



## From Screen to Street: Vocal and Lexical Appropriation from Hausa-Dubbed Indian Films in Adolescent Peer Interaction in Northern Nigeria

**Blessing U. Ijem**

*Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University Wukari, Nigeria*

Email: [blessingginikanwa@gmail.com](mailto:blessingginikanwa@gmail.com),

**Ishaq Isa El-Qassim**

*Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University Wukari, Nigeria*

Email: [shaqsimgift@gmail.com](mailto:shaqsimgift@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**

*This study examines how adolescents in Northern Nigeria appropriate vocal and lexical forms from Hausa-dubbed Indian films within everyday peer interaction. Existing research on media and youth language has largely emphasized behavioral influence, visual representation, and lexical borrowing, with comparatively limited attention to the circulation of vocal style, prosody, and dubbed-media speech in local interactional contexts. Drawing on ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews, assisted acoustic analysis, and the Manual Diction and Lexicon Technique (MDLT), the study investigates how adolescents selectively reproduce and reinterpret film-derived speech styles associated with heroic, villainous, and comic characters. Findings indicate that media-derived vocal and lexical forms function as socially meaningful resources through which adolescents perform toughness, humor, affiliation, and symbolic aggression within peer-group interaction. Prosodic features such as pitch modulation, cadence, rhythmic elongation, and intensified vocal delivery were recurrently associated with stylized peer performances modeled on dubbed cinematic speech. The study further shows that these forms acquired local social meaning through repeated interactional uptake and peer recognition rather than through direct imitation alone. The article proposes the Vocal Influence–Appropriation Model (VIAM) as a heuristic framework for analyzing the movement of media-derived speech forms from exposure to interactional appropriation. By foregrounding voice and prosody as indexical and performative resources, the study contributes to youth sociolinguistics, media linguistics, and African media scholarship, demonstrating how dubbed-media speech becomes recontextualized within adolescent peer networks in a multilingual African setting.*

### 1. Introduction

Media influence on adolescents has been widely examined within sociolinguistics, media studies, and communication research, particularly in relation to behavioral modeling, identity formation, and language use (Bandura, 1977; Gerbner et al., 2002; Livingstone, 2009). However, comparatively little attention has been paid to how media speech itself—especially vocal style, prosody, and stylized lexical performance—circulates beyond media texts and becomes part of everyday peer interaction. This gap is particularly evident in multilingual and non-Western contexts where dubbed media serves as a major channel of linguistic and cultural mediation.

In Northern Nigeria, Hausa-dubbed Indian films occupy a prominent place in adolescent media consumption. Through communal viewing, mobile media exchange, and informal circulation networks, these films expose young audiences to highly stylized speech characterized by marked cadence, intensified vocal delivery, dramatic pausing, and distinctive lexical expressions. Although originally situated within cinematic narratives, such speech forms frequently become available for reuse in everyday interaction.

Research on youth language in Africa has documented slang formation, code-switching, lexical innovation, and multilingual hybridity (Omoniyi & White, 2006; Oyetade, 2018). Research on dubbed media has similarly examined translation practices, ideology, and audience reception. Yet relatively little attention has been given to how dubbed vocal performances become socially recognizable resources within peer interaction. As a result, the interactional life of media-derived vocal styles remains insufficiently understood in African youth contexts.

This study investigates how adolescents in the Taraba North Senatorial Zone engage with vocal and lexical resources derived from Hausa-dubbed Indian films. It addresses three questions:

- How are heroic, villainous, and comic speech styles represented in Hausa-dubbed Indian films in terms of vocal delivery and lexical stylization?
- In what ways do adolescents engage with and adapt such speech forms within peer interaction?
- What processes are involved in the emergence of social meaning and recurrent use of media-derived vocal and lexical forms within adolescent peer networks?

To address these questions, the study develops the Vocal Influence–Appropriation Model (VIAM) as a framework for examining the movement of media-derived speech forms from exposure to interactional appropriation. Methodologically, it combines ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews, assisted acoustic analysis, and contextual lexical annotation through the Manual Diction and Lexicon Technique (MDLT).

## **2. Literature Review**

This section reviews scholarship relevant to media-influenced youth language, with particular attention to mediated speech circulation, vocal stylization, dubbing practices, and the performative dimensions of adolescent interaction. Drawing from sociolinguistics, media studies, linguistic anthropology, and communication theory, the review situates the present study within broader debates on how young people appropriate and recontextualize linguistic resources circulating through mass media. Particular attention is given to the relative neglect of voice, prosody, and dubbed-media speech in African sociolinguistic research.

### **2.1 Media Influence and Youth Language**

Research on media influence has long examined how audiences, particularly adolescents, acquire behaviors, attitudes, and communicative practices through repeated exposure to mediated models. Within this tradition, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory remains foundational. Bandura argues that individuals learn through observation, imitation, and reinforcement, especially when models appear socially rewarded or symbolically powerful. Although early applications focused primarily on behavioral aggression, subsequent work expanded the framework to include symbolic and communicative practices such as gesture, stance, and language use (Bandura, 2001). Media characters therefore function not only as behavioral models but also as linguistic and vocal models whose speech styles may become socially desirable within peer interaction.

Cultivation Theory similarly emphasizes the cumulative effects of repeated media exposure. Gerbner et al. (2002) contend that sustained immersion in mediated environments gradually shapes audience perceptions of authority, conflict, morality, and social relations. While the theory has been criticized for its limited treatment of audience agency, it remains

useful for explaining how recurrent media representations establish recognizable interactional templates that may later surface in everyday discourse.

More audience-centered approaches complicate deterministic understandings of media influence. Hall's (1980) encoding/decoding framework argues that audiences actively interpret media texts through negotiated, dominant, or oppositional readings shaped by social experience and cultural positioning. This perspective is especially relevant to youth language studies because adolescents rarely reproduce media language mechanically. Instead, they selectively extract and adapt linguistic forms in ways that align with local interactional goals and peer-group norms.

