



Research Paper

A Morpho-Semantic Analysis of Nigerian LGBTQ+ Terminologies

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ABSTRACT

In the Nigerian context, research on LGBTQ discourse is primarily influenced by socio-religious biases; very little has been explored from a linguistic perspective. This study examines the morpho-semantic features of 26 LGBTQ+ terminologies used by Nigerian X users. Using Laurie Bauer's (2004) Morphological Productivity as a linguistic framework, a qualitative linguistic analysis was conducted on the test items, which are etymologically derived from both inner-circle English and Nigerian English, as well as from substrate languages. Findings reveal (1) that the morphology of inner-circle English-inspired LGBTQ+ terminologies is characterized by a high degree of morphological creativity supported by derivation, borrowing, clipping, blending, compounding, acronymy, and conversion, (2) that these terms are mostly descriptive of aspects of LGBTQ identities and lack social stigma, and (3) that Nigerian LGBTQ terms comprise Nigerian English inspired morphological processes as well as borrowing from substrate language (Yoruba) which carry negative socio-semantic connotations. The study suggests that the stigma reflects underlying social opposition to LGBTQ identities in the Nigerian context.

Keywords: Linguistic innovation, queer morphology, perception, LGBTQ+ terminologies,

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I. INTRODUCTION

Language's remarkable capacity to express and mirror the complex identities of its users is one of its most captivating features. Its flexibility plays a vital role in constructing identity, allowing individuals, groups, and speech communities to modify and blend linguistic elements with the available socio-semiotic resources. This process helps them articulate and negotiate intricate social identities (Joseph, 2004; Dela Rosa, 2016). The language choices reflect their positions within specific cultural, social, and ideological contexts, serving both as representations of social structures and as tools for social action (Halliday, 1978). The link between language and identity is crucial, especially in how we perceive ourselves and others regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, notably within minority groups. A key area where language marking is significant is the LGBTQ+ community. Attitudes and characterizations towards LGBTQ+ identities are fluid, shaped over time by various social, political, religious, and cultural influences across different regions and eras. Most discourse on LGBTQ+ identities has been developed in the West, where academia, media, and policy have heavily influenced perceptions and discussions. These influences have altered how individual and collective identities are understood and negotiated publicly, in education, and politics. Western scholars have challenged the notion of fixed sexual or gender identities, asserting that gender and sexuality are fluid concepts shaped by societal norms and power dynamics (Sedgwick, 1992). Recently, globalization and Western liberal influence have brought LGBTQ+ discourse into many non-Western socio-cultural contexts.

Driven by religious and cultural influences, opposition to queer identities remains strong across most of Africa. However, globalisation continues to gradually liberalise aspects of LGBTQ+ discussions (Emama, 2024). As a result, it is not surprising that research efforts are increasingly focusing on LGBTQ+ issues in Nigeria from various perspectives, including literature, religion, and sociology (Egbedi, 2021; Osisawo & Alugbin, 2024; Iloma

& Effiong, 2024; Ukonu et al., 2021). Nonetheless, there is a significant gap in the depth and variety of LGBTQ+ scholarly research. This gap is especially evident in the lack of research exploring the linguistic features of LGBTQ+ language in sociolinguistics, syntax, semantics, and morphology. Therefore, this paper examines the morphological processes and the semantics of social media LGBTQ+ terms. A second, somewhat ancillary motivation is the need to determine the underlying etymology of LGBTQ+ terms and the social attitudes that underpin them. The latter is beneficial for identifying the origins of the terms — whether from the inner circle or the outer (Nigerian) — and, crucially, the level of sociocultural acceptance embedded in their meanings. The study is therefore expected to reveal cross-variety social differences between inner-circle LGBTQ+ terms and those used in the Nigerian sociocultural context, especially as they appear in Nigerian social media spaces.

