

# Therapeutic Discourse: A Pragma-Linguistic Analysis of Selected Yinka Ayefele's Songs on Social Issues



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## Abstract

Music is an artistic tool which is embedded with diverse pragmatic acts aimed at addressing social issues affecting individuals within society. Extant linguistic studies on Nigerian musical renditions have examined stylistic variations, ideological values and discourse issues with little attention paid to how pragmatic acts are used as linguistic tools through which social issues are addressed. Therefore, this study has been designed to investigate the pragmatic functions of selected Yinka Ayefele's songs to determine the linguistic relevance of music to (re)solving social issues. The Textual Part of Jacob Mey's Pragmatic Act Theory and Anita Fetzer's conceptualisation of Macro Context served as the framework. The data were purposively selected from eight of Yinka Ayefele's music albums, which are crafted with songs that capture contemporary social issues dominant within the Nigerian socio-cultural context. Data were subjected to pragmatic analysis. Findings show that five pragmatic acts: acknowledging, requesting, informing, promising, and warning, are deployed in the selected songs. These acts are specifically used to address social issues which revolve around: ungrateful human attitude, disappointment, unhappiness, betrayal, and other perplexities of life. These acts, respectively, are used to perform pragmatic functions of showing appreciation, stimulating an exciting mood, giving comfort and assurance of hope, emphasising God's reciprocity nature, and cautioning strategy. The realisations of these pragmatic functions are enhanced by metaphor (MPH), inference (INF), and linguistic and social context. It is through these acts that this study posits that Yinka Ayefele's songs are linguistic embodiments of social and emotional dimensions of therapy suitable for suppressing induced stressors.

**Keywords:** *Music, Therapy, Pragmatic acts, Social issues*

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## **Introduction**

Music is the art of combining vocal or instrumental sounds to show aesthetics (beauty) or emotional expressions, usually according to cultural standards of rhythm, melody, and harmony (Epperson, 2002). In other words, music encapsulates the passing of information to its hearer through a lyrical composition by a being who has been able to combine some musical notes and linguistic sounds. By implication, music and language are universal human abilities with many similarities relating to their acoustics, structure, and frequent use in social situations (Brown and Jordania, 2013). It therefore suffices to posit that music remains an artistic tool which deploys diverse pragmatic acts to address social issues affecting individuals within a society.

A society such as Nigeria is undoubtedly a clone of diverse social problems, ranging from poverty, inequality, corruption, terrorism to issues relating to betrayal and hostility (Ukpong, 2013). The unique entertaining way by which Yinka Ayefele usually identifies and proffers solutions to these problems through his highly flavoured songs has arguably paved his way into most Nigerian homes. In other words, Ayefele's consistent use of certain pragmatic acts which embody emotional and social therapeutic values must have necessitated a wide receptiveness of his songs in many Nigerian homes. Therefore, it becomes expedient to examine how these pragmatic acts function as therapeutics in Yinka Ayefele's selected songs.

Historically, the Nigerian music industry is highly embellished with a gross number of musical genres ranging from *Percussion to Juju, AfroJuju, Afro beats, Apala, Highlife, Fuji, Waka, Reggae, Senwele, Gospel and Hip-hop*; as pioneered and promoted by artistes such as Babatunde King, Tunde Nightingale, Haruna Ishola, IK Dairo, Fela Anikulapo kuti, Ebenezer Obey, King Sunny Ade, Prince Nico Mbarga and his band Rocafil Jazz, Victor Olaiya (the only Nigerian to ever earn a platinum record), Stephen Osita Osadebe, Evangelist Bola Are, Dr. Orlando Owoh, Ayinla Kollington, Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, Segun Adewale, Shina Peters, Adewale Ayuba, Dele Taiwo and many more. Many other notable Nigerian musicians in the industry operate under the auspices of the Performing Musicians Association of Nigeria (PMAN), founded in 1984. Surprisingly, Yinka Ayefele, towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, also brought out the uniqueness of music as he tagged his style of music *Gospel-Tungba* (a fusion of juju music, percussion and rhythm into the gospel genre).

