A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED END-SARS SLANG ON TWITTER

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Abstract

The #EndSars was a protest that surfaced as a social movement that vociferously agitated the disbanding of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in Nigeria. This research study attempts to investigate an innovation of public protest discourse using the #EndSars tweets and slogans as data. The study examines #EndSars' tweeted slogans and protesters' comments. Twenty (20) online posts and comments hashtagged #EndSars during and after the protest were purposively collated as data for the study. Fairclough's sociocultural approach to Critical Discourse Analysis was used as the study's theoretical framework and analytical tool. Findings show that tweeters and commenters employed linguistic and discourse styles such as language, encouragement, defiance, and obscenities, amongst others, to enhance and project their focus calling on youths' participation in governance concerning the 2023 elections. These discursive strategies advance language politics within the power imbalance, abuse, extra-judicial practices, marginalization, and other social injustices. The study concludes that virtual protesters deploy slang to sensitise, persuade, motivate and mobilise the virtual community on the goal of the #EndSars protest, to sustain their solidarity in the struggle, and to coordinate the demonstration.

Key words: Critical Discourse, End SARS, Slang, Tweeter

Introduction

The year 2020, to the world, was a year that no one would want to wish for again, but to Nigerians, it was a different ball game altogether as it came with not just COVID-19 at the beginning of the

year, but the later part of the year brought with it the End-SARS protest, which metamorphosed to the Lekki toll gate massacre and palliative loot around the country. A major driver of the End-SARS protests was the human rights abuses by SARS and other security operatives as a result of a lack of accountability for their actions. In many situations, security operatives who violated human rights were shielded by the police hierarchy; victims were afraid to speak out for fear of being targeted again. A June 2020 Amnesty report stated that "the government has failed to prosecute a single SARS operative since the National Assembly passed the Anti-Torture Act of 2017" (Amnesty International June Report). Also, the Police Act which is the enabling legislation for the Nigeria Police Force is obsolete. The act, which was adopted in 1943, leaves broad discretionary powers in the hands of police officers. These allowed officers to perform warrantless searches and make arrests based on mere suspicion of guilt or even intent to commit an offence. This is the crux of many allegations against SARS: victims' phones have been seized without a warrant, while others have been arrested for wearing tattoos or dreadlocks.

Scholars have argued that social media has become central to many protests that have occurred in the past decade. Sebastian Valenzuela, Arturo Arriagada and Andres Scherman in their study opine that "social media can play a key role in mobilization because it facilitates access to large amounts of contacts, generates collective identities, and serves as a site for information distributions" (16).Social media tends to support or facilitate traditional protest forms. In addition to using Twitter to coordinate protests and to denounce police violence, protesters use other social media platforms as alternative information sources, a space to publish a counter- narrative to the version being portrayed in pro-government propaganda channels. These social media platforms were used to invent and redeploy slang termed "End-SARS slangs". "Slang referred to as the city's language" (Green Jonathon 5). It is a type of language "consisting of words and phrases that are very informal, more common in speech than writing, and are typically restricted to a particular context or group of people"

(Adams Michael 12). Slang is also used as a synonym for the terms cant, flash, or argot in reference to the "language of rogues and thieves" (Zoltan Ildiko 9). However, contrary to the traditional definition of slang, "internet slangs are mostly used in writing" (Crystal David, 20). Other terms associated with internet slangs are netspeak, chatspeak, cyber-slangs, internet-jargon, cyber-jargon, and social-slang.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a particular strand of discourse analysis which has been interested in the role of language in the functioning of society and political processes. Emerging out of Critical Linguistics in the late 1970s, CDA sees "language as a form of social practice" (Fairclough Norman, 20), which is used to legitimize, maintain and naturalize forms of social power and inequality. Here, power means the ability not only to coerce through things like the military, legal or penal system but also where there is control over the kinds of ideas and values used to create our societies. "These will be found throughout institutions and organizations such as schools, businesses and media" (Simpson Paul and Mayr Andrea 22).

During the End-SARS protests slangs were used to communicate some ideological messages that this study intends to bring to the fore. Twitter, among other social media platforms, served as the major vehicle through which these slangs were deployed. The protest started from Twitter before it was taken to the streets. The Nigerian youths tagged the 'soro soke' generation used the Yoruba phrase which means 'speak louder' on social media and offline to encourage people to speak up in protest against bad governance and police brutality; that was how the usage of slang began, all in a bid to inspire mass participation and rapid response to the cry of the masses.

