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Thus, mutual linguistic influence in any situation of language contact is usual. Just as English has influenced Nigerian languages, so have these languages influenced English. The term 'Nativization', which has now been, generally accepted for describing the Indigenization of English in a second language environment (Kachru 1992: 48-74) adequately summarized the nature of this influence.

Nativization of English in Nigeria is not limited to the usual features of transfer of phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic patterns of Nigerian Languages in Nigeria. It is also concerned with the creative development of English Language, including the evolution of distinctively Nigerian usages. Creativity manifests itself in various ways: first, expressions are coined to reflect the Nigerian experience.

Second, authentic Nigerian native idioms are translated into English in such a way as to reflect the mood of the situation or character.

The features are not merely deviations from the norms of standard English, but from features which characterize standard Nigerian English. Standard Nigeria English can be understood internationally and thus it is accorded worldwide prestige and internationally accepted. Regional variations of Nigerian English with first language prompted features such as Hausa English, Igbo English and Yoruba English etc. are considered non - standard and are not formally acceptable even in Nigeria.

Although, standard in English is not a case that all native speakers of English pronounce words in the same way, most users of the 'new English' accept the existence of standard but are unable to distinguish it from normal English.

Platt et al (1998: 304) says that:

'The only way to show that language features are not idiosyncratic learners errors but part of a language system of a new English is to prove statically that:

Standard in English is the dialect most used by the educated members of the society. It is the form used in government, public records, official pronouncements and the media. This dialect is accorded such widespread social acceptance that it has become first among equals. In this light, the term standard can be extended to the English of such countries like India, Nigeria, Ghana, Singapore etc. These varieties are grammatical with local inflection.

Randolph Quirk (2002:24) gave a more distinguished definition of standard English as what the speakers accept as "normal English". He also said that standard English is that "which draws the least attention to itself."

In the light of the above discussion on English, it is completely apparent that the English usage of some part of Nigeria-particularly the Igbo, is neither a standard variety of Nigeria English nor acceptance "normal English" even within the Igbo community. It is undoubtedly unacceptable and draws an unusual attention to itself. Yet, its prevalence among Igbo speakers of English makes it a verifiable investigative phenomenon as I hope to do in this project.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Language has been, described as man's most precious. It may be considered as man's crowning achievement for various reasons.

Language permits man the enormous wealth of contemporary as well as historical knowledge that would be beyond his grasp if based solely on his personal experiences. Language permits a variety of efficient and subtle modes of communication for expressing his innermost feeling and thought ranging from the poetic

and musical, to the present and the concrete and transcends time and space.

In Nigeria, estimates have ranged from 200 to 400 distinct indigenous languages that fulfill some of these mentioned functions. This makes Nigeria as a multi-lingual society. In addition, English Language, though a colonial language, has remained in Nigeria. Subsequently, the British colonial masters to Nigeria. Bamgbose (1995: 35) remarks that:

..... of all the heritage left behind

In Nigeria by the British at the

End of colonial administration,

Probably none is more important

Than the English Language

English language is language of government, commerce and business, education, the mass media, literature and much internal as well as external communication. In regard to this, one can then infer that the English language is very important in the national and social life of Nigeria.

However, the language being an alien language is not the language orientation of a child born in a typical Nigerian community where the mother tongue is probably, Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba or Efik as the case may be. Therefore the child born into the Nigerian community is faced with a complex language situation. He battles with the problem of mastering his own indigenous language and gaining a good command of the English language.

The co-existence of English with 400 or more indigenous languages in Nigeria has produced numerous repercussions. One such repercussion is the aspect of linguistic nativization which includes Nigerian language vowels and consonants for English ones; replacement of stress by tone; introduction of culture-specific vocabulary items, preposition combinations and some LI-induced syntactic structure. These features have been extensively discussed in the works of Bamgbose (1995), thus the present form or status of English in Nigeria is a result of the contact between English and Nigeria language in the socio-cultural and political situations.

1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

It has been observed that our first language or mother tongue (L1) has a continuous and dominant influence on all languages we subsequently acquire as our second or foreign language (L2). All attempt to suppress L1 (if seen as a hindrance to effective second language learning will yield no genuine result because it is fruitless. Instead, the level of proficiency of the L2 in question, as it is the case with English in Nigeria, will be falling within and outside the educational system and with it, understandably, the general level of education. Specifically, the falling standard in the English usage of Igbo undergraduates in particular had been attributed to mother tongue negative transfer, false hypothesization or over generalization. Oluikpe (1996:147). Other usage problems had been caused by inadequate knowledge of special syntactic features of certain words and expressions in English. Consequently,

Specifically, the falling standard in the English usage of Igbo undergraduate in particular had been attributed to mother tongue negative transfer, false hypothesization or over generalization. Oluikpe (1996: 147). Other usage problems had been caused by the inadequate knowledge of special syntactic feature of certain words and expressions in English. Consequently, the English actually used by undergraduates differ in various ways from standard English. This clearly makes for a complex study of a contrastive analysis of the two languages which stand in the relationship of L1 and L2.

