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The Intangible Migrant: Language, Migration and Identity

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Abstract
Drawing from evidence in sociolinguistics and what Victor Turner (1986) refers to as 'the anthropology of experience', this paper analyzes immigration from the perspective of loanwords into various languages. The specific site of contestation is the Hausa language of northern Nigeria. Drawing from the Hausa classical dictionary of Bargery (1934), as well as personal 'anthropology of experience' (Turner, 1986), I analyze the shifting patterns of idiolect, sociolect and onomatopoeic migration of Hausa words into linguistic Nigerianism. To provide a wider transnational canvas, I first look at the infusion of loanwords from various language clusters into the English language, the third most spoken language in the world, although the most widely spread. The main premise of the paper is that of language is an 'intangible' migrant, often being domesticated in social cultures that radically differ from it, whether regionally, nationally or globally. This contrasts with the notion of human migration, whether temporary or permanent. Language migration is a permanent displacement of words and expressions that over time, contribute towards construction of new identities. The source of the data is the classical Hausa dictionary of Bargery (1934) and personal 'anthropology of experience'.

Introduction

Studies on migration have traditionally focused on the movement of people, whether temporarily, although predominantly permanently, from one location to a totally different location, whether in the same country or across borders. According to Kleiner (2003, p.10-11),

> …the term *migration* refers to the act or process by which people, especially as a group move from one location (city, country, region) to another. The term migrant has no legal status. Thus, many nations now use the terms *immigrant* or *emigrant*. These terms have legal status, and they are carefully defined in various national and international legal codes. *Immigration* typically refers to the process of people leaving one nation for permanent residence in another. *Emigration* typically refers to the process of people leaving a nation (including emphasis)

It is instructive to note that 'immigration' here refers to a *permanent* process, not temporary. As Waldinger (2015, p.1) further noted, 'immigrants are the people who *leave* one country behind to *settle* down somewhere else.' Cross-border migration of the human race has been an on-going process since the initial formation of human communities and dispersal of the species. These are all tangible migrations. What is not tangible is language migration – a process in which words, expressions, and phrases leave their native spaces and acquire same or new permanent meanings in another locality. As "migrant" itself, language often travels with migrants to where they establish roots and either lose it or acquire the language of their surroundings. This is more so for temporary migrants (e.g. students from a different country who must study a foreign language in a university before completing their studies). As language travels from one community to another where words, expressions are domesticated to the local language situations and gain universal acceptance as "home-grown" even though the language expressions were either borrowed from migrant settlers, or acquired during the period of temporary migration and contact through travels and trade.

This paper looks at what I refer to as the 'intangible migration' of language with emphasis on linguistic borrowing through the adoption of loanwords by both in-groups (residents) and out-groups (settlers). The base site of my contestation of consideration of language as a migrant is the Hausa language of northern Nigeria and whose lands form a crucible of settlement by migrants for centuries, attracting both trans-border migrants (predominantly Arabs of North African origin) as well as in-country migrants from predominantly non-Muslim communities of southern Nigeria. The 'internal diasporic settlements' among the Hausa, has not shown evidence of any substantive 'integration' between the Hausa and these migrant settlers – each preferring to maintain its cultural spaces and identity. Language, however, rejects these barriers and moves across what I refer to as 'diasporic borders' and settle in and out of the groups.

To provide a wider perspective of im/migration of language, I also look at how Hausa immigrant words acquired a 'national' outlook as Nigerianisms, moving from idiolects – speech or words peculiar to a person, i.e. the dialect of an individual, which can transit to a commonly

adopted expression, thus becoming part of lexical corpus of the individual's in-group – to sociolect which are different ways of using the same expression but in different cultures, or out-groups. I use sociolect alternatively with Nigerianism, where a Hausa in-group idiolect transited 'out-group' Nigerian cultural setting and became adopted as a migrant word being peculiar to Nigeria.

At the same time, I also argue that even the predominant 'Nigerian official language' of English itself was formed significantly out of intangible migration of loan words from various cultures by the English trade, contact and conquest.

For the Hausa, however, intangible migrant words came mainly into their lexical corpus through their acquisition of Islamic religion, temporary migration to other parts of Nigeria, West Africa, or as a result of mingling with permanent settlers who refused to give up their linguistic identity, and the Hausa "migrated" their language and domesticated it. In this study therefore, the question was how Hausa language evolved and devolved cultures and societies in a single invisible, but clearly vocal, intangible entity which I refer to as the 'intangible migrant'.

