

TITTLE PAGE

**SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF NIGERIAN ENGLISH
EXPRESSION**

BY

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APPROVAL PAGE

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to almighty Allah (SWA) who spare my life and gave me the grace to complete my first degree successfully.

This research work is also dedicated to my beloved parent through whose encouragements, sacrifices I was able to attain my academic height in life Alhaji Babatunde Abdulrahman, Alhaja Mariam Abdulrakman.

Prof Dejo Abdulrahman, Mr Oga, Alhaji Teslim Jimoh.
May Almighty Allah continue to bless them, and the entire Abdulrahman's family.

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ABSTRACT

This study analyses some selected Nigerian English expressions. The expressions context are made up of forty (40) established English expression interpreted based on meaning and level of intelligibility which access whether they are typically Nigerian English expressions or not. In presenting the data, table were used, this enabled the researcher to present the meaning and intelligibility assessment of the selected Nigerian English. There are four tables in all representing different sub-heading under them. On the level of intelligibility assessment, the failure has the highest figure than those who succeeded.

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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, aims and objectives of the study, the scope of the study, significant of the study, research methodology and model of approach adopted in analyzing the work.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The importance of language to man is inestimable especially when human interaction is considered. An effective communication processing approach should remain the bedrock of any language study. Linguistics of all persuasions seems to agree that a language should be viewed as a system, a set of elements, each of which has a function of contributing to the working of the whole (Beaugrande and

Oressler 1992:3) language and society develop side by side and social change brings about linguistics change.

The global spread of the English language as one of the most far reaching linguistic phenomena of our time is already an established fact evidence of the world wide phenomenon of language contact variation and change can be seen through such designations as world English new English, Modern English, West African English, south African English, Australian English, Indian English to mention just a few.

The phrase “Nigerian English” has also appeared in the last four decades or so.

Each of the new Englishes has distinct characteristic as well as distinct linguistic and cultural identities largely due to the different historical and geographical areas.

Jowitt (1991:126) has observed that given the increasing complexity of the Nigerian society in recent decades, the vocabulary employed by Nigerian to translate their thinking into language could also be expected to have undergone rapid expansion. Since the new elements in the twentieth century transformation of Nigerian experience have their lexical correlates largely in Nigerian English.

In other words, as Ayodeba (2003:5) aptly puts it:

“Nigeria standard English as a variety of the world English usage has a syntax that is not radically different from other English, it is only perhaps in lexis that unique linguistic items from part our communication process”.

The unique nature of new English poses several problems among which are those of identification, definition, classification norm and intelligibility. This could be the

reason why particular attention is given semantic analysis of selected Nigerian expressions in English.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

English language is a defacto language of communication of various international levels, mutual intelligibility among interlocutors of different global affinities becomes a thing of paramount interest. English having assigned to it certain varieties poses a problem of international intelligibility to its users.

This study attempt to carry out a semantic interpretation of selected Nigerian English expression an attempt that is hoped facilitate understanding of these expression by foreign speakers of English.

This question of mutual intelligibility is important, if the spread of this English language is going to be relevant. This

attempt therefore is hoped to facilitate understanding of these expression by foreign speaker of English. It is against this background that this research work is carried out to examine the semantic analysis of some selected Nigerian English expression.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of this research is to conduct a semantic analysis of Nigerian English. Specifically it geared towards:

- i. Assessing the level of intelligibility to typically Nigerian English expressions.
- ii. Identifying elements that constitute uniquely Nigerian English expressions.
- iii. Carrying out a semantic analysis of identified English expressions.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to a semantic analysis of some selected Nigerian English expressions. The expressions analyzed are those believed to have stabilized in Nigeria and they are made up of forty (40) established Nigerian English expressions.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The linkage between the national and international role of English in Nigeria is best summed by Akindele and Adegbile (1999:61) that English performs three broad functions of accommodation participation and social mobility. The international status of English makes it perform peculiar role, and its ability to adopt easily to contextual variables is an added value. At the international level, English plays a global integrative role.

It is also significant because it will constitute part of the oral table materials that can aid further study on varieties of English and comparative studies on Nigeria English and other varieties of English.

The study is significant to learners of English in Nigeria because by presenting the same equivalents of the analyzed Nigerian expressions, it provides a variable insight for these learners to see the difference that exist between Nigeria English and the standard variety and thus will help to develop their use of English to attain the standard requirement.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a technique and system of gathering data basically for research purpose. The data for this research was gathered. Using two sources of data collection, which are

- a. Primary source of data collection
- b. Secondary source of data collection.

The primary source used in gathering the data is interview and the secondary source used in gathering the data for this research is from the library.

