

**THE IMPACT OF PIDGIN ENGLISH ON STUDENTS
COMPETENCE IN NIGERIA UNIVERSITY : CASE
STUDY OF 300 LEVEL STUDENTS OF MELL**

BY

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APPROVAL PAGE

This project has been fully supervised and approved by the undersigned as a partial fulfillment for the award of Bachelor of Arts English (Honors) in the Department of Modern European Languages and Linguistics, Faculty of Arts and Islamic Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my father, Alhaji Hassan Bello Mai Wurno, my entire beloved family and finally to my Niece Lubabtu (IBTEESAM) Bashir Ibrahim Gusau .

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ABSTRACT

This project is an attempt to explore the recurring grave concerning the academic performance of students. Though a large percentage of students in Nigeria learn English as a second language and are instructed in it, the Nigerian pidgin seems to interfere with their acquisition of the language and their performance in it much more than their mother tongues. The impact of pidgin contributes in no small measure to the dismal performance of students in their academic career

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a multilingual country with four hundred indigenous languages, out of which three are regarded as major ones, namely: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, representing the three major geo-political zones - North, East and South respectively. Despite this fact, Nigerian Pidgin is used in diverse degrees in different parts of the country and it has become a lingua franca for many, while it is a Creole in some Southern and Eastern States like Rivers, Lagos, Delta, Edo, and Cross Rivers. Marchese and Schnkal (1980) confirm this after a major evolution in the Delta area of Nigeria, they say; "... in a particular part of Nigeria, the areas around Warri and Sapele, Nigerian pidgin is more of a Creole. Creole is a mixture of an European language with a local language and is spoken as a first language.

Some view it as a variety of English, while others see it as a distinct language. A look at the structure of Nigerian pidgin (NP) portrays that it

has structures and patterns of behaviour of its own. Though at its initial stage, NP was considered the language of those who could not speak good English, but many know better now. It is therefore, no wonder that it is not only used by undergraduates in Nigerian universities during conversation with the uneducated public, but it has become a fascinating medium of casual exchange among students themselves. Fisherman (1997) asserts that; "no language considered inferior is aptly logical". This is because where two or more speech communities come in contact, a lingua franca or common language of communication emerges. He further points out that it is the social situation use popularly known as context that affects the morpho-syntactic pattern of a language. Since pidginisation, according to Hymes (1971:84), is a "complex process of Sociolinguistics", we shall now consider the use of Nigerian Pidgin English among students of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The term pidgin is used to refer to a language which develops in a situation where speakers of different languages have a need to communicate but do not share a common language. Once a pidgin has emerged, it is generally learned as a second language and used for communication among people who speak different languages.

Language is the most creative and unlimited instrument for social communication and it helps us to understand the deep seated social relevance, culture involvement and the human relatedness of language. Having said this, we can therefore agree that pidgin is a language of its own and not just a supplementary tongue as some people see it, since it serves as an unlimited instrument of social communication especially in a multilingual society like Nigeria.

Linton (1982) states that "the culture of a society is the way of life of its members, the collection of ideas and habits which they learn, share and transmit from generation to generation". These cultures, ideas and habits

can only be transmitted from generation to generation through language. In Linguistics, every language is considered adequate to represent the communicative needs of its people as such should not be made to suffer any biases.

This cannot be said of Nigerian Pidgin - even though it is a language because various attempts have been made by different factions to eradicate the use of Nigerian Pidgin English. These attempts have however been unsuccessful because of the significant value the language has to its users. It is a language that has brought people together in spite of their differences in ancestral culture and language by creating a local culture for itself which blends ideas from different cultures.

Moreover, this use of Pidgin as a lingua Franca affects many Nigerians in academic careers, especially, those students that come from the environments where it is spoken.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is very pertinent to note that what actually started as an "emergency language" between the white merchants, to ease communication with the natives has now become "an elitist campus language" spoken among the teeming population of the Nigerian students in higher institutions of learning, thereby overlapping the standard English to such an extent that the students' competence is impaired.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This Study is important because its results can go a long way in finding out the causes of students' competence. This work will in no doubt contribute to one's knowledge, especially in the Department of English, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto as it will highlight some issues in relation to written English. It will be a guide for the effective educational system.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research is carried out to examine the effect of Pidgin English on students' competence. It is a fact that students deviate from the norms of codified English in most of their essays and communications.