Technology remains a crucial factor in the development of the English language. The invention of the printing press, the telegram, telephony, and mass media contributed to standardisation, the rapid spread of new words, and increased literacy. Compared to these earlier innovations, the digital revolution has had the most significant impact on language (Emama, 2023/2017). The internet, unlike traditional print media, transcends geographical boundaries and is largely unaffected by gatekeeping practices; as a result, it fosters linguistic innovation. The most prominent influence of internet-driven English is its globalisation and the cultural hybridity it fosters. As a result, English has not only prompted a range of sociolinguistic and grammatical changes in non-English sociocultural contexts worldwide but has also influenced behavioural patterns globally, continuing to alter norms of acceptable sexual behaviour. The debate on LGBTQ+ identity is thus significant in the discourse of English-driven globalisation across different regions. The Nigerian sociolinguistic landscape, as the most populous English-speaking country in Africa, presents a fascinating setting for examination. The overt socio-religious resistance to LGBTQ+ affiliations in Nigeria and the apparent acceptance of queer identities and subculture in literary discourse and among Gen Z demographics offer intriguing avenues for studying the morphology and meaning of LGBTQ+ terms in Nigerian social media spaces and how they intersect with societal (dis)approval, considering their etymology and origins. This study investigates the morphology and semantics of LGBTQ+ terms on X in Nigeria, their etymology, and the social attitudes embedded in these terms.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sex is fundamentally important in human sociology. Consequently, discussions about sex and the acceptable ways community members engage in it are central to social taboos, which are deeply rooted in ethno-religious belief systems. Human societies have enacted laws and punitive measures to discourage participation in activities deemed deviant and opposing communal values (Nwagbo, 2021). These measures often fail to achieve complete orthodoxy. Most historians recognise that evidence of same-sex unions and gender fluidity exists in all documented cultures. For instance, the Bible mentions homosexuality in ancient Israel (Genesis 19:5). In ancient Greece, the myth of Apollo and Hyacinth shows that same-sex relationships were woven into the social and cultural fabric of Greek civilisation (Boswell, 1994). Similarly, in ancient Egypt, there is evidence that Pharaoh Hatshepsut was known for assuming a masculine identity in a manner analogous to contemporary cross-dressing.. For instance, Amadiume (1987) also documents gender-fluid roles in pre-colonial Igbo society, where the 'female husband' could marry another woman to preserve family lineage. Kendall (1998:228) also describes a socially accepted same-sex union called *Motsoalle* among women in Lesotho. The evidence suggests that most of the African continent exhibits a decidedly hostile attitude towards same sex unions. As of 2022, thirty-two out of 54 countries on the continent have enacted laws that criminalise LGBTQ+ affiliations with sentences of up to fourteen years; in the case of Nigeria, the death sentence (Phiri, 2023). In the Nigerian context, ethnocultural, Christian, and Islamic values continue to exert a significant counterforce on the entrenchment of same-sex relationships. Thus, social media, which offers layers of e-anonymity, has become a haven to those who choose to disregard ethno-religious taboos and the legal sanctions on sex affiliation. Social media-enabled platforms have also evolved into spaces for the creation and maintenance of markers of identity, typically in the form of naming, to ensure anonymity for outsiders and to facilitate in-group identity among members.

Alongside the ethnoreligious opposition to same-sex unions in Nigeria, the legal framework banning LGBTQ identities was established following the passage of the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act of 2014. Despite legal and ethnoreligious resistance to LGBTQ+ groups in Nigeria, discussions about LGBTQ+ issues remain active, especially among the younger demographic most influenced by globalisation-driven cultural hybridity, which helps spread nuances of LGBTQ+ identity subtly, particularly on social media platforms. As a result, Nigeria's social media space offers a valuable environment for studying the formation and meanings of LGBTQ+ terms, also serving as indicators of social attitudes toward LGBTQ identities embedded in inner- and outer-circle terms.