1.7 LIBRARY

- i. Textbooks
- ii. Journals
- iii. Periodical that have relevance on my work

1.8 MODEL OF APPROACH

The model of approach adopted is that of Van dike (1985), the most general concrete model used to denote the specific object of a semantic theory is the concept of interpretation (Van dike 1985). Interpretation may be of various kinds depending on the discipline or theory involved,

for the sake of clarity, we first distinguish between abstract and concrete types of interpretations of discourse elements by systems and by rules of such systems, where as the latter are interpretations by language users. The two kind of interpretation are not unrelated. An abstract linguistic (grammatical) semantic usually has empirical claim that is intends to model at least some aspect of the concrete interpretations of language users as they are accounted for psychological models.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter is a general introduction. This chapter intended to review some literatures related to the topic under discussion.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

English is a member of the Germanic family of language the Germanic family is a branch of the indo-European language family a blend of early Frisian and Saxon, it absorbed Drish and Noman French and later added many Latin and Greek technical terms in the United State of America, Canada, Harrau Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and elsewhere. It absorbed terms for ingenious plants, animals, foodstuff, clothing, housing and other items from native and immigrant languages plus the various dialects

from cooking to Jamaican and innumerable sources of slang, from Polari to hip-hop continue to add novel terms and expressions to the mix. It is no surprise to hear from people learning English. As a result, English has spread around the globe. It is now the third most spoken language in the world after Mandarin, Chinese and Hindi (A-Z Dictionaries.com)

2.2 VARIETIES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The size of the British Isles often leads people to assume that the language spoken in its countries of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland is same as what homogenous and first time visitors are often surprised to find that they have difficulty in understanding the accents and dialects of certain regions. Even within the country of England alone, there are great diversity dialects both regionally and socially.

Trudgill (1999) believes that for the majority of English people “where they are from” is very important to them.

Accents are clues to where people were born and to where they grew up. Although some people may change the way they speak during their lifetimes. Most people “carry at least some trace” of their accent and dialect origins. Throughout their lives, in addition, to the regional accents. However, our focus is on the regional and continental differences.

Since 16000, the English colonization of North America resulted in the creation of distinct American variety of the English language. Some English pronunciations and words “froze”. When they reached America, in some ways American English is more like the English of Shakespeare than Modern British English in some expressions in “Amercanism” are infant original British expressions that were preserved in the colonies while lost for a time in Britain (for example trash for rubbish loan as a verb instead of lend and fall for alitumn, another example frame up, was re-imported into Britain

through Hollywood gangster movies. Spanish also had a influence on American English (and subsequently Britain English) with words like, ranch, stampede and vigilante being examples of Spanish words that entered English through the settlement of the American west French words (through the slave trade) also influenced American English (and so to an extent British English).

Today, American English is particularly influential due to the USA's dominance of a cinema, television, popular music, trade and technology (including the internet). But there are many other varieties of English around the world including for example Australian. English New Zealand English, Canada English, South African English, Indian English, Caribbean English and Nigeria English (English club.com).

These new English are the result of the global spread of English that began with colonialism during the nine-teenth century (Crystal , 1997) Trudgill *et al.*, 2002, Jenkins 2003 etc). the focus of this research however is the Nigerian English.

2.3 NIGERIAN ENGLISH

According to Ogu (1992), Walsh (1967) was among the first to draw attention to the existence of a variety of English known as “Nigerian English (NE) Ogu quoted Walsh as saying that the varieties of English spoken by educated Nigerians, no matter what their lam make it a general type, which may be called Nigeria English (1982:88).

Bokamba (1982, 1991) recognizes the existence of a Nigerian English and referred to it as a variety he called “West African Vernacular English” (WAVE). Similarly Jibril

(1982) sees Nigerian English as part of the continuum of “standard Nigerian English”.

Odumah (1987,1993) recognizes Nigerian English as one of the new Englishes and says: “our position is that there exists at the moment a single super ordinate variety of standard English in Nigeria which can be regarded as “Nigerian English”.

Several other linguists such as (Salami 1968, Adekunle 1974, 1985; Adetugbo (1979), Balogun (1980), Goke Pariola (1993) to mention just a few, have either written about or made passing references to this varieties of the English language. Finally (and definitely not the least) Bamgbose 1982 one of the foremost African linguist of our time highly respected internationally and with a great reputation on matters relating to language and society in Africa, not only recognizes the existence of a Nigerian English, but also has

written extensively on this variety of the English language. His article “Standard Nigerian English Issues of identification (1982) not only identifies Nigerian English but also analyzes some of its identifying features.

However, not everyone believes in the existence of Nigerian English, Vincent (1944) for instance sees it as “bad English” likewise Salami (1968) contents that what has been identified as NE is in reality “Errors of Usage” Vincent and Salami are to large extent voicing the concern of a host of the English language teachers in Nigerian institution of learning who find it quite derogatory and rather insulting to refer to such as variety of the English language. These would rather see any departure from the British variety (which was imported into Nigerian) as either deviant or incorrect.

According to Walfson (1989) although the English language has gained worldwide prominence, it is not used

exactly the same way. That, The English of Americans is not the same as that of Canadians or Kenyans and that a Continuum exist between the various practices constituting the English language usage throughout the world.

A cursory look at history reveals that this phenomenon is not new. Similar occurrence have taken place in the past and their results are still with us today. Latin for example gave birth to the present day Romance languages (French Spanish, Italian) during the renaissance period, Arabic gave rise to the various regional dialects . in north Africa and the middle East Egyptian . Arabic as well as Algerian Arabic and Tunisian Arabic etc. What is happening today with the English language is not normal linguistic process that takes place in an atmosphere of mobility and language and culture contact. It is a well known sociolinguistic fact that when two or more languages and cultures came into contact, different

types of socio-linguistic chemistry take place. Sometimes a diagnostic situation may result or change shift attention or even language death in some other instances which can lead to the formation of a pidgin, a creole or even the birth of a new language altogether (Sebba 1997). Instance of these various possibilities can be found in different contact situations around the globe.