Interestingly, Bimbola (2012), one of the very few works on Yinka Ayefele's songs, examines the bilingual behaviour of code-mixing in a contemporary Nigerian gospel music setting. The study, however, focused more on the stylistic and marketing strategies behind Ayefele and Bola Are's use of code-mixing without giving much attention to the pragmatic use of language in their selected songs. Many other related extant linguistic studies, such as Adegbite (2006), Oikelome (2009), Oikelome (2012), Bamgbose (2016), Mosobalaje (2018), and Kehinde (2019), have only delved into the stylistic and critical discourse analysis of musical albums produced by Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Ebenezer Obey, King Sunny Ade, and Saheed Osupa, with little attention paid to the ones produced by Yinka Ayefele. The existing studies have only concentrated more on stylistic variations, ideological values and discourse issues without exploring further into how Yinka Ayefele deploys pragmatic acts as linguistic tools through which social issues are addressed within the context of the Nigerian society. It is therefore against this backdrop that this study has been designed to investigate pragmatic acts and functions

in selected Yinka Ayefele's songs to determine the linguistic relevance of music to human society.

### **Language, Music and Culture**

Arguably, one should not dispute the opinion that music is an integral aspect of people's culture, and as such is rendered through a particular language or languages. Hence, language and culture become inseparable as they are a reflection of one another. Little wonder that a popular Nigerian Musician, Akorede Babatunde Okunola (Saheed Osupa), once said in one of his albums (*Respect and Reliable*) that "music is a universal language that everyone understands". Ludden (2015) also asserts that every human culture has music, just as each has language, and that music is a universal feature of the human experience. He, however, notes that both music and linguistic systems vary widely from culture to culture.

Nevertheless, studies have shown that people are pretty good at detecting the emotions conveyed in musical renditions that do not even align with one's culture (Omojola, 2014). That is, one could easily depict the two basic human emotions of happiness and sadness, irrespective of the culture of the singer. This is so because specific features of melody (which is called prosody in Linguistics) contribute to the expression of emotion in music. Higher pitch, more fluctuations in pitch and rhythm, and faster tempo often convey happiness, while the opposite confers sadness (Ludden 2015). Little wonder that Yinka Ayefele himself finds it easy to beautifully incorporate different cultural traits in some of his musical renditions, as we have in albums such as *Fulfillment* (2004), *Gratitude* (2007), *Everlasting Grace* (2010), *Comforter* (2013).

In essence, if language remains a major tool through which music is rendered, it would therefore be appropriate to opine that meanings derived from musical renditions are contextually influenced either by linguistic, social or cultural factors; this is the focus of a pragmatolinguistic study. It is, however, surprising that many linguistic studies on music have been mainly on stylistic analysis, critical discourse analysis and/or comparative analysis. In the work of Oikelome (2012), his research encapsulates a stylistic study on the Nigerian hip-hop music where he examines the music of Innocent Ujah Idibia (2Face) to illustrate common aspects between local elements and the western popular features inherent in his music. These features are provided by the analysis of certain musical concepts in *staff notation*. Drawing on descriptive and stylistic theory, his article provides an analysis of five songs by the musician. Through an interpretive lens, the paper identifies specific elements in relation to 2Face's use of melody, rhythm, harmony and form in his music.

Furthermore, in the work of Bamgbose (2016), where he looked into the music of a notable *Fuji* musician, Saheed Osupa, he expresses that music in Africa has always served social, moral, religious, psychological and spiritual purposes. Hence, it emphasises the fact that the language of musicians does not always come in a vacuum but is highly embellished with different thematic preoccupations which are usually shared by the lovers of the genre of such music.

Similarly, Mosobalaje (2018) in his studies titled *Textual migration in Ebenezer Obey's Juju Musics* examines textual migration as one of the principal sources of Ebenezer Obey's *Juju* music in the framework of free borrowing that characterised the oral composition and performances of Yoruba traditional chanters. He stresses that in indigenous Yoruba societies, in which there was no patent law governing artistic productions, free borrowing allowed chanters to pick song items from different sources

within the context of performance to deck up composition, thus giving Obey the opportunity to expertly make use of this artistic graft, herein referred to as textual migration.