There were two sources of data for the paper. The first was the *Dictionary of the Hausa Language* by Bargery (1934) which contained words and expressions that are uniquely Hausa and based on Bargery's fieldwork in northern Nigeria in early parts of the 19th century. This translates Hausa words, complete with etymology and regionalism, into English. It was made available on the Web at http://maguzawa.dyndns.ws/. The entries included A Hausa-English Dictionary (39,000 words) and English-Hausa Vocabulary (4,600 words). Although there were other Hausa to English dictionaries (e.g. Abraham. 1962; Skinner, 1965; Newman & Newman, 1977; Newman, 1990; and Awde, 1996, and), the one by Rev. Bargery remained the 'gold standard' in terms of quintessential capturing of words that are as close to the 'non-modern' Hausa as possible. In 2006, a first Hausa-to-Hausa dictionary was published by the Center for the Study of Nigerian Languages as *Ƙamusun Hausa na Jami'ar Bayero* (Bayero University Kano, 2006). However, I did not use this because I was more interested in unique Hausa idiolects that became sociolects and that can be attributed to pre-modern usage of Hausa language.

The second source of data was not based on any specified dictionary, but part of my personal experience as L1 Hausa speaker, a methodology that Turner and Turner (1982) refer to as 'the anthropology of experience'. This methodology gives an embedded ethnographer the methodological legitimacy to expertly provide observations, perspectives, notions and nuances of language, dress, behavior codes, food habits and other forms of social discourse as a 'privileged insider' and therefore as a primary reference. My analytical focus will be on two languages and how various loanwords – my 'intangible immigrants' – became adopted in the two languages as a result of contact, trade or settlement. I will focus on English and Hausa languages. The data for the English use of intangible migrants in various lexical expressions is commonly available from many writers (e.g. Kuthe, 2007; Haspelmath, 2009; Durkin, 2014; Gonzáles, 2017 among others).

The Intangible Tangibility of Languages of the World

I begin the exploration of the intangible migrant concept with the English language, spoken by both native and non-native speakers of the language across the world. It is fatuous to attempt an English language mapping, suffice to say it is the most widely spread language in the world, even though it is only the third widely native spoken language, after Chinese and Portuguese. I start with English due to its obtrusive presence in all communities, and proceed to show how the language benefitted from the presence of 'intangible migrants' through language acquisition, adoption and adaptation.

Perhaps due to the extensive travels of the British, especially through colonialism, slavery and trade, the language had absorbed intangible migrant words from other languages and groups and over the centuries, the words became to be seen as authentic English words. Detailed linguists such as Durkin (2014) indicate the high degree of lexical borrowing or what I refer as intangible migration, of words from many languages, such as Scandinavian, Celtic, German, into the English language, especially the English spoken in the Middle Ages. The migration of words into English from Spanish, for instance, is illustrated by Algeo (2017, 13-14), who noted that:

> …Spanish words that English borrowed not directly from Spanish, but through some other language, are regarded not as Spanish loans, but rather as from the language of direct or "immediate" borrowing. Thus, Spanish or Portuguese *baranda, varanda* 'handrail, balcony' was introduced into Hindi, Bengali, and other Indie languages, and from the latter was borrowed into Anglo-Indian and thence into general English as *veranda.* Despite its "ultimate" Iberian origin, as far as English is concerned, the word is an Indie borrowing.

In this we see how intangiblea word is when it traveled from the Iberian Peninsula, to India and back to Europe, and eventually became part of World expression in English; for even the Hausa refer to it as 'baranda'. However, even without having to revert back to sources of origin, many words in the English language were Indie (Pal 2016). These include:

English Word	**Hindi Origin**	**Meaning**
jungle	jangar	wild wasteland
dinghy	dingiya	small rowing boat
pajamas	payajama	leg clothing
juggernaut	jagannath yatra	giant carriage
thug	thag	thief/swindler
shampoo	champo	squeeze, knead or massage
lut	loot	plunder or steal
bangla	bungalow	one storey house

The Hindi word *paanch* means 'five' and refers to the number of fruits used to make the drink of the same name (something like 'five alive' in Nigerian marketing). The drink and the word transited into English as *punch* which is a type of drink, but the word is also used to mean to 'hit'.

Suzanne Kemmer of Rice University, United States was able to compile a compendium of intangible immigrant words that entered into the English language from other languages (2019). The original list was compiled for her course, LING 216 and provides a vast array of such immigrant loanwords. Some of them and their sources are indicated in Table 1. The table also includes sources from Turkish (Demir, 2016), French and German (Sitzman, 2016), and Arabic (Arabic, 2017).

Table 1. Intangible Immigrants into English lexicon

Spanish	Dutch	German	Amerindian	Italian	French	Turkish	Arabic
armada	booze	noodle	Squash	arsenal	grenade	beg	academic
marijuana	landscape	lager	Canoe	umbrella	bigot	doodle	demography
alligator	onslaught	blitzkrieg	cannibal	motto	clique	horde	diplomacy
armadillo	coleslaw	poodle	Tobacco	studio	sachet	kaftan	canary
mosquito	stockfish	bum	hurricane	ghetto	ballet	kiosk	philosophy
ranch	dollar	kindergarten	Maize	balcony	saloon	lackey	doctorate
tornado	split		Potato	piano	bayonet	mammoth	surrealism
guitar	uproar		chocolate	torso	chassis	quiver	physics
vigilante	leak		Chili	violin	garage	shawarma	tuna
barricade	smuggle			cartoon	cafe	yogurt	giraffe
bravado	cruise				entrepreneur		cat
cannibal	sketch				genre		drama
desperado	cookie						folklore
embargo	curl						mythology

These words were acquired, as noted earlier, through trade, contact, conquest and settlement in the various areas where the British domesticated the various words as their own – raising the question of whether they do not have such equivalents in their own language to begin with. However, that is the nature of the immigrant – the far side sites of contestations bring a greater stimulus than local ecosystems, for such contacts enrich not only the language, through enhanced lexical properties, but also the experiences of its users.