Sociolinguistic research consistently demonstrates that adolescents are particularly active in processes of linguistic appropriation and stylistic innovation. Eckert (2000) shows that adolescent speech practices are closely linked to peer-group identity, social differentiation, and symbolic positioning. Young speakers draw on multiple linguistic resources—including regional vernaculars, slang, borrowed forms, and media language—to construct recognizable social stances such as toughness, humor, resistance, or coolness. Media speech, because of its stylized and affectively charged character, provides especially salient material for such interactional performances.

Research on hip-hop and mediated popular culture further illustrates this process. Alim (2006) demonstrates that youth often adopt not only lexical items from rap culture but also rhythmic timing, intonational contours, and performative stance markers. These forms are subsequently recontextualized within local peer interaction and detached from their original media settings. Similar observations have been made in studies of television, film, and online media, where catchphrases, speech styles, and vocal gestures circulate as socially recognizable resources among adolescents (Androutsopoulos, 2014).

In African contexts, scholarship on youth language has emphasized hybridity, multilingual creativity, and strategic borrowing. Omoniyi and White (2006) argue that African youth frequently combine local languages, colonial languages, and global media forms in the production of emergent linguistic identities. Oyetade (2018) similarly notes that youth vernaculars often develop through playful manipulation and semantic restructuring rather than direct borrowing alone. However, much of this scholarship has focused primarily on lexical innovation, slang formation, and code-switching, with comparatively limited attention to the vocal and prosodic dimensions of media-related language practices.

This omission is analytically significant because media speech is experienced not only lexically but also vocally. Adolescents frequently reproduce vocal texture, cadence, rhythmic delivery, and affective stance alongside lexical expressions. Understanding media-related youth language therefore requires attention to how vocal performance itself becomes socially recognizable and interactionally reusable within peer-group contexts.

## **2.2 Dubbing, Voice, and Mediated Vocal Style**

Voice occupies a central but comparatively underexamined position within media and sociolinguistic research. Chion's (1999) theory of audio-vision argues that cinematic meaning is shaped not only visually but also acoustically, particularly through vocal performance. Features such as pitch, timbre, loudness, tempo, and rhythmic delivery contribute to the construction of character identity and moral positioning. Vocal style may therefore signal authority, danger, vulnerability, humor, or emotional intensity independently of lexical content.

Dubbing further intensifies the semiotic importance of voice by relocating speech into a new linguistic and cultural context. Nornes (2007) argues that dubbing is not simply a process of translation but a form of interpretive reconstruction in which vocal performance is reshaped for new audiences. Dubbers must reproduce emotional tone, interactional stance, and character typology while adapting dialogue to local linguistic expectations. In practice, this often results in heightened vocal stylization and exaggerated prosodic contrast.

In Hausa-dubbed Indian films, vocal differentiation frequently functions as a major narrative resource. Adamu (2015) observes that heroes are commonly voiced through deep,

measured cadence and controlled delivery associated with strength and moral authority, whereas villains are characterized by abrupt pitch shifts, intensified stress, coarse timbre, and exaggerated pauses. Such vocal stylization increases memorability and enhances audience recognition of moral alignment and dramatic tension.

Importantly, these vocal forms do not remain confined to cinematic contexts. Chion (1999) notes that film voices circulate as auditory images that can be recalled, reenacted, and redeployed in other social settings. For adolescents, whose interactional practices are often highly performative, media-derived vocal styles provide reusable templates for staging authority, aggression, humor, or confrontation within peer interaction.

Despite this, dubbed media remains comparatively underexplored within sociolinguistic research on youth language. Existing studies frequently focus on subtitling, translation ideology, or audience reception while paying less attention to how dubbed speech becomes interactionally meaningful after media consumption. This omission is particularly notable in African contexts where dubbed media constitutes a major form of linguistic localization and where oral performance traditions already place considerable cultural value on voice and vocal delivery.

The present study addresses this gap by examining Hausa-dubbed films as sites of mediated vocal circulation. It treats voice and prosody not as secondary features of speech but as socially meaningful semiotic resources that move across media and interactional domains.

### **2.3 Performance, Indexicality, and Adolescent Peer Interaction**

Performance theory provides an important framework for understanding how media-derived speech becomes socially meaningful within adolescent interaction. Goffman (1981) conceptualizes everyday communication as a form of social performance through which speakers manage impressions, negotiate relationships, and enact recognizable identities. Language use is therefore shaped not only by propositional meaning but also by audience orientation and interactional effect.

Bauman (2001) extends this perspective by arguing that performance foregrounds communicative form itself, inviting evaluation, recognition, and response. Adolescents frequently engage in such performative activity through teasing, joking, mock confrontation, storytelling, and stylized reenactment. Within these interactional settings, media-derived speech forms may function as resources for displaying creativity, social competence, or group affiliation.

Indexicality theory further explains how linguistic and vocal features acquire social meaning. Silverstein (2003) argues that linguistic forms become indexically linked to particular identities, stances, or moral associations through repeated social usage. Media-derived speech often enters interaction already associated with recognizable character types such as heroes, villains, tricksters, or comic figures. Adolescents may subsequently reinterpret these associations within local peer contexts, where vocal and lexical forms acquire new interactional functions.

Research on mediatization similarly emphasizes that media language becomes socially significant only through local uptake and circulation. Androutsopoulos (2014) argues that adolescents do not simply imitate media speech but stylize, parody, and recontextualize it within peer-group interaction. The persistence of such forms depends heavily on audience recognition and peer ratification. Laughter, admiration, mock fear, or collaborative repetition contribute to the stabilization of media-derived forms as socially meaningful interactional resources.

These processes are closely connected to symbolic aggression within adolescent interaction. Goodwin (2006) demonstrates that mock threats, insults, and confrontational exchanges frequently operate as ritualized social performances rather than direct precursors to physical violence. Media-derived speech, particularly speech associated with cinematic

conflict and exaggerated confrontation, provides adolescents with recognizable resources for staging symbolic aggression while maintaining interactional control and peer solidarity.

