Go Dye seems to merely identify the Warri members

of his audience, but, really, orients towards this (his) ethnic group and the audience, as a whole.

Sample 101

Warri boys dey here?

Area (audience response) eh area

Some people wey no be Warri

Dey just wan make dem fear dem

Eh ... eh

Call-and-response

Related to formulas are exchanges between comedian and audience, much in the spirit of the call-and-response type of African oral tradition (Okpewho 122), with the former initiating the call and the latter obliging the response. These come in the forms of question/answer, puzzle/resolution, and elliptical statements (whose completive components are sought from the audience). In each of the following samples, we find combinations of some of these dialogic verbalizations. I Go Dye makes fun at the predisposition of Nigerian women to make-up and artificiality, predicating his argument on a hypothesis, for which he seeks the audience's approval: Nigerian women are greater liars than Nigerian men.

Sample 102

A lot of guys lie, same thing with girls

But na girls lie pass

Girls and guys who lie pass

Make I break am down for you

Guys own na word of mouth ... na im

Girls own, everything for una body na liea lie

Hair (Audience: "lie")

Finger nail (Audience: "lie")

Eye lash (Audience: "lie")

Eye brow (Audience: "lie")

Lips (Audience: "lie")

Height (Audience: "lie")

(touches both parts of his chest)(Audience: "lie")

Here, the comedian starts with a general statement in line(1) and moves on to make a controversial conclusion in line (2), obviously depending on the audience's reaction (indicated by the significant pause) before introducing the comedy. Line (3) is an alternative question whose answer (whichever way it goes) is supposed to introduce the comedy. The comedian assumes the position of authority in line 4, and, to some extent, in lines (4) and (5). But from line (7) till the end of the excerpt, he transfers part of the responsibility of solving the puzzle and answering the lingering question—who lies more between men and women?—to members of the audience, by gesturing to them with the microphone to fill in the elliptical information. And in line (13), he linguistically invokes call-and-response via gesturing.

Sample 103

Now, for dis country, dia is difference between cell and prison

if you go cell wen you come out

Sample 104

*you go be ex-convict,
but wen you go prison omo*

Sample 105

baby you go be President

(applause)Abi I dey lie?

(Audience: 'No')

Sample 106

Mandela, na prison e go abi na cell

(Audience: 'Prison')

Ehn? Pardon?

(Audience: 'Prison')

Sample 107

E get one oda person for dis contry

wey go somewhere

Sample 108

Wia e go?

(Audience: "Prison")

Sample 10

Wen e come outside nko?

(Audience: 'President')...for dis country

(Disjointed comments from audience)

Sample 110

You say?

(Audience: 'Call im name')

Sample 111

Make I call im name?

(Audience: 'Yes')

Sample 112

You no get mouth?

(laughter)You no get mouth, ehn?

Sample 113

(laughter)You wan take your reggae spoil my blue?

(Do you want to put me in trouble?_)

Sample 114

(laughter)Na my mouth you wan hear say king mess?

(laughter)Na somebody I tok

(laughter)Somebody na somebody name?

Sample 115

(laughter)E go somewhere, he became a president

(laughter)If you tink say I dey lie, you go prison

wen you come outside, may God help you

Alleluia.

Using Clark's (101) terminologies, "communal common ground" he homogenizes his audience as a "cultural community" within which he belongs. He, thus, constructs a script based on a set of "inside information", "particular information that members of the

community mutually assume is possessed by members of the community”—that they know about (Nelson) Mandela and his prison-to-presidency saga; that they know the unmentioned Nigerian “somebody” whose story is similar to Mandela’s; that they know why it might be inappropriate or politically incorrect (even in the discursively free context of comedy) to specify the “somebody” (101) . I Go Dye, thus, makes use of the pause, audience laughter, and question-answer to invite the audience to a joint action of comedy construction.

