



INFLUENCE OF NIGERIAN ENGLISH ON THE VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

¹Sadiq Muhammad, ²Alhassan, Abubakar Musa and ³Joseph Akanya

¹Department of Arts and Social Sciences

ABU Zaria. 07030476481

²08065497719

³Department of Arts Education,

Kogi State University, Anyigba.

08036449368

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to see the influences of Nigerian English in the written essays of the students across SS levels of the staff secondary school, federal college of education, Kano. In order to do this two research questions were formulated with corresponding hypotheses. The hypotheses sought to test whether or not there were significant relationship and differences in the frequency of Nigerian English on the vocabulary development of SS students. Two instruments were used, a written essays of the students and questionnaires for teachers. T-test and ANOVA statistical procedures were used to test the level of significant at 0.05. the major finding of the study was that there was significant difference in the frequency and gravity of Nigerian English on vocabulary development of students' essays across SS levels. Based on the finding, many recommendations were provided.

Background to the study

Two concepts are prominent in this study i.e 'vocabulary development and Nigerian English' vocabulary is commonly defined as 'all the words known and used by a particular person' (Ogwuche 2004).

Although vocabulary development is only an aspect of language use as language is made up of various aspects such as phonology, morphology syntax and semantics (Kamal 2007), but it is the knowledge of appropriate vocabulary that help in achieving the goal of writing. This is true of Senior Secondary Student (SSS) who desire competency in writing because a students who cannot write well at SSS level will find it difficult to have a smooth transition to higher institution of learning. A high proficiency is required from the students across Senior Secondary Student (SSS) levels in vocabulary development task because they need to have a command of English.

Nigerian English is defined as "the adaptation that led to peculiar usage of English in Nigerian

environment. Many studies were conducted on Nigerian English, for instance, Obaje (2006) carried out a research on the varieties of Nigerian spoken English. The aim was to find out the different varieties of spoken English. He used a population size of 2,345 and sampled 54. One of the findings of the study is that association with vast majority of illiterate persons is responsible for the influence of Nigerian English on vocabulary development.

Johnson (2004), studies the educational Nigerian English while Mustapha (2008) investigated the Nigerian pidgin English. It is a matter of concern to this researcher that studies into the written aspect of Nigerian English, especially at Senior Secondary School level has been neglected and it is this very aspect of Nigerian English that greatest demand is made, especially in students answer scripts and official document in government offices. Thus it is the students competence in written English not his mastery of speech that is of paramount importance.

Statement of the Problem



Over the years, English teachers across senior secondary school level have observed the poor performance of students in examination (David 2014). Ideally SSS students with developed vocabulary should be able to write very well because techniques for writing such as organization of content, expression and mechanical accuracy were taught already. Unfortunately, students keep failing English examination. One of the factors responsible for the poor performance is the use of Nigerian English lexical and syntactic items in their essays. This study proposed to investigate the causes of the use of Nigerian English and the influences it has on the vocabulary of SSS students.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study in clear terms are to:

1. Find the influence of Nigerian English on the vocabulary development of SSS students.
2. Assess how the influence of Nigerian English usage affects the performance of SSS students in examinations.
3. Determine the causes of using Nigerian English in students written essays\

Research questions

At the end of this study the research work is expected to have provided answers to the following questions:

1. What are the influences of Nigerian English on the vocabulary development of SSS students in Federal College of Education, Kano?
2. To what extent has the use of Nigerian English influenced the performance of SSS students in examination?

Hypothesis:

1. There is no significant relationship in the vocabulary development of SSS students and the use of Nigerian English.
2. There are no significant differences among the frequencies of Nigerian English produced in essay writing at the SSS levels and their vocabulary developments.

Research Methodology

Here, brief explanation on methodology and procedure for collection of data will be undertaken under the following headings; research design,

population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments and analytical procedures.

Research Design

Survey is the design used in this study because it is a type of research design that does not involve experiment. It is aimed at identifying variables and their relationship to one another. It is used for the purpose of obtaining data to enable the researcher to test hypothesis or answer research questions. In this case, the researcher manipulated the data because it has no treatment. The anonymity of survey allows people to feel more candid with their responses to get accurate data, one needs his/her respondents to be as honest as possible with their answers.

