

Disarming And Reclaiming *Iyamiri* In Nigerian Social Media Discourse

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Abstract

Current concerns in the increasing use of slur utterances in Nigeria and globally, the dangers and threats such utterances pose and the difficulty of curbing them using legislation and criminalization motivate the need to seek alternative approaches to address hate utterances. This paper explores the nature and linguistic mechanics of slur utterances and how they can be reclaimed, using Brontsemaian hate speech acts model for the reclamation of slur utterances within the caveat of linguistic disarmament. Data for the study is a short anti-Igbo hate song on YouTube rendered in Hausa and translated into English by the researcher. The analysis which focused on a single lexical item *-Iyamiri-* amidst other hate-induced utterances, identified the characteristics of slur words and how they are deployed to cause harm. To neutralize, disarm and/or reclaim *inyamiri* in the Nigerian social media socio-cultural and political discourses, the paper suggests that the word should either be owned by those it pejoratively refers to by a process of pejoration separation reclamation or reverse the referent through the process of pejoration inseparable reclamation. Through these two processes drawn from Brontsema's (2004) reformulated three processes, *Iyamiri* can be neutralized, reclaimed, disarmed of its hurt, and the value of its harm can be reversed in the interest of the positive and collective linguistic psyche of Nigerians.

Keywords: Social media discourse, *Iyamiri*, slurwords, disarmament, reclamation, hate speech acts

Introduction

Slurring is a type of hate speech meant to harm individuals simply because of their group membership. It not only offends but also causes oppression. Slurs are noted for their offensive autonomy. They offend regardless of speaker's intentions, attitudes, and beliefs. Slurs are also noted for their offense variation, as not all slurs offend equally. Slurs signal identity affiliations; they cue and re-entrench ideologies. They subordinate and silence target members and are sometimes used non-derogatorily. Slurs raise interesting issues in the philosophy of language and linguistics, social and political philosophy, moral psychology, and social epistemology (Wyatt,

2020). Slurs are used by individuals in a given community to inflict pain on other individuals or groups in the same community, based on the beliefs, norms and culture of that society. Slur utterances are used in context and within social situations. Debates (Falana, 2017; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005; Steinmetz, 2005) about slur words/utterances regularly cover newspaper headlines all over the world; with some suggesting that their users be prosecuted. Some even argue that inciters should be more culpable than the principal offenders who carry out the act of raping and killing (Brontsema, 2004). This is because slur utterances have

caused a lot of havoc in the world, inciting people into revolution and genocide.

The first genocide of the 20th century which occurred in Southwest Africa (now Namibia), between August 1904 and 1907 was fuelled by racial superiority and slur utterances.

The Germans felt that the indigenous Ovaherero people (that had been annexed by Germany in the early 1880s) were inferior, made some dehumanising statements against them and attempted to exterminate them (Steinmetz, 2005). The Rwandan genocide of 1994 was also ignited by speeches laced with slur on the Tutsi by the Hutus. The Hutus, who were the majority group in Rwanda felt the Tutsi, a minority group and in power then, were too inferior to rule over them. The Hutus made derogatory statements about the Tutsi, calling them "cockroaches" and "snakes", which led to genocide (Nnoli, 2008). Also, according to Osaghae and Suberu (2005), the remote cause of the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-1970 which claimed millions of lives was attributed to slur utterances between Igbo traders and Hausa/Fulani traders in Northern Nigeria.

While several studies have investigated slurring and the use of slur utterances (Anderson & Lepore, 2013; St Clare, 2018; Hornsby, 2001; Popa-Wyatt & Wyatt, 2017; Langton, 2012; West, 2012; Popa-Wyatt, 2020), there is little focus on the Nigerian situation and the new dimension of slur utterances in the YouTube. This study is therefore an acknowledgment of this gap to identify what slur words really are and to suggest possible avenues through which they can be linguistically disarmed, neutralized and reclaimed from its bitter sting and pain.