Self - deprecation

A stand-up comedian performs before an audience holding on to the only microphone at the venue and taking centre stage with the light directly focused on him/her. He/she therefore assumes inherent authority and power and, by implication, conversational superiority, at least for the duration of his/her performance, in relation to the audience. To de-emphasize this positioning, therefore, comedians employ self-deprecation (making self abilities, characteristics, or achievements seem less important) to connect with their audiences. This is used to achieve comedian-audience intimacy, whereby the latter identifies (and probably sympathizes and/or empathizes) with the former (Russell 202). Nigerian comedians use self-deprecation (most often self-devaluation) as a rhetorical strategy to warm up to their audiences. This pragmatically tells the members of the audience that the comedian is just like them. This is seen in two instances of the recurrent themes of physical appearance and socio-economic status: while I Go Dye claims to be of a poor parentage, Ali Baba presents himself as poor man. In the following extract, Ali Baba inserts the poor-family-background script (illustrating the fact that his parents do not drive cars) into his routine and states that he doesn’t want to share his parents’ lot.

Sample 116

Like me, I no dey fear death

I fear poverty pass death

Sample 117

It's better for me to rich and die

With the rich than poor and die

Sample 118

Because my family dem no even hussle

Papa and mama poor

Papa poor mama poor,

Sample 119

My father is poor, my mother is poor

Sample 120

Family meeting, dem hold am

Na legezen everybody dey drive come

Sample 121

I tell myself say I can never be poor.

The comedian offers himself to the audience not as a superior member of the society, but as having the same social status as even the person probably occupying the lowest social class within the audience.

Sample 122

See Tuface buy Navigator wey just come out

Di next tin, e buy E-class, E330,

Sample 123

Tear rubber, Chacha, brand new 11.2 million naira.

Sample 124

P-Square dem buy M-class, di latest one 16.4 million.

Sample 125

D Banj, BMW is it 3 abi 4, 5 series tear rubber. >brand new 8.9 million.

Na im make i vex.

Sample 126

Na im I buy my own

Mine...X5 ... SAGEM...tear rubber

(laughter)

In Samples 122-126, Ali Baba self-ridicules himself by claiming that, while Nigerian musicians, his fellow entertainers, were buying brand new cars, he could only afford to buy a brand new, cheap mobile phone, SAGEM X5. By so doing, he aligns with the audience, by bringing himself to the level of some of the poorest people in his audience (whose phone could even be more expensive than the said phone). Also, by leaving out “Lincoln” in “Navigator” and referring to Mercedes cars simply as “E-class”, “E330”, and “M-class”, the comedian is sharing with the audience the responsibility of filling in the gaps as regards the types of cars he means.

Shared experiences

According to Double Oliver, “Much of what stand-up comedians do is about sharing shared feelings, shared experiences, creating a sense of community with the audience” (116). Along this line, comedians often tell comedy which would identify them with their audiences,

among other categorizations, according to region, gender, social orientation, and nationality. Nigerian comedians exploit this resource in various ways. I illustrate, below, with extracts from the performances of Basketmouth

Sample 127

*And the girls if you catch your boyfriend,
dey cheat on you*

Sample 128

Express your feelings the right way.

Sample 129

*If una catch una boyfriend una dey
una dey subject una emotions*

Sample 130

*Because of the kind of girl you find with him
It's wrong. If you catch your boyfriend with girls,*

Sample 131

*Express your feelings the same way.
If girl catch im boyfriend with ugly girl*

Sample 132

*Her reaction dey different o
You don notice am?*

Sample 133

*If you dey with girl and your girl waka come
And the girl you dey with, ugly*

She go just waka (demonstrates)

Sample 134

“Mark, what is this? No, no, what are you doing with this thing?

No, no, what are you ... in my house

No, no, don't talk

Can you leave this place?”

Sample 135

‘You this ugly, are you drunk

Now if di girl fine’

Sample 136

(Sobbing) ‘hm, hm ...Mark, why are you doing this to me?