Each of the new English has distinct characteristic as well as distinct linguistic and cultural identifies, largely to the different historical geographical, political and socio-cultural factors that gave birth to them. Thus Nigerian English will differ from either Ghanaian or Indian English. Each variety however, will also have various subvarieties or dialects reflecting its multilingual environment. The depth of impact at various linguistic in each variety will be determined by the degree of localization of English.

2.4 FEATURES OF NIGERIAN ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS

Bamgbose's (1984) observes that most differences between Nigerian English and other forms of English are found in the innovation in lexical items, Idioms and their meaning are still valid, to the extent that the place of appropriateness and competences in the field of second language learning and teaching has been emphasized by researchers that observation is also valid partly because the lexical of a speech community such as Nigeria including her idioms and meanings, part of the community's existence in terms of expression of ideas, feelings and aspirations.

Bamgbose's (1985), Adegbiya's (1989) and bamiro's (1994) classifications of lexical forms of Nigerian users of English at least to this position.

Bamgbose's (1982) believes in the existence of the Nigerian English form. The reports that features of instances

of its spoken and written forms have been described and descriptions published in outlets within an outside territory. Alo (2005:116) also describes the variety of English in use in Nigeria as a domesticated variety of English, functioning within the Nigerian linguistic and socio cultural setting as a second language, that view is also shared by Babatunde (2003:116) in his opinion.

The Nigerians of NE is observed at the levels of phonetics/phonology, lexis, grammar semantics pragmatics and discourse.

In this own contribution to the discussion on Nigerian English (hence forth NE) Kiyore (1991) argues that since the concept of NE is still developing, definitive statement about its status are premature. He therefore, counsels that there is a limit to which we allow nation of getting the idea to take correction. He suggests that there should be a comprehension

description, codification of NE's grammar for it to serve as a normative guidance.

Jowitt (1991) appears to have provided what is describe as the most comprehensive and detailed study of NE phenomenon not only in the volume of lexical features identified and defined, but more so in the breath and depth of the relevant theoretical issues significantly analyzed till date. He introduces the dimension of popular Nigeria English (PNE) on the basis that;

The usage of every Nigerian user is a mixture of standard forms and popular Nigerian English form, which are in turn composed of error and varieties (p.47).

Through he has not engaged in a strict typology of NE varieties instead he presented a range from the extreme heavy deviation from Standard British English (SBE) to an approximation of SBE busing his position on Odumulis (1987)

varieties 1,2 and 3 with education as a parameter on a general note. Babatunde (2003:138) has observed that there is no consensus on the description of the performance varieties of NE not to talk of identifying an acceptable standard. The solace, according to him is the high level of awareness of the problem in informed circles and the persistent calls being made to address the issues accordingly.

2.5 ENGLISH PROFICIENCY IN NIGERIA

Several scholars have commented on the level of English use in Nigeria. Quoting Adejare, Jowitt (2005:25) says

“.....the nation’s huge investment in the English language appears not to be yielding any substantial dividends. The percentage and quality of passes in the subject at the primary and secondary school levels are; disconcertingly show nation-wide”.

He adds also that it is self evident truth that the standard of English in Nigeria is at rock bottom and can not go any further. And perhaps the often glaring bud use of English amongst Nigeria is best summarized in Adesanonye's (1976) statement; that there were too many graduates who obtained honours degrees in English yet were illustrates in the basic mechanism of the English language " as if that is not enough, Banjo's (1981) asserted that;

“there is a general dissatisfication with the level of proficiency in English among the products not only of secondary school, but also of the universities”.

Is still valid today through it is generally acknowledge that the quality of the English of most Nigerians who have acquired some proficiency in it is unsatisfactory, Banjo (1974) had earlier on assumed a middle course sort of :

“The question we should be asking.....is not whether we speak or write better or poor english than our forebears immediate or remote, but rather whether our total proficiency in English is equal to the task demanded of its in present day Nigeria (Jowitt 2005:26)”.

Having laid down some foundation and arguments of NE, it would however be helpful, NE has no features or uniqueness such as the two main varieties (i.e US and UK English) of the language have: its lexis is basically the same as these other varieties although some loan or coined lexical items do exist. But there’s some uniqueness about its grammar especially its syntax.

Faruq Akperogi in his online article posted on Thursday 20th May 2010 which is titled “Broken English, Pidgin English

and Nigeria English “explains that the fundamental sources of Nigerian English include: improvisation (to express unique socio-cultural through processes that are absent in the Standard Varieties of English) old fashioned in British English expressions, initial usage errors fossilized out time and it corporate into our linguistic report and a mixture of British and American English.

With regard to syntactic features of NE, Banjo (1995:217) observes that “empirical contrastive study of the syntax of Nigerian and British English goes back to the era of error analysis and contractive linguistics” e.g. the works of Tomor (1967) Banjo (1969) Odumuh (1981), Kujore (1985) Further works on the syntax of NE are found in Odumuh (1987) Jowitt (1991) Bamgbose (1992) Kiyare (1995) and Banjo (1995) for example, Odumuh (1987:60 – 65) identifies

some typical variation between British English and Nigerian English as spoken by tertiary educated class.