Population

The population for the study comprised 240 students in SSS (I-III) i.e 40 students in each class of two arms and ten English teachers of SSS (I-III) of the Federal College of Education (FCE)_Staff Secondary School.

Sample and sampling techniques

The first set of respondents were all the ten English teachers. They were used to ensure a comprehensive representation. Purposive sampling was used to select a sample size from the population (Winner 1987). For the second set of respondents, 24% of the population were used, i.e 96 students. The sample is representative because it cuts across the Senior Secondary Student (SSS) levels.

Data collection procedure

1. A topic titled my "career in life" was given to students during class to write
2. The essay writing was supervised by the researcher and two other assistants.
3. Questionnaire titled Knowledge of Nigeria English were administered to English teacher after marking the essay scripts.
4. There was an interactive session between the teachers and the students

Description of the questionnaire

- i. The questionnaire titled "Nigerian English/ standard English" was broken into two columns
- ii. The respondents were given different statement titled "erroneous sentences"



- iii. Respondents teachers were asked to tick what they felt were Nigerian English/ standard English in the columns (see appendix 1)

Data analytical procedures

The influence of Nigerian English was classified into seven categories; these are Nigerian English related to number restriction in nouns, use of pronouns, use of adjectives, Nigerian English related to auxiliary verbs, the ones associated with the use of prepositions and over extension of lexical rules. Consequently, they were identified, classified, explained and suggestions were finally made.

Statistical Procedures

1. Statistical T-test independent (at 100%) was used to test hypothesis one and at 0.05 level of confidence. T-test is valuable in deciding how far two means differ.
2. Two ways analysis of variance ANOVA which analyses variance of three or more groups (Spiegel, 2000) was used to determine the significance in the types and frequency of Nigerian English students produced across SSS levels

Table 3: Distribution of Nigerian English used by Students across SSS level.

S/N	Types	SS.1 freq.	%	SS. II Freq.	%	SS.III Freq.	%	Total Freq.	Total %
1	Nigerian English related to the use of pronoun	120	64.9	40	21.6	25	13.5	185	100
2	Nigerian English related to number reflection of noun	38	28.7	60	45.5	34	25.7	132	100
3	Wrong use of determiners	14	16.3	31	36.0	41	47.7	86	100
4	Wrong use of Adjectives	27	34.2	17	21.5	35	44.3	79	100
5	Nigerian English associated with the use of preposition	20	38.5	18	32.6	14	26.9	52	100
6	Over extension of lexical rules	30	17.3	43	24.9	100	57.8	173	100
7	Wrong use of lexical	50	33.1	50	33.1	51	33.8	152	100

The table shows that the highest most frequency of the Nigerian English across SS level was the Nigerian English related to the use of Pronoun SS 1 (64.9%) SS 2. (21.6% SS 3 (13.5%) followed by the over extension of lexical rules (17.3% 24.9% 57.8%).

At SSI the least frequency of Nigerian English usage was the use of determiners (16.3%) while the least frequency at SSII way the wrong use of adjectives

(21.5%). It can also be noticed that Nigerian English related to the use of pronoun decreased at SSII and III (64.95, 21.6% and 13.5%), the same thing to Nigerian English associated with the use of preposition (38.5%, 32.6% and 26.9%) However, wrong use of determiners (16.3%, 36.0% and 47.7%) with over extension of lexical rule (17.3%, 24.9% and 57.8 %) increase at SSII and SSIII level from the table, most of the error types can be seen to have persisted across the three levels.