This performative perspective complicates simplistic assumptions about direct media effects. Rather than treating adolescents as passive recipients of media influence, it highlights how young people actively reinterpret and repurpose media-derived speech forms within locally meaningful social contexts. Understanding this process requires attention not only to lexical borrowing but also to vocal delivery, audience response, and the interactional conditions through which speech forms acquire social recognition.

## **2.4 Research Gap**

Despite extensive scholarship on youth language, media influence, and performance, several important gaps remain.

First, voice and prosody remain comparatively underexamined in sociolinguistic research on youth language. Existing studies have extensively documented lexical innovation, slang formation, and code-switching, yet relatively few have examined how pitch, cadence, vocal texture, rhythmic delivery, and other prosodic features circulate through media and become socially meaningful within adolescent interaction.

Second, dubbed-media contexts remain underrepresented within studies of media-related linguistic appropriation, particularly in African settings. Research on global media circulation has often emphasized narrative content, ideology, or representation while giving less attention to how dubbing reshapes speech and produces locally recognizable vocal models for interactional reuse.

Third, relatively few studies integrate ethnographic observation with assisted acoustic analysis and contextual lexical annotation in examining media-derived speech practices. As a result, the interactional processes through which media-related forms are reproduced, validated, and stabilized within peer networks remain insufficiently documented.

The present study addresses these gaps by examining how adolescents in Northern Nigeria appropriate vocal and lexical forms from Hausa-dubbed Indian films within peer interaction. Methodologically, the study combines ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews, assisted acoustic analysis, and the Manual Diction and Lexicon Technique (MDLT) to investigate how media-derived speech forms become socially recognizable resources within adolescent interactional practice. Conceptually, the study contributes to youth sociolinguistics and media linguistics by foregrounding voice and prosody as central dimensions of media-related linguistic appropriation in a multilingual African context.

## **3. Theoretical Framework: The Vocal Influence–Appropriation Model (VIAM)**

The present study draws on the Vocal Influence–Appropriation Model (VIAM) as a heuristic framework for examining how adolescents in Northern Nigeria appropriate linguistic resources from Hausa-dubbed Indian films. VIAM conceptualizes the movement of media-derived forms into peer interaction as a staged and recursive process—Exposure, Imitation, and Appropriation—accounting for both lexical and vocal dimensions of youth language. By foregrounding voice, prosody, and interactional meaning, the model positions media language not as a unidirectional influence but as a socially mediated resource that is actively interpreted, adapted, and recontextualized within adolescent peer networks.

### **3.1 Conceptual Overview of VIAM**

VIAM is grounded in the assumption that media influence is multilayered, socially mediated, and interactionally performed. Rather than focusing narrowly on lexical borrowing (Alim, 2006; Omoniyi & White, 2006), it foregrounds vocal and prosodic features—pitch, timbre, rhythm, intensity, and cadence—as central to how media speech is perceived and reused in interaction. This aligns with scholarship that treats voice as a primary semiotic resource in meaning-making (Chion, 1999; Coupland, 2007; Androutsopoulos, 2014).

VIAM conceptualizes media-to-peer transfer as a staged but non-linear process. Although analytically separated into phases, the stages are mutually reinforcing and empirically overlapping. It therefore functions as an analytical heuristic for tracing circulation, uptake, and stabilization of media-derived forms rather than as a deterministic causal model.

### **3.2 Stage One: Exposure**

Exposure refers to repeated encounters with stylized lexical and vocal forms in media environments, operating at perceptual and cognitive levels that enable adolescents to encode both linguistic content and its auditory delivery (Chion, 1999; Hall, 1980). These auditory features—prosodic contour, pitch range, tempo, and timbre—index meanings such as authority, humor, threat, or heroism.

In Hausa-dubbed Indian films, exposure is intensified by repeated communal viewing, mobile circulation, and informal broadcast practices. Dubbing further heightens vocal contrast, producing salient templates in which heroes are associated with low, controlled cadence and villains with heightened pitch variation and intensified timbre (Adamu, 2015). These forms are embedded in peer environments that already privilege performative repetition.

In line with Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), exposure facilitates selective attention to salient and emotionally charged models, enhancing memorability and later imitation. Cultivation Theory (Gerbner et al., 2002) further suggests that repeated exposure fosters familiarity with interactional templates related to authority, conflict, and alignment, including both lexical and prosodic patterns.

### **3.3 Stage Two: Imitation**

Imitation refers to the situated and evaluative reproduction of media-derived lexical and vocal forms within peer interaction. It is not mechanical replication but socially negotiated performance, typically occurring in informal peer settings where immediate audience response shapes uptake and modification (Eckert, 2000; Goodwin, 2006).

Imitation operates at both lexical and vocal-prosodic levels. Adolescents reproduce film-derived expressions and speech styles, including pitch movement, tempo, pauses, and timbral effects. However, reproduction is rarely exact; it is typically stylized, exaggerated, or adapted to interactional goals.

While Social Learning Theory explains reinforcement processes, VIAM extends this by emphasizing multimodal validation: peer uptake depends not only on lexical accuracy but also on perceived vocal authenticity. Responses such as laughter, alignment, or resistance determine whether forms are accepted or rejected.

Imitation is also adaptive. Media-derived forms are frequently combined with local linguistic resources, producing hybrid expressions intelligible primarily within peer-group contexts (Omoniyi & White, 2006; Oyetade, 2018). This highlights imitation as a creative and agentive process rather than simple repetition.

### **3.4 Stage Three: Appropriation**

Appropriation refers to the stabilization of media-derived forms as recurrent and socially meaningful resources within peer interaction. At this stage, value is derived not from repetition alone but from their role in identity construction, social positioning, and interactional negotiation (Goffman, 1981; Silverstein, 2003).