It is important to maintain at this stage that Nigeria pidgin (NP) and Broken English (BE) are not inclusive in the discussion of NE in this essay. This is because majority of the scholars vehemently assert that if they are not correct to be included within the ambit of NE. however, some Nigerian English slangs will be considered as well used as English express in Nigerian at the point of analysis to tie the sack of this discussion, it is pertinent to point out that, certain English expressions in Nigeria are characterized by that distinctive vocabulary which includes borrowing and loan translations from local language e.g. Dan shiki from Hausa (a gown worn by men).

At this stage therefore attention will be given to the concept of semantics and semantic analysis which form the theoretical frame work of the study.

2.6 SEMANTIC

Semantic is not an integrated discipline. It is not a clearly defined level of linguistic, not even comparable to phonology or grammar. Rather it is a sort of study of the use of language in relation to many different aspects of experience, to linguistic and non linguistic context to particular bit of language is appropriate (Palmer 1981:206).

Words are not coined in order to extract meaning from them. If parts can be found whose meaning suggest the one in mind, so much the better but is not essential. (Bolinger 1965:109).

Semantics is generally defined as the study of meaning and it seeks to convey and classify human experiences through language when the study of the meaning of utterance first began, scholars in this field concerned themselves with arguments which have now been discovered to be mainly tangential to the understanding of how words combine to convey human experience. For instance, there was an initial pre-occupation with the disfunction between “being meaningful” and “having meaning” (Lyons 1968: 402).

The progressive accumulation of research evidence influenced largely by the diversity of view point, goals orientations, has led to a continuous re-examination and redefinition of what should be the scope and goals of intellectual endeavours its meaning explication.

Analysis have refused to accept the limitation of linguistic to sentence grammar. Conversational analysis has

stressed the primary of the social dimension of language study..... pragmatics than meaning in the abstract.

One clear picture from the rather long quotation above is the undue compartmentalization of these approaches and insights. This weakness has rubbed off so much of the gain derivable from the cumulative insight into the process of understanding utterances, the factors involved in this understanding, the formal for the precise representation of meaning at all levels of language study, the definitions of meaning dependent properties of expression and relation between them, and the explication of how human beings relate utterances to background experiences.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents the research procedures. The researcher provides the detail of the method of research used in collecting data for the project which also include the instrument used. It defines clearly the target population for the research, source of data, sample, method of data collection, data analysis and justification for choosing the method.

3.1 POPUALTION

Semantics Analysis of Nigerian English Expression is the focus of the study. The target population for this research is made up of forty (40) respondents from the two categories of people that make use of English language (British and Nigerian) that make up the university community. Forty (40)

undergraduate will be selected randomly, representing three faculties (which means twenty (20) from the faculty of (FAIS), ten (10) from management science and ten (10) from Social Sciences respectively. This makes a total of forty respondents, as stated above.

3.2 SOURCE OF DATA

Both Primary and Secondary data were used in the conduct of this field work. Thus, the first most basic method employed is the interview conducted with some students. Equally, library was used where materials were consulted and reviewed as they relate to the research.

3.3 SAMPLE

The procedure for this research is a random sampling which involves the selection of some given element in a population, which serves as representative of the whole.

3.4 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Interviews were carried out among various students in Usmanu Danfodiyo University from different levels, and also materials were consulted from the library.

3.5 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

In this field, in order to analyse the semantic analysis of Nigerian English expression, we extracted some words phrases, to the level of sentences of phrases, to the English expression such. Nigerian English expression sampling with a view to find out their semantic analysis or meaning.

3.6 JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOOSING THE METHOD

Interview was used because it is a sociolinguistics oriented study, people play a vital role and it is important to know how they use the both types of English especially in a university community.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the data collected in the study are presented and analyzed, that is the forty selected Nigerian expression in English are analyzed semantically by identifying the linguistics inputs that tends to make them look different from the Standard British English. These expressions are also categorized under several heading based on observed linguistics occurrences as a result of the identified inputs (for example contextual extension, omission of essential element, use of inappropriate preposition) Inputs are provides while the appropriate contextual usage or appropriate structural usage is provided in the Standard

British versions. The analyses are carried with each of the objectives taken at a time.

4.1.1 DATA PRESENTATION

In what follows, (40) Nigerian English expression collected during our research are presented: with their meaning and respondents intelligibility assessment. The expressions are presented in 4 tables each containing Ten (10) expressions.

Table 1: Showing the first system ten Nigerian English expressions with their meaning respondents intelligibility assessment.

S/N	Peculiar Nigerian English expression	Meaning	Intelligibility assessment	
			Wrong	Wright
1.	Please come back tomorrow, the officer is not <u>on seat now</u> .	The expression means the officer is not available now	10 people	10 people
2.	We came to your house yesterday, but we meet <u>your absence</u>	Means the person visited was not around	12 people	8 people
3.	I wonder what the Shehu is	Means a public area	13 people	7 people

	doing in the <u>motor park</u> .	where buses or taxis are usually parked		
4.	The <u>big man</u> who ate our money has been arrested	Big man means a wealthy man	16 people	4 people
5.	He suffered in the civil services because he had no god-father	Means an influential person who can decide a political social, even religions outcomes	13 people	7 people
6.	The wedding didn't hold because the brides parents <u>rejected</u> the Dowry.	Means a money groom pays for the bride sake	18 people	2 people
7.	Olu's daughter and mine at <u>tight friends</u>	Tight friends means close friends	11 people	9 people
8.	John was awarded the scholarship because he has a <u>long leg</u>	Means to have strong popularity with highly influential people	13 people	7 people
9.	Now that he has seen the <u>Hand Writing</u> on the wall he wil ask for forgiveness.	Means someone's writing appearing on the wall	13 people	7 people
10.	They served plenty of hot drink at the party	Means strong alcoholic drink	8 people	12 people

As we can see from table 1: ten peculiar Nigerian English expressions were presented with expected meaning and respondent's interpretation or assessment.