This study is unique because it examines an aspect of LGBTQ language that has not been previously examined in Nigeria. While existing studies have explored LGBTQ language using critical discourse analysis

(Oyebanji, 2023; Onanuga & Schmied, 2022) and modality (Adegbola, 2019), a significant gap remains. Most research on LGBTQ issues in Nigeria tends to focus mainly on socio-religious topics. The sociological and religious views dominate current Nigerian research, shaping how the phenomenon is perceived. Religion and ethno-cultural influences strongly affect public attitudes toward LGBTQ matters. Previous studies have mainly analysed the topic from legal and civil rights perspectives (Izzi & Umunna, 2020; Sogunro, 2022; Calvin, 2018), public perception (Adekoya, 2023; Olaseni & Nel, 2024), and culture and religion (Adebanjo, 2021; Kaoma, 2023; Ehiemua, 2020; Osisanwo & Alugbin, 2024). This research primarily aims to expand understanding of LGBTQ language in Nigeria's online space by examining its morpho-semantic characteristics, etymology, and the social attitudes shaping the terminology.

III. LINGUISTIC FRAMEWORK

This study is based on morpho-semantics, primarily drawing from Bauer's 2004 work on Morphological Productivity as a linguistic approach. The concept of Morphological Productivity shows that morphology is a process in which words are created according to morphological rules, and that these rules can be expanded to form new lexical items that meet communicative needs. Bauer views Productivity as the degree to which morphological rules can generate lexical innovations. This linguistic framework allows for the analysis of productive morphological patterns in LGBTQ+ terminologies and how their meanings are shaped through semantic broadening, narrowing, and reappropriation.

The study integrates Morphology and Semantics in its analysis. Morphosemantics is a linguistic field that explores word meanings by analysing their component morphemes (Dorais, 2010, p. 137). Morphology focuses on the mental systems that underlie the internal structure of words (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2011). According to Leiber (2009, p. 2), morphology is the study of how new words are created across languages and how word forms vary depending on their sentence context. Semantics involves the study of meaning. Loebner (2013) states that semantics examines the meanings of linguistic units like words, phrases, and sentences. It provides a framework for understanding how morphemes and words carry meaning (Cruse, 2011). This framework is especially relevant here because much lexical innovation in the LGBTQ+ community involves using existing English morphological tools to generate new words that reflect queer identities and experiences.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative linguistic approach, motivated by the descriptive nature of the research, to conduct a morpho-semantic analysis of LGBTQ+ terminology on X. Data were collected from tweets by members and allies of the community with significant followings. A purposive sampling of their tweets was done to maintain relevance to linguistic trends. Target tweets were obtained using hashtags like: #lgbtq, #gay, #lesbian, #queer, #non-binary, #transgender. A total of twenty-seven (26) neologisms were extracted from the tweets based on frequency of occurrence and usage in conversations. The data were subject to a morpho-semantic analysis guided by Bauer's Morphological Productivity theory. The data was first identified, followed by the assignment of grammatical names, and then the morphological process involved. Finally, the interpretative meaning was provided, along with a commentary on the semantic implications of its use.

V. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

i. Cisnormativity

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Derivation
- Morphemic breakdown: cis (prefix) + norm (N) + ativity (suffix)
- Interpretative meaning: the assumption of being cisgender as the norm.

This term describes an ideology of a gender identity that matches the sex a person was assigned at birth as the norm. The term is created by adding the Latin prefix *cis-*, used in queer discourse to signify a gender identity aligned with the sex assigned at birth, to the root word *norm* (meaning social standard in this context), and the suffix *-ativity*, which turns adjectives into nouns. The prefix *-cis* emphasizes that cisgender identity is considered the default norm. A notable feature of this term's morphology is the uncommon prefix *cis-*, which indicates a broader use of prefix types in LGBTQ terminology inspired by inner-circle language.

ii. Cishet

- Form class: Adjective, Noun
- Morphological process: Blending
- Morphemic breakdown: cisgender (Adj) + heterosexual (Adj, N)
- Interpretative meaning: Someone who is both cisgender and heterosexual
- Etymology: inner circle English