However, these previous studies on the End-SARS protest in Nigeria tend to be a description of the economic impact, extrajudicial killings, and the way forward for the Nigerian youth after the protest. To the best of the knowledge of this research, no study has employed a Critical Discourse Analysis approach in studying the End-SARS protest and also, no study has been conducted on End-SARS slang. This is why this study uses CDA to examine and analyse End-SARS slang used on

Twitter to demystify the ideological meanings of this slang and to show how the slang is deployed during the protest.

Review of Previous Studies

Several studies have been carried out on End-SARS protests and these studies employed different theories to arrive at different conclusions. One such investigations on the End-SARS protest focusing on the social aspects that gave a rebirth to activism was conducted by Ehi Agbashi, Nirvana Tesfayohannes, Temiloluwa Adeyemi and Osasenaga Aghayere. Their study focused on the impacts of the End-SARS protest on Nigerians. Their data was collated from online corpus related to the protest some of which include Yiaga Africa, Yale Journal of International Affairs, Sahara TV, to mention but a few. Their findings revealed that the End-SARS protest and other protests like the #Blacklivesmatter movement are inextricably linked because they both call for racial and social justice. They also see the End-SARS protest as a precursor of the opportunity at the disposal of Nigerians and the youths to shape the political future of the country with the 2023 general elections around the corner. This study is a departure from the current study since the current study focuses on End- SARS slang.

In another study, Tamar Haruna Dambo, Metin Ersoy, Ahmad Muhammad Auwal, Victor Oluwafemi Olorunsola, Ayodeji Olonode, Abdulgaffar Olawale Arikewuyo and Ayodele Joseph examined the limitations of the #EndSARS campaign by assessing how Nigeria's political environment can serve as a possible hindrance to successful movements. The research answered two questions: What are the dominant themes in Nigeria's #EndSARS campaign? What are the limitations to activism in Nigeria? They argue that Nigerians' tendency to politicize issues of great importance affected the success of the #EndSARS campaign. This study too does not have a similar pre-occupation as the current study which examines End-SARS slang from a Discourse Analysis perspective.

Similarly, Usman Abbo, Bashiru Alhaji Njidda, and Auwal Baba in their study hold a similar view to Dambo et al but while the

latter ascribed the failure of the movement to things like religion, culture and political inclinations, the former did not. The study demonstrated that the ENDSARS social movement had achieved a remarkable failure in the sense that it had created lawlessness and chaos where the security situation degenerated quickly into massive looting and robbery which made the SARS era look even better. They suggested that to make change happen, gathering a band of passionate enthusiasts is not enough. The organizers need to make their purpose clear, establish values and create a plan for success.

Adekoya, Clement Ola in a related study showed that social media was used during the #EndSARS protest to listen to news about the protest, to find out the causes of the protest, and to know about the extent of police brutality. He recommended in line with the findings of his study that social media should be constructively utilised as an instrument of social transformation to protest against obnoxious activities observed to be inimical to human dignity and social justice in the society. This study, just like that of Abbo, et al, differs from the current study in both theoretical concern and approach.

Ekoh and George conducted a study where they argue that digital technology has made it possible for people to get information in real-time and in many cases with digital video evidence. Thus, protests as we know them are changing in line with digital technological advancements, and many protests will be influenced by digital technology. They also pointed out that social workers in Nigeria have a responsibility to join in the fight against oppression and injustice using online and offline platforms while also ensuring people are protected at a time when the risks of the COVID-19 pandemic was still prevalent.

Similarly, Afeez and Adeolu conducted research on the impact of social media on police brutality. This research was published in January 2021. They point out that the #EndSARS movement dates back to 2017, when Nigerian youths used the hash tag to share their experiences on violence and assault perpetrated by the defunct Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). They also pointed out that although social

media has some negative impacts on young ones and the society, it still has numerous positive impacts.

Despite the numerous points of convergence between the current study and the reviewed works, it is clear that none of the works above was preoccupied with studying End-SARS slang; hence this study intends to investigate, explore and analyse slang related to the End-SARS protest from a critical discourse perspective.