The following are the set of objectives to be achieved

- a. To show the impact of Nigerian Pidgin in a University Community; using 300level students of MELL
- b. To assess the extent of its popularity and the communicative situation within which it is used.
- c. To show who uses Pidgin and for what purpose?

1.5 JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE STUDY

Prior to this time, a lot of works and research have been done on NP as a language of wider communication in Nigeria. However, its impact on the students is worth investigating. This work will attempt to reveal the

fact that the Nigerian pidgin which was initially used as a medium of communication by particular group of people and for specific purpose has gradually come to be used in institutions of higher learning

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research work will attempt to investigate the impact of Pidgin English on the University community, though it focuses on the Students of UDU, Sokoto (300level MELL) with a view to providing detailed information on the impact of NP on the performance of the students.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is the most densely populated country in West Africa and one of the most multilingual having approximately 400 indigenous languages (Todd, 1984). Today this figure is highly questionable as recent development of minority languages has increased this figure to possibly estimated 500. As in other parts of West Africa, there are no statistics for the number of people who speak pidgin English but as the population is a young one and as more become urbanized, Todd (1984) projects at least 5 million users of pidgin English in Nigeria. With the growth of Nigeria's population and rapid urbanization one can project a much higher figure.

Nigerian Pidgin (NP) is widely used in certain states where minority languages abound and no particular language is deemed as the major language. State

creation however, gave rise to the status of the various local minority languages in such states. Such states where NP is viewed as a-language in its own right by virtue of constant usage and growth include the South-South geo-political states of Edo, Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa and Cross River and to a lesser extent Akwa-lbom. Akwa-lbom is a fairly homogenous state and so, strictly speaking does not fall under this category. A pidgin is a communication system that develops among people who do not share a common language. Linguists claim that a language is an arbitrary set of signs by which members of a speech community communicate and cooperate (Fromkin and Rodman, 1989). Pidgins are auxiliary languages which can be characterized as either restricted or extended. An extended pidgin is one which although, it may not become a Mother Tongue (MT/L.1) but proves virtually important in a multilingual nation like Nigeria where pidgin is used beyond the original limited functions.

The Nigerian Pidgin (NP):

It is a Known fact that pidginthe world over, developed from contact situations,especially where the groups in contact have no common means of communication. Todd (1984) defines pidgin as a marginal language that arises to fulfill certain restricted communication needs among people who have no common language. In other words, when a language is used as a means of contact or communication between persons having no other language in common and when this particular language is native to none of the people using it, it is called a pidgin. Todd (1984) says that a pidgin is a common language that has a fixed word order and is syntactically simpler than any other mother tongue variety of English. The Nigerian pidgin is particularly influenced not just by English but by local languages too. Egbokhare (2001) observes that NP thrives in a linguistically heterogeneous environment like Nigeria with a total of about 436 indigenous languages. In the same vein, Bamgbose (1991) accepts the wide use of NP as a means of communication in Nigeria.

The Nigerian Pidgin (NP) is a language of wider communication in the face of the multiplicity of languages in the country. Pidgin has no standard grammar or model; no noun-verb agreement endings. NP is therefore not standardized as it varies in depth and usage from region to region (Ugot, 2009). However, Abdullahi notes that using the word pidgin to describe the speech pattern or its written version commonly referred to as broken English in days gone by or stylishly named rotten English by Ken Saro-Wiwa in his novel, *sozaboy* is no longer fashionable nor accurate. The structure of the NP includes an absence of grammatical categories like gender, case, person, number, mood and voice. There are no inflections for plural possessive or derivational types. Pronouns often precede nouns.

Code-switching and code-mixing are inherent in Nigeria's multilingual society. The NP is one of the languages used commonly in code-mixing and code-switching in particular because it is often used in situational code-switching where the situation demands a change in language to accommodate a third party who may not be fluent in the language used by the original speaker.