To this end, one could easily say that music is truly a universal system of communicating emotions as humans find it easy to infer emotion on the basis of the melodic cues that mimic universal prosodic cues. Like language, music also has syntax rules (as we have Transformational Generative Grammar rules in English Grammar). These musical syntactic rules for ordering elements such as notes, chords, and intervals are usually woven into complex structures in order to give out a melodic and meaningful output. Since music and language share features in common, it is not surprising that many of the brain areas that process language also process music. Nevertheless, this does not totally mean that music is a language that one can use to express any thought to any person on the planet.

**Theoretical foundation**

This study adopts the textual part of Jacob Mey’s (2001) pragmatic acts theory and Anita Fetzer’s (2004) conceptualisation of Macro Context. The pragmatic acts theory is a socio-cultural (context-based) theory which emphasises the priority of cultural and social factors in meaning construction and comprehension (Odebunmi and Unuabonah, 2014). The textual part of Mey’s pragmatic acts theory (as seen in Figure 1) is considered relevant to this study because its components – Inference (INF), Reference (REF), Relevance (REL), Voice (VCE), Shared Situation Knowledge (SSK), Metaphor (MPH) and Metapragmatics (‘M’) are what Mey (2001:222) refers to as ‘contextual features that influence communication’. These components are therefore suitable to account for the context-based acts that are deployed in the Yinka Ayefefe’s selected songs.

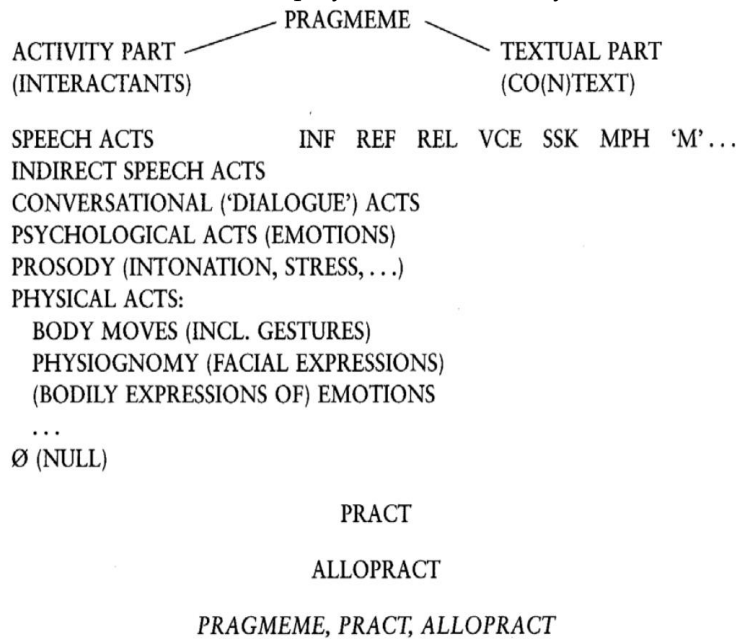


Figure 1: Mey’s model of pragmeme  
Source: Mey (2001)

Additionally, Fetzer's (2004) conceptualisation of macro context emphasises the relevance of context (at the macro level) to meaning making. According to Fetzer, there are three aspects of macro context – cognitive context, linguistic context and social context. Cognitive context is the mental host of inferences and reasoning. The elements that constitute cognitive context, according to Fetzer (2004:35), are 'mental representations, propositions, contextual assumptions and factual assumptions'. There is a linguistic context which the meaning of a text is constrained by its structural and lexical environment. Finally, social context refers to how communicative encounters, that is, 'constituents of social context' (Fetzer, 2004:36), influence the way meanings or events are interpreted. Fetzer explains that the constituents of social context are – model users (interlocutors), physical surroundings (time and location) and the macro contextual institutional and non-institutional domains like cultural variables.