Hm, am I not good enough for you? Am I not good enough for you?’

Here, Basketmouth instantiates observational comic presentation of “everyday phenomena that are rarely noticed or discussed” (Russel 116), to remind the audience of how ladies depict their self-assessments of self-worth in the emotional reactions they exhibit when they discover whom their cheating boyfriends are dating. By asking the rhetorical question, ‘*You don notice am?*’, the comedian not only addresses the audience as a collective (“you”) but also compares his experience of an aspect of male-female romance with theirs. The audience’s initial response of near silence - a subtle indication that this part of the routine demands serious contemplation - when the joke is being prefaced (until the rhetorical question), probably confirms the sharedness of his experience.

In sample 137 below, I Go Dye makes everybody in the comedic space - performer and audience - one nation, Nigeria, through a comedy about the menace of armed robbery.

Sample 137

People de complain dis contri evriday

Everyday arm robber, arm robber tief,

Sample 138

Tief I don tink am I don tire.

Di reason why arm robber dey dis country

be say, first na government.

Sample 139

Dem make gun dear and bullet cheap

How you go sell bullet 30 naira?

Sample 140

If you get gun and get your bullet 30 naira

If someone even get 1000 naira,

Sample 141

You go take 30 naira tief am.

No be di gun be di fear na di bullet

Sample 142

If federal government fit do am make

Every Nigerian get gun

Sample 143

no arm robber again.

But make di bullet dear.

Sample 144

Di bullet go be like 1.5 million,

How much you wan take 1.5 million tief?

Although the focus of this routine seems to be the high cost of bullets, as the emphasized words depict, the underlying argument is that the comedian discusses a national, critical issue of security. This would then be classified, following Oliver as an instance of “found comedy”, by “presenting something not designed to be funny as an object of amusement” (123). In the process of sharing experiences, Nigerian comedians sometimes divide their audience, by humorously identifying and setting one section apart from another, to reawaken either its liveliness or energy.

In sample 145 below, Ali Baba triggers the audience’s enthusiasm by classifying the audience into fans of different English football (or soccer) teams, drawing on the shared background of Nigerians’ passion for these teams.

Sample 145

Make we just hail all di people

All the Arsenal fans,

Sample 146

All the Arsenal fans represent yourself (noise, some hands are raised)

Sample 147*All the Chelsea fans**All the Chelsea fans, make some noise (noise, some hands are raised)***Sample 148***All the Manu fans (noise, some hands are raised) and the final one,***Sample 149***And the best one, and the best team***Sample 150***All the Eyimba fans (loudest noise, many hands are raised)*

Here, the comedian deploys exaggeration in the utterance preceding the punch line—*And the final one, and the best one, and the best team*—to prepare the mind of the audience for the point being made about football fans in Nigeria. Given that Nigerian fans support English Premier League (EPL) teams (Arsenal, Chelsea, and Man U) to the detriment of Nigerian Premier League teams (Eyimba), the irony, intended in the utterance and punch line, is contextually activated by the common ground shared by the comedian and audience, as evidenced obviously by the increase in the voice volume of the audience's response to the punch line.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion of Results, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion of Results

From the study, it is observed that the language of comedy reflects the illocutionary speech acts identified as stating, knowing, asserting, telling, emphasizing, describing, commanding, asking, guiding, saying, informing, reporting, requesting, beckoning, thanking, describing, reminding, informing, reporting, protesting, challenging, refusing, repudiating, stating, requesting, demanding, appealing, declaring, judging, assessing, explaining, comparing, provoking, criticizing, judging, condemning, expressing, satirizing, and appreciating.

Comedians often cast aspersions on the subjects of their comedy. This is geared towards correcting or exposing certain behaviour or merely being sarcastic for the purpose of entertainment. The use of aspersions performs the direct act of informing, while the indirect act is that of criticizing, satirizing, condemning and correcting.