A blend of *cis-*, which is short for cisgender, meaning "one whose gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at birth and *-het*", which is short for heterosexual. Both morphemes are derived from longer words by being clipped into a compact form. The word's etymological roots extend to classical languages. *Cis-* is a prefix derived from Latin meaning "on the same side as", and *-het* is gotten from Greek *heteros*, meaning "different". The term is used to describe sexuality without implying that other sexual identities are abnormal.

iii. Gaydar

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Blending
- Morphemic breakdown: Gay (Adj) + radar (N)
- Interpretative meaning: An intuition for detecting other gay people
- Etymology: inner circle English

The term is derived from a blend of two words: *gay* + *radar*. *Gay* is a free morpheme and an adjective, combined with 'dar', which is clipped from the noun 'radar'. *Dar* is used as a quasi-suffix that signals the ability to detect queerness. *Gaydar* is a neologism coined to describe an intuition for detecting a person's sexual orientation through subtle cues such as voice, body language, and habits, often based on stereotypes.

iv. Enby

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Clipping
- Morphemic breakdown: Non-binary • NB → enby
- Interpretative meaning: A non-binary person
- Etymology: inner circle English

It refers to a gender identity that falls outside the traditional binary of male and female. It is clipped from the initial letters N and B of "non-binary" and written as "enby" to capture the phonetic spelling of the initials.

v. Aro

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Clipping
- Morphemic breakdown: Aromantic (Adj) → aro
- Interpretative meaning: Someone who experiences little or no romantic attraction
- Etymology: inner circle English

It is a shortened version of *aromantic*, taking up the first syllable *aro* and repurposing it as a lexical item. *Aromantic* is derived from the Latin prefix *-a* (meaning- not) and the root word *romantic*. It is a term used to describe a lack of or occasional/varying experiences of romantic attraction. It is a linguistically simplified, longer clinical term that has been shortened to friendly slang in the LGBTQ+ community.

vi. Ace

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Clipping
- Morphemic breakdown: Asexual (Adj) → Ace
- Interpretative meaning: Someone lacking or experiencing occasional sexual attraction
- Etymology: inner circle English

It is a free morpheme that is phonetically clipped from the first syllable of the word *asexual*, which is derived from the Latin prefix *-a* (meaning "not") and the root word *sexual*. It takes the initial letter *a*. It describes a lack of or varying/occasional experience of sexual attraction. Outside its original meaning of being a playing card or an expert at something, it is semantically narrowed down in queer discourse to mean an asexual person.

vii. Boygirl

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: compounding
- Morphemic breakdown: boy (N) + girl (N)
- Interpretative meaning: an effeminate boy/man
- Etymology: Standard Nigerian English

This is a compound expression formed by joining two simple lexemes: "*boy*" and "*girl*". It retains both words in their base form without affixation. *Boy* and *girl* are mutually exclusive categories; their juxtaposition challenges

gender binaries in Nigerian discourse on X. Boygirl is used derogatorily to refer to effeminate boys but has been reclaimed by some queer Nigerians to embrace gender fluidity and non-conformity to gender norms.

viii.Cis

- Form class: Adjective
 - Morphological process: Clipping
 - Morphemic breakdown: Cisgender (Adj; N) = Cis
 - Interpretative meaning: A person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex assigned at birth
- Cis* is clipped from *cisgender*. It is a bound morpheme that functions as a prefix. The word "*cisgender*" itself is formed by adding the Latin prefix *-cis*, meaning "on the same side," to the root word "*gender*." The term has high potential productivity as it can be attached to many gender/sexuality related terms, such as cishet, cisman/woman, cisprivilege. It can be lexicalised as in this case. It is used to describe a gender identity that aligns with the sex a person was assigned at birth.