The causalities of lexical borrowing are identified as either *need* or *prestige* (Hock & Joseph, 1996). As they further explained, need is an internal cause, emerging out of a changing socio-cultural environment. Prestige is an external cause, where languages of more powerful cultural spheres become sources for loans in other languages. Powerful and intellectual languages such as Greek, Latin, German, Russian and English are frequent loan-givers in history, although English is also a frequent loan-taker. In any event, a designation for a new concept is always created when a new 'arrival' is integrated into the community of speakers. This designation may alter the original phonetics of the immigrant word, thus integrating it into the linguistic vocabulary of its new community.

Idiolectic and Sociolect Intangible Immigrants

While I prefer to use the term 'intangible migrant' to refer to the central core of my thesis of an immigrant without a border – traveling, gossamer-like in-and-out of various vocalisms and meaning constructions, nevertheless sociolinguists will see my 'intangible migrant' more easily recognizable as words and expressions that have been borrowed or loaned from one linguistically different in-group to another and domesticated by the second group. Additionally, they could refer to idiolectic words that were created by one group (even within an in-group, e.g. families) and through travels and contact, become a standard referent for a particular concept.

It is instructive to note that I distinguish between neologism – newly coined word or expression – and an adopted immigrant word. 'Google', for instance, is a neologism used to refer to searching for information on the Internet. The 'teleseminar' and 'webinar' are also neologisms that acquired higher visibility and currency during the Coronavirus Pandemic in 2020 which forced, mainly learning activities, as well as some social interactions, to online media, rather than in-person experiences. Webinar is simply a seminar held via Internet. This has been going on since the days of Video Conferencing in the 1990s, but gained new hegemony in the face of total lockdown of social interactivity imposed by the need to keep physical distance among participants.

Idiolect, on the other hand, as I referred earlier is an in-group expression/word belonging to a distinct group of users. A typical example is the Kano word 'Tal'udu', which on the surface, appears Arabic; but is not. I restricted it to Kano because that was where it was created and the only place where it has any meaning. It refers to the junction in the heart of the city of Kano that will lead to Bayero University Kano (Gwarzo Road). The road that bisected the city into two, leading to the junction was built by a British construction company, Taylor Woodrow, with their names plastered boldly on their plant and machinery which were parked at the junction. Locals, unable to pronounce 'Taylor Woodrow' simply created an onomatopoeic 'Tal'udu' as name for the junction – something which it carries up to now and has become a referent for visitors as a compass point.

Indeed, the travels of the intangible migrant to a new home (and from there, yet again, to another 'home') constitute the corpus of agreed

vocabularies due to the domestication of the intangible migrant, before it moves to another group. The domestication itself moves through stages. The first is what I call 'primary' stage which refers to the initial interface between 'in-group and 'target' out-groups. The second, 'secondary' stage is when the intangible migrant leaves the in-group, and becomes domesticated by a third group, and so on. Thus these travels qualifies language as a migrant, with no fixed abode, leaving its original 'base', where it may or may not be remembered, and losing its identity, although not its roots, in its 'secondary' settlement. While my main focus will be on Northern Nigerian Hausa (or those who self-identity as primarily Hausa), I will also look at how the Hausa have contributed intangible migrants to the Nigerian lexicon, and how the English language itself, which came to define our political identity is a hodge-podge of various intangible migrants from various languages.

Adopted words, if you accept, intangible migrants, make sense only if they are referents to something that does not exist in the target out-group, which leads to domestication, but with the same meaning, albeit different pronunciation or spelling from the primary in-group source. By 'intangible migrant', I also refer to the movement of idiolects, constructed "as a set of abstract phonetic sentences, form-earnings pairs consisting, in the case of a spoken rather than a written or signed idiolect, of a structured phonetic sound sequence…and a meaning of this sequence (Sackmann 2009, p. 5). A perfect example of this idiolect migrant is the Hausa word, ***Inyamiri***. The Hausa of northern Nigeria refer to the Igbo people as ***Inyamirai*** (pl. ***Inyamira***, fem.) This community idiolect does not translate Igbo, as the Hausa term for Yoruba, which is ***Yarabawa***. ***Inyamiri*** is a corrupted form of Igbo expression, "*nye m mmiri*", which means "bring me water". The Hausa idiolect for this became corrupted as ***Inyamiri***, using a combination of idiolectic and onomatopoeic devices to modify the word, ***mmiri*** (water) onomatopoeically as ***Inyamiri***. The idiolect then underwent semantic expansion and became plural '***Inyamirai*** for the whole of Igbos. It thus became intangible migrant with repeated use among the Hausa before it migrated to other groups in the north of Nigeria who also refer to the Igbo as '***Inyamirai'***, thus becoming a Hausa ***sociolect*** as a dialect of specific group, but semantically adopted as part of increasing Nigerianisms, by

which I mean linguistic adoptions that have become either regional or national.