Table 2: showing the second ten Nigerian English expression with their meaning and assessment.

S/N	Peculiar Nigerian English expressions	Meaning	Intelligibility assessment	
			Wrong	Wright
1.	He was rude to his <u>senior brother</u>	Elder	12 people	8 people
2.	I was late for lectures, because of the <u>go-slow</u> on the way	Means traffic hold-up	10 people	10 people
3.	We joined the taxi near the market place	Means shopping center	7 people	13 people
4.	John will <u>put up</u> with his uncle while in Lagos	Means stay with	18 people	2 people
5.	I Decided To <u>Step-Down</u> For Mallam Ali during the last local government elections.	Step down means to resign	13 people	7 people
6.	His late father was poor in his last life. He should be rich when he comes again.	Means someone who has died to come again	12 people	8 people
7.	Ameh is a <u>trouble-shooter</u> he quarrel a lot	It means how can trouble shooter maker be causing problems by quarrelling	14 people m	6 people
8.	Please tell us all what you know about the matter	All means everybody what they know about the issue	8 people	12 people
9.	You have done well. More grease to your elbow	Means more power to your elbow	15 people	5 people
10.	The driver abandoned the car and field into the bush for his dear life	Dear is in standard English which simply means a determiner	10 people	10 people

As you can see from table 2, ten peculiar Nigerian English expressions were presented with expected meaning and

respondents interpretations or intelligibility assessment the next table shows the third ten expressions.

Table 3: showing third ten Nigerian English expression

S/N	Peculiar Nigerian English expression	Meaning	intelligibility assessment	
			Wrong	Wright
1.	You can try on your own. They say taste of the pudding is in the eating.	Taste is simply proof standard English	11 people	9 people
2.	Ali has searched every nook and corner for his missing money.	Means every nook and corner	13 people	7 people
3.	It is time to go to bed please turn off the light	Means to sleep	12 people	8 people
4.	The pupils are expected to treck from the gate to hostel	Means to walk	18 people	2 people
5.	the robbers shot Musa the trader on the head	Means in the head in Standard English	15 people	5 people
6.	Unfortunately, the thief bolted away before the police arrived.	Means the thief escaped	16 people	4 people
7.	Joseph is always asking for money from his father	Means requesting for money	18 people	2 people
8.	The principal said he will travel to Lagos tomorrow	Means that the principal will travel to Lagos tomorrow	12 people	6 people
9.	He said he had to grease the officer to get his promotion	Means to bribe the officer to get his promotion	14 people	6 people
10.	My father always says that he that dines with devil must have a long spoon	Dines means supps	12 people	8 people

As you can see from table 3, ten peculiar Nigerian English expressions were presented with expected meaning and respondents interpretations or intelligibility assessment.

Table 4: showing the forth last ten Nigerian English expression

S/N	Peculiar Nigeria English expression	Meaning	Intelligibility assessment	
			Wrong	Wright
1.	He said he would get the university admission by hook or crook	Means by hook or by cranny in standard English	14 people	6 people
2.	He said to my hearing that i was a bad man	Simply means have within ear shot	14 people	6 people
3.	He was advised to put his request into writing	Simply means have it written.	15 people	5 people
4.	Aminu is a kind man: he gave me lift in his car this morning	Means he gives a lift in his car every morning	16 people	4 people
5.	I prefer chicken pepper soup to cow pepper soup	Means meat soup with enough pepper	14 people	6 people
6.	During the festival. We saw a one headed spirit carrying a basket full of water	One headed means physical feature of the host carrying a basket full of water	18 people	2 people
7.	we went to condole Ali when his father died	Means to pay a visit of condolence to Ali for his father demise	10 people	10 people
8.	I have checked for the book but it was not found in the shelf	Means look for or search for	12 people	8 people
9.	My wife has taken in we need a nanny as soon as she puts to bed	Puts to bed. means delivered	14 people	6 people
10.	The girl was operated	Means the girl was taken into surgery	16 people	4 people

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The data are analyzed and interpreted in this section.

1. 'Please come back tomorrow, the officer is not on seat now' in Nigerian context, the above expression implies that the officer is not available now. While in Standard British English platform, it may imply that the officer is not sitting on his seat at present.
2. 'We came to your house yesterday, but we meet your absence. "In Nigerian context, the implication of this expression is that the person visited was not available as at when they called. In British context is not conventional to say "We meet your absence" instead you say we did not meet you around" therefore the difference is in the structure meet your absence.
3. I wonder what the Shehu is doing in the motor park. In Nigerian context, the word motor-park" implies a public

area where buses or taxis are usually park so as to be used for public services. In British context. It is not called Motor park, but rather car park. So the difference of this expression from its equivalent Standard British English is in the element - motor park

4. The big man who ate our money has been arrested. The word big man is peculiarly Nigerian in the context of which it is used in the expression. It implies a wealthy man. It is used as a single word. While in British context, it is made of two words big +man and it implies a man that probably has big physical feature. Another linguistic input identified in the expression which contributes in making the expression different from the standard British version is ate however, this is taken care of under direct translations.
5. 'He suffered in the civil service because he had no god – father'. The Word “ god-father” in Standard British

English stand for a head of a criminal organization, but in this context it implies an influential person who can decide a political, social, even religious outcome, therefore, the context of which the word is used in the expression differs from the conventional British context.