ix.Tomboy

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Compounding
- Morphemic breakdown: Tom (N) + boy (N)
- Interpretative meaning: masculine-presenting women

Tomboy is an exocentric compound noun, consisting of "Tom" + "boy". Initially, *Tom* is a generic name for a male, while *boy* denotes a young male child. The term describes a girl or woman who adopts behaviours, appearances, or roles culturally associated with boys. In Nigerian queer discourse on X, it overlaps with identities like 'stud', signalling masculine-presenting lesbians, or heterosexual girls with boyish traits, and even trans women.

x.Homo

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Clipping
- Morphemic breakdown: (homo) sexual
- Interpretative meaning: A gay man
- Etymology: Nigerian English

It is a bound morpheme in the term homosexual, which is derived from Greek *homos*, meaning "same" + Latin *sexual*. This clipped form reduces the word from a bound morpheme and shifts it into a free morpheme functioning as a noun. Over time, it has been reanalysed and stabilised as a separate lexical item used pejoratively in the Nigerian context to refer to a gay man.

xi.Sistagirl

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Compounding
- Morphemic breakdown: *sista* (N) + *girl* (N)
- Interpretative meaning: a transfeminine or trans woman
- Etymology: Inner Circle English

The morphological structure of this term consists of two free morphemes, '*sista*' and '*girl*', combined to form a compound word with a specific meaning. '*Sista*' is a phonological variation of '*sister*'. The term includes a reduplication of the word '*kinship*', emphasising solidarity and unity. Although it originally refers to a female friend, its meaning is extended in this context to include a transgender woman or a non-binary individual.

xii.Gaybriel

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Blending
- Morphemic breakdown: Gay + Gabriel
- Interpretative meaning: used pejoratively to refer to a gay man
- Etymology: Nigerian English

Although the term is etymologically a variant of the biblical 'Gabriel', it has over time acquired an LGBTQ-centered meaning by leveraging the phonological similarity between the first syllable in 'Gabriel' and 'gay', the common word for a male homosexual. Gabriel is thus used to emphasize queer identity, forming a blend of the morphological root 'gay' with the second syllable in 'Gabriel.' It is a pun-based slang term used pejoratively

to refer to a gay person. It combines elements of Christianity and queer subcultures to signify homosexuality. It is used pejoratively to describe gay men who display feminine traits.

xiii. Agender

- Form class: Noun, Adjective
- Morphological process: Derivation (prefix)
- Morphemic breakdown: -a (prefix) + -gender (N)
- Interpretative meaning: A person who does not identify as having a gender
- Etymology: inner circle English

The term is formed by adding the Latin prefix *-a* (meaning- not) to the root word *gender*, which is a social construct of being male, female, or neither. The term describes a range of identities that do not conform to traditional binary norms. It refers to a person whose gender is not defined. It offers visibility to unnamed gender identities.

xiv. Transphobia

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Blending
- Morphemic breakdown: Transgender (Adj) + phobia (N)
- Interpretative meaning: Prejudice and discrimination towards transgender
- Etymology: inner circle English

The term is formed by combining a Latin-derived prefix *trans-*, which means "across", and *phobia*. From the morphological components, the term suggests a "fear of across". It is a form of prejudice and discrimination directed towards transgender people. Transphobia manifests as a denial of a person's identity as transgender and the enforcement of the gender binary.

xv. Biphobia

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Blending
- Morphemic breakdown: Bisexual (N) + phobia (N)
- Interpretative meaning: Fear or hatred of bisexuals
- Etymology: inner circle English

It is formed by combining the Latin prefix *bi*, meaning "two," from "bisexual," and the Greek suffix *-phobia*, derived from *phobos*, meaning "fear." A direct translation of the term suggests "a fear of two". It means a form of prejudice and discrimination directed at bisexual people. It manifests as a denial or dismissal of bisexuality as a valid identity.