This idiolect differs from a specific word that has a definitive meaning in its original 'home', but migrated to another society where it became more or less a referent, to the people who use it. A typical example is the Hausa word '***aboki'*** which means 'friend'. In southern Nigeria (at least across the Niger bridge), it is used often in a derogatory way to refer to any northerner, regardless of whether they are Hausa or not. This is because of the predominant perception of southern Nigerians that anyone north of the Niger Bridge is Hausa because Hausa is a common community language in the area, despite the massive variety of languages available in the area. '***Aboki'*** is used in the same way that 'Nigger' is used in the United States by Whites to refer to Blacks, even though, ironically, the Blacks themselves have domesticated the idiolect as an in-group reference, as evidenced by the numerous use of the word in the songs of Black, Latino and even White rappers in the US (for which, see, for example, LaGrone, 2000; Armstrong, 2004; Harkness 2008).

As noted earlier '***aboki'*** in Hausa simply means 'friend', and Hausa migrants in southern Nigeria who find it difficult to pronounce non-Hausa and non-Islamic names (even southern Nigerian Muslim names, like 'Muroino , for Hausa ''Imran') simply referred to their hosts as '***aboki na***' (my friend). The word became idiolectic among southern Nigerians to refer to northerners, or at least the Hausa. The Hausa living in the south that I have interacted with were amused by this, as they do not feel offended at all by being called '***aboki'***. This is because the southern idiolectic immigrant is honorific to its northern roots, since you refer to a person as a 'friend' when you really trust them. To emphasize this point, the southern idiolectic immigrant word was adopted by Isma'il Abdullahi who was born in the semi-Hausa community of Agege in Lagos. He is a rapper and adopts the name 'BMERI Aboki' as a stage name, thus indigenizing the idiolectic slur as a personal identity tag which gave him high audial visibility both in the north and in the south (as Aboki). BMERI Aboki often sings in Hausa, Pidgin English and Yoruba.

Another Hausa intangible immigrant idiolect is '***suya'***. In its Hausa linguistic home it means 'frying' (as a verb) and is used to refer to roasted meat, a dish of the Hausa street cafes. The actual name of the meat product

is '***tsire'*** – skewered cow meat on sticks which is marinated in spices and roasted close to burning logs. A similar meat meal is '***balangu'*** which is grilled meat, usually of lamb or goat (*ƙaramardabba*; smaller animal), although lamb meat is preferable due to its sweeter – and healthier – taste. Southern Nigerian clients of the Hausa who sell these types of meats somehow created an idiolect, 'suya' to refer to any meat sold by the Hausa. Yet 'suya' refers to fried meat, especially during the Eid-al-Huda (the Abrahamic festival) celebrated once a year by all Muslims including Hausa Muslims, during which sacrifices with various religiously allowed animals were made, and the meat fried and distributed to the needy, but most especially neighbors, regardless of the animal, at least in Nigeria (other countries that celebrate the festival do not necessarily fry the meat, but freeze it and simply use it in cooking). But idiolectically, the southerners refer to fried meat '***nama'***, which simply means 'meat' in a generic sense (raw, cooked, fried, grilled, etc). Some Hausa entrepreneurs, knowing that the Hausa easily distinguish between 'suya' and 'tsire', seized the opportunity of marketing visibility to advertise their companies as 'suya' spots. A famous example the ***Yahuza Suya Spot*** franchise, as illustrated in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1. Deceptive, but effective marketing of 'Suya'

It is instructive that Yahuza Suya Spot does not market *fried* meat, but *roasted* or *grilled* meat. But they adopted the 'Suya' name to appeal to general Nigerianism.

There are other words that belong to one group but become national in use, sharing, ironically enough, the same meaning across different linguistic communities (thus further qualifying my expression of 'intangible migrant'). An example is '***wahala'***. This is a Hausa word meaning 'trouble', 'suffering', 'bothersome'. However, it has become Nigerianized as meaning 'trouble', often substituting as a similar word in English, but used to emphasize its Nigerian idiolectic origin. For instance:

*NSE	Please stop bothering me	Pidgin	Abeg, make una no give me *wahala*
	I don't want any suffering/trouble from her (a distinct biological female)		I no want any woman *wahala*
	I am tired of his troublesomeness		I don tire for em *wahala* sef
	I find his demands too much		I find em *wahala* too much

In each of these examples, the intangible immigrant word retains it root meaning across the various linguistic expressions and sentence constructions. Thus '***wahala'*** can be, tired, trouble, weary, fed-up, etc. – generally dissatisfaction. A Hausa immigrant word has thus become a sociolect – as the dialect of a particular group of Nigerians, in this case, Pidgin English speakers who cut a massive swathe around the country. When the Hausa use the word 'wahala' they use it in its correct placement as non-migrant word, while Nigerians who prefer Standard English (i.e. NSE or 'proper' English) avoid its usage in their sentence construction as a non-English word, even if they can speak Pidgin English.