Name Calling is also used on the subject of comedians' jokes to create humour or deflate character for corrective purposes. This may elicit positive or negative reactions from the audience, depending on who is involved.

Synonyms for liars are often adopted to criticize the subjects of jokes, especially comedies that is prejudicial to the female gender.

The language of comedy makes use of exaggerations to drive home its point, as some of the ideas being expressed are obviously unrealistic or exaggerated. This literary device helps to

create laughter as well as present ideas for the sake of imaginative thinking. Sarcastic language characterizes the language of comedy. The use of such literary device mocks the subject of discourse and lampoons certain ills or behaviours that are considered negative to the society.

The language of comedy is often spoken with hidden meanings which often are created for exposing the Nigerian ways of life, attitude and living. Rude, offensive, inconsiderate, foul, and the use of sexual or earthly languages characterize the comedians' choice of vocabularies.

Code-switching, which uses a blend of Nigerian Pidgin and Standard English, and the use of physical demonstrations also create humorous effect on the audience. The perlocutionary effect of the language of comedy is often laughter. However, it can be observed that not all the members of the audience find a piece of joke amusing.

It is also observed that comedians often employ six major strategies - linguistic coding/pausing, stereotyping, call-and-response, formulaic expression, self-deprecation, and shared experiences. In terms of linguistic coding, findings reveal a preponderant use of NP (either as an independent code or as alternated with SBE) and the deployment of significant and emphatic pauses. The call-and-response patterns, the comedian's use of the microphone, to forge with the audience share rhetorical authority. The Nigerian comedians' use of self-deprecatory scripts serves the purpose of reducing their stage-authority and social or economic aloofness, a performance style which makes the audience warm up to them, as real human beings, with whom it has so much in common. And in their performance of shared

experiences, the comedians at once converge with and diverge from the members of the audience by inviting them to co-produce humour on social relationship and national issues (security and football fandom).

5.2 Recommendations

It is important to state unequivocally that the importance of NP in comedy production and consumption is impressive. So, efforts should be on top gear in developing Nigerian Pidgin. It should be developed to a full-fledged language to enhance effective communication. Comedy shows should be seen as a means of learning, correcting and not just for entertainment purposes alone. Comedians should be encouraged to perform in Nigerian Pidgin without being underrated. The use of NP should not be limited to trade, jokes, cartoons, religious teachings, news broadcast and advertisement purposes alone. It should be given a free hand to operate and serve wider coverage. In order to attain this height, it is strongly suggested that language planners must work on its codification. This will assist it in serving wider part of the populace, since it is not ethnically bound. When language planners and government indicate practical interest, the attitude of different people towards Nigeria Pidgin will change drastically. To gain the proposed ground, it will be pertinent to include it in the National Policy on Education. The National Orientation Agency, the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education will also play significant roles in propagating, mobilizing and re-orientating the populace on its imports and rationale. In conclusion, in view of the various potentialities of Nigerian Pidgin, it will amount to injustice if Nigerian Pidgin is not given prominence. Its general acceptability by the majority

of the Nigerian populace makes its recognition inevitable as it is capable of enhancing Nigeria's speedy progress.

5.3 Conclusion

This research, investigating the use of NP in comedies discovers how comedians use language to create laughter. In this regard, this work justifies how the illocutionary speech acts manifest in the creation of comedy. Each of the five classifications of speech acts is identifiable in the comedy. In spite of the fact that the five classifications have been given equal treatment in the analysis, a close study of the texts in the data presentation reveals that assertives and directives appear to feature more prominently in the language of comedian than expressives, commissives and declaratives. In some instances, the expressives, commissives and declaratives are merely implied or embedded in the assertives and directives.

Nigerian stand-up comedians have been able to achieve unique success with the use of NP. Even though it would be assumed that most of (if not all) the members of the audiences are literate and so should understand English, the comedians have felt it necessary to perform in NP, since this informal language is the most widely used and understood variety in Nigeria's multilingual society. Yet, the pre-eminence of NP clearly excludes members of the audience who are not very versatile in this language (especially non-Nigerians) from independently processing the meanings intended by the performances.