6. 'The wedding didn't hold because the Brides parents rejected the dowry'. In Nigerian context, the word "dowry" stand for the money a groom pays for the brides sake, while in British context it is otherwise i.e., Dowry standards for the money a bride gives her husband when they got married. Therefore what differentiates the expression from its Standard British version is the word the contextual use of the word 'dowry'.

7. 'Olu's daughter and mine are tight friends'. The use of 'tight' in the expression violates its normal Standard British contextual use. The appropriate word to use is 'close' that is close friend. Therefore the implication of

the expression is that Olu's daughter and mine are close friends.

8. John was awarded the scholarship because he has a long leg. To have a long leg in Nigerian context implies to have a strong network with highly influential people, while in Standard British English, it means someone's leg being long.
9. 'Now that he has seen the hand writing on the wall, he will ask for forgiveness'. In Nigerian context, the expression is a figurative one which implies the person has seen signs probably indicating that he or she will be punished of his short comings in a normal Standard British English, the phrase " their hand writing on the wall' can be explained as someone's writing appearing on the wall.
10. 'They served plenty of hot drink at the party'. Hot drink in Nigerian context implies alcohol. So the

implication of this expression is that plenty of alcohol was served at the party.

In a normal Standard British English the expression would have read. They served plenty of gin (strong alcoholic drink) at the party.

11. 'He was rude to his Senior brother'. The word "senior" in Standard British English is used to indicate level or ranking an institution or organization but it has been extended in Nigerian context to indicated position of birth by age in a family, the appropriate word in Standard British English is 'elder'.

12. 'I was late for lectures, because of the go-slow on the way'. In Nigerian context, the expression implies that the personnel's lateness to lectures was as a result of traffic position on the road, hence the use of go-slow in Standard British English. The go-slow stands for a protest against an employer where the workers walk as

slowly as possible. This shows that the word's contextual meaning has been extended in Nigerian English expression.

13. 'We joined the taxi near the market place'. The word joined has been extended in this expression to mean 'boarded' therefore in Nigerian context the joined in the expression stands for boarded, hence the expression Standard British English will read. We boarded the taxi near the market place.

14. 'John will put up with his uncle in Lagos.' to put up with in Standard English means to accept an unpleasant situation or person without complaining. So the phrasal verb is not adequately applied in the expression. The implication of the expression is that 'john will stay with his uncle while in Lagos. So using put up with is not appropriate because it contradicts the intended meaning. Explaining the expression from

Standard British English platform. It implies that John will accept his uncle while in Lagos.

15. 'I decided to step down for Mallam Ali during the last local government election'. The phrase verb 'step-down' in Standard British means to relinquish a previously held position probably to someone else or to resign. But in this expression it is used to indicate a voluntarily decision to withdraw one's political pursuit for the sake of another person. This therefore is a contextual misapplication of a fixed expression.

16. 'His late father was poor in last life he could be, rich when he comes again'. In the expression, the phrase 'last life' do not observe rule of collocation. Last and life do not collocate, instead collocates with day to give us days. Also there is a logical contradiction in the expression although it has a paradoxical undertone, how can a late father (someone who died) come again?

17. 'Ameh is a trouble shooter he quarrels a lot'. The word 'trouble shooter' means a problem solver so how a 'trouble shooter' be causing problems by quarrelling a lot? The expression has a logical contradiction.
18. 'Please tell us all what you about the matter'. The use of all in the expression is redundant since there is 'us' in every body.
19. 'You have done well, more grease to your elbow'. In this expression, the word, 'grease' is used to substitute the word 'power' which is the appropriate word in the idiom. So the Standard British English should read more power to your elbow.
20. 'The driver abandoned the car and fled into the bush for his dear life. The use of 'dear' is not necessary again, since 'his' as a determiner has been used.
21. 'You can try it your own'. They say the taste of the pudding is in the eating'. This idiomatic expression have

been modified in the Nigerian English expression by substituting 'proof with taste, In Standard British English' it should read the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

22. 'Ali has searched every nook and corner for his missing money'. The word cranny has been substituted with 'Corner' in this Nigerian English expression. In the Standard British English the idiom is every nook and cranny. In the selected expressions, some fixed phrasal verbs in British English as modified by rearranging them structurally. Such expression are presented under the heading.

23. 'It is time to go to bed please turn off the light'.

In the expression, the use of 'turn off the light is not in line with the Standard British English in which the normal structure should be 'turn the light off. And when

'turn off is used as in the expression, it means a different things altogether.

24. The pupil are expected to trek from the gate to hostel in standard British English, the verb 'to trek' is not followed by from prepositions, but such is obtainable in Nigerian English expression as in the expression as the expression above. So the expression in the Standard British version can be put this way "from the gate, the pupils are expected to trek to the hostel.