Todd(1984) also observes that pidgin Englishes are simpler than Standard English (SE) in that they are more systematic and thus easier to learn. They have jettisoned morphological and syntactic irregularities but they have not sacrificed the ability to communicate precisely and unambiguously the linguistic needs of their speakers. It is to be noted that because pidgin and by extension the NP is acquired as an auxiliary language, it does not need to fill as many roles as a unique mother tongue. In addition, it is perfectly adequate to the linguistic roles in which it is used and can be expanded as the communicative needs of its users increase. Thirdly, although, a pidgin's vocabulary is less extensive than that of SE, it can convey similar types of information with fewer words often expressing abstractions by means of metaphorical extensions of basic vocabulary items like belly, eye and hand.

2.1 THE EVOLUTION OF PIDGIN AS A FORM OF LANGUAGE

The linguistic status as well as social acceptability of pidgin as a form of language has changed dramatically over the century. A language-form once held as *bastardized* (Holm 2000), and for that reason unacceptable,

disapproved, and shunned in so many spheres of society, would appear to have eventually shed its dark cloak and emerged as a people's linguistic sweetheart. This state of affairs finds corroboration in the preponderance of research that has suffused the academic terrain on Pidgin (both in Nigerian and other similar contexts). For example, Holm (2000), *An Introduction to Pidgins and Creoles*, attempts a comprehensive evaluation of important aspects of Pidgin and Creole languages, ranging from the relationship over time between the languages, on the one hand, and linguistics (the branch of learning whose object ought to be the study of languages from an analytical, empirical and scientific point of view), to such other fundamental aspects of the language as the intricacies of terminology and the development of theory. This remarkable interest attests to the new found friendship between linguistics and pidgin languages. Globally, several social or socio-cultural factors have also culminated in the proliferation of varieties of pidgin and Creole languages in the wider world. Consequently, other linguistic aspects of the pervasive pidgin

phenomenon such as Lexicosemantics, Phonology and Syntax are now flourishing.

Holm (Ibid; 1) therefore, remarks that "what earlier generations thought of pidgin and Creole languages is all too clear from their very names: *broken English, bastard Portuguese, nigger French, kumbuuistaaltje* ('cookhouse lingo'), *isikulu* ('coolie language')", and so on. He further acknowledges that the seeming "contempt" towards pidgins, initially, "often stemmed in part from the feeling that pidgins and Creoles were corruptions of 'higher', usually European languages, and in part from attitudes towards the speakers of such languages who were often perceived as semi-savages whose partial acquisition of civilized habits was somehow an affront". To corroborate the logic of Holm in the forgoing discussion as regards the initial attitudes towards pidgin and creole languages, the following excerpt from Aleksandra (2009; 1) is available:

The study of pidgin and creole phenomena has long been neglected in linguistics. The study attracted interest in the late 1960s. Previously

they were referred to as "marginal languages" (Reinecke1938: 107). The discussed languages were considered for a very long time to be slave talk [di Patwa or patois] (Patrick 1995: 227), uneducated languages, and "were to be avoided".

2.2 THE PLACE OF PIDGIN IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN SOCIETY

It is important to acknowledge the fact that Holm does not stand alone in the initial crusade for (the recognition of) pidgin languages alongside other major types of languages, and specifically as encountered in Nigeria, i.e. Nigerian Pidgin. A good deal of linguists and research works fall within this trend-setting category. In the Nigerian context and, as the 21st century unfolds, the second part of its opening decade has witnessed an even larger influx of research on the subject-matter, including works such as Ihemere (2006) *A Basic Description and Analytic Treatment of Noun Clauses in Nigerian Pidgin*; Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2010) *The Sociolinguistics of Nigerian Pidgin English in Selected University*

Campuses in Nigeria; Iwuchukwu&Okafor (201 1) Nigerian Pidgin in the 21st Century: Any Hope of Surviving the Opposition from English, Nigerian Languages and Foreign Languages?'; Active (2012) Cultural Influences as Inputs of Development of Nigerian Pidgin; (Mozzoli 2012).