Theoretical Framework

Fairclough's Discourse as a social practice model of CDA is employed as a theoretical framework for this study. The model gives the general picture of the language in society. The general picture is elaborated on the relationship between language and power and the relationship between language and ideology. Fairclough believes that language is centrally involved in power struggles and it is so involved through its ideological properties. Hence, in analysing language/discourse as a social practice, one commits oneself not just in analysing text, nor just to analysing the processes of production and interpretation, but to analysing the relationship between text, processes and their social conditions. These social conditions involve both the immediate conditions of situational context and the more remote conditions of institutional and social structures. This includes the relationship between texts, interaction and the context corresponding to three dimensions or the stages of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) description, interpretation and explanation.

Furthermore, Fairclough says Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analysis that "aims to contribute to addressing the social 'wrongs' of the day (in a broad sense, injustice, inequality, lack of freedom etc.) by analysing their sources and causes, resistance to them and possibilities of overcoming them"(163). Hence, a critical discourse analyst will examine how certain levels of discourse reveal value judgements and ideological perspectives. Ideology in this context includes which individuals or groups/identities represent themselves or are represented by others. According to van Dijk,

"ideologies go beyond the representation and legitimization of class domination." (20) Dominated groups (e.g. the workers) also require a form of ideology as a basis for resistance. Ideological discourse very often reveals evidence of positive 'we' representation ('we' representing, the workers, an ethnic group, or a particular political persuasion) and negative 'other' representation ('other' being either the government or a political opposition group etc.).

The choice of Fairclough's model of CDA as a framework for the analysis in this study is necessitated by the fact that slangs are not used in a vacuum; they are entrenched in a certain context. This point is significant in Fairclough's Discourse as a social practice model. Fairclough argues that utterances are meaningful only in their situational, cultural, ideological and historical context. It is based on this reasoning that this research allocates the analysis of context a central place. Understanding the silent meaning attached to the use of slangs in protests will be more valid using this theory.

Methodology

This study utilizes the descriptive-qualitative design in the critical analysis of End-SARS slangs in the year 2020. Specifically, this study involves textual analysis to determine the three stages of Fairclough's CDA as social practice: description, interpretation, and explanation. A total of twenty (20) samples which include, statements, sentences and expressions were collated for the study. The samples were drawn randomly from Twitter.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Data is presented and analysed based on Fairclough's three stages of text analysis for critical discourse. These include description, interpretation, and explanation. The first stage of analysis deals with the identification of the different of slang used in tweets during the EndSARS protest. Next, is the interpretation stage, where the different meanings of these slang are pointed out. The final stage deals with the

way protesting Nigerians used these slang to pass solidarity messages to comrades within and outside the country.

The #EndSars protest discourse was grounded in ideology using discourse strategies. These linguistic and discourse strategies, well exploited by online protesters, proved to be the backbone for communicating the #EndSars movement's agenda. the discursive strategies engaged by tweeters and Face bookers within the social realities of abuse of power and extra-judicial practices and by extension, bad governance in Nigeria are: defiance, motivation, submission, advice, questions, and resilience; all of which are instrumental in projecting the tweeters' focus and desire as well as calling for youth participation in governance. These discursive strategies are discussed with respect to the contextual ideological underpinnings responsible for this discourse construction.

Slangy words and expressions are highly contextual and are often blend of lexemes from indigenous languages with the Standard English. Noteworthy is the fact that tweets of #EndSars protesters largely appear in the unofficial form of language use such as colloquialism, vulgarism, provocative language, code-mixing and code-switching, therefore, it is not surprising that slang is deployed to intimately communicate the goal of the protest.