xvi. Transmisogyny

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Blending
- Morphemic breakdown: Transgender (Adj) + misogyny (N)
- Interpretative meaning: Discrimination against trans women
- Etymology: inner circle English

The term is formed by combining *trans*, which means "across", clipped from *transgender*, and *misogyny*, a free morpheme from the Greek *misos* meaning "hatred" and *gune* meaning "woman". It is an intersection of transphobia and misogyny. While transphobia is a prejudice and discrimination directed at transgender people generally, transmisogyny is hate targeted at transfeminine people or transwomen, rooted in the assumption of masculinity being superior to femininity.

xvii. Transitioning

- Grammatical name: Verb
- Morphological process: Conversion
- Morphemic breakdown: Transition (N) + ing (Suffix)
- Interpretative meaning: The process of changing a person's gender presentation
- Etymology: inner circle English

The term is formed by adding the suffix *-ing* to "*transition*," which is derived from the Latin root word "*transit*," meaning "*to go across*." The root is combined with *-ing* to form a gerund signalling an action in progress. Transitioning means the process of changing one's internal gender identity. It could include changing one's deadname or even involving medical procedures to change one's physical features to align better with the gender they identify with.

xviii. Straight

- Grammatical name: Adjective
- Morphological process: Conversion
- Morphemic breakdown: Straight (adj, N)
- Interpretative meaning: The sexual identity that is heterosexual
- Etymology: inner circle English

The term is used to describe a sexual orientation that is heterosexual as an extension of its original meaning, which is the state of being unbent or honest. It refers to a person who is romantically or sexually attracted to people of the opposite gender. It is often preferred over heterosexual for its brevity and colloquial tone.

xix. Gaybread

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Compounding
- Morphemic breakdown: Gay (Adj; N) + bread (N)
- Interpretative meaning: a slang used to refer to gay men
- Etymology: Standard Nigerian English
- Gaybread is a term circulating in Nigerian online spaces, which is a phonetic variation of "Gaybriel", a generic male given name among Christians. It is a Nigerian queer slang that has gained traction for homophobic trolling. Its morphemic composition consists of two free morphemes: *gay* and *bread*. It is used in a derogatory context.

xx. Agaygay bread

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: borrowing
- Morphemic breakdown: Agaygay (Yoruba-agege) + bread (English)
- Interpretative meaning: A slang used on people perceived to be gay
- Etymology: Nigerian substrate language (Yoruba)

Agaygay bread is an orthographic variation of *agege bread*, a typical staple food in Nigeria, named after Agege, a suburb of Lagos. The construction is an orthographic reanalysis of *agege*. While *Agege bread* is a compound noun made up of the Yoruba word "agege" and the English word "bread", referring to a type of bread commonly eaten in Nigeria, agaygay bread has almost the same internal structure, replacing *-ge* with *gay*. It is an expression mainly used by non-members of the LGBTQ+ community with pejorative connotations. It is used to ridicule and troll perceived homosexuals. Agege bread, from which agaygay bread is derived, is a common type of bread often associated low quality. The phonic conversion of agege bread to agaygay is a deliberate attempt at demeaning homosexual identity in the Nigerian context.

xxi. Outing

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Conversion
- Morphemic breakdown: Outing (V= N)
- Interpretative meaning: Disclosing someone's gender and sexual orientation without the person's consent
- Etymology: inner circle English

It is derived from the verb *out*, a free morpheme, with the *-ing* suffix to indicate the act of revealing someone's gender orientations without their consent.

xxii. Closet

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Conversion
- Morphemic breakdown: Closet (N = V)
- Interpretative meaning: To hide one's sexual identity
- Etymology: inner circle English

It is a free morpheme used as a metaphor for a state of secrecy or non-disclosure of one's sexual/gender orientation. It is a term that evokes the metaphor of a private space where an individual can conceal their true identity. This concealment serves as a strategy for self-preservation and protection against intolerance.