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Appendix

Bovi comedies – Bovi Comedy on Sun Awards 2017

Why you no leave comedy for us na okey Bakassi

Buhari was president 30yrs ago, he come come back to be president again

Okey na dey on comedian way don dey here long

That is why him no dey do comedy for free ooo

But for house, he is a house husband

When him come come for stage, him go dey vibrate like say him be president

Comedian the try, they dey entertain, dey born

As klint de drunk take go born bikin last yearbut no be him wife born am o

Na him wife dey rack am why him go born outside

Him come say na because him dey drunk, him no know when e take happen (laughter)

Bovi on Fire on Presidential Speech 2013

American people dey like to listen to speech, na dat speech go make them know whether to vote for you or not

Na speech dey convinces them whether to vote for you or not

Mc go come introduce you, you go give your own speech

Oya make una listen to Nigerian speech ooo (clears throat)

APC candidate go come begin dey give speech

'We go create new job opportunities for you'

'Our party go target three million new jobs'

'We go build a network of local mobile clinic'

'We go triple education spreading over the next 10years'

'Our party, APC will set a target to get Nigeria's public finances in order' (laughter)

'Our party will sponsor public enlightenment programmes so that we go fight gender inequality'

'We will ensure salaries and retire entitlements of workers'

'We will promote research for new building technologies'

'We will come ensure that our education system is improved upon'

But when we come vote them in

Even one thing we dem say dem go do

They no go do again

So all our political leaders na big scam dey bi pass yahoo yahoo boys self

Basketmouth comedies – Night of A Thousand Laughs, 1996

I know say judgment day dey sha....

Na dat time you go know say all men

Some people here go dey shout 'wayo! Wayo!! (Laughter)

Make e be...I done enter, I don enter (more laughter)

E go say 'oga, oya check with my real name, Bright...Bright Okocha' (more laughter)

Them go come like see Jesus inside heaven dey stroll...maybe Jesus go dey show me round (demonstrates a pleasurable walk) u know? (laughs) 'daz the chapel...'

Dem go say 'bros J, dat guy don corrupt ooo ...'

Yeh but I trust Nigerians sha, dem fit temper with the list

'hahahahahahah...no worry yourself! You fit put yourself for heaven later with your mouth...'

'Bright Okpocha...I say hell fire!!!' (more laughter and clapping)

You go come see Angel Gabriel (demonstrates a flying angel) go fly come 'don't annoy God... He will be very angry'

'Change of plans, if you are a Nigerian and you dey inside heaven, come outside'

I talk say na only men of God way I know go go inside heaven

'So if you no be the one I know, come outside!'

'I know, Bishop Oyedepo, I know Bishop Adeboye, I know Edeusa

'Oya if you no hear your name, come outside'

I hereby pronounce all of you way no hear your name, hell fire!!!' (laughter)

One pastor go come dey shout

'Jesus no mind them ooo I go change, I don repent now'

'I say I pronounce all off una way no hear una name oya jump enter hell fire now now'

(more laughter)

Yeh but I trust Nigerians sha dem fit tamper with the list o (laughter) I dey tell you...you go see strong men of God to come like this...them go say 'what is your name?' ... 'my name is Enoch Adeboye' ... 'Enoch Adeboye? You have entered heaven already' (laughter) he go say ehmm 'somebody must have used my name to enter' (more laughter)

Na only Jesus go come come, when him go see him servant, he go say 'what! My servant? Give me the list, give me the list'. He go look am, he go say 'haa dis is not the list...if you are a Nigerian and you are inside heaven ...(demonstrates with the right hand) come outside we are starting again' (more laughter)