> **TWT 1**: We're still in the darkness…. ***Eh soro soke werey*** Mr @MBuhari
> #endsars #EndPoliceBrutality #EndBadGoveranceInNigeria
> https://mobile.twitter.com/wahlexmiicky/status/13189909499 51901696

The #EndSars protest was a form of retaliation to the status quo, and retaliation is first communicated by speaking. This explains the deployment of the slang Soro *soke* by the protesters. This is a Yoruba expression which means to 'speak up'. In the context of this study, it is taken as slang to motivate protesters and spur more reactions from them. *Soro Soke* is a slang adopted by protesters to speak with one voice. It is a contextual expression that calls for outspokenness and

vociferousness; that it is high time Nigerians spoke up against oppression, unequal power relations, subservience, criminality, corruption and many others. TWT1 shows that irate Nigerians want drastic change and no apologies from the government. Through the typographical strategy of calling which is an inclusive feature of Twitter, a call is made to '@JideSanwoOlu', the Governor of Lagos State and '@MBuhari', President Muhammadu Buhari to 'speak up' and come up with a sensible resolution on the demands of the protesters which would bring peace. Slang is often vulgar and provocative. Such instances in the extract are the inclusion of *WEREY* (lunatic), *ODE* (fool) *F*CK* (F-word). The use of such expression suggests rage and also total disregard for the addressees.

> **TWT 2**: Now… You want to know the greatest **'Lori iro'** …is the point when they say "THE POLICE IS YOUR FRIEND." Every other lie can become true someday… But not this one. This is soo EVIL! #mrmacaroni
> Rt this #EndSARS … Let's keep it trending
> https://twitter.com/veva_peter/status/1360613436707786753?s=20&t=aCDAluffWT-GH7ufsdQCxQ
> **TWT 3**: SARS to SWAT? **Weyreydey disguise**. #ENDSARS #ENDSWAT #ENDSWATNOW
> https://twitter.com/unicodeveloper/status/1316084618836221952?s=20&t=aCDAluffWT-GH7ufsdQCxQ
> **TWT 4**: Guys Uncle Anonymous is at it again, a credit alert of 2million naira
> This one **mad oh**, everyone stay near ATM and hold your card Zenith
> #EndPoliceBrutalityinNigera
> #EndPoliceBrutalityinNigeraNOW #EndSARS #ilorinprotest #AbujaProtestsRetweetforawareness
> https://twitter.com/EverythingAdams/status/1318183857355739136?s=20&t=aCDAluffWT-GH7ufsdQCxQ

The tweets above establish the social issues of power imbalance, exploitation and oppression suffered by some Nigerians in the hands of

some members of SARS and the police force as the ideology behind the #EndSars protest. Instead of this, the "your" inclusive group stands up to challenge the "they" exclusive group or our group on a status quo that continuously threatens their humanity. The inclusion effect tends to make all Nigerians share the sentiments of the protesters, see the protest as a national struggle and identify with their group thus the government heap lies upon lies.

Furthermore, the slang **weyrey dey disguise** and **mad oh** means that it is faux and something is seriously surprising. The reference to one Mr Anonymous is none other than the Hacker group that hacked the servers of DSTV, GOTV, MTN, and some financial institutions. They exploited the servers and made free what these companies and banks charge their customers for. It was a short-lived experience as they found ways to reverse the damage done.

During the End-SARS protest, the minds of the masses received a lot of pressure from the happenings around them but incentives came from the virtual protesters and this served as boosters to a people who were already fainting

> **TWT 5**: The police at Lekki try to frustrate us today by telling us where to pass n where not to pass, they even said we can't pass through Lekki Toll Gate, they blocked Ikoyi bypass bridge, But **We Move**!!! n pass through, let them kill us, All die na die. A rally is not a protest
> #EndSARS, Rinu
> https://twitter.com/realTobiAkinbo/status/157630335484182
> 1184?s=20&t=aCDAluffWT-GH7ufsdQCxQ
> **"We Meuuve"**

What started as an imitation of BBNaija 2020 star, Vee Adeyele's accent when she had a quarrel with her lover, Neo Akpofure, in the Big Brother house has now become a popular slang. Vee was heard telling Neo to "meuuve from the door" (move from the door) when the latter was trying to prevent her from leaving the room.

The words become better accepted as a motivational phrase and a way Nigerians say "life goes on." Many tirades of woeful stories often end

with "... but then, we meuuve!" Also, when Nigerians cannot go and kill themselves, they say "see ehn, we meuuve."