'***Wayo'*** is another Nigerian sociolect, with distinct origin in Hausa before migrating to Nigerianism. In its original Hausa version, it has two meanings: cunning and its synonymic variants: shrewdness, artfulness, wiliness, trickery, finesse, intrigue, slyness, deception, etc. For instance,

NSE	He is not a trustworthy person	Pidgin	Na *wayo* man, abeg, forget am
	He is too clever-by-half		He has too much *wayo*

The second meaning is ***passage*** of boyhood. For instance:

Hau	An haife ni a Sakkwato, amma na yi *wayo* na a Legas	NSE	I was born in Sokoto but *grewup* in Lagos

In this example, the protagonist uses the original word as a sociolect which provides a radically different, but acceptable alternative variant to its other synonymic derivatives. The Hausa also use '***wayo'*** to refer to a child's lack of knowledge/experience, deftness, etc. of things because of tender age:

Hau	Yaro ne, ba shi da *wayo*	NSE	He is a child, and not *wise enough*
	Ɗan kauye ne, ba shi da *wayo*		He is from a village, a *simpleton*

The late Nigerian Afrobeat musician Fela Anikulapo Kuti (1938-1997) brought out the word, ***wayo***, as a Nigerian sociolect more forcefully in his political protest performance of *Army Arrangement* (Celluloid Records, 1985) as in the following few lines:

Them set up inquiry/
Them say money no lost o/
Them *dabaru* everybody/
…
Give me money, put am together/
***Army arrangement!*/**
***Wayowayo*, put am together.../**
***Army arrangement!*/**
…
Na *wayo* government we dey o/
E gba mi o/
Na *rigima* government we dey o/
Ye paripa o/

It is interesting that Fela's lyrics also used two other Hausa words, ***dabaru*** (pl; *dabara*, sing.) which refer to 'deception' in his verse, but actually means 'resourcefulness' in Hausa. The second Hausa word is '***rigima'***, which means *constantly living beyond one's income* but is used colloquially as troublesomeness. In this context of protest (whether Hausa or

Nigerianism as used in Fela's *Army Arrangement* protest song), however, it is also used to refer to seeking for trouble, viz:

Hau	**Ya faye *rigima***	**NSE**	**He is always seeking *trouble***

Fela's use of ***wayo***, ***dabaru*** and ***rigima*** in the performance is the provision of Hausa immigrant sociolects that have gained common Nigerian currency, although 'dabaru' and 'rigima' are not regularly used Nigerianisms.

Fela's further contribution to Nigerianism through adopted coinage was the popularization of the nicknames given to Traffic Wardens, 'yellow fever'. In a conversation recorded with Veal (2000) but published only in 2000, Fela claimed that the term 'yellow fever' was first coined in Mushin, Lagos in 1975 to refer to the newly introduced Traffic Wardens by the Federal Government of Nigeria. This nickname, derived from the orange tunics, served as inspiration for Fela's blistering attack on Nigerian Black women who bleach their skins to appear white, but actually appear pinkish. This was captured in his performance, *Yellow Fever* (Afrodisia, 1976), as the following spliced verses from the song show:

Original and artificial he dey!/
Bom bom bom, tell me now.../
…
Artificial catch you/
You be man or woman/
Na you go catch am yourself/
Na your money go do am for you/
You go yellow pass yellow/
You go catch moustache for face/
You go get your double colour/
Your yansh go black like coal/
You self go think say you dey fine/
Who say you fine?/

While the bleaching did not stop among both Nigerian men and women who wanted to appear white, the tendency among women transited to

wearing European style wigs, creating an interesting urban landscape of dark-skinned women with 'blonde' hair.

The final Hausa sociolect used by Fela was '***yanga'***. Fela's use of the word ***Yanga*** was in his 1972 performance, 'Trouble Sleep, *Yanga* Go Wake Am' from the album *Music of Fela - Roforofo Fight* (Jofabro Records, 1972), although in a different context, as the following verse 1 shows:

When trouble sleep/
Yanga **go wake am/**
Waking him dey find/
Palaver, he dey find/
Palaver, he go get-e o)/
Palaver, he go get/
Palaver/

Yanga in this context refers to 'palaver', an informal English word referring to unnecessary attention or fuss. The song therefore refers to 'let sleeping dogs lie' mantra. The word, popularized through Fela's music in the southern part of Nigeria has become a Nigerianism Hausa immigrant retaining its original Hausa meaning where, it means "putting on airs and graces", something akin to showing 'class' or taking time to do something due to perceived importance of the protagonist, or even refusing to do something. For example:

Hau	Ki/ka daina yi min *yanga*	NSE	[gender] Stop putting on *airs and graces*; *Stop wasting my time*

'***Awuf***; may not sound Hausa, but it is, and the actual spelling is '***a-wufu***', which means 'worthless' or 'cheaply'. The Hausa often use it to refer to items (mainly clothing or electrical items) claimed to be 'Igbo-made' or '***ɗan jabu*** or ***jabu*** (from Ijebu Ode, a town on Ogun State of Nigeria), both expressions referring to low quality of overseas imported items purchased from these areas, at least in the early 1950s and 1960s. This was at the same time the Hausa expression '***okirka'*** was used to refer to second-hand clothing from Okrika in Rivers, which was a port town, and therefore a transit for goods, especially clothing, from overseas, most of which were second-hand. The Hausa use '***okirka'*** to refer to second-hand clothing, and

'***ɗan jabu***'or '***jabu***' for substandard products of low quality. Both ***okirka*** and ***jabu*** are adapted idiolects but have become northern Nigerian sociolects due to their use even among non-Hausa linguistic groups. It is instructive that Shagamu, a Hausa trading camp which became a settlement ('zango') is less than 40 kilometers from Ijebu Ode, and the use of '***ɗan jabu***' by the Hausa was a migrant use of the word for the products they purchased from nearby Ijebu Ode and eventually transported to the north. It is likely that these 'sub-standard' goods were only imported to these areas from where they were distributed to Hausaland and acquired their unsavory status. The word, '***Awuf'***, however, has migrated into Nigerianism, retaining its base Hausa lexical meaning of something unworthy, or something that is free of charge (FOC) because it has no value, in Nigerianism.

Another intangible immigrant is the Hausa word '***cuwa-cuwa***'. It actually means *eager to be off,* or *to see what is coming,* akin to people clustering around and gawking at an accident in curious to see what is happening. It became a Nigerianism sociolect in the early 1990s when fuel queues started forming due to fuel shortage at gas stations. Often motorists would come out of their vehicles and go to the gas pumps, just looking – the bunching-up of people at the gas pumps is actually '***cuwa-cuwa***' – for they are all eager to see what is going on. The word is also used to refer to many people trying to get out of the same door after an indoor activity. However, it jumped into Nigerianism when other motorists thought that those at the pumps were trying to jump the queues, so they pleaded with them to 'stop cuwa-cuwa at the pumps/ku daina cuwa-cuwa wajen bayar da fetur'. Non-Hausa security forces – mainly soldiers, drafted to keep peace – thought the word means crookedness and therefore it acquired its lexical expansion to Nigerianism as referring to anything that is shady or not straight. Its neologistic variants are 'wuru-wuru', 'gada-gada', 'mago-mago', 'muna-muna', etc.

Similarly ***turenchi*** (proper: ***turanci***) is a Hausa compound idiolect for English language that has acquired Nigerianism, as in ***dogon turenchi***, 'big grammar'. The Hausa call the English '***Bature'***, from where his language, 'Turanci' is derived. Yet in its original derivation, ***Bature*** referred to a Turkish person, viz, ***Baturke*** (someone from Turkey) and became corrupted to ***Bature*** to refer to White people Uniquely Kano, the term

Baturke became corrupted to Bature because the Kano central mosque was built by the Turks and during the process of building it, the engineers came to be referred to as ***Baturke***. Historically and etymologically, however, a person from England would be ***Baingile***, (cf. ***Baindiye***, someone from India) but the Hausa used ***Nasara*** (a White Christian, regardless of nationality) to refer to the British before adopting the ***Bature*** idiolect and its associated migrant linguistic connotations.

A final example of Hausa immigrant sociolect that has become a common Nigerianism is '***shikena'***. The actual Hausa expression is 'shi ke nan' which means 'that is all'. The improper structure in Hausa is 'shikenan' as a single word; but it is actually three words (*shi* – that; *ke* – is; *nan* – it/all) compacted together. The sociolect 'shikena' mispronounced by non-Hausa and used as a Nigerianism adopted its root reference to 'finality' in any discourse or decision, or 'that's it'.

The Yoruba of Nigeria have also contributed intangible immigrant words to Nigerian sociolect. For example, '***Oga'***, a Yoruba word spelt as ***ọ̀gá***, meaning chief, boss, master, etc., has become domesticated as a Nigerian sociolect for a 'master', or at least someone who is generous, across linguistic groups. In some instances, it even refers to feminist tendencies of women. Despite its appearance in the Oxford Dictionary as of Yoruba origin, there are contestations about its exact origin. However, regardless of its origin, it has become virtually African sociolect. For instance,

NPE	She is the real *oga* at the top	NSE	She is the *master*/in control

Used in a somewhat derogatory fashion, a woman being "oga at the top" refers to a woman who is assertive, or highly aware of her rights, and who is in control of a particular situation; reversing the situation where the 'oga' is always the male creature and is expected to be at 'the top' – both a sexual innuendo and social power handle.