Within peer networks, appropriated forms serve three main functions:

- **Identity Construction:** Vocal and lexical forms enact identities such as bravery, humor, or cunning. Heroic cadence may index authority, while villainous intonation may signal playful aggression or irony.
- **Hierarchy Negotiation:** Stylized forms regulate social rank and dominance without physical confrontation, functioning as symbolic aggression in interactional calibration (Goodwin, 2006; Androutsopoulos, 2014).
- **In-group Signaling:** Recurrent use of specific forms marks group boundaries and reinforces solidarity through shared semiotic knowledge.

Appropriation is performative and contingent. Following Goffman (1981) and Bauman (2001) and Magaji (2018) meaning emerges through uptake and audience response. Stabilization is therefore understood as a socially ratified process in which repeated forms acquire indexical value through circulation and peer recognition.

### **3.5 Integrative Theoretical Foundations**

VIAM synthesizes several complementary theoretical perspectives:

- Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977): Explains attentional selection, modeling, and reinforcement in exposure and imitation processes.
- Cultivation Theory (Gerbner et al., 2002): Accounts for cumulative exposure effects in shaping interactional expectations and perceptual schemas.
- Performance Theory (Goffman, 1981; Bauman, 2001): Frames language as socially enacted performance oriented toward audience reception and evaluation.
- Indexicality (Silverstein, 2003): Explains how linguistic and vocal features acquire social meaning through repeated association with interactional stances and identities.

Together, these frameworks position VIAM as a multimodal and socially embedded model of media-related linguistic circulation, linking individual perception with interactional practice and peer-group meaning-making.

### **3.6 VIAM as a Heuristic for Empirical Analysis**

VIAM functions as an interpretive heuristic rather than a deterministic causal model. It provides a framework for observing and analyzing the circulation of media-derived speech within adolescent peer interaction.

The three stages of the model correspond to the study's empirical procedures:

- Exposure: ethnographic observation of media consumption and interactional environments.
- Imitation: audio documentation and acoustic analysis of lexical and prosodic reproduction.
- Appropriation: MDLT-based coding and distributional analysis of recurrent forms and their interactional functions.

The model also facilitates theoretical triangulation by linking observed speech practices to reinforcement (Bandura), indexical meaning (Silverstein), and interactional performance (Goffman).

### **3.7 Implications of VIAM**

VIAM contributes to the study of media-related language use by foregrounding voice and prosody as central analytical dimensions, conceptualizing media influence as socially mediated, and treating appropriation as an adaptive and interactionally negotiated process. It further provides a framework for integrating ethnographic, acoustic, computational, and interpretive approaches in the analysis of multimodal language practices.

Accordingly, VIAM offers a structured lens for examining how media-derived lexical and vocal forms emerge, circulate, and acquire social meaning within adolescent peer interaction.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1 Research Design**

The study adopts a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods design integrating ethnography, semi-structured interviews, acoustic-phonetic analysis, and computational lexical analysis, alongside structured manual annotation (MDLT). The design is motivated by the need to capture both interactional micro-processes of adolescent speech use and distributional patterns of media-derived linguistic forms across peer networks.

Mixed-methods integration follows a convergent triangulation logic in which qualitative and quantitative strands are collected in parallel and analytically integrated at the interpretation stage to enhance validity and analytical depth (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2017). Rather than

privileging any single data stream, the study treats ethnographic, acoustic, and computational outputs as complementary evidentiary layers.

Within the framework of VIAM, ethnographic data primarily operationalize exposure and interactional uptake, acoustic-phonetic analysis captures imitation at the level of vocal realization, and MDLT-coded lexical data support analysis of stabilization patterns associated with appropriation.

Importantly, VIAM is treated here as an analytic scaffold rather than a causal mechanism, ensuring that observed patterns are interpreted as socially situated correlations rather than deterministic media effects.

## **4.2 Study Area and Participants**

### **4.2.1 Study Area**

Fieldwork was conducted in the Taraba North Senatorial Zone of Nigeria, a linguistically heterogeneous region where Hausa functions as a dominant lingua franca in adolescent peer interaction.

The site was selected through criterion-based sampling due to:

- High circulation of dubbed media content, particularly Hausa-dubbed Indian films distributed through informal and household media networks.
- Dense adolescent peer ecologies, particularly in semi-public spaces (school peripheries, recreational grounds, and informal gathering sites).
- Sociolinguistic salience of non-standard variation, making the site appropriate for observing stylization, indexical reallocation, and media-derived speech uptake.

### **4.2.2 Media Corpus (Film Selection Rationale)**

The analysis draws on *Daku* (1980) and *Mogambo* (1990), locally circulated in Hausa-dubbed versions (Zarrah and Caskale).

Film selection followed explicit criteria:

- Documented popularity within adolescent viewing communities (based on preliminary field reconnaissance and informant confirmation).
- Presence of systematic vocal contrast structures (hero/villain/comic registers).
- Presence of recurrent lexical stylization and formulaic expressions.

Rather than treating films as narrative units, the study operationalizes them as source corpora of recurrent vocal-lexical templates for downstream sociolinguistic uptake.

### **4.2.3 Participants**

Participants were selected through purposive and network-informed sampling.

- Adolescents ( $n \approx 45$ ): aged 13–18 years, recruited across school and informal peer settings.
- Key informants ( $n = 23$ ): comprising teachers, school management representatives, and security personnel.

Sampling was not designed for statistical representativeness but for analytical generalizability, defined as the transferability of observed sociolinguistic processes to comparable contexts rather than population inference (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

### **4.2.4 Participant Profile**

Table 1 presents the participant composition for the study.

**Table 1: Participant Profile**

<b>Participant Category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Role in Study</b>
Adolescents	45	13–18 years	Primary participants observed and interviewed
Teachers	9	Adult	Key informants
School management personnel	6	Adult	Key informants

Security personnel	8	Adult	Key informants
Total	68	—	—

The adolescent participants constituted the primary focus of the study because they represented the principal users and interpreters of media-derived speech forms within peer interaction. Key informants provided contextual information regarding adolescent communication practices, school-based interactional environments, and observable patterns of media-related speech behavior.

#### 4.3 Data Volume and Corpus Characteristics

The empirical dataset comprised multiple sources collected during fieldwork and analyzed through triangulated procedures.