> **TWT 6**: Abuja protesters were on their way to the Nigerian police HQ to meet the IGP and guess what? The police attacked them with teargas and water cannon again, just a few minutes after the supposed news of disbandment. Nigerians! **Ji! Ma sun**. Them Dey disguise! We've not won o. #ENDSARS
> https://twitter.com/blvck_Witch/status/1315300401781055490?s=20&t=aCDAluffWT-GH7ufsdQCxQ

In tweet 6 the phrase **Ji Ma Sun** which is a slang that is of Yoruba origin means to "wake up, not to be dull". It was deployed by the angry protesters to send motivation to comrades. It is a truism that the Nigerian government is fond of making promises they do not intend to keep and the slang is telling Nigerians to wake up and perceive the aroma of coffee because it is not over until the banners of SARS are no longer flown.

> **TWT 7**: See them bringing in tanks to kill their citizens. Fucked up government
> #LekkiMassacre   #LekkiGenocide   #LekkitollgateMassacre #EndBadGoveranceInNigeria #EndSARS #EndPoliceBrutalityinNigeraNOW
> **Mafo** we mount for una this time Our eyes don open!!!
> https://twitter.com/DanielsDavincii/status/131882026912182272720?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg
> **Ma Fo**

This is one of singer, Naira Marley's slangs that have stood the test of time and are still as famously used as the first day it was said. Literarily, this is a Yoruba term that means "Don't break", but in the real sense, it is saying, "Don't be intimidated or don't be bothered."
It can be simply used as "Ma Fo" which can also mean "don't worry" and it can be stretched to a street line, "OmoIya mi, ma fo, mowapelu e" which means, "My brother/sister, don't be bothered, I am here with you."

Although the battle raged hot it seemed like Nigerians had submitted to the fate of their proverbial taskmasters. Their voices were still heard subtly calling on the virtual community to join in the struggle for a better Nigeria.

> **TWT 8**: Poverty or illiteracy, I still don't know which is a stronger tool for the government. These government-sponsored thugs can't be paid more than N5, 000 to unleash havoc and disrupt a peaceful protest.
> **E be things** #EndSARS
> https://twitter.com/Lazycheftweets/status/1318509631501750272?s=20&t=aCDAluffWT-GH7ufsdQCxQ

Tweet 8 above was used to capture the attention of protesters and all Nigerians, both home and abroad, and evoke empathy for the victims and disgust for the perpetrators. By tweeting such unfortunate incidents with much emphasis and a sense of urgency, the tweeter intends to update the virtual community on the reality of killings and judicial atrocities in society. This tweet subtly endears the virtual community to join the campaign and lend their voice to amplify the agenda of the #EndSars protest by massively retweeting and commenting.

> **TWT 9**: #EndSARS is Killing young Nigerians
> Bandits are killing & Kidnapping farmers in all the zones of Nigeria.
> Food is at the all-time high in the Country.
> People are losing their jobs at a scary rate
> And everybody is going about their normal lives.
> **E be things oo**
> https://twitter.com/Nig_Farmer/status/1308463319720824832?s=20&t=aCDAluffWT-GH7ufsdQCxQ

Although the above slang is similar to tweet 8, it is deployed based on a different trouble that is pertinent to the protest. It is deployed to evoke a sense of righteous anger in Nigerians and it offers a wakeup call to those who have been sitting idle, to raise their voices and do what is required. This tweet subtly endears the virtual community to join the

campaign and lend their voice to amplify the agenda of the #EndSars protest by massively re-tweeting and commenting.

> **TWT 10**: #EndSARS: No forget to say we still dey for the matter ooo. No go chop Rice and dodo forget pipu we don die for this struggle.
> Retweet if your eyesight this
> **God no go shame us.**
> #EndBadGovernmentinNIGERIA
> https://twitter.com/Niyiafrika02/status/1321729251004002304?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

God no go shame us is a phrase in one of the tracks of Zlatan Ibile's hit track titled "*Able God*" In the music, the artist pleads for showers of blessings from God. The phrase tells of how Nigerians resign to the power of a supreme being when situations go out of hand. Protesters and Nigerians alike are all asking for God's help as the country takes a downturn.