Another common example of Yoruba Nigerianism is '***bolekaja'***. In its original context, it means 'come down, let's fight', so it is apparently a concinnated word, just like Hausa '***shikena'***. As Anyaegbunam 1993, p. iii), pointed out, the term ***bolekaja***

> derives from the mass transit system in Lagos and other parts of Western Nigeria that depends in part on rather unreliable vehicles known as mammy-wagons. The bodies of mammy-wagons are locally built from wood and corrugated iron sheets while the chassis, though originally imported, are often junk-yard retrievals that may already be past their prime.

It subsequently came to be used as a Nigerianism sociolect to refer to any 'road-side', 'worthless' items, behaviors or even thoughts considered to be of little or no value. Ironically, the wooden-bodied trucks are still as strong, reliable and in use on Nigerian roads as ever – belying the perception of their ultimate low quality consumerism, such that radical Pan-African writers like Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike (1983) described themselves as 'bolekaja critics' due to their staunch belief in rescuing Africa's prose literature from what they perceived as the dominant Eurocentric criticism (Maduka, 1989).

Hausa, the Sahara, and the Arabic Language

As Awagana and Wolff (2009) pointed out, Arabic stands out as the most frequent donor language to Hausa language. This was because of the contact between Hausa and Islam, though not Arabs, since 13th century. Islam was brought to Hausa by Wangara merchant clerics (Palmer, 1908), and contact with the Arabs was only through scholar-travelers who visited courts of the various rulers of Hausaland. Arabs started migration to the Hausa cities of Katsina and Kano due to the commercial potentials of the cities as the terminus of the trans-Saharan trade, bringing goods and services across the Sahara. They eventually began to settle in Katsina before moving to Kano due to greater commercial viability of Kano. The intrusion of intangible immigrant languages into Hausa lexicon, however, had more to do with the earlier African Muslim contact between the Hausa through Islamic religion, than any social contact with the latter White Arab merchants who maintained, by and large, in-group cohesion, rarely mingling with their African hosts, with a few intermarriages across the races. Because of this in-group barrier, the Arabs have not really contributed to the Hausa vocabulary through social discourse. As Awagana, & Ekkehard Wolff (2009, p.150) further noted,

> in the context of African languages, contact scenarios, routes and intermediaries even for clearly borrowed words are hard to establish and almost impossible to prove beyond doubt. The reasons are scarcity of data on potential donor or intermediary languages, lack of historical documentation and of methodologically sound reconstructions, lack of robust dialectological evidence even for the target language. Judgment, therefore, often remains intelligent guesswork

The intangibility of language as a migrant is demonstrated in the relationship between Arabic and Hausa. According to Abubakar (1972), as much as 40% of the corpus of words that constitute Hausa language is made up of Arabic words, especially from 1750-1960. And while the Fulani Islamic jihad of 1804 to 1807 created new theocratic dynasties in northern Nigeria, it also created a curious migratory language scenario – the Fulani conquerors eventually lost their Pulaar language and adopted the Hausa, simply because the only way they could communicate to their new dominions was in Hausa.

The trade between the Hausa, Arabs, Tuaregs, as well as contact with Nigerian ethnicities has contributed to inward intangible migration of words and expressions into the Hausa language, often obscuring the origin of the words in the lexical borrowing.

The Hausa word for "diplomacy" ('***diblomasiyya/diplomaciyya'***) for instance, is the same as for Arabic which the Hausa acquired through contact with the Arabs; and it is the domestication of the English word, 'diplomacy'. The Arabs convert 'p' to 'b' in the written, and often, spoken form (e.g. Sudanese version of Arabic). Thus, for instance, 'Pepsi' is 'Bebsi'. Similarly, 'canary' migrated from Arabic to Hausa as '***kanari'***, the yellow crested bird, which was kept as a house pet among the more affluent Hausa due to its melodic chirps. Table 2 shows other lexical borrowings into the Hausa language.

Table 2. West African Lexical Borrowings in Hausa

Berber	**Hausa**	**English**	**Pulaar**	**Hausa**	**English**
Ayaran	ayari	caravan	Allah seini	alasaini (pl)	May Allah make you ***happy***
takarde	takarda	paper	All reini	alaraini (pr)	May Allah ***protect*** you
takoba	takobi	sword	Allah sabbi nane	alasubbinani (h)	May Allah ***prolong*** your life
cokal	cokali	spoon	kindirmu	kindirmo	curdled milk
kanwa	kanwa	potassium	bukkaro	bukka	hut
ejaq	jaki	donkey	burtol	burtali	cattle path
aurak	auraki	tooth brush	jalloru	jallo	gourd jerry can
akala	akala	focus	burugal	burugali	kitchen utensil
azurf	azurfa	siver	Baff	baffa	uncle (paternal)
mamaki	mamaki	surprise	Kawu	kawu	uncle (maternal)
ashiq	ice	firewood	goggo	gwaggo	aunt (paternal female)
tindi	turmi	mortar	ndottijo	dattijo	old man/decorous behavior
sabro	sauro	mosquito	ndottaku	dattaku	gentlemanly behavior
teku	teku	ocean			

The trans-Saharan trade between Kano and northern Africa, passing through the Berber lands has resulted in the domestication of words and expressions peculiar to the Berbers as a result of contact and trade further down south (see, particularly, Kossman, 2005) This has enriched the Hausa language since the domesticated words have now become 'indigenous' to their new abode.