Table 4: Anova Table showing variation in Nigerian English used by Students at SSI-SSIII

Sources of Variance	SS Square	DF	MS	F
Row: Nigerian English	21.4	6	3.6	6.6
Column: SSS students	103.1	2	57.6	75.2
Interaction: Nigerian English/SSS students	-828	12	-6.9	-12.7
Within	267.9	474	0.542	
Total	307.6	514		



Discussion of findings

The result in respect of the seven categories of Nigerian English used by students across SSS levels have shown that in most situations, students failed to produce correct sentences without elements of Nigerian English. The disturbing phenomena is that the use of Nigerian English increases as they progressively moved to a higher instructional level. This result is in agreement with the first hypothesis testing which showed no significant relationship in the vocabulary development at SSS students and the

use of Nigerian English. This trend could be as a result of lack of proper knowledge of what Nigerian English are or carelessness on the part of students. Some of the Nigerian English like the use of Nigerian English of determiners and adjectives (see table 3) were found to have increased according to proficiency level. This could be attributed to lack of extensive reading.

A few of the Nigerian English category like the ones related to the use of pronoun and that of preposition decreased according to proficiency level. This could be as a result of students' improved mastery of the use of the items.

From all indications, students failed to develop their vocabulary as they produced more Nigerian English in their writing at SS II and III. Thus this study is in line with that of Olaofe, (2000) who found no significant difference in terms of frequency of Nigerian English produced by students across three proficiency levels.

Conclusion

That Nigerian English prevails in the writing of Students across SSS levels is not in doubt. It is also true that the use of Nigerian English persisted such that some were even grievous across the SSS levels. This study also confirmed that lack of seriousness, carelessness and ignorance in the existence of Nigerian English were some factors responsible for the persistency of Nigerian English lexis in students' essays across SSS levels.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were based on the observation from the data gathered for this study. They are:

1. Many students were not covered by the study, therefore there is need for a similar

study to cover a large size than the present one.

2. There is need for close monitoring of students' use of Nigerian English in essay writing to ensure that SSS students' writing is devoid of much lexical and syntactic usage of Nigerian English.
3. Since the ability to write well isn't naturally an acquired skill, students need to be sufficiently exposed to the language through various language skills. This is a possibility of minimizing the influence of Nigerian English at SSS levels.

References

- Abroks, D. (2010). *Analysis of error gravity and persistency in students' written essay across JSS levels*. An unpublished M.Ed (TESL) Thesis, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Adesanya, F.A. (1983). *A study of Varieties of Written English in Nigeria*. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Ibadan.
- Adetugbo, A. (2002). 'Nigeria English: Fact or Fiction?'. In *Lagos notes and records*, 1:128-141.
- Alhassan, A. (2012). *Practical English for Secondary and Tertiary Institutions*. Kano: Tunland Publishers.
- Alkali, Z. (2001). *Principles of Teaching Second Language in Colleges*. Kano: S.K Publishers.
- Bhadmus, J. (2010). *Perspective on Pedagogical Grammar*. Unpublished MA Thesis Dissertation, University of Ibadan.
- Broughton, (2003). *Teaching English as Foreign Language*. London: Routledge Publishers.
- Desmond, B. (ed) (2011). *Fundamentals of communication skills*. Owerri: Chukwuemeka Printers and Publishers.



- Franklin, J. (2011). *Response to students Writing, Implication for second Language Learning*. Kogi: Utopgba Publishers.
- Gabriel, G.O. (2000). *Nigerian English in Focus*. Kano: S.K Printing.
- Idowu, O.A. (2007). *Regin and Creole Language*. Cornell: PVT Publishers
- Jowitt, D. (1996). *Nigerian English Usage: An Introduction*. London: Longman.
- Karra, M. (2006). *Second Language Acquisition Learners' error and Error Correction in Language teaching*. <http://iron.po2.com/doc> accessed on [27/7/2012](http://iron.po2.com/doc).
- Odum, A. (1987). NE (NIGE). Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press Ltd.
- Olaofe, I.A. (2000). *Current trend in communication skills for new millennium*. Paper presented at a four day workshop on communication skills, Kaduna state polytechnic, Zaria. 26-29 June.
- Tenjich A. (1980). *The Negative Influence of French Students' Writing Habits on the Acquisition of English*. An Unpublished Research work submitted to the State University. USA.
- Williams, D. (1999). *Linguistics in Language Teaching* London: Edward Arnold.