In standard British English expressions, in some cases some elements are not needed in the structure, but in Nigerian English expressions, these elements are often found being included. Such expressions are grouped under this heading.

25. The robbers shot Musa the trader on the head The inclusion of the definite article "the" in the expression is

not acceptable in Standard British English expression and this thereby differentiates it from the Nigerian version. The robbers shot Musa the trader on his head.

26. Unfortunately, the thief bolted away before the police arrived. Some Nigerian English expressions are often found a proposition attached to a verb that ordinary does not take a proposition in Standard British English. For instance, in this expression, the, addition of 'away' to bolted makes the expression uniquely Nigerian.

27. Joseph is always asking for money from his father. Just like in no 26 a propositions is seen following the verb "requesting" which does not exist in Standard British English expression. So the use of "for" in the expression renders it Nigerian English expression. While in some expressions, certain elements are added as against the Standard British English Version, in other

cases some required elements are being omitted. So such expressions that are found lacking some elements required elements when judging from British standard are grouped under this heading.

28. The principal said he will travel to lagos tomorrow. In this reporting statement, it is expected that a correlation element such as “that” should be included. For instance, the statement should have been put this way. The principal said that he would travel to Lagos tomorrow”

29. He said he had to grease the officer’s palm to get his promotion.

In this expression it is expected that there should be an inclusion of “that” and “in order” if it must anger with the linguistic principle of Standard British English. But the omission of these is elements automatically renders the expression Nigerian English expression instead of

British Standard English. The expression if added the elements will read. “he said that he has to grease the officer’s palm in order to get his promotion.

30. My father always says he that dines with devil must have a long spoon.

This expression is naturally a Nigerian proverb, but there must be an element that should join the first structure to the second one and that the element is “that” Hence, the expression will read-My father says that he that dines with the devil must have long spoon.

31. He said he would get the University admission by hook or by crook. The following elements are omitted from the expression-‘that and by’. The expression should read the way- “he said that he would get to the University admission by hook or by crook.”

In Nigerian English expression that are certain ones in which different prepositions are used and under

Standard British English these prepositions are considered inappropriate. So the use of these prepositions in Nigerian English expressions renders such expressions uniquely Nigerian. Therefore, such expressions as found within the forty selected expressions are grouped under this heading.

32. He said to my hearing that I was a bad man.

The use of the preposition 'to' in the expression has marked it Nigerian, because within the ambit of standard British English "in" would be used instead of 'to', so the expression should read- "He said in my hearing: that I was a bad man".

In this expression, the use of "into" is inappropriate for standards British English, instead, 'in' is more appropriate. So the use of 'into' has rendered the expression Nigerian English. Some expressions seem to create some grammatical contradiction, such

expressions as identified are ground under this heading.

34 Aminu is a kind man; he gave me a lift in his car this morning.

In this expression, the use of the past verb 'gave' and 'every morning' has a continuous implication seem to pose a grammatical contradiction. The expressions would have been "Aminu is a kind man, he gives me a lift in his care every morning".

Some elements are directly translated into English from Nigerian Language and then imported into English. Such expressions that contain such words are listed under this heading.

35. I prefer chicken pepper-soup to cow pepper-soup.

The word "pepper-soup" is not naturally a standard English word, it is a coined word found in the Nigerian English expressions. It means a particular type of soup

with enough pepper, and other spices which is eaten mostly in the Nigerian society.

36. During the festival, we saw a one-headed' sprint carrying a basket full of water. The word 'one-headed' does not exist in the English dictionary; so it is a direct translation used in Nigerian expression in English. It is used to describe the physical feature of the ghost or sprint seen by the reporter. Under this heading, expressions that contain certain words which do not exist in English but has noun representations, are grouped.

37. We went to Condole Ali when his father died. The verb 'condole does not exist in the English language, but rather, the noun 'condolence' to condole'. In the above expression, the speaker is trying to say that "we went to pay a visit of condolence, to Ali when his father died"

38. I have checked for the “book, but it was’ not found in the Nigerian English expression. Because in’ standard British, expression it is not accepted. Therefore, the sentence has to be re-structured’ maybe this way I have checked the self for the book, but it was not found”.

39. My wife, has taken in; we need a nanny as soon as she put to bed. The use’ of “taken in” in this sentence has a different contextual meaning different from standard British English’ context. In, this expression, it, means that the conceive of a baby, while in standard, British English it means to assimilate an idea or a teaching also the use of ‘puts to bed’ means to deliver a baby in Nigerian English countries, while in standard British English, it means to put a child in there bed. So this contextual extension makes the statement uniquely Nigerian.

40. The girls was operated. the expression is typically Nigerian English because there is the omission of the preparation 'on'.

So the omission of the preparation 'makes the statement uniquely Nigerian expression.

This section explains the number of people who in giving the correct Standard English and also the number of people with failures.

(1) Please come back tomorrow, the officer is not on seat now. This expression has ten numbers of failures and ten numbers of people who succeeded.

(2) We come to your house yesterday but we meet your absence. This expression has fourteen numbers of failures and eight numbers of people who succeeded.

(3) I wonder what the Shehu is doing in the motor-park.

This expression has sixteen people as failures and seven people as those who succeeded.

(4) Big man who ate our money has been arrested. This

expression has twelve people as failures and eight people as those who succeeded.