There are many features in the structures of English sentences that are not found in Igbo sentence structures and these contrast present learning and usage problems. This is probably the reason why the concept of "straight for English" technique put forward as a solution for solving the language problem in some multilingual African countries will never yield result. Until the featured of mother tongue (MT) are recognized and incorporated into the already mapped out insights into the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning; particularly the teaching and learning of the language among Igbo undergraduates in the Department of English whose LI is Igbo language. Thus the problem of usage especially in English syntax is a measure of the failure of utilizing mother tongue experiences for effective second language teaching.

1.4 PURPOSE OF STUDY

The study is primarily concerned with the syntactic problems encountered by Igbo speakers of English and how their first language affects subsequent acquisition of other languages, particularly English language. The methodology will enable us determine for instance, the collocational possibilities and the degree of problems encountered by students as there is no clues (morphological or syntactic) to fix precisely the acceptable collocational patterns.

The significance of this methodology affords the students the following opportunities: A careful examination of how the only preposition in Igbo 'n' a' variously translated in English as in at on etc, influence the use of English prepositions; the implications to the existence of mother tongue interferences with the target language as evinced in the non-use of articles, instances of their superfluous usages', and irregularities in idiomatic usages, whether the absence of absolute genitives in Igbo, that is, the possessive determines for instance mine, ours, yours, theirs, as we have in English, presents usage problems in structures where the attributive genitives, that is, simple possessive determiners such as, my, our, your, their, is required, mention will also be made of the distribution of determiners in Igbo language and their equivalents in English.

Finally, the process of embedding in the two languages will be discussed.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. To what extent is nativization of English not limited to LI negative transfer?
2. How does the Igbo syntactic structures affect the English usage of Igbo undergraduates?
3. To what extent is the communicative competence of English dependent on the user's consistent effort to always practice with English in both formal and informal settings?
4. Is there any relationship between English and an Igbo syntax?
5. To what extent is Igbo English distinct from other regional varieties of English in Nigeria such as Hausa English , Efik English or Yoruba English?

1.6 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Within our context, we have the cognition of some apparent hypotheses that could form our research basis. These hypotheses include the following:

1. Nativization of English in Nigeria is not limited to the usual features of transfer or phonological, lexical, semantic, but extends to the syntactic patterns or Nigerian indigenous languages into English language.
2. Regional variations in standard English with first language prompted features such as Igbo

English are considered non-standard and are therefore not formally acceptable even in Nigeria.

3. There is a conscious effort by Igbo speakers of English to aspire towards approximation of the native speaker level of performance.

4. We can tell an English usage with Igbo language prompted features by merely examining the text or listening to the accent.

5. Students encounter syntactic problems in specific areas like borrowing, coinage, adaptation and translation of certain Igbo linguistic features into English.

6. Most of the contrastive analysis on the syntactic structures of both languages are not reliable and are detrimental to the students' competence and performance of the two language in contact.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF STUDY

The study shall be concerned only with the undergraduates of the University of Lagos whose LI is Igbo language. This implies that we are not interested in the English usage of the average Igbo primary school learner, low grade workers in establishments, most university dons, editors and judges.

Our method of approach will be descriptive and as such will depend on analysis of data.

The significance of this endeavour will afford future researchers the reference and motivation to do research on English usage problems, especially of second language users.

1.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Every human knows at least one language, spoken or signed. Linguistics is the science of language, including the sounds, words, and grammar rules. Words in languages are finite, but sentences are not. It is this creative aspect of human language that sets it apart from animal languages, which are essentially responses to stimuli.

The rules of a language, also called grammar, are learned as one acquires a language. These rules include **phonology**, the sound system, morphology, the structure of words, **syntax**, the combination of words into sentences, semantics, the ways in which sounds and meanings are related, and the lexicon, or mental dictionary of words. When you know a language, you know words in language, i.e. sound units that are related to specific meanings. However, the sounds and meanings of words are arbitrary. For the most part, there is no relationship between the way a word is pronounced (or signed)

Knowing a language encompasses this entire system, but this knowledge (called **competence**) you may know language, but you may also choose to not speak it. Although you are not speaking the language, you still have the knowledge of it. However, if you don't know a language, you cannot speak it at all.