A closer look at the existing literature on Nigerian Pidgin as highlighted above would however reveal two major pre-occupational trends (among the different scholars): the first is the effort to emphasize or articulate the importance of pidgin (concurrent with which is the advocacy for its upgrading as recognized lingua franca among Nigeria's multiplex ethnicities; and the second is the daring attempt to regularize its form and structure by subjecting it to rigorous linguistic analysis.

To illustrate the first research trend above, Abdullahi-Idiagbon(2010) expresses the view that "over the years, Nigerian Pidgin has expanded, stabilized and probably creolized". In his reasoned opinion, this is probably due to the fact that, at times, "linguistic resources like

borrowing and coinage are resorted to in order to cope with day-to-day emerging functions and concepts". For example, the word *solo* (a coinage used to mean 'calm down') was cited to illustrate that such words (and there are many similar others) "are introduced by Nigerian youths on campuses as well as by hoodlums in the society to swell-up the lexical register of pidgin typologies".

Idiagbon (Ibid) therefore highlights the common functions of Pidgin expressions to include the following, that it is used: (i) to herald musical concert of interest within or outside [the] campuses, (ii) to womanize or talk about ladies or ladies discussing their male friends, (iii) to express basic domestic needs like eating and clothing, and (iv) for interpersonal/private discussion.

Furthermore, Ajibade, Awopetu&Adeyemi (2012) examine Nigerian youth's perception in relation to Nigerian Pidgin. The major question they sought to answer was: what do Nigerian youths think or make of pidgin as a linguistic choice available to them in their everyday language-based

interrelationship. "To accomplish this", in their own words, "the study investigated the influence of tribe, institution, age, location sex and social status on the youths' perceptions of pidgin ... as a unifying factor, and its consideration as a recognized official language in the Nigerian language policy".

It must be stated from the outset that in a bid to examine the position occupied by pidgin (Nig.P) among students of UDUS, this study finds it expedient to attempt some illustrative comparisons involving other languages available to the students, such as English (the current language of instruction) and other Nigerian local languages (mother-tongues). However, considerations other than those aimed at investigating the level of importance or significance, or the degree of necessity attributed to the language, i.e. Nig.P., by the students, was deemed to have gone outside of the scope of this study. The emphasis is on the pragmatic and objective measure of *need* or *requirement* associated with the language among the students, and not on their subjective or value-laden attitudes towards it. In other words, a distinction, for the purpose of this study, has

been made between the question 'do the students feel, have and demonstrate a significant need for Nigerian Pidgin?' and 'do the students feel strongly, enthusiastic or passionate about it?' The logic here is that, a second language learner of French (or even English) may feel strongly about the language but not have any real practical needs for it, and so not actively engaged in the everyday use of it, in which case the language would take an inferior place in relation to other languages spoken by that person. It was based on this logic that considerations of the place of Nigerian Pidgin among the students was basically held or taken to constitute the major scope of this study. It is hoped that the findings from this study will, to a large extent, tally with findings from other universities and tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Therefore, most scholars (Jowitt, 1991; Faraclas, 1996; Egbokhare, 2003 & Igboanusi, 2008), agree that Pidgin is not just some 'distorted' or 'bastardized' form of language, as some would think, and which perhaps makes them refer to it as *Broken*, but that *Pidgin* is a complete language in its own right. Therefore, the term *Pidgin* in its abstract sense refers to a

linguistic concept, not to be seen as a variety of any language until one begins to talk of the linguistic components *of Pidgin* in one particular context, i.e. in terms of the languages from which it has been formed, or in terms of what Holm (2000) and others refer to as its *substrate* and *superstate* languages.

According to Mensah (2011), some of the explanations put forward in support of *Pidgin English* as being a sort of distortion of standard English, is that discourse-pragmatics is an imperative factor in understanding both the lexical and structural borrowings that characterize usages in Pidgin English, and that Nigerian Pidgin on the other hand is replete with adequate descriptive, prescriptive and grammatical forms. According to Iwuchukwu and Okafor (2012), Nigeria's multi lingual background provides a veritable ground for the emergence of Nigerian pidgin as a formidable national language. But yet Nigerian Pidgin remains a marginal language.