The ethnographic component consisted of approximately 52 hours of non-participant observation conducted across school environments, recreational spaces, and informal adolescent gathering sites. These observations generated structured field notes documenting naturally occurring speech events, interactional contexts, and instances of media-related linguistic performance.

A total of 36 semi-structured interviews were conducted. These included interviews with adolescent participants and key informants drawn from teaching staff, school management personnel, and security personnel. Interviews explored media exposure patterns, perceptions of Hausa-dubbed films, peer-group speech practices, and interpretations of recurrent media-derived expressions.

Across observational and interview datasets, 148 documented speech-performance episodes involving media-derived lexical items, vocal stylization, or both were identified and coded for analysis. These episodes formed the primary analytical corpus for examining imitation and appropriation processes within peer interaction.

The media corpus consisted of Hausa-dubbed versions of *Daku* (1980) and *Mogambo* (1990), selected because of their popularity among participants and their extensive use of stylized heroic, villainous, and comic speech registers. Dialogue excerpts from these films were transcribed and annotated for lexical and prosodic features, enabling comparison with speech-performance episodes documented during fieldwork.

Table 2 summarizes the overall dataset.

**Table 2: Summary of Data Sources**

Data Source	Volume
Ethnographic observation	52 hours
Semi-structured interviews	36
Adolescent participants	45
Key informants	23
Documented speech-performance episodes	148
Films analyzed	2

These data sources were analyzed through methodological triangulation involving ethnographic interpretation, acoustic analysis, computational lexical processing, and MDLT coding procedures.

#### 4.4 Data Collection

Data collection was structured into four analytically distinct but integrated streams: media corpus analysis, ethnographic observation, interviews, and computational-annotation procedures.

##### 4.4.1 Film Corpus Preparation

Film dialogue was transcribed with dual-level representation:

- Lexical layer: orthographic transcription of Hausa-dubbed dialogue.
- Vocal layer: annotation of prosodic features (pitch movement, stress, tempo, pause structure, and intensity).

Prosodic annotation was aligned with acoustic measurements obtained through Praat, enabling comparison between perceived vocal stylization and measurable acoustic correlates.

#### **4.4.2 Ethnographic Observation**

Ethnographic data were generated through non-participant observation in semi-public adolescent spaces, including school environments, recreational zones, and informal gathering sites.

Field procedures included:

- Structured fieldnote protocols capturing interactional sequences and speech events.
- Contextual logging of performance episodes involving media-derived expressions.
- Selective audio capture where ethical clearance and assent were obtained.

Where recording was not possible, structured recall notes were written immediately after observation to reduce memory distortion. Ethnographic data were used primarily to identify instances of media-derived speech activation in natural interactional contexts, not to infer frequency prevalence.

#### **4.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with adolescents and key informants to triangulate observational data.

Interview domains included:

- Exposure patterns to dubbed media content.
- Peer norms governing speech stylization.
- Perceived meanings of recurrent media-derived expressions.
- Contexts of use and social evaluation of stylized speech.

Interviews were conducted in conversational formats to reduce formality bias and enhance elicitation of naturally occurring metalinguistic commentary.

#### **4.4.4 Computational Analysis and MDLT**

This study integrates two complementary analytical layers.

##### **(a) Acoustic and Computational Processing**

- Praat analysis: extraction of relative pitch (F0 contours), intensity variation, and temporal pacing.
- Python-based lexical analysis: tokenization, frequency distribution, and collocation mapping of recurring lexical items.

Outputs were treated as descriptive distributions, not inferential probabilities.

##### **(b) The Manual Diction and Lexicon Technique (MDLT)**

The Manual Diction and Lexicon Technique (MDLT) is a structured qualitative-interpretive coding framework developed for the contextual analysis of lexical choice, diction patterns, and interactional meaning in literary and discourse data (Ijem & El-Qassim, 2025). In the present study, MDLT was adapted for sociolinguistic analysis to classify media-derived lexical items according to their interactional function and indexical value within adolescent peer interaction.

##### **MDLT Procedure**

Identification phase: Candidate lexical items are extracted from ethnographic transcripts, interview data, and the film corpus.

Contextual verification phase: Each item is verified against interactional context, speaker intention (as reported or inferred from ethnographic triangulation), and peer response patterns.

Functional coding phase: Each token is assigned one or more interpretive categories—aggression (symbolic or performative), humor, authority, parody, and affiliation/solidarity.

Cross-validation phase: MDLT codes are compared with computational frequency outputs, ethnographic field notes, and interview confirmations.

#### **Reliability Procedure**

To ensure coding consistency:

- Dual independent coding was conducted on a subset of the dataset.
- Intercoder agreement was assessed using negotiated convergence rather than statistical Kappa (appropriate for interpretive sociolinguistic coding).
- Discrepancies were resolved through analytic adjudication meetings grounded in contextual evidence.

#### **Validation Strategy**

Validation is achieved through triangulated convergence, not statistical generalization:

- Convergence between ethnographic evidence, acoustic patterns, and MDLT coding is treated as confirmatory.
- Divergence is analytically retained as evidence of contextual variability rather than error.

### **4.5 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical procedures followed established qualitative research standards for work involving minors.

Key safeguards included:

- Informed assent from adolescents and consent from guardians and institutional gatekeepers.
- Anonymization of all participant identifiers.
- Restriction of audio recording to consented contexts only.
- Non-interventionist observation protocols.
- Secure encrypted storage of all data.

The study prioritizes symbolic interactional analysis and explicitly avoids elicitation of physically risky or coercive peer behaviors.

### **4.6 Methodological Rationale**

The methodological architecture is designed to operationalize VIAM as an analytic framework rather than a causal model.

- Ethnography captures contextualized exposure and uptake conditions.
- Acoustic analysis operationalizes imitation at the level of vocal realization.
- MDLT operationalizes appropriation through stabilized social meaning assignment.
- Computational analysis provides distributional support for identifying recurrent forms.