There are two types of grammar: descriptive and prescriptive. **Descriptive grammar** represent the unconscious knowledge of a language. English speakers for example, know that "lime likes apples" is incorrect and "I like apples" is correct, although the speaker may not be able to explain why. Descriptive grammar do not teach the rules of a language, but rather describe rules that are already known. In contrast, **prescriptive grammar** dictate what a speaker's grammar should be and they include teaching grammars, which are written to help teach a foreign language.

There are about 5,000 languages in the world right now (give or take a few thousand), and linguists have discovered that these languages are more alike than different from each other. There are universal concepts and properties that are shared by all languages, and these principles are contained in the **universal Grammar**. Which forms the basis of all possible human languages.

Morphology and Syntax

MORPHEMES are the minimal units of words that have a meaning and cannot be subdivided further. There are two main types: Free bound morphemes can occur alone and Bound morphemes must occur with another morpheme. An example of a free morpheme is "bad" and an example of a bound morpheme is "ly". It is bound because although it has meaning, it cannot stand alone. It must be attached to another morpheme to produce a word.

FREE MORPHEME: bad

BOUND MORPHEME: ly

WORD: badly

When we talk about words, there are two groups: lexical {content} and **function** (or grammatical) words. Lexical words are called open class words and include nouns, verb, adjectives and adverbs. New words can regularly be added to this group. Function words, or closed class words, are conjunctions, prepositions, articles and pronouns, and new words cannot be (or are very rarely) added to this class.

Affixes are often the bound morpheme. This group include **prefixes, suffixes, infixes, and circumfixes**. Prefixes are added to the beginning of another morpheme, suffixes are added to the end, infixes are inserted into other morpheme, and circumfixes are attached to another morpheme at the beginning and end.

Following are examples of each of these:

Prefix: re- added to do produces redo

Suffix: - or added to edit produces editor

affixes are added to the end of an existing word for purely grammatical reasons. In English there are only eight total inflectional affixes:

-s	3rd person singular present	she waits
-ed	past tense	she waited
-ing	progressive	she's eating
-en	past participle	she has eaten
-s	plural	three apples
-'s	possessive	Lori's son
-er	comparative	you are taller
-est	superlative	you are the shortest

The other type of bound morpheme are called bound roots. These are morphemes (and not affixes) that must be attached to another morpheme and do not have a meaning of their own. Some examples are ceive in perceive and mit in submit.

English Morphemes

- A. Free
 - 1. Open class
 - 2. Closed class
- B. Bound
 - 1. Affix
 - a. Derivational
 - b. Inflectional
 - 2. Root

There are six ways to form new words. Compounds are combination of words, **acronyms** are derived from

the initials of words, **back-formations** are created from removing what is mistakenly considered to be an affix, **abbreviations or clippings** are shortening longer words, **eponyms** are created from proper nouns (names), and **blending** is combining parts of words into one.

Compound: doghouse

Acronym: NBA (National Basketball Association) or scuba (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus)

Back-formation: edit from editor

Abbreviation: phone from telephone

Eponym: sandwich from Earl of sandwich.

Blending: smog from smoke and fog

Grammar is learned unconsciously at a young age. Ask any five year old, and he will tell you that "I eat" and "you eat", but his "dog eats." But a human's syntactical knowledge goes farther than what is grammatical and what is not. It also accounts for ambiguity, in which a sentence could have two meanings, and enables us to determine grammatical relationships such as subject and direct object. Although we may not consciously be able to define the terms, we unconsciously know how to use them in sentences.

Syntax, of course, depends on lexical categories (parts of speech.) you probably learned that there are 8 main parts of speech in grammar school. Linguistics analyzes words according to their affixes and the words that follow or precede them. Hopefully, the following definitions of the parts of speech will make more sense and be of more use than the old definitions of grammar schoolbooks.

Open Class Words

+ plural endings Det. Adj. _ (this is called a noun phrase)

Nouns _____ "the big dog"

"dogs"

+ tense endings Aux. _____ (this is called a verb phrase)

Verbs _____ "have spoken"

"speaks"

Adjectives _____ + er / est Det. _____ Noun

"small" " the smaller child"

Adj. + ly _____ Adj. or verb or Adv.

Adverbs "quickly" "quickly ran"

Determiners a, an, the, this, that, these, _____ Adj. Noun

those, pronouns, quantities "this blue book"

Auxiliary Verbs forms of be, have, may, NP _____ VP

can, shall "the girl is swimming"

prepositions at, in, on, under, over, of, _____ NP (this is called a prepositional phrase)

"in the room"

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