xxiii. Neopronoun

- Form class: Noun
- Morphological process: Compounding
- Morphemic breakdown: Neo (Adj) + pronoun (N)
- Interpretative meaning: New gender neutral pronouns
- Etymology: inner circle English

Neopronoun is a compound word formed from the prefix *neo-*, meaning "new", and the noun *pronoun*. *Neo* denotes novelty and innovation. Its attachment to pronouns demonstrates high productivity, as it can be attached to a wide range of bases. While "pronoun" refers to a closed grammatical class, neopronouns are narrowed down semantically, referencing new pronouns outside the conventional ones used to refer to non-binary identities like *xe/xem*, *ze/hir*.

xxiv. Misgender

- Form class: Verb
- Morphological process: Derivation (prefix)
- Morphemic breakdown: Mis (prefix) + gender (N)
- Interpretative meaning: Referring to someone with incorrect gender terms
- Etymology: inner circle English

The term is formed by combining the bound morpheme *mis-*, meaning "incorrectly", with the noun *gender*, which in this context functions as the base for the verb. *Misgender* means referring to someone with the wrong pronouns or terms that do not align with their gender identity, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

Table 1: LGBTQ Terms Morphological Typology

	Blending	Compounding	Derivation	Clipping	Borrowing	Conversion
1	Cishet	Boysgirl	Cisnormativity	Enby	Agaygay bread	Transitioning
2	Gaydar	Tomboy	Agender	Aro		Straight
3	Gaybriel	Sistagirl	Misgender	Ace		Closet
4	Transphobia			Cis		Outing
5	Biphobia			Homo		
6	Homophobia					
7	Transmisogyny					
8	Gaybread					
9	Neopronoun					

VI. CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates how morphology interfaces with semantics to encode the experiences of Nigerian X users who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. It can be seen that high levels of morphological creativity and semantic innovations shape LGBTQ+ terminologies. The study analysed word formation processes, including blending, derivation, compounding, acronym formation, borrowing, and clipping. The study shows that blending is the most dominant process in the data.

Derivation—the process of forming new words from existing words, usually by adding a prefix or suffix—allows for the modification or extension of terms to accommodate the inclusion of self-identification in their meaning. The prefix "a" in asexual and agender shows the lack or absence of specific gender and sexual qualities in the meaning of the root words. Hence, the addition of the morpheme "a" enables individuals to describe identities outside the normative meanings of the root words. "Trans" is a suffix used to express identities crossing beyond gender boundaries, and "bi" in bisexual signals the infusion of two sexual identities. These prefixes enable the adoption and recognition of complex identities. Compounding creates new terms by joining two meaningful units, highlighting intersectionality in queer identities. Neopronouns indicate emergent honorifics in response to the inadequacies of traditional pronouns in representing non-binary identities.

Blending creates novel forms that capture emerging queer identity categories that were not previously named in words like *cishet*, and *gaydar*, which represent identities of both cisgender and heterosexual, and an intuition for detecting gay people. While *transphobia*, *homophobia*, and *biphobia* name systemic biases towards specific queer identities. Clipping, which involves shortening longer terms, often eases use by making terms briefer. "Trans" is clipped from *transgender*, "cis" from *cisgender*, "aro" from *aromantic*, "enby" from NB (non-binary), and "ace" from *asexual*. Acronymy captures the spectrum of identities in a concise form. Each

morphological process of neologism contributes to queer identity formation in overlapping ways, enabling queer individuals to create linguistic terms that reflect their realities.

The analysis of the data also reveals differences in the underlying social attitudes embedded in LGBTQ terms derived from inner-circle English, standard Nigerian English, and one substrate language (Yoruba). Of the twenty-six LGBTQ terms used in the study, twenty-two have inner-circle English origins and lack negative social attitudes toward LGBTQ identities. Four of the LGBTQ terms—agaygay, gaybread, homo, and gaybriel—are of Nigerian English and substrate lexicosemantics and express negative social attitudes toward LGBTQ identities.

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