### **Methods**

Data were purposively selected from eight (8) Yinka Ayefele's music albums (*Fulfilment* - 2004, *Gratitude* - 2007, *So far so Good* - 2022, *Comforter* - 2013, *Next level* - 2006, *Sweet Experience* - 1999, *Divine Intervention* - 2001, and *Bitter Experience* - 1998) which are embedded with musical contents that capture contemporary social issues dominant within the Nigerian socio-cultural context. Explicitly, two tracks were taken from *Fulfilment* and *Sweet Experience* while a single track was used from each of the remaining selected albums. Altogether, ten (10) excerpts make up the data used. Ayefele's ability to copiously identify and proffer solution to certain human social issues (as portrayed in his songs) has therefore necessitated the choice of this selection. As retrieved from Ojo (2020), the award winning artiste, Yinka Ayefele, began his music career in 1997 after surviving a motor accident that affected his spinal cord. Afterwards, in 1998, he dropped his debut studio album titled, *Bitter Experience*. Ayefele sings a fusion of gospel with high percussion beat called *Gospel Tungba* and has released several studio albums. His experience about the human society has undoubtedly served as his major inspiration behind his musical contents. His music albums are available on Audiomack (an internationally acclaimed music downloading channel). The descriptive design was adopted while the data were subjected to pragmatic analysis. A literary translation (which is context-based translation) was used to translate data excerpts from the Yoruba language to the English language.

### **Data analysis**

Findings show that five pragmatic acts: acknowledging, requesting, informing, promising, and warning are predominant in the selected songs. These acts are specifically deployed to address certain social issues (often triggered by unstable and unpredictable human nature) which revolve around: ungrateful human attitude, disappointment, unhappiness, betrayal, and other perplexities of life. These acts, respectively, are used to perform pragmatic functions of showing appreciation, stimulating exciting mood, giving comfort and assurance of hope, emphasising God's reciprocity nature, and cautioning strategy. The realisations of these pragmatic functions are enhanced by metaphor (MPH), inference (INF), relevance (REL), linguistic and social context. It is through these acts that this study posits that Yinka Ayefele's songs function as therapeutic linguistic tool through which social problems are identified and resolved.

### Acknowledging act used to show appreciation

Acknowledging is an act of realizing and accepting the truth of a situation or an accomplishment (Low, *et al.*, 2013). In a similar view, it is the act of recognizing the importance or quality of a being (whether animate or inanimate). As an overt action, Ayefele will not cease to acknowledge that his breakthrough is motivated by the help of God and individuals who supported him. Apart from his *Divine Intervention*, there is none of Ayefele's albums that an acknowledging act has not been pragmatically used to appreciate God and his supporters. This point is corroborated in the excerpts below:

#### Excerpt 1

*Beru ba monuro ni, adupe*, (If a slave is thoughtful enough, he would show appreciation)

*Beru ba monuro ni, adupe*. (If a slave is thoughtful enough, he would show appreciation)

*Baba e se, Baba e se*, (Father, I am grateful, Father, I am grateful)

*Beru ba monuro ni, adupe*. (If a slave is thoughtful enough, he would show appreciation)

Source: *Fulfilment* (track 3)

Time: 00:25-01:12

#### Excerpt 2

*Mo ri anu gba, labe igi aanu*, (I got favoured under a 'favouring' tree)

*Mo so wipe mo ri anu gba*, (I am emphasising that I got favoured under a 'favouring' tree)

*Labe igi aanu*.

*Eyin abe igi aanu, E se ojo...* (You my 'favouring' trees, thank you for what you have done)

Source: *Gratitude* (track 2)

Time: 29:20-30:24

The pragmatic act of acknowledging deployed to show appreciation is evident in excerpts 1 and 2. Ayefele's intention to appreciate God and other supportive individuals is known through his metaphoric (MPH) use of language and the contexts (linguistic and socio-cultural contexts) that build up the lyrics. In excerpt 1, Ayefele metaphorically refers to himself as a slave: *If a slave is thoughtful enough, he would show appreciation... Father, I am grateful*. Within the linguistic context of this expression, Ayefele has pragmatically said (although ellipted to avoid repetition) that he is a slave: *Father, I, A SLAVE, is grateful*. Within the Yoruba socio-cultural context, a slave is often meant to be submissive and subservient. This therefore, makes Ayefele to acknowledge that he is a slave who is appreciating God for sparing his life (as a slave could have been killed by his owner – within the context of the Yoruba cosmology and social hierarchy; hence, he is grateful).