Another level at which Nigerian Pidgin registers its way is the Nigerian music scene, particularly with the emerging Naija pop culture. Here,

Fasan (2010) notes that Nigerian Pidgin is a predominant language of expression and a form of solidarity or mark of identity among the various multi-ethnic groups of young people who crave to create effective urban culture in their respective locations. It is also acknowledged as a formidable stride in the recreation of Nigerian and African socio-cultural identity. This level of prominence carries over into the religious terrain in Nigeria, especially in Christian Pentecostal circles, characterizing most urban centers, as well as into the Nigerian film-making industry where the language enjoys unrestricted use, mirroring the way of life of Nigerian people.

The foregoing serves to highlight the perceived and observable place of Nigerian pidgin in contemporary Nigerian society. The implication of this is that if enough research work that is commensurate with the rapid rate of growth and influence associated with the language is carried out, Nigerian Pidgin may well receive more audience from the government and secure a better place in Nigeria's language policy in the nearest future.

2.3 FEATURES OF NP

The tables below illustrate some salient features of contemporary Nigerian Pidgin. Specifically, it identifies some superstrate and substrate influences on Nigerian Pidgin, as well as instances of reduplication, compounding and clipping in Nigerian Pidgin.

Table 1: Superstrate & Substrate Influence on NP

Lexical source	NP Lexical Item	NP Meaning
English	Pale	pal/friend
	veks	vex
Portuguese	Palavapikin	problem/trouble
	dash	childgift know flirt

Table 2: Reduplication in Nigerian Pidgin

Nig.P Reduplication	English base
---------------------	--------------

small small	'gently'
weluwelu	'very well'
kulukulu	'calmly'
sharp sharp	'fastly'
kwikkwik	'urgently'
magomago	'deceitful'
wuruwuru	'unfaithful/deceitful'
Jagajaga	'confusable'

Table 3; Compounding in Nigerian Pidgin

Nig.P Compound Words	Semantic Equivalent in English
long throat	'glutton'
bad belle	'jealousy/envy'
busy-body	'loquaciousness'
strong head	'stubbornness'
God pikin	'Christian'
house boy	'male servant'
baby girl/boy	'girl/boy friend'
country people	'the masses'
basket mouth	'a talkative'
woman wrapper	'weakling (a man)'

coconut head	'dunce'
pure water	'cheap/mass produced goods'
I get mouth	'boast'
make eye	'wink'
hear word	listen'
tear race	'run'
fear face	'respect'

Table 4; Clipping in Nigerian English

Clipped Words in Nigerian Pidgin	Semantic Equivalent in English
Pamy	'palm wine!
Demo	'show off or use style on someone'
Caf	'cafeteria'
Naija	'Nigeria'
Acada	'academic'
Momo	'(early) morning'
Bros	'brother' —

2.4 THE STATUS OF NP

No official status has been granted to Nigerian Pidgin English in Nigeria, although some Nigerians have suggested that it would be a good candidate for national language status, since it retains the above mentioned characteristics of solidarity and neutrality. However, Nigerian pidgin English is not sufficiently well developed to fulfill all the duties of a national language. There is no standard orthography, little or no written use, and above all active movement favoring its development and propagation. One of the obstacles to standardization is the perception of Nigerian Pidgin English as a variety of English, rather than a separate language. Nigerians often refer to Nigerian Pidgin as broken English. Essien (2003) proposes a new language policy for Nigeria which includes a translation of a foreign language for international communication into actual Nigerian languages and allocation of functions. The NP is one of these proposed languages and its introduction is to be done in phases. NP is a language accepted and recognized by Nigerians at all levels of education and class as a language that is effective for communication (Bamgbose, 1991;

Elugbeand Omamor, 1991; Jibril, 1995; Okon, 1997; Essien, 1998; Egbokhare, 2001). As Egbokhare (2001) states, Pidgin thrives in a linguistically heterogeneous environment where contact is marginal.