Rationale for the Study

Slurring is a concern globally. Most people tend to see every hate expression, slur, so, the term is very difficult to pin down to a specific definition. . There is no clear consensus to what constitute slur in an utterance; what is the intent behind the use of slur expressions and how to reclaim them and mitigate the harm caused by them beyond legislation and criminalization of slur utterances. The propose of this paper then is to examine the nature of slur words through the lens of speech act theories (Austin,1962); Searle, 1969; and Grice,1975). It is also expected that the analysis in this study will provide not only the intent behind the use of slur utterances in the YouTube social media discourses in Nigeria, but also attempt to provide ways through which these slur words can be disarmed and reclaimed from a speech act perspective.

Conceptual Clarification

Social Media Discourse

Advancements in technology have resulted in people being able to access a wealth of information and participate in virtual opportunities not previously available. Through the tools of computers and cell phones, people have moved from engaging in face-to-face interaction to virtual spaces like; Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter Blogs, Skype and even newspapers and magazines, among others.

Modern societies all over the world tend to use the social media for social interaction, hence, making the social media a revolutionary medium of communication which enhances communication of all types. Just as in other parts of the world, the social media facilities

have provided greater avenues for the population in Nigeria - especially the youth - to engage themselves in all sorts of activities online. With the development of the social media, people through the above-mentioned sites use language as they please; including those which humanize and those which dehumanize. Accordingly, Egbe and Ekpe (2009) postulate that the media is "a double-edged sword which can either promote or exacerbate conflict" (p.122). The language choices of individuals determine whether another individual or group of individuals are humanised or dehumanised. The social media has become a veritable platform for hate-mongers, cyber-bullies, and terrorists to communicate their noxious views, harass others, emanate hate and even plan and hatch nefarious actions. Today, the anonymity of the social media provides a 'safe' platform for some individuals/groups to send their warfare messages of hate across to target individuals/groups. Some good examples of this are; the faceless Boko Haram leader (Shekau) and the writer and singer of the song *Iyami*; the data used for this study.

Slur Words/Utterances

Slur is a kind of hate speech that has special properties. There are thousands of terms that are identified as slurs, including those based on race, gender, nationality and sexuality. Slurs can harm and degrade their targets, making them feel humiliated, dehumanised, disempowered, and silenced. Slurs may also offend non-targets, often making them feel complicit, while meeting with approval from bigots. Slurs vary in their strength of effects. In particular, there is a considerable variation in the degree of offence caused. Offence varies across different slur words, across different uses of the same slur word, and across the

reactions of different audience members (McGowan, 2012).

Wyatt (2020) holds that slurring is a type of hate speech meant to harm individuals simply because of their group membership. It not only offends but also causes oppression. Slurs are noted for their "offensive autonomy" (they offend regardless of speakers' intentions, attitudes, and beliefs) and for their "offensive persistence," as well as for their resistance to cancellation (they offend across a range of contexts and utterances). They are also noted for their "offense variation" (not all slurs offend equally) and for the complicity they may induce in listeners. Slurs signal identity affiliations; they cue and re-entrench ideologies. They subordinate and silence target members and are sometimes used non-derogatorily. Many slurring utterances are not just about expressing contempt, but are also oppressive speech. The offence caused by a slurring utterance varies with the degree of oppression that it plausibly seeks to achieve. Slurs vary in their ability to be so used, from the most potent to the milder. Both the most potent and the milder injurious utterances are identified as slur and can be used to convey contempt, which causes a baseline offence. Additional offence is caused by those slurs used to oppress (Hornsby, 1995; Langton, 2012).

St. Clare (2018) opines that slur utterances, same as hate speech, have three features with which they can be identified.

- i. **Referents and Reminders:** Slur utterances are characterized by multiple referents. They simultaneously refer to a target group and the individuals in the group. On the other hand, slur words cannot be used against individuals

without referring to the group where the individual belongs. Slur words are distinct from pejoratives and other insults; slur utterances automatically include the entire target group. Secondly, slur utterances seem to have the characteristics of alluring to troublesome historical facts. Slur utterances seek to assert a particular, subjective world-view as an objective fact; a world-view that holds members of the target group as being inferior. Since minorities tend to comprise many of the target groups and since minorities have historically faced numerous instances of oppression. St. Clare (2018) argues that slur utterances have a tendency to reference the times in history when the target group was openly and officially oppressed.

ii. Subordination and Silencing:

Understanding slur words would be incomplete without exploring what they do. Slur utterances can both be subordinating and silencing. Langton (2012, p.28) opines that, "to subordinate someone is to put them in a position of inferiority or loss of power, or to demean or denigrate them." Furthermore, Maitra (2012) claims that some speech can subordinate by causing physical and psychological harms to its targets that deprive them of significant rights, powers, and abilities. Langton (2012) lists three ways in which people may be silenced: (a) people do not speak because they are intimidated, or because they believe that no one will listen; (b) people speak but fail to achieve the effects they intend – for example one invites, but no one attends the party; and (c) one speaks and not only does not achieve the effects

they intended, but they also fail to perform the action they intended. Also, in cases where slur utterances incite violence, sometimes resulting in death – as in the Nigerian Civil War –, those who are killed because of these utterances are silenced to an irreparable degree. Even those who do not suffer such an extreme fate are intimidated.

iii. Context: The effects of slur utterances are context sensitive. The importance of context in relationship to language studies was introduced by Malinowski (1923) when he asserts that utterance can only become intelligible when placed within its context of situation. To further buttress this point, Mey (2001) notes that to understand any utterance correctly, it is necessary to make reference to the world of the speaker. He identifies the speaker's world to include the speaker's linguistic, social, cultural and general life context. This shows that context is important because slur utterances are enabled or empowered according to the context in which it is used. Understanding that context partly determines the nature of the utterance and their effects. This will be crucial for understanding how slur words might be reclaimed.

Theoretical Framework

The speech act theory, pioneered by John Austin and further developed by John Searle is defined by Searle (1969, p.16) as "the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication." They are verbal actions happening in the world. Mey (2001) asserts that the languages we use, particularly, the speech act we utter are entirely dependent on the context of the

situation in which such acts are produced. The term "speech act" has been used by Crystal (1992) to refer to a communicative activity defined with reference to the intentions of a speaker while speaking and the effects achieved on a listener. He explains that forms of language generally serve specific communicative functions. Austin's (1962) concluded in his investigation that all utterances could at the same time constitute three kinds of acts:

i. **Locutionary Act (Locution):** The act of writing or saying a meaningful sentence which is strictly literal and denotative. The locutionary act is in the form of a statement, a question, a command or an exclamation.

ii. **Illocutionary Act (Illocution):** This is performed by virtue of the performance of the locution. Austin (1962) holds that the illocutionary acts are the non-linguistic acts performed through linguistic or locutionary acts. It is the speaker's intention or the listener's interpretation of the speaker's meaning even without linguistic input. At this level, the speaker performs such acts as rejecting, inviting, praising, advising, admonishing, congratulating, and so on.

iii. **Perlocutionary Acts (Perlocution):** This is the act performed by means of what is said. It could also be said to be the effects or consequences of the illocution. If the intention of the illocution is not understood by the listener, he misses it and so, a pragmatic failure occurs because the wrong effect is realised.

Searle (1979) further classified Austin's speech act theory, focusing on the idea that meaning is a kind of doing. He claims that the study of

language is a sub-part of the theory of action and the term Speech Act Theory is in practice, a reference to illocutionary acts. Searle presents the sub-classification of Austin's Speech Act Theory thus:

- a. **Representative/Assertive:** Commits a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, e.g., reciting, asserting, claiming, describing, concluding, reporting, suggesting, predicting, stating, among others.
- b. **Directive:** Here, the speaker wants the hearer to take a particular action, e.g., requesting, commanding, advising, questioning, pleading, inviting, warning, etc.
- c. **Expressive:** Expresses the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the proposition, e.g., congratulating, thanking, apologising, appreciating, complaining, condoling, greeting, scolding, etc.
- d. **Commissive:** Commissive speech acts commit a speaker to some future action, e.g., promising, threatening, offering, guaranteeing, vowing, betting, challenging, etc.
- e. **Declaratives:** A successful declarative speech act performance changes in reality in accordance with the proposition of the declaration, e.g., baptising/naming, pronouncing someone guilty or pronouncing someone husband and wife, arresting, imprisoning, etc.