Furthermore, Ayefele acknowledges that the favour he enjoys at the moment is courtesy of the individuals who have supported his career. Hence, he metaphorically (MPH) refers (REF) to them as 'favouring trees' (a cultural conception of protection). By extension, Ayefele believes that human beings are quick to forget good deeds, but in his own case, he will always be appreciative to God and individuals supporting his goal; this

which should be emulated, being a therapy that can motivate others to be kind to humanity.

### Requesting an act used to trigger an entertainment mood

Human beings requests for diverse purposes. In the case of Ayefele, he uses this pragmatic act to spur and stimulate an exciting mood, which will get his listeners entertained. By so doing, it would be noteworthy to opine that Ayefele's deployment of the requesting act geared at stimulating an exciting mood is therapeutic to the human state of mind. The excerpts below corroborate this position:

#### Excerpt 3

*Eni te bari to fema roju koko*, (If there is anyone who looks sorrowful)  
*E ni ko forin Ayefele, kofi turaka*, (Ask such a person to listen to Ayefele's song)  
*Koje ki 'lumi yii lokan pada o*, (Ask such person to allow Ayefele's beats positively change his mind)  
*Orin Ayefele dun joyin lo...* (Because Ayefele's music is 'sweeter' than honey)

Source: *Fulfilment* (track 3)

Time: 10:21-10:43

#### Excerpt 4

*E wa bami jo, skentele*, (Come and dance with me, it's entertaining)  
*Ijo alayo, skentele*, (A joyful dance, it's entertaining)  
*Ijo olomo, skentele*, (A Puerpera's dance, it's entertaining)  
*E bami jo o, skentele...* (Come, dance with me, it's entertaining)

Source: *So Far So Good* (Track 1)

Time: 06:11-07:00

Excerpts 3 and 4 show how Yinka Ayefele melodiously deploys a requesting act to engage the emotions of his listeners. This is achieved through reference (REF), metaphor (MPH) and REL (relevance). The second line of excerpt 3 - *E ni ko forin Ayefele, kofi turaka* (Ask such person...), is a request with an embedded intention of making someone who is sorrowful cheer up and be happy. Ayefele metaphorically (MPH) says his song-beats are capable of changing (positively) a troubled mind (Ask such a person to allow Ayefele's beats to positively change his mind). Additionally, Ayefele makes reference (REF) to honey in the last line of excerpt 3 - *Orin Ayefele dun joyin lo...* (Because Ayefele's music is 'sweeter' than honey). The essence of this reference is to emphasise the therapeutic power of his song in exciting one's mood, as honey is contextually (linguistic context) believed to be sweet. Similarly, within the medical context, honey is believed to be medicinal to human wellbeing (Ranneh, *et al.*, 2021).

The preponderance of requesting acts aimed at entertaining is also seen in the first and the last lines of excerpt 4 (Come, dance with me, it's entertaining). Ayefele makes a metaphoric reference by making a direct comparison of his song and a woman (Puerpera) who has just put to bed (*A Puerpera's dance, it's entertaining* - excerpt 4). This comparison is relevant as it is expected of a Puerpera to be excited. By extension, Ayefele believes is songs are capable of getting a troubled mind entertained and excited.

### **Informing acts used to give assurance of hope**

An act of informing is such that it notifies a discourse participant(s). In the selected Ayefele's songs, it is found that the singer deploys this act to basically assure his listeners that his songs can help meet their emotional needs; hence, his listeners should not hesitate to listen to his songs. This position is explicated in excerpts 5 and 6:

#### **Excerpt 5**

<i>Mo ni Olorun ti kii bati laye,</i>	(I have a God that does not fail)
<i>Mo ni Jesu leyin mi eru kotun bami mo,</i>	(I have Jesus and I need not to fear anymore)
<i>Ore nigba ore aye ba koni,</i>	(He is a true friend even when earthly friend fails me)
<i>Olutunu nigba ti iji aye bafe,</i>	(He is the true comforter in times of trouble)
<i>Emi ti towo,</i>	(I have 'tasted' him)
<i>mo si mon wipe oyin ni Baba.</i>	(And I can attest that he is honey-personified Father)

Source: *Comforter* (Track 1)

Time: 14:02-14:19

#### **Excerpt 6**

My God is able to do all things for me,  
He knows what I want; he will never let me suffer,  
*Fear no go catch me* (I won't be frightened),  
I go never bow for Satan (I will never bow for Satan),  
He has given me the authority to step on snakes,  
And to overcome all the powers of my enemies...