Integration occurs through cross-validation across datasets rather than hierarchical privileging of any single method.

### **4.7 Limitations and Reflexivity**

The study acknowledges the following constraints:

- Analytical scope limitation: findings are context-specific and not statistically generalizable.
- Reactivity risk: observer presence may have influenced performance intensity.
- Corpus limitation: only two primary films were analyzed, limiting representational breadth.
- Acoustic granularity constraints: analysis is limited to macro-prosodic features rather than fine spectral structure.

Reflexive practice was maintained through systematic fieldnote annotation of researcher positionality and interpretive decisions during coding.

### **4.8 Methodological Contribution**

This study advances sociolinguistic methodology by integrating ethnographic interaction analysis, acoustic-phonetic measurement, computational lexical distribution analysis, and structured interpretive coding (MDLT). The result is a triangulated multimodal framework for analyzing media-to-peer linguistic transfer in under-documented sociolinguistic ecologies,

particularly where dubbed media functions as a primary input source for youth language formation.

## 5. Findings

This section presents the empirical outcomes of the study in relation to adolescents' uptake of vocal and lexical forms from Hausa-dubbed Indian films. Findings are organized according to the analytical sequence proposed in the Vocal Influence–Appropriation Model (VIAM): Exposure, Imitation, and Appropriation. Evidence is drawn from ethnographic observations, interview data, acoustic measurements, and MDLT coding outputs.

### 5.1 Exposure Patterns and Media Consumption Contexts

The findings indicate that exposure to Hausa-dubbed Indian films was frequent, repetitive, and socially embedded within peer interactional environments. Interview and observational data suggest that media consumption was predominantly collective rather than individual.

Three major exposure conditions emerged.

#### 5.1.1 Repetitive Circulation of Film Content

Participants reported repeatedly watching the same films, particularly scenes involving confrontation, revenge, heroic declarations, and comic exchanges.

*“We can watch the same fighting scene many times. Sometimes we already know the words before the actor says them.” (Male participant, 16 years)*

*“The villain’s voice is what we remember most. Even after the film ends, some boys repeat it while joking.” (Male participant, 15 years)*

Repeated viewing appeared to increase familiarity not only with lexical expressions but also with vocal delivery patterns. Additional interview data revealed similar patterns of repetitive engagement with memorable speech sequences.

*“Sometimes we replay the same part because of the way the character talks, not only because of the story.” (Male participant A, 14 years)*

*“If somebody misses the scene, we repeat the dialogue for him and try to sound like the actor.” (Male participant B, 16 years)*

*“We remember the voice first. Even when we forget some words, we remember how it was said.” (Male participant C, 15 years)*

These responses suggest that repeated exposure reinforced both lexical recall and auditory familiarity with stylized vocal performance.

#### 5.1.2 Collective Viewing and Shared Attention

Field observations revealed that film viewing frequently occurred in groups. Immediately after viewing, adolescents often reenacted memorable scenes using exaggerated vocal performances.

Observation Extract 12: Following a screening session, four boys reenacted a confrontation scene. One participant reproduced a villainous speech style using an elongated pause before the final threat. The performance was followed by laughter and collective repetition by the other group members.

These observations suggest that exposure was socially reinforced through immediate interactional repetition.

#### 5.1.3 Salience of Vocal Contrast

Participants consistently recalled characters based on voice quality rather than dialogue content alone. Table 3 summarizes recurring participant descriptions.

**Table 3: Participant Perceptions of Dubbed Character Voices**

Character Type	Common Participant Description
Hero	Calm, deep, controlled
Villain	Harsh, loud, threatening

Comic character	Fast, exaggerated, playful
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The findings suggest that vocal contrast increased memorability and facilitated later imitation. Interview evidence further indicates that participants frequently categorized characters through vocal qualities rather than narrative functions.

*“You know the villain immediately from the voice.” (Male participant, 17 years)*

*“The hero sounds calm even when he is angry.” (Male participant, 16 years)*

These observations reinforce the interpretation that vocal differentiation served as a salient cue for character recognition and subsequent imitation.

## 5.2 Imitation: Emergent Vocal and Lexical Reproduction

Evidence from ethnographic observation and interviews indicates that adolescents actively reproduced selected lexical and vocal elements from Hausa-dubbed films. However, imitation was typically stylized rather than exact.

### 5.2.1 Lexical Imitation

MDLT analysis identified several recurrent lexical items and expressions derived from the film corpus.

**Table 4: Illustrative Media-Derived Lexical Items**

Expression	Observed Tokens	Primary Function (MDLT)
Heroic challenge phrase	29	Authority
Villainous threat phrase	34	Symbolic aggression
Comic insult phrase	22	Humor
Formulaic greeting style	17	Solidarity

These expressions were rarely reproduced verbatim. Instead, participants frequently modified wording while retaining the interactional function.

**Table 4A: Illustrative MDLT Functional Coding of Media-Derived Expressions**

Expression Category	Typical Interactional Context	MDLT Function
Heroic challenge phrase	Leadership claims and peer competition	Authority
Villainous threat phrase	Mock confrontation and teasing	Symbolic aggression
Comic insult phrase	Joking exchanges among friends	Humor
Formulaic greeting style	Peer-group interaction	Solidarity
Authority declaration	Claims of status or control	Identity performance

The MDLT coding indicates that media-derived expressions were rarely used for literal communication alone. Rather, they functioned as interactional resources through which adolescents enacted authority, humor, aggression, and group affiliation.

*“We don’t always use the exact words. Sometimes we change them but keep the same style.” (Male participant, 17 years)*

### 5.2.2 Vocal-Prosodic Imitation

Acoustic measurements were conducted using Praat (Boersma & Weenink) following a consistent extraction protocol. Fundamental frequency (F0) values were derived from vowel nuclei in stressed syllables identified through combined auditory-acoustic inspection, while intensity measurements were taken at peak amplitude points within each utterance. All recordings were normalized for sampling rate prior to analysis.