> **TWT 11**: Nigeria A New Dawn called Exodus!
> Our promised land awaits! Congrats to every Nigerian! Such a time to be alive! We continue to midwife this birth of newness alongside God! **God no go shame us**, his promise to us remains Yes & Amen!
> #EndSWAT #EndSARS
> #EndSarsNow #EndPoliceBrutality
> https://twitter.com/Jaypearse/status/1316280548462137345?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

In this tweet, the tweeter makes an allusion to the case of emancipation of the Israelites from the land of Egypt, this is another discursive strategy employed by the angry protesters during the EndSARS protest which raged on both physically and virtually.
A new dawn called Exodus is envisaged because Nigeria has never seen the like of the EndSARS protest where religion and region were put aside for the pursuit of a common goal.

> **TWT 12**: **On God!** All these pictures and videos are giving me goose bumps, you guys out there are the real MVPs#EndSARS #EndSARSMemorial

https://twitter.com/ManLikeBright/status/145075861132042
6499?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6t

This is another case of allusion to the higher powers. The tweeter resigns to God when gory pictures and videos of protesters are released and calls them the real MVPs. **On God** is also another of Zlatan's coined slang that made rounds during the protest to renew the hope of Nigerians.

> **TWT 13**: #endSARS is a very heavy memory. & I only witnessed via the live videos from my phone far away from home. SANWOOLU, TINUBU & all involved, it will NEVER be well with y'all!!! **On GOD**
> RIP to our brothers & sisters. We will NEVER forget.
> #EndSARSMemorial2 #OBI #GRV
> https://twitter.com/vybeauthentiq/status/1583082031570776
> 064?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

Allusion is a discourse strategy that creates flashback effects by referring to past experiences. Allusion reflects and beams the light of past attitudes and incidents on current issues in an attempt to find a suitable panacea for the problems encountered in the present. The virtual #EndSars protesters engaged in religious and socio-political allusion to persuade and enlighten the virtual community on the need for renewed zeal and enthusiasm in the protest. Religion has always been ingrained in the fabric of the African society. Almost every Nigerian subscribes and submits to the tenets of a religion. The virtual protesters took the #EndSars struggle into a spiritual dimension, especially with the outspokenness of prominent spiritual leaders across the country. Nigeria is a nation rich in religious heritage and little wonder why spirituality becomes a perfect blend with activism in the #EndSars struggle. Within the consciousness of the vanity of life without religion, virtual protesters become more motivated having known that their efforts are backed up by spiritual forces - spiritual forces are considered greater and more fearsome than physical forces.

The virtual #EndSars protesters engaged in a discursive practice of calling out some social actors and directly addressing them in respect of the pressing social issues. Virtual #EndSars protesters called the attention of salient social actors whose social roles would influence and directly impact the essence of the social struggle.

> **TWT 14**: See how our government is making us fight for basic human rights... It was #EndSARS to live. Now it's #EndSocialMediaBill to speak...
> God forbid!
> As I set to die, that angel felt it was Nigeria that'd suit me most...
> **O wrong o**
> https://twitter.com/amy_jdd/status/1323567719468453888?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

When a situation gets out of hand and there is nothing more to say and no other means to express emotions the slang **O wrong o** or **O wrong now** is usually deployed and it speaks volumes where words may fail.

> **TWT 15**: Pastor Osinbajo, **always resist the urge to Shalaye.**
> We need action, prosecution, not explanation.
> #EndSARS #EndSARSBrutalitynow #justiceforjimoh #5for5
> https://twitter.com/fa_ka_yo_de/status/1317348893127041024?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

The tweeter sends a message to the VP Elect to **Always resist the urge to shalaye.** This statement is unsolicited advice to in this case the VP not to bite more than he can chew or say more than is needed and to do what is required of his office.

Empty words do not put food on the table or change the nation's narrative.

> **TWT 16**: In this #EndSARS matter abeg DON'T **resist the urge to shalaye**
> Make sure you SORO SOKE OOO
> #EndSARS
> https://twitter.com/Only1TMD/status/1318122098481598464?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

Another discursive feature deployed by protesters during the End-SARS protest is the use of questions. A lot has happened; those responsible are denying their involvement, who then is responsible? For the lives lost, acts perpetrated, and futures cut short.