All this tittle...king...queen of comedy (scoffs), that time (demonstrate a line of queue) everybody...na people go dey say 'come on feel free to enter' e say 'no stay your position'(laughter), I go jut look back like this I go come see Queen Elizabeth (laughter), I go say 'ehh Lizzy...you dey here? (laughter), (mimicking) 'I am Queen Elizabe...' (interrupts) 'leave dat thing...you be queen na him you follow me stand?' (laughter) 'where your son? Where Charlie?' (laughter) 'When una one frustrate Dina that year (laughter) 'make una go do quee (laughs)'. All this goes to prove that everybody will be judged with equity as they will account solely for their own actions. The following utterances

demonstrate the idea that each man will stand alone to face judgment: 'see my turn go just reach like this gbaa!' I go just bounce go the table, Angel Gabriel go open my file 'What's your name?', 'Bovi', 'Bovi...Heaven' (demonstrates a walk of swag into heaven) (laughter)

The guy don old...nooo action (laughter)..na him one day the girl come complain 'honey what is all this? (Demonstrates girlishly) one minute ... one minute what is all this? You promised me you are gonna show me ...it was gonna be physical.. What is all this? You mean you can't even do up to 10 minutes or 15minutes.' The man go say (changes voice to bass) 'young girl (laughter) young girl... listen ...I am 48 years old (laughter) you are only 21... if I cannot satisfy you, cheat on me (more laughter) just cheat on me don't worry' (more laughter)

And the girls, if you catch your boyfriend dey cheat on you, express your feelings the right way. If una catch una boyfriend, una dey subject una emotion because of the kind of girl wey him dey with, its wrong... If you catch your boyfriend with girl express your feelings the same way... she just waka enter inside 'Mark... what is this? (laughter) noo noo what are you doing? What are you doing with this (pointing irritatingly to something) thing? What are you doing with this thing? No no no no no no what don't talk don't talk... what are you doing with this thing? What is this thing in your house? I say what what you are doing (demonstrates) in my house?... can you leave my house? You this ugly...what, what...are you drunk?' (laughter)

Now if the girl fine, (demonstrates a solemn face) 'Mark (laughter) why are you doing this (points to self) to me? (more laughter) am I not good enough for you?' (Laughter continues)

Well let me tell you this.

You see, in this life we live, there are two things involved.

It is either you are a man or you are a woman.

If you are a woman you are safe but if you are a man, there are two things involved.

It is either you are a civilian or you are in the military.

If you are a civilian you are safe but if you are in the military, there are two things involved.

It is either you are in the office or at the war front.

If you are in the office you are safe ... (laughter)

But if you are at the war front, there are two things involved ...(laughter)

It is either you kill somebody or somebody kill you ...(laughter, claps)

If you kill somebody you are safe ... (laughter, cheers)

But if somebody kill you there are two things involved ...(laughter, cheers)

It is either you are being buried or your body is used for manure ...(laughter, cheers)

If you are being buried you are safe, if your body is used for manure there are two things involved ... (laughter, cheers)

It is either you are used to grow plants, flowers or you are used for trees.

If you are used for flowers, you are safe

If you are used for trees, there are two things involved.

It is either you are used to make paper and tissue paper or you are used to make furniture.

If you are used for furniture you are safe

If you are used for tissue paper, there are two things involved

... (laughter, claps, cheers) Thank you.

It is either you are being used by a man ... (laughter)

Or you are being used by a woman...(laughter)

If you are being used by a man you are safe

((laughter, cheers, claps, catcalls) Thank you

But ... if you're being used by a woman, there are two things involved ...

It is either she use you from the back ... (laughter)

Or she use you from the front ...(laughter)normal pause in SUC,

If you are being used from the back, you are safe ...

If you are being used from the front, there are two things involved ...(laughter, cheers)

It is either you contact gonorrhoea, or you contact HIV...(laughter)

If you contact gonorrhoea you are safe

If you contact HIV ... there is only one thing involved ... (laughter)

You will die.