It is a language spoken by both the elite and the masses in Nigeria. In a study, Oken effectively proves the usefulness of NP in Cross river state in particular where it was established that both male and female population in the state use NP in communication. NP is used in the state in disseminating information on health, economic, political and cultural issues through the media. NP is also used in broadcasting the news and is very versatile in advertisements. The repeated call by Okon (1997) for the use of NP as a national language buttresses Essien's (1990a, b) recommendation for the introduction of the NP with specific roles and functions assigned to it. Furthermore, he proposed new language policies which include the gradual implementation of the NP as a national language.

The use of the NP has an extensive scope, for as Jibril (1995) observes, the functions of NP have become more all-inclusive. Furthermore, he says news

broadcasts, current affairs, discussions, programmes and news bulletins are some of the programmes that tend to favour NP.... as the language of the masses in certain states such as Rivers, Delta and Cross river etc. Gani-lkhilamai(1990) recognizes the fact that NP has become so wide spread in Nigeria that it is practically the mother tongue or Lingua Franca of some Nigerians notably in the South-South geopolitical zone. It has become creolized and could be used orally as a medium of instruction in the initial years of primary school if education is to be meaningful to our pidgin speaking children. Okon (1997) joins a growing number of linguists who have called for growth on NP in order to assign specific roles and functions to it which in the long run would introduce a new language policy for the gradual implementation of the NP as a national language.

At a conference of language scholars at the Institute Francais de Recherche enAfrique (IFRA) held at the University of Ibadan in 2009, Abdullahi observes that scholars rose with the firm resolution that the NP is presently well developed enough in terms of widespread usage identifiable orthography and communication propensity to shed the derogatory connotation of the term

pidgin and wear a new respectable toga known as Naijalangwej with a new standard orthography as written by NaijaLangwejAkedemi (NLA).

2.5 REDUPLICATION IN NIGERIAN PIDGIN

Reduplication is a process by which a category or constituent of a sentence can be doubled (Essien, 1990b). Crystal (2003) describes reduplication as a process of repetition whereby the form of a prefix/suffix reflects certain phonological characteristics of the root. Crystal (2003) again observes that reduplication is a morphological process whereby a process of repetition occurs. The NP exhibits several word formulation processes including borrowing, coinage or neologism and blending reduplication. Borrowing is done through loan words or loan translations, a loan word being a recipient language has lifted from a foreign language to mean the same object and practices to which it originally referred in the donor language. Nigeria is a multilingual country whose history of borrowing pre-dates her independence (Olaoye, 2007). Contact with the outside world during the Trans Saharan trade in the Moores, the slave trade era and more recently

the contact with the West have had a far reaching linguistic impact on Nigerian languages and by extension Nigeria pidgin. We shall look at word formation processes for reduplication expression for prolonged activity, adjectives, intensification and emphasis, duplicity, plurality, nominalization, onomatopoeic expressions and even nick-naming. Pidgin speakers enlarge the functional power of a limited vocabulary through the use of reduplicated forms. Reduplication occurs in many languages including English:

Goody-goody, never-never, so-so, fifty-fifty

In NP, reduplication is a borrowed form from the mother tongue or L1 of the speakers as it is a common phenomenon in many Nigerian Languages. Olaoye (2007) says that when a foreign word is borrowed into another language it may or may not retain its original pronunciation. Most speakers will pronounce the borrowed word according to the sound system of their own language particularly if the phonemic sounds of the borrowed language do not exist in the borrowing language. Essien observes that

reduplication of nouns and adjectives can be used to perform adverbial functions. In the case of verbs, Essien (1990a) explains that reduplication leads to the modification of the root phonologically in one way or another with the CVC roots.

In Leggbo, an Upper Cross language, Udoh (2004) notes that reduplication is a very productive morphological process. All word classes are prone to reduplication with both total and partial reduplication. ; Total reduplication is used to mark grammatical categories such as plurality:

Lettolggweneggwene-white heads

In Agwagune, another Upper Cross language in Cross river language, reduplication is common in short negative sentences in the imperative (Udoh, 2003):

- Wa-go
- Gewawa-do not go

In Efik, a Lower Cross Language in Cross River state, Mensah (2004) observes the formation of adverbs from nouns by reduplication:

- Itiat-stone
- Itiatitiat-stony

Pidgin speakers enlarge the functional power of a limited vocabulary through the use of reduplicated forms. Reduplication in NP is used to express different grammatical and lexical functions

- Luk-look
- Lukluk-stare
- Lukuluku-someone who stares or gapes

There is a long list of such adjectives.