> **TWT 17**: Our white friends don join the #EndSARS #EndSWAT movement! **E shock you abi?**
> https://twitter.com/von_Bismack/status/13166735032660418 56?s=20&t=aCDAluffWT-GH7ufsdQCxQ

The tweet above employs the discursive strategy of questioning. This question was popularized by a skit maker called Samuel Perry but popularly referred to as Brother Shaggy. It is an expression of shock that is thrown at the listener to confirm if the surprise is mutual. The events surrounding the End-SARS protest made a lot of Nigerians witness first-hand what is experienced by citizens of other countries where there is civil unrest.

> **TWT 18:** Buhari had Twitter shut down, yet #EndSARS is trending…
> **No be juju be that?**
> https://twitter.com/MrIpadeola/status/140104214494977229 2?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

Tweet 18 houses the question **"Nobe juju be that?"** (Is that not witchcraft?)

Nigerians are known for their spirit of resilience, even in the face of trials, challenges, and times they always find a way to pull through and move on with their lives. This discursive strategy can be found in its largeness in the slang used during the End-SARS protest. Nigerians come up with terms and sayings to help them move on with their lives and this buttresses the lines of Late Fela Anikulapo's song "Suffering and Smiling"

> **TWT 19**: Bashir is still pained that courageous Youths took on the courage to confront a reformed #dictator via the instrumentality of the #EndSARS campaign. E nor believe. **E Choke!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

> https://twitter.com/BashirAhmaad/status/135078377368894
> 6688...
> https://twitter.com/FS_Yusuf_/status/1350815974719696896
> ?s=20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

E Choke

This is a very popular and currently trending street slang that was started by famous Nigerian singer, David "Davido" Adeleke. "E Choke" literarily means "It Chokes", however, in the street language; it is an exclamatory remark for something overwhelming or extremely impressive. When Nigerians see something or someone that goes beyond expectation, this slang is a way of saying that they were so surprised that they choked on air or their saliva, though it may be a bit exaggerated.

The tweet above exemplifies the use of this slang and it was used in both instances sarcastically to berate people who were caught doing or saying things that they are not supposed to be doing or saying.

> **TWT 20**: Appreciate those who took out time to check on you in the midst of all these. **We go all dey alright las las.** #ItIsNotFinished #EndSARS #LazyNigerianYouthUnite
> https://twitter.com/debbiesean_/status/1319587785397948416?s=
> 20&t=i7B-4vJxBo5yqnkAq1v6tg

Tweet 20 is an example of the Nigerian spirit of resilience in the face of challenges. "las las we go dey alright" literally means of despite all that is going on we are going to pull through, we may be shot at, killed, drawn and quartered by inflation and hike in fuel and commodity prices but we will be alright in the end.

General Discussion

The study set out to examine and analyse End SARS slang used on tweeter from the lens of CDA, so as to be able to deflate the ideological meanings of these slang with regard to how they were deployed during the End SARS protests. The data presented and analysed thus far have succinctly captured this reality through the

sampled tweets. For instance, tweets 1-20 as presented and analysed have clearly identified the different slang used in tweets during the protests. Similarly, the different meanings of these identified slang have identifiable interpretations that pass solidarity messages to the EndSARS protesters. While TWTS 1-5 establish the social issues of power imbalance, exploitation and oppression suffered by Nigerians in the hands of the police, TWTS 6 and 7 do not only decry police brutality but call forth the protest. There is the slang **God no go shame us** in TWTS 10 and 11, **On God** in TWTS 12 and 13, **O wrong o** in TWT 14, **resist the urge to Shalaye** in TWTS 15 and 16, **E shock you abi?** In TWT 17 and No **be juju be that?** In TWT 18. In TWT 19, the slang **E Choke** comes to the fore while in TWT 20, we are exposed to the slang, **we go all dey alright las las** as a beacon of hope for a better future.

Conclusion

Twitter is one of the theatres for this struggle and the influence of the new media in recent years aided the viral spread of mass awareness. The virtual protest served as a fillip and motivation for the on-site protesters. The entrenched social phenomena of extra-judicial practices, insurrection and insurgencies, problems of insecurity, failed political promises, abuse of fundamental human rights, and brutality of the Nigerian police, formed the macro-context of this discourse and created solid ground for the tenets of critical discourse analysis to thrive. Ideological underpinnings as evinced through CDA are factors that triggered these discursive practices. The analysis shows that these discursive strategies were tactically used to mobilize, sensitize and persuade the virtual community on the goals of the #EndSars movement.

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