Baskemouth Uncensored IV Remedy for Cheating – Lord of the Rib's Basketmouth TV

Special Part 2 2018

Man can cheat on their wife eee

But if your wife catch you eee

Omor na die be that o

When she come catch you red handed ee

And she say no baby its fine and she ask you 'what do you want to eat

Just know say na fire be that oooo (laughter)

And if you say no, she go come say, 'no you have to be hungry after what you have done'

You go come say 'no babe I no hungry ooo'

'No you must eat your food, I insist because I made it with so much effort'

'Please na babe I say I belly full well well ooo, I go eat tomorrow'

'I know but you have to eat mine as well it's not poison ooo'

'You sure? Oya make I call my father to tell am first watin happen today before I chop' (loud laughter and clapping)

Ali Baba comedies – Night of a Thousand Laughs 2000

One thing about men...e get one man (stutters) especially aristos. Aritos them go dey form (mimics a deep voice) 'let me take care of you...I will take care good care of you' dem go dey tell all diz small small girls. Na so one aristo go dey tell one girl, the guy na 48, the girl na 21 (mimics a deep voice) 'I will take care of you' and you know all these young girls...dem still (demonstrates girlishly) dat youthful level...energy still dey so she wants to be satisfied ...physically, emotionally and pocket wisely (touches the pocket) (laughter)

Then another thing about guys, also if you dey spend money on chick, spend money wisely. There some girls that are worth only mineral when you take them out (laughter)...now if you one spend money for woman, they fit fine but there are some packaging way deserve more things. If you take girl comot, if the packaging no too dey alright, make she just drink only mineral or water (laughter) if she no just try at all, make una just dance throughout (more

laughter) well if she try, you know, you fit dey give am all those smirnof ice, Gordon Spark; if she try well well, Baileaf, is she too try (pause) Champaign (laughter) I dey tell you

There are some girls that are worth only mineral when you take them out (laughter). No e quarrel, may una never vex, the girls (laughter)

Dis guy dey give am money...dey show love but the physical... (Demonstrates sexually) you know (laughter) you know ...the guy cannot ...you know (more laughter) the guy don old...nooooo action (laughter) na him one day the girl come complain 'Honey what is all this? (Demonstrates girlishly) one minute, what dis all this? You promised me you are gonna show me love...it was gonna be physical... what is all this? You mean you can't even do up to 10 or 15 minutes'

Some girls go come, una una know una self, una go cheat us use fake fake things. First of all, you short you go come wear high heel (demonstrates height from shortness to tallness and points finger as a sign of counting) (laughter) now we think say you tall (laughter), this thing no dey (points to the breast) you know, you go come lift am, we go think say e dey (laughter) now you done go reach, you don go reach smirnof ice now. Dem go come put all those their eye lash (demonstrates girlishly towards the eyes) wey dey make their eyes like say e dey beautiful...you done dey reach Champaign, (laughter) hair (demonstrates a weave on) you know, if you no reach the level, check the girl out.

Na dis kind crowd na im good to mess.

I bought one drum like that and hung it in my living room. One day like dat wey meat no dey to cook for the dogs, I look the pomo ... look am, look am, look am ... well, dey enjoyed it sha.

One day like that, when there was no meat ... I took a good look at the hide ... looked at it, looked at it, looked at it ... well, they enjoyed it anyway.

Comedy in Essence vol. 1

Make we just hail all di people

All the Arsenal fans,

All the Arsenal fans represent yourself (noise, some hands are raised)

All the Chelsea fans

All the Chelsea fans, make some noise (noise, some hands are raised)

All the Manu fans (noise, some hands are raised) and the final one,

And the best one, and the best team

All the Eyimba fans (loudest noise, many hands are raised)

I Go Dye – Comedy in Essence

Any Warri guy dey here?

Area (Audience: 'eh')

I dey wan beg people make dem hold dia fone o.

Na so dem tief one guy fone

After two weeks as di guy dey pass for di area, na im dem call di guy

'Oga, come here ... your fone no los?'