Hate Speech Acts Theory

Drawing from Austin's Speech Act Theory and the expanding Speech Act Theory, St. Clare (2018) propounded the "Hate Speech Act Theory". According to St. Clare (2018), Austin's Speech Act Theory can easily be

applied to hate speech/slur utterances without difficulties. Austin's locutionary act deals with utterances but the locutionary act of hate speech or slur words deals with utterances referring to individuals - and/or the group to which they belong- in a derogatory manner and to mean that they are inferior or to cause them pain. Austin (1962) holds that the illocutionary acts are the non-linguistic acts performed through linguistic or locutionary acts. Going by St. Clare's (2018) assertion, Hate Speech Act may have the illocutionary force of subordinating and silencing the targeted individual or group as these are also non-linguistic acts performed through linguistic or locutionary acts. In the perlocutionary act of hate speech/slur utterances, the targeted individual of the speech or group - if present or is/are aware - may take offence and this may result to a confrontation or a violent act. Consequently, the targeted individual(s) of hate speech/slur words may come to develop low self-esteem and other psychological issues. Moreover, it is believed that utterers of hate speech experience a perlocutionary effect of feeling superior to their targets (St Clare, 2018). The speech act theory and the hate speech acts theory are therefore used as the theoretical framework of this study.

Slur Reclamation

According to Brontsema (2004), reclamation refers to the appropriation of a pejorative epithet by its target(s). She further offers a reformulation of three perspectives for which pejoratives can be reclamation:

- i. Pejoration Inseparable: Reclamation Opposed
- ii. Pejoration Separable: Reclamation Supported and
- iii. Pejoration Inseparable: Reclamation Supported.

Firstly, Pejoration Inseparable: Reclamation Opposed holds that a slur is inseparable from its pejoration so, should not be used. The view here is that slur is pejorative and cannot be expressed in a non-offensive way; it could only be said differently but would connote the same meaning. According to this view, since slur is not invented and used against members of the same group, rather, from outside the target group, it derives its pejorative nature and capacity to harm from external sources. This concept, Brontsema (2004) calls *linguistic ownership*. This means that slur is and will always be an outsider's weapon which forcefully establishes bounds of legitimacy. For this reason, linguistic ownership seems to be "permanent," reclamation efforts will not only prove futile but also self-defeating.

Secondly, Pejoration Separable: Reclamation Supported, on the other hand, believes that pejoration can be separated from hate speech/slur, thus, the slur in question should be used. Brontsema (2004) maintains that the goal is for the slur to lose its stigma and become non-offensive or injurious. Here, she introduced "neutralisation" or "value reversal". According to Brontsema (2004), neutralization renders slur ineffective, nullifies its force and removes its biting sting. She further explains that, a word neutralized is a word deadened, incapable of doing any harm. On the other hand, she holds that value reversal is the transformation from a negative to a positive value. The plan here is to steal the word from its injurious trajectory and send it to the opposite path. This means that unlike the first view, where ownership is permanent, ownership of words is transferable in the latter. Thirdly, the Pejoration Inseparable: Reclamation Supported, argues, just as the first view, that hate/slur utterance is inseparable from its pejoration. However, proponents of

this approach see that very inseparability as a reason for using the word. Here, the goal of reclamation is *stigma exploitation*; using the said stigma as a confrontational, revolutionary call. Brontsema (2004) believes that it is essential for members of the target group to use the slur that targets them. This will in turn question the social construction and regulation which apply to their group. In other words, this form of reclamation challenges the legitimacy of the distinction between the groups in question; in a way, it might be said to resist the notion of “the other” in the first place. Note that obtaining this view, the word in question cannot undergo either neutralization or value reversal. For this view, if hate/slur loses its pejorative nature, it also loses its power to be used.

Methodology

The data for this study is a Hausa/Fulani hate video/song on YouTube titled “The Anti-Igbo Song by Hausa/Fulani calling for another genocide”. Stumbling on this song spurred this research as the researcher started thinking of how to disarm and reclaim such abusive utterances, found in the song. The researcher translated the data to English language and coded the data as Text 1 to Text 8, going by the arrangement of the song. While Text 1 is the chorus, Texts 2 – 7 are the verses.