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Given that the dataset consists of naturally occurring field recordings rather than laboratory speech, acoustic outputs are interpreted as relative within-speaker indicators of prosodic shift, rather than absolute phonetic norms. Accordingly, all comparisons are intra-speaker (baseline vs. reenactment) and are not intended for cross-speaker generalization or population-level inference.

Utterances were segmented manually from continuous interactional sequences using perceptual boundaries (pauses, intonational resets, and interactional turn-taking cues). Baseline segments were selected from the same speaker immediately preceding or following reenactment episodes to control for speaker-specific vocal characteristics and situational variability.

A central finding of the study is that participants reproduced vocal style alongside lexical content. Within the observational corpus, imitation episodes were characterized by recurrent prosodic modifications associated with film-derived speech styles.

The following prosodic features were consistently observed within the sampled dataset:

- Exaggerated pitch lowering in heroic performances.
- Intensified stress on key lexical items.
- Elongated pauses before threats or declarations.
- Rhythmic slowing during confrontational speech.
- Increased vocal intensity during symbolic aggression.

To complement ethnographic observation, an exploratory acoustic analysis was conducted on twenty-four recorded speech-performance episodes selected from the corpus. For each episode, mean fundamental frequency (F0), peak intensity, and pause duration were extracted and averaged across annotated tokens.

For each performance episode, a corresponding baseline conversational segment was identified from the same speaker, occurring immediately before or after the reenactment event. Acoustic values were manually extracted and aggregated at the level of speaker-matched pairs, rather than pooled across speakers, to preserve intra-speaker comparability.

The analysis is intended to be descriptive and illustrative rather than inferential, aimed at identifying broad tendencies in vocal stylization under naturalistic conditions.

**Table 5: Illustrative Acoustic Comparison**

Feature	Baseline Speech	Reenacted Speech
Mean fundamental frequency (F0)	118 Hz	92 Hz
Peak intensity	67 dB	76 dB
Mean pause duration	0.31 sec	0.78 sec

Overall, the findings suggest that imitation involved systematic modification of vocal delivery rather than lexical repetition alone, with prosodic restructuring functioning as a key resource in stylized reenactment of film-derived speech.

Observation Extract 31: During a peer disagreement, a participant adopted a markedly lower pitch and slower cadence while reproducing a film-derived threat expression. Peers immediately identified the source character and responded with laughter. This indicates shared recognition of the vocal model being invoked.

### **5.3 Appropriation: Social Functions of Media-Derived Speech**

#### **5.3.0 Illustrative MDLT Coding Pathway**

To illustrate how media-derived forms moved from imitation to appropriation, Table 5A presents an example of the coding process applied during analysis.

**Table 5A: Illustrative MDLT Coding Progression**

Analytical Stage	Observation
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Film source	Villain-style threat expression
Initial imitation	Reproduced during peer joking shortly after discussion of a film scene
Peer response	Laughter and collaborative repetition
Repeated use	Observed across multiple interactional episodes
MDLT classification	Symbolic aggression; identity performance
Appropriation outcome	Became a recognizable peer-group resource used beyond immediate film-viewing contexts

The coding pathway suggests that media-derived forms acquired social significance through repeated interactional uptake and peer recognition rather than through exposure alone.

### 5.3.1 Identity Performance

Participants used media-derived vocal styles to enact socially recognizable identities. Heroic vocal styles were frequently associated with leadership and confidence. Villainous styles were often deployed during playful confrontation.

*“When somebody wants to act like the boss, he talks like the hero.”*

*“If we are joking and pretending to fight, somebody will use the villain voice.”*

MDLT coding identified identity-performance functions in 41 of the 148 documented speech-performance episodes.

### 5.3.2 Symbolic Aggression

Media-derived speech frequently appeared in ritualized verbal confrontations.

Observation Extract 44: Two boys exchanged mock threats using exaggerated villain-style intonation. Despite the aggressive lexical content, both participants laughed throughout the exchange and no physical conflict followed.

MDLT coding classified 36 episodes as symbolic aggression rather than genuine hostility. These findings support the interpretation that media-derived speech often functions as performative play rather than direct aggression.

### 5.3.3 Group Solidarity and In-Group Signaling

Repeated use of recognizable film-derived speech forms functioned as a marker of peer-group membership.

Observation Extract 51: A participant initiated a film-derived phrase. Three peers completed the expression collaboratively before collectively reproducing the associated vocal style. Such episodes demonstrate that media-derived speech had become part of a shared interactional repertoire.

## 5.4 Distributional Patterns of Media-Derived Forms

Analysis of the corpus revealed uneven distribution across speech functions.

**Table 6: MDLT Functional Distribution**

Function	Frequency
Humor	47
Symbolic aggression	36
Identity performance	41
Solidarity	24

Humor and identity performance accounted for the largest proportion of observed uses, suggesting that media-derived forms were primarily interactional resources rather than mechanisms of direct influence.

### 5.5 Peer Validation as a Mechanism of Stabilization

A consistent finding across all datasets was the importance of peer evaluation. Successful performances were typically followed by:

- Laughter.
- Repetition by peers.
- Imitation by additional speakers.
- Explicit praise of performance quality.

Observation Extract 63: Following a particularly accurate reproduction of a villain character's vocal style, several peers applauded and requested that the participant repeat the performance. Conversely, unsuccessful performances frequently attracted corrective teasing or indifference.