Source: *Next Level* (Track 1)

Time: 07:51-08:10

An informing act used as an assurance-giving strategy is realised through Biblical/metaphoric reference and linguistic context in excerpts 5 and 6. In excerpt 5, Ayefele begins the song with an informative act about his possession of a God that never fails; therefore, he need not fret even when earthly friend fails. This is an indirect act of informing his listeners to emulate him by embracing his God, who gives undoubted assurance. The linguistic context through which the song lyrics revolve enables the listeners to make a presupposition that fear is an inevitable human emotion that arises in response to perceived danger, threats or betrayal (I have Jesus and I need not fear anymore, even when early friends fail). Notwithstanding, there is a God who gives assurance of comfort. Additionally, Ayefele backs up his intended meaning (of embracing God of assurance) by making a Biblical reference (REF) to God as the comforter who gives hope in times of trouble (2nd Corinthians 1:4). This is also explicated in excerpt 6 (He has given me the authority to step on snakes) where the singer makes a metaphoric reference of snakes as his enemies who he needs not to fear because his God has given him authority and power.

### **Promising act used to emphasise God's reciprocity**

An act of promise can be used to achieve diverse pragmatic goals that are embedded with either positive or negative intentions. In the case of Ayefele, he deploys this pragmatic act to draw the attention of his audience to the reciprocity nature of God. In other words, Ayefele often makes emphasis in his songs on the 'give and take' principle, which God uses to operate with mankind. The excerpts (7 and 8) below corroborate this argument:

#### **Excerpt 7**

My lifetime, I will give God my lifetime.  
My lifetime, I will give God my lifetime.  
When I give God my lifetime,  
He will take care of me,  
He will never ever let me down,  
I will give God my lifetime.

Source: *Sweet Experience*

Time: 00:10-00:35

#### **Excerpt 8**

Today o, I will lift up my voice in praise,  
Today o, I will lift up my voice in praise,  
For I know, you are always there for me,  
Almighty God, you are my all in all,  
No matter what I face,  
When troubles come my way, I will praise the Lord.

Source: *Divine Intervention*

Time: 04:56-05:20

Through the use of an indirect speech act, Ayefele, in excerpt 7, promises (... *I will give God my lifetime*) to give God his lifetime because he understands the reciprocity nature of God. Pragmatically, Ayefele's use of promising act to call the attention of his audience to the reciprocity nature of God is enhanced by relevance (REL) as the singer emphatically reveals the relevance of giving one's lifetime to God - *when I give God my lifetime, He will take care of me, He will never ever let me down...*(excerpt 7). Additionally, in excerpt 8 (*When troubles come my way, I will praise the Lord...*), Ayefele reminds his listeners of the inevitabilities of escaping the perplexities of life. This is in line with the Biblical words of Jesus (John 16:33) - '*...in the world, you will have troubles...*' To overcome the troubles of life, he will rather lift his voice and praise God (bearing in mind the reciprocity nature of God). Finally, the pragmatic presupposition in Ayefele's use of 'Almighty God' (excerpt 8) is to make his listeners infer (INF) that God is a being that is mighty in all (*you are my all in all*) to overcome all human troubles.