Further, the Hausa domestication of 'immigrant' Arab loanwords is associated with literacy and prestige, since the Arabic language is the language of the Qur'ān. The more a Hausa speaker's inclusion and intonation of Arabic words in a conversation, the greater the prestige of the speaker, for it communicates a high level of sophistication – much in the same way African English speakers try as much as possible to imitate the 'correct' way of speaking English to reflect their own sophistication. For the typical Muslim Hausa speaker, it is considered more prestigious to gravitate towards Arabism in speech patterns and use of immigrant words, than English, regardless of the level of contemporary education of the speaker.

The case of Fulɓe language, or what the Hausa refer to as Fulatanci is extremely curious in linguistic adaption. The jihād of 1804, variously labeled as religious (Adeleẹyẹ, 1971), or "Fulani" jihad (Last, 1974), in reference to the ethnicity of its progenitor Usman bin Fodiyo (or Usman ɗan Fodiyo, as the Hausa refer to him, decimating the Arabic 'ibn' – son of – to its more domesticated equivalent 'ɗan'), created a form of colonialism in which power, spirituality and arms were brought to bear to conquer the Hausa states and install Fulani dominance and aristocracy. However, the Fulani realized enough that their language was not universal and had to communicate with their subjects in the dominant Hausa language; eventually leading to the substitution of the Fulɓe language with Hausa, even in the ruling houses. Thus, the presence of Fulɓe words in the Hausa language is few as indicated in Table 2.

Other Nigerian languages also immigrated into the Hausa language, being 'clothed' and domesticated to the linguistic intonation of the Hausa. A list of a few of these intangible immigrants into the Hausa language is given in Table 3.

Table 3. Nigerian Lexical Borrowings in Hausa

Kanuri	**Hausa**	**English**	**Yoruba**	**Hausa**	**English**	**Nupe**	**Hausa**	**English**
kasugu	kasuwa	Market	Paki	Kwaki	Garri	gulu	ungulu	vulture
tubo	turba	path/road	Kpeno	kwano	Metal bowl	gbamgba	agwagwa	duck
sango	sango	gun harpoon	Agogo	agogo	watch	kplaba	kwalba	bottle
fure	fure	flower	Apoti	akwati	box	iyelye	alele	Moin-moin
tambari	tambari	seal	Gele	gyale	Head cover	bente	bante	pant
algaita	algaita	trumpet	Fshana	ashana	matches			
ganga	ganga	drum	Dokita	likita	doctor			
birni	birni	city	Patapata	kwata-kwata	finally			
goyi	gwani	expert	Pali	kwali	carton			
yarima	yarima	prince	Gangan	ganga	drum			

It is interesting to note the onomatopoeic nature of the domestications in most cases. In Yoruba, for instance, the word for box, 'apoti' became the Hausa 'akwati', sharing similar tonal qualities. In such cases of intangible immigrants being domesticated in their new homes, the question that begs to be answered was, what word do the Hausa use for boxes (as well as other objects with local equivalent) – or was it that they had no boxes until they came in contact with the Yoruba?

Conclusions

With these evidences of intangible migration of language as adopted, adapted, and loanwords, the question then becomes, what is the specific gravity of identity? I will deliberately not answer this question, as there is no answer to it. However, going back to my site of contestation, I would like to use the template of racial identity in northern Nigeria. As Sowell (1996, p. 38), pointed out migration is not just merely a relocation of bodies but, more fundamentally, a redistribution of skills, experience, and other 'human capital' across the planet. It is the process of *cultural* change that has transformed nations and continents.' It is the cultural exchange emphasis that I would want to close this discourse through language, migration and identity. My arguments, so far, have been on acquisition of loanwords from one language to another. The loanwords incorporated in various languages have nevertheless enabled such language users to retain a cohesive identity. This is because adoption and usage of key loanwords might be just for social, rather than in-group discourse and conversations – thus retaining the overall 'herd' or 'group' identity.

For centuries, people have engaged in a series of migratory movements along various national corridors as traders, refugees, scholars, merchants and opportunists. Such movements – of both human and material goods – more recently seen in economic context as globalization has subsequently increased the complexity of ethnic configurations of communities throughout the ages and defined how isolated and monolithic communities construct their identity and sense of nationhood.

Thus words, as intangible immigrants weave in and out of societies, countries, continents and change status from being idiolectic to sociolectic where they are adopted as belonging to any community of users, regardless of the source of origin – thus making them truly migrants, as they have no intension of reverting back to their origin and leaving the lexicon of their adopters.

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