Data Presentation

The data for this study is the anti-Igbo audio song calling for genocide in Nigeria. This song was voiced by an unknown female artist in Hausa language and was carefully worded with the intention of causing a deliberate mass incitement of Nigerians from the North against the Igbos. This audio came up in August 2017, shortly after the leader of Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB) Nnamdi Kanu came up with

new agitation for the actualization of the Republic of Biafra. Seeing this, the Foundation of Peace Professionals started urging the Federal Government to take immediate action to avert the Rwanda genocide experience in Nigeria that may likely occur as a result of the song. <http://saharareporters.com/2017/08/05/>

Analysis and Discussion

Text 1: *Igbos (Inyamiri) are ungrateful people and fools*

Igbos a curse to Nigeria, whose existence and birth as a people in Nigeria is useless.

Aborting you is better than giving birth to you bastards

Text 1 - the chorus- above opens with *Inyamiri*, translated as the Igbos. *Inyamiri* is a term used to denigrate the Igbos by the Hausas. This name was said to be derived during the Nigerian Civil War when the government cut supplies of food and water to the eastern region. Then, when the Igbos were captured, the first thing they would say was *nyemmiri*, meaning, “give me water” in Igbo (Nairaland Forum). Hence, the use of the word *Inyamiri* is a deliberate act to hurt, demean, dehumanise and subjugate the Igbos who are the target group here. The word *Inyamiri* to the Igbos brings back the bitter memories of the sufferings and pains the Igbos went through during the civil war, a kind of reference and a reminder. The Igbos were abandoned without the supply of food and water; running in the bush and watching their children dying. When they eventually gave them water, it was poisoned and this resulted in more massive death of the Igbos. The word *Inyamiri* evokes a general image of the war, the painful loss of lives and property. Thus, hearing the word *Inyamiri*, the Igbos recall all these and are hurt and pained.

Going by Searle's expansion of the speech act theory, with the exception of *inyamiri*, all other slurring items in Text 1 -*fools, useless, bastard, a curse to Nigeria* - are considered declaratives, but unsuccessful declaratives. They are termed unsuccessful because Searle explained that for any declarative to be successful, the person making the declarative must be first, be someone in the right position to make the declaration and secondly, the declaration must be made in the right setting. Any declaration made without the realisation of these two, is termed a misfire (Seale, 1979). To further buttress this point, the song was said to be sang by an unknown person with no specified setting. So, those slur words are misfired declaratives.

Text 2: *Right from onset; God's time of creation*

Oh Lord, help me in this song let me not exaggerate.

Sieve away these jobless children of thieves, oh God

Inyamire (Igbo) in this land are not useful at all

Text 2, just like Text 1 is a declarative, with *Inyamiri* appearing again in the line. The text is requesting God to *Sieve away* and *help* the speaker *not to exaggerate*. In line 3 above, the speaker is making a declaration that the Igbo are *children of thieves*. The slurring word there is *thieves*, a declarative. This declarative also is unsuccessful as thieves are successfully declared by judges and in a court of competent jurisdiction hence, a misfired declarative.

Text 3: *Let's compete and see who will suffer*
You all know from on set that the Igbo do not have identity
We now helped by identifying you in our country

Because of your ugly troublesome nature

In the above extract, there really is no slur word that could be termed slurring but for the following phrases; *the Igbo do not have identity* and that they have an *ugly troublesome nature*. What is identity? Identity is the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks and/or expression that make a person or group. In sum, the meaning of identity is the shared sense of belonging by someone or some persons to a group. So, for the target group to be identified by a name and some cultural and/or traditional beliefs, it means they have an identity, which nullifies that claim. Secondly, the *ugly troublesome nature* could allude to the Igbo's incessant agitation for the Republic of Biafra.

Text 4: *Can the people ask, "who is this inyamiri?"*

It is the Igbo, after great suffering said "give me some water"

Because of this statement of "give me water"
We started calling them "Inyamiri"

The text explains the derivation and evolution of the word *inyamiri* and where it started from. In Text 4, references are made to historical events in Nigeria dating back to 1966 when the first military coup was staged in Nigeria which was claimed to be masterminded by the Igbo. The text explains that the Igbo suffered in the bush with no food or water, and at the sight of anyone, the first thing they say is "nyemmiri" - *give me some water* -, which was lexicalized as *Iyamiri*, the major slurring word in the entire text. Thus, Text 4 is a deliberate reference and reminder of a painful historical event to injure, denigrate and dehumanise the target group.