### **Warning act used to caution and show regret**

A warning act is a communicative act that serves as a cautioning strategy, mainly deployed to alert discourse recipient (s) of potential danger, consequences, or harm. In the light of this, Ayefele's musical renditions are often embedded with warning acts which he uses to caution his audience about the unstable, disappointing, and unpredictable human nature which could either make or mar relationships as he often

regrets how disappointed he is with many of his social relationships with his fellow human beings. Excerpts 9 and 10 corroborate this point:

**Excerpt 9**

*Aye yii le o,* (Life is terrible,  
*Aye yii le o,* (Life is terrible,  
*Ile aye le, Aye le,* (This life is terrible, life is terrible,  
*Ayefele, e je ka ma rora,* (Life is fragile, so, let's be cautioned,  
*Aye le.* (Life is terrible,  
*Bomo eniyan ba sin aja lasan o,* (If an individual decides to rear a dog,  
*Tabi, bomo eniyan ba sin adiyee o,* (or he decides to rear a cock,  
*Bo ti se'nlo soke sodo,* (as the animal is being sent up and down,  
*Boya ki motor wa gba,* (it encounters an accident,  
*Eniyan a wa so wipe ohun ko lo laja o.* (human beings will deny ever  
knowing the animal.)

Source: *Sweet Experience*

Time: 15:20-18:18

**Excerpt 10**

*Mo fi ibere ojo aye mi sise,* (I used the early part of my life to work,  
*Mi o tete mo payefele mosubu;* (It was however late for me to realize  
how wicked this world is; so I fell;  
*Nigba mo si subu tan ijo ajumo jo* (After my fall, the people I thought  
would come to  
my aid left me alone,  
*O wa dijo emi nikan soso...* (so, I am left alone to struggle in life)

Source: *Bitter Experience*

Time: 00:12-01:02

Excerpts 9 and 10 explicate Ayefele's preponderant linguistic use of warning act, particularly aimed at cautioning his audience about the cruelty of life – 'This life is terrible, life is terrible... (excerpt 9).' The pragmatic entailment of this act of warning is enhanced by the linguistic contextual usage of the word 'terrible', which presupposes danger. Ayefele, through metaphor (MPH) further cautions his listeners by relating the experience of an animal (dog or cock) that usually embarks on errands for human beings. This animal unfortunately, had an accident but was left alone by human beings when they are meant to give the animal moral support. This scenario emphasises the disappointing and unpredictable human nature. Ayefele, in excerpt 10 however, says he regrets ever putting trust in human beings as he was left alone to struggle during his trying times – 'After my fall, the people I thought would come to my aid left me alone... so, I am left alone to struggle in life'. In essence, these excerpts emphasise how cautionary discourse functions as a moralising strategy within Afro-Pentecostal and popular music cultures as well as the impermanence of relationships (and life itself). Therefore, Ayefele is warning his audience to be prepared for any form of disappointment to avoid any sudden emotional pain.

### Conclusion

This study has been able to highlight the profound therapeutic and pragmatic value of Yinka Ayefele's music in addressing social issues. Through the use of pragmatic acts—acknowledging, requesting, informing, promising, and warning—his songs transcend mere entertainment to serve as a linguistic and emotional balm for individuals experiencing life's challenges. Ayefele's ability to integrate metaphor, inference, and contextual elements into his music enhances its impact, making it a powerful tool for fostering social awareness, emotional healing, and moral guidance. His songs reflect the complexities of human existence, dealing with themes of gratitude, disappointment, hope, betrayal, and resilience. By doing so, he not only provides comfort but also cautions listeners about the unpredictable nature of life and human relationships. The study ultimately asserts that Ayefele's music is not just an artistic expression but a necessary therapeutic medium that resonates deeply with society, offering both solace and wisdom to those who engage with it. To this end, this study suggests to the public that Yinka Ayefele's music is a necessity for every home and every troubled mind, as his music pragmatically serves as a soothing and supplementary therapy for depression and other perplexities of life.

### Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study has focused its attention on therapeutic discourse using Yinka Ayefele's songs as prescriptions to suppressing many societal-induced stressors. Therefore, using real-life engagements with randomly selected Nigerians on their therapeutic experience with Ayefele's songs would have enriched the quality of this study. Hence, a quantitative and qualitative research design would have been more appropriate for determining the percentage population of selected Nigerians who have been restored (emotionally, psychologically, socially, etc.) through Ayefele's songs. Subsequent linguistic research works can therefore delve into this aspect.

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