*“If nobody laughs or responds, people stop using it.” (Male participant, 15 years)*

*“When everybody repeats it, then it becomes part of our normal joking.” (Male participant, 16 years)*

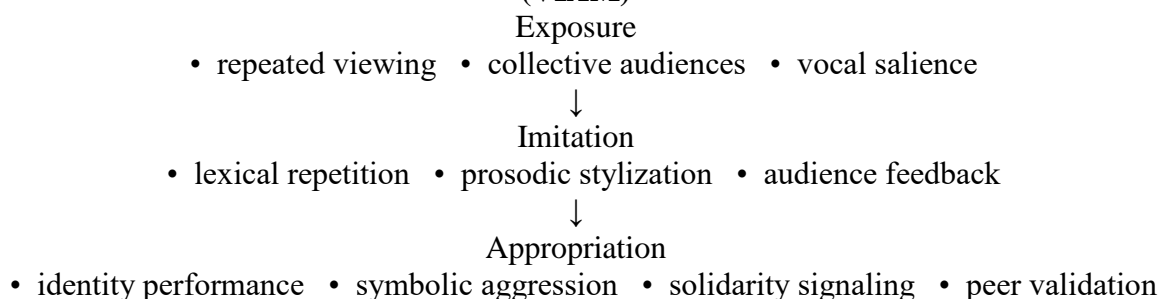
These accounts suggest that peer evaluation functioned as a social filtering mechanism through which some media-derived forms were retained while others disappeared from circulation. Peer validation thus served as a mechanism through which certain vocal and lexical forms became stabilized within adolescent interaction.

## 5.6 Summary of Findings

The evidence presented above indicates that:

- Exposure to Hausa-dubbed Indian films occurred primarily in socially shared environments.
- Adolescents reproduced both lexical content and vocal style.
- Prosodic features such as pitch, intensity, rhythm, and pausing played a significant role in imitation.
- Media-derived speech was typically stylized rather than mechanically copied.
- Peer validation functioned as a key mechanism in the stabilization of media-derived forms.
- Humor, symbolic aggression, identity performance, and solidarity emerged as the dominant interactional functions of appropriated speech forms.
- Appropriation was a socially mediated process involving collective recognition and repeated interactional uptake.

### **Figure 1: Empirical Representation of the Vocal Influence–Appropriation Model (VIAM)**



## 6. Discussion

The findings suggest that media influence on adolescent language use in the study context is best understood as a multimodal and socially mediated process rather than a simple transfer of lexical items. Hausa-dubbed Indian films provided both lexical material and vocal templates, but adolescents did not reproduce these resources passively. Instead, they selectively adapted and recontextualized them within peer interaction to achieve locally meaningful social effects.

A central finding is the prominence of vocal features—particularly pitch modulation, cadence, rhythm, and intensity—in the circulation of media-derived speech. This supports

Chion's (1999) argument that voice is a primary carrier of cinematic meaning and extends it to adolescent peer interaction, where vocal stylization functions as a resource for social performance. The findings therefore challenge predominantly lexical accounts of media-related language use by demonstrating the centrality of prosody in linguistic appropriation.

The results also support the usefulness of the Vocal Influence–Appropriation Model (VIAM). The progression from exposure to imitation and appropriation was observable across the dataset, although the stages frequently overlapped. Exposure facilitated familiarity with stylized speech forms, imitation involved their experimental reproduction, and appropriation reflected stabilization through repeated peer validation. VIAM is therefore best understood as a heuristic continuum rather than a fixed sequence.

The findings partially support Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), particularly in explaining attentional selection and imitation of salient media characters. However, reinforcement extended beyond lexical accuracy to include vocal authenticity and performative effectiveness, suggesting that adolescents acquired not only linguistic forms but also socially recognizable ways of sounding.

Similarly, Cultivation Theory (Gerbner et al., 2002) helps explain how repeated exposure contributed to familiarity with interactional templates associated with authority, conflict, and moral positioning. The findings nevertheless indicate that adolescents drew selectively from these resources according to local interactional needs rather than reproducing them deterministically.

The results further align with performance-based approaches (Goffman, 1981; Bauman, 2001). Media-derived speech was commonly deployed in joking, teasing, mock confrontation, and storytelling, where meaning emerged through audience uptake, repetition, and laughter. Symbolic aggression functioned primarily as a ritualized interactional practice rather than a precursor to physical conflict, supporting Goodwin's (2006) observations on peer interaction.

Finally, indexicality theory (Silverstein, 2003) helps explain how media-derived forms acquired local social meanings. Vocal and lexical features associated with cinematic characters became re-indexed within peer contexts to signal authority, humor, solidarity, or playful transgression. These meanings remained fluid and dependent on audience interpretation and interactional context.

Overall, the findings position adolescent language use as a site of active semiotic production in which media resources are transformed through peer interaction. Within this process, VIAM provides a useful framework for understanding how media-derived speech moves from exposure to socially meaningful appropriation.

## **7. Conclusion**

This study examined how adolescents in the Taraba North Senatorial Zone of Nigeria appropriate vocal and lexical forms from Hausa-dubbed Indian films within peer interaction. The findings indicate that media influence operates through a process of exposure, imitation, and appropriation rather than through direct lexical borrowing alone.

A central contribution of the study is the demonstration that media-derived speech circulates not only as lexical content but also as vocal style. Prosodic features such as pitch modulation, rhythmic pacing, and intensified delivery were recurrently reproduced and recontextualized in peer interaction, where they functioned as resources for humor, identity performance, symbolic aggression, and group affiliation. The findings further show that the stabilization of such forms depends less on exposure alone than on repeated peer validation through interactional uptake.

Methodologically, the integration of ethnography, acoustic analysis, computational lexical processing, and MDLT provides a multimodal framework for investigating media-related language use in under-documented sociolinguistic settings. Theoretically, the study contributes to youth sociolinguistics and media linguistics by foregrounding voice and prosody as

important dimensions of media-derived linguistic appropriation and by demonstrating the analytical value of VIAM as a heuristic framework.

Future research may extend this work through longitudinal investigation of media-derived speech forms, broader media corpora, and finer-grained acoustic analysis of prosodic variation. Such studies would further illuminate the role of mediated voice in shaping contemporary youth linguistic practices in multilingual African contexts.

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### **Authors' Bios**

*Blessing U. Ijem is a Professor of Applied Linguistics in the Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University Wukari, Nigeria. Her research interests include cultural linguistics, African literature, digital humanities, and youth language.*

*Ishaq Isa El-Qassim, PhD is a researcher in the Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University Wukari, Nigeria. His research focuses on media studies, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis in African contexts.*