'Yeah, they stole my phone here two weeks ago.'

E say wait ... di guy enter, carry one Ghana

fone na im full inside travelling bag

Na im dem bring one Sony Erikson ...

'Na you get dis fone?'

'Yeah, this is my fon'

Na im di Warri boy say,

'Ehehn... So na you lock, eh ehn ...

Dis fone wey we no fit sell am

Open di fone now make you dey run'.

Our Nigerian girls face dey quick change.

Before I tink say na hardship

Until I come know.

Check your Papa and Mama, you go see say dem two don resemble each other

Why?

Wen di man don dey put too much

Sim card for di fone,

Wen di tin don too full di body

E go come dey chang, di face,

of Mama and your papa your mother and father

Dem two go don dey look

Like brodas and sistas

Dat is why if woman get belle

If she born di pikin go resemble

di papa or di mama

Na blood

If girls stop to dey date difrent men dem go look sweet ...

Different men wey una dey follow

dey confuse una face

A lot of guys lie, same thing with girls

But na girls lie pass ...

Girls and guys who lie pass

Make I break am down for you

Guys own na word of mouth ... na im

Girls own, everything for una body na liea lie

Hair (Audience: "lie")

Finger nail (Audience: 'lie')

Eye lash (Audience: 'lie')

Eye brow (Audience: 'lie')

Lips (Audience: 'lie')

Height (Audience: 'lie')

(touches both parts of his chest)(Audience: 'lie')

Now, for dis country, dia is difference between cell and prison

If you go cell wen you come out

You go be ex-convict,

But wen you go prison omo

Baby you go be president

(Applause)Abi I dey lie?

(Audience: 'No')

Mandela, na prison e go abi na cell

(Audience: 'Prison')

Ehn? Pardon?

(Audience: 'Prison')

E get one oda person for dis contry

wey go somewhere

Wia e go?

(Audience: 'Prison')

Wen e come outside nko?

(Audience: 'President')...for dis country

(disjointed comments from audience)

You say?

(Audience: 'Call im name')

Make I call im name?

(Audience: 'Yes')

You no get mouth?

(laughter)You no get mouth, ehn?

(laughter)You wan take your reggae spoil my blues?

(Do you want to put me in trouble?_)

(laughter)Na my mouth you wan hear say king mess?

(laughter)Na somebody I tok

(laughter)Somebody na somebody name?

(laughter)E go somewhere, he became a president

(laughter)If you tink say I dey lie, you go prison

wen you come outside, may God help you

Alleluia.

Like me, I no dey fear death

I fear poverty pass death

It's better for me to rich and die

with the rich than poor and die

Because my family dem no even hussle

Papa and mama poor

Papa poor mama poor,

My father is poor, my mother is poor

Family meeting, dem hold am

Na legezen everybody dey drive come

I tell myself say I can never be poor.

See Tuface buy Navigator wey just come out

Di next tin, e buy E-class, E330,

Tear rubber, Chacha, brand new 11.2 million naira.

P-Square dem buy M-class, di latest one 16.4 million.

D Banj, BMW is it 3 abi 4, 5 series tear rubber. >brand new 8.9 million.

Na im make i vex.

Na im I buy my own

mine...X5 ... SAGEM...tear rubbe...

(laughter)

Night of A Though Laughs 2000

People de complain dis contri evriday

Evriday, arm robber, arm robber tief,

Thief I don tink am I don tire.

Di reason why arm robber dey dis country

be say, first na government.

Dem make gun dear and bullet cheap

How you go sell bullet 30 naira?

If you get gun and get your bullet 30 naira

If someone even get 1000 naira,

You go take 30 naira thief am.

No be di gun be di fear na di bullet

If federal government fit do am make

Every Nigerian get gun

No arm robber again.

But make di bullet DEAR.

Di bullet go be like 1.5 million,

How much you wan take 1.5 million tief?