(5) He suffered in the evil services because he had god-

father. This expression has thirteen people as failure and seven as those who succeeded.

(6) The wedding didn't hold because the bride's parent

rejected the dowry. This expression has eighteen people as failure and two as those who succeeded.

(7) Olu's daughter and mine are tight friends. This

expression has eleven people as failures and nine people as those who succeeded.

(8). John was awarded the scholarship because he has a

long leg

This expression has thirteen people as failure and eight people

(9). Now that he has seen the hand writing on the wall, he will ask for forgiveness.

This expression has thirteen people as failure and people as those who succeed.

10). They served plenty of hot drink at the party.

This expression has six people as failures and twelve people as

11). He was rude to his senior brother

This expression has twelve as failure and nine people as those. Whose succeed.

12). He was late for lectures, because of the go-slow on the way.

This expression has twenty-four people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

13). We joined the taxi near the market place.

This expression has twenty-four people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

14). John will Put up with his uncle in Lagos.

This expression has twenty-eight people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed?

15). I decided to step down for Ali during the last local government elections. This expression has twenty-three people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

This expression has twenty-two people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

16). Ameh is a trouble-shooter he quarrels a lot.

This expression has twenty-two people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

17). Please tell us what you know about the matter.

This expression has thirty-four people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

18). You have done well, more grease to your elbow.

This expression has fifty-five people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

19). The driver abandoned the car and fled into the bush for his life.

This expression has thirty two people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

20). You can try it on your own, they say the taste of the pudding is in the eating.

This expression has fourteen people as failures and nine people as those who succeed.

21. Ali has searched every nook and corner for his missing money.

This expression has twelve people as failures and four people as those who succeed.

22). It is time to go to bed please turn off the light.

This expression has twelve people as failures and four people as those who succeed.

23). The pupils are expected to trek from the gate to the hostel.

This expression has eighteen people as failures and six people as those who succeed.

24). The robbers shot the traders on the head.

This expression has fifteen people as failures and two people as those who succeed.

25). Unfortunately, the thief bolted away before the police arrived.

This expression has sixteen people as failures and eight people as those who succeed.

26). Joseph is always asking for money from his father.

This expression has eighteen people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

27). The principal said, he will travel to Lagos tomorrow

This expression has twenty-two people as failures and fourteen people as those who succeed.

28). He said he had to grease the officer's palm to get his promotion.

This expression has twenty-four people as failures and thirteen people as those who succeed.

29). My father always says that he that dines with devil must have a long spoon.

This expression has sixteen people as failures and eight people as those who succeed.

30). He said he would get the University admission by hook or by crook.

This expression has fifty-five people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

31). He said to my hearing that he was a bad man?

This expression has fourteen people as failures and six people as those who succeed.

32). He was advised to put his request into writing.

This expression has fifteen people as failures and eight people as those who succeed.

33). Aminu is a kind man; he gave me a lift in his car.

This expression has sixteen people as failures and four people as those who succeed.

34). I prefer chicken pepper soup to cow leg pepper soup

This expression has fourteen people as failures and eight people as those who succeed.

35). During the festival, we saw a one headed sprint carrying a basket full of water.

This expression has eighteen people as failures and six people as those who succeed.

36). We went to condole Ali when his Father died.

This expression has nineteen people as failures and fourteen people as those who succeed.

37). I have checked for the book it was not found in the shelf

This expression has twenty people as failures and eight people as those who succeed.

38). My wife has taken in; we need a nanny as soon as she puts to bed.

This expression has fourteen people as failures and nine people as those who succeed.

40). The girl was operated

This expression has sixteen people as failures and twelve people as those who succeed.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter research methodology of collecting data and analyses in this present chapter data presentation and analyses will be discussed.

5.1 SUMMARY

The peculiar expressions obtained from elected Nigerian English expressions were analyzed in this study. The analysis involved' the meaning of the expressions and the level of intelligibility; showing the number of these that failed and those that succeed in the assessment.

In presenting the data tables were used. This enabled the researcher present the meaning and intelligibility assessment of the selected Nigerian English expressions.

There are four tables in all representing different sub-heading under them.

It was discovered that on the level of intelligibility assessment, the failures has the highest figure than those who succeeded.

A semantic analysis of selected Nigerian expressions in English is carried out. In carrying out the analysis, the selected expression were categorized into headings according to what linguistic principle makes them uniquely Nigerian and also different from the standard British English in categorizing the expressions, twelve headings were realized from categorizing the expression the contextual implication in a Nigerian language also identified and indicated, while their standard English was also provided.

5.2 CONCLUSION

From the analysis it can be concluded that Nigerian English sessions, differ from the Standard British English in different ways. For instance, the meaning of certain linguistic elements in Nigerian context has been proven by the result of the analysis. It has been concluded that certain linguistic elements are usually omitted from some structures and tend to make such expressions uniquely Nigerian. This therefore, shows that some so-called Nigerian expressions are just example of error of usage,

Also, it can be concluded that Nigerian English expressions are expressions that violate the Standard British English rules as been found by the analysis. That is some, expressions, certain linguistic elements are added as against the Standard British English Language rules, some in the other hand are rearranged against the conventional

structural arrangement. In some cases” some elements are substituted with another element in conventional fixed structures.

So in conclusion, the selected Nigerian English expressions are expressions that violate Standard English language grammatical and semantic rules.

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