Text 5, 6, 7 and 8

Texts 5, 6, 7 and 8 are all examples of hate expressions borne out of strong dislike from

one ethnic group to another. In Text 5 for instance, *-The Igbos are fond of carrying out exercises in futility. Although you tried competing with us but you are not our equals. Even your overall national riot leader. He said you should retreat early enough and stop the exercise in futility-*.

Line 1 is an allusion to the incessant agitation for the Republic of Biafra which has not yielded any success yet, hence, *an exercise in futility*. In Line 3, *...your overall national riot leader*, is a reference to Nnamdi Kanu who is the arrow head of the agitation for the Republic of Biafra. Also, as earlier established, the texts are hate expressions borne out of strong dislike as the speaker is further showing how important the speaker's group is as against the target group, thus; *Although you tried competing with us but you are not our equals, Let's split our country and see who will cry and so on*. Text 8 is a run-on line where in addition to the hate expression, the speaker outlines a litany of the speaker's ethnic group's riches which the target group does not have. Some of which are: *We northerners have beans, you have nothing, we farm rice, you have nothing, it's with the over-flow from the north the south does everything*. The third and second to the last line in Text 8 - *They killed Sardauna, multiple threads, the loved by all and, see also Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa* - are an allusion to the coup and subsequent events that led to the 1967 genocide, culminating in the bloody civil war (1967-1970). Sir Ahmadu Bello, popularly called Sardauna Sokoto (Sadauna of Sokoto) and Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa were major figures in Northern Nigerian during pre-independence politics and throughout the First Nigerian Republic. Sir Ahmadu Bello was killed during the 1966 coup led by Major Patrick Chukwuma Nzeogwu (of

Igbo extraction although served in the North at the time of the coup). During the same 1966 coup, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was abducted and missing for several days after which his decomposing corpse was found dumped by the roadside bush (Falode, 2011). This must have fuelled the utterance: *They killed Sardauna, multiple threads, the loved by all, See also Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. Iyamiri* is seen again in the last line in Text 8, followed by the chorus which also has the same slurring word *-inyamiri*. Apparently, *inyamiri* being the major slurring utterance in this text, is that which needs to be reclaimed.

Reclamation of *Iyamiri*

Over the years, especially after the civil war, *Iyamiri* has been a major slur word the Hausas call the Igbos when they want to spite the Igbos. *Iyamiri* has been used to intimidate and injure the Igbos publicly. The word *Iyamiri* serves as a painful reminder of the horrific killings and assassinations of the Igbos during the civil war. Yet, for a word so destructive and so soaked in blood, its meaning and use are still evolving. This calls for a reclamation. Brontsema 's (2004) second -Pejoration Separable: Reclamation Supported- and third -Pejoration Inseparable: Reclamation Supported - reformulated perspectives for which pejoratives can be reclaimed, would be suitable for the reclamation of *Iyamiri*.

Brontsema's (2004), second perspective of slur reclamation; Pejoration Separable:

Reclamation Supported, has two options; it is either neutralised or the value is reversed. To neutralise *Iyamiri*, the target group will have to render the slur ineffective, nullify its force and remove its biting sting. This could be achieved by accepting the word *Iyamiri* as their identity, in fact, use the word to identify themselves. By so doing, the capability of the

word doing them any harm is deadened. Conversely, the target group could choose the value reversal option. With this, the injurious word *-Iyamiri-* has to be stolen and sent back to the opposition. Here, the slur has to be transformed from a negative to a positive value. The main goal here is to steal the word from its injurious trajectory and send it to the opposite path, since the ownership of words is transferable in this perspective. The target group should then address the opposition group as *Iyamiri* but without any prejudice behind it.

Brontsema's (2004) third slur reclamation option - Pejoration Inseparable: Reclamation Supported - is of the view that even if slurs are inseparable from their pejoration, it could also be reclaimed by using the stigma in the slur as a confrontational and revolutionary call. Here, the members of the target group –the Igbo– should use the slur - *Iyamiri* – that targets them. *Iyamiri*, a derivation from the Igbo clause 'Nyemmiri' (Give me water) can be used by the group member to mean the following: (i) a brother, a backup, (ii) someone who is culturally Igbo, (iii) a synonym for Igbo worldwide, and (4) rebellious, fearless, unconventional Igbo person. This will restrain

the notion of the others using the slur against them because once a slur loses its pejorative nature, it also loses its power to be used.

Conclusion

This study has developed an understanding of what slur is, what it does, how it does it, and how it could be disarmed and reclaimed by viewing it through the lens of Brontsemanian's (2004) three formulas for reclamation - Pejoration Inseparable: Reclamation Opposed, Pejoration Separable: Reclamation Supported and Pejoration Inseparable: Reclamation Supported. Furthermore, the study observed, identified and analysed a particular slur utterance *-Iyamiri-* found in the Anti-Igbo Hausa song downloaded from You-Tube. It was also acknowledged that slurs are used deliberately to inflict emotional and psychological damage on the targets and subordinate them. It was revealed in the study that *Iyamiri* can be identified, disarmed/neutralized and reclaimed in a positive sense as one way of handling certain hate utterances in Nigeria.

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Appendice 1: The Anti- Igbo song sang in Hausa Language

Text 1 (chorus): *Igbos (Inyamiri) are ungrateful people and fools*

Igbos a curse to Nigeria, whose existence and birth as a people in Nigeria is useless.

Aborting you is better than giving birth to you bastards

Text 2: *Right from onset; God's time of creation*

Oh Lord, help me in this song let me not exaggerate.

Sieve away these jobless children of thieves, oh God

Inyamire (Igbos) in this land are not useful at all

Chorus:

Text 3: *Let's compete and see who will suffer
You all know from on set that the Igbos do not have identity*

We now helped by identifying you in our country

Because of your ugly troublesome nature

Chorus:

Text 4: *Can the people ask, "who is this inyamiri?"*

It is the Igbos, after great suffering said "give me some water"

*Because of this statement of "give me water"
We started calling them "Inyamiri"*

Chorus:

Text 5: *The Igbos are fond of carrying out exercises in futility*

Although you tried competing with us but you are not our equals

Even your overall national riot leader

He said you should retreat early enough and stop the exercise in futility

Chorus:

Text 6: *A child does not know fire until he/she steps on it he/she will understand*

You will be unable to put off the fire you have ignited

Shameless fatherless bastards

Let's split our country and see who will cry

Chorus:

Text 7: *Right from onset we know you have nothing*

It's with the wealth from the North that the oil wells were dug

The opening of a plant does not bring forth fruits

We farm, we rear cattle, and you have nothing

Chorus:

Text 8: *We northerners have beans, you have nothing*

We farm rice, you have nothing

Cocoyam and potatoes, you have none

Benny seed and wheat

Red bell pepper and chilli pepper you have none

Even our millet too, you do not have

Our benny seed and onions too, you have none

Bambara nut and groundnut you don't have any

We ate to our satisfaction, gave out to others and dumped for people to pick at will.

Its with the over-flow from the north the south does everything

Let the country be divided, we the northerner say let it be divided

You said you don't like us, we also don't like you at all

*This is our country and nobody's fatherland
.....*

*We own everything in Nigeria, we are proud
and we make a boast of that
The Igbos are the ones killing this country, we
knew right from onset
You dress like the Fulanis, block our high ways
rob
And then dress like the Boko Haram and kill
us, shameless beings
You spoilt our children and left them at the
mercy of our redeeming them
Let's split the country and know peace because
the Igbos are useless
Our president baba, they didn't make him, they
deceived us
The Yorubas gave their support, we joined
together
The Hausas gave their support, we joined
together
Even we the Fulanis gave our support, we
joined together
The Igbos are useless; inyamiri we don't like
you at all
They inherited their warlike and troublesome
nature from their forefathers
Inyamiris did a lot of bad deeds in the time past
They killed Sardauna, multiple threads, the
loved by all
See also Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa
Inyamiri is shameless and useless*

Chorus:

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