Sik	Sick
Sikisiki	Someone who is always sickly
Play	Play
Playplaye	someone who is very playful
Pis	Urinate
Pispis	someone who wets the bed frequently

Talk	Talk
Talk Talk	Prolonged Chatter
Lai	Lei
Lai Lai	Someone who tells a lot of lies

Reduplication intensifies or modifies the meaning of a simple form:

Fain Pikin	Lovely Child
Fain fainpikin	A really lovely child
Ben	Bend
Ben Ben	Crooked
Na So	That's how
Now	Now

Now Now

Immediately

Chook

Pierce

Chookuchooku

Thorns

Reduplication can be used to imply a repeated or protracted action:

- Di pikin de krai-The child is crying
- Di pikin de sosokraikrai-The child is always crying

Reduplication can be used to express the equivalent of one by one and one each:

Di people bin entawanwan-The people entered one by one /Gif dem tutu-Give them two each, Reduplication as a devise is systematically exploited for emphasis through derivational morphemes:

E fain

It is lovely

E fain well well

It is very lovely

E big

It is Big

E big well well

It is very big

E skata

It is scattered

E skataskata

It is very scattered

Come today today

come today

Reduplication can be used to indicate plurality:

- Na so so stone stone full di bucket -only stones are in the bucket, Na so sokapetkapetdey-it is only carpets everywhere
-

Reduplication is used to suggest duplicity:

Holiholi	Sanctimonious
Ton ton	Make excuses
Kona kona	Trickily

Reduplication is used to express adverbs:

Nyafunyafu	Plenty
Magumagu	Trickily
Wuruwuru	Dubious
Kpatakpata	Completely
Watawata	Watery
Sam sam	Completely
Kia kia	Quickly
Sofrisofri	Easy
Wan day wan day	Soon
Today today	Immediately

Reduplication is also common in adjectival formations:

Jagajaga

Scattered

Shine shine

Smart

Shine shinebobo

A smart looking man

Korokoro

Plain

Korokoro eye

Naked eye

Suffasuffa

hardship

Suffasuffa person

Someone going through hard times

Reduplication is also used on creating abstract nouns:

Sabisabi Omniscience (All-knowing)

Reduplication in NP can also be found in onomatopoeic expression:

Gbamgbam	Heavy sound
Kong kong	Tin
KringKring	Doorbell
Yoriyori	Soft heartbit
Piompiom	Whistle

Pioneer writers in Nigerian pidgin include Aiglmoukhuede's *Pidgin Stew and sufferhead in 1982*, Ken Saro-Wiwa's long pidgin poem *Dis Nigeria self* in his collection *songs in a time of war* in 1985, MammanJiyaVatsa's *Tori for Geti Bowleg*, EzenwaOhaeto's *I wanbi president* in 1998 and *If to say I be sojain* 1998. In Onwundijo's *De wahala for Wazobia* in 2007 the writer makes extensive use of reduplicative expressions in his pidgin poems. For Instance:

In everything get k-leg for wazobia, we have.

..... Both papa and mama and picindem

De kill killdem

Up and down de lake

No look back

Where kili kill denotes plurality killing Again in I find dem reach Baga.

..... Water de dry de go, de dry de go.....

Water is described as drying up with the NP expressing continuous prolonged activity.

In I go de sing my song for pidgin

..... Wey been dey like sand sand for dis water

In Quota system don break my jaws

..... Dem get plenty plenty doctor

A case of intensification many

2.6 CONCLUSION

The NP is a versatile language that meets the demand for a growing number of Nigerians who need to communicate. The morphological process of reduplication has been found to be one of full reduplication which has been very useful in this endeavour as it enlarges and enriches the vocabulary and verbal categories of the language. The NP is a language of necessity in a multilingual and pluralistic society such as Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights various methods used to collect the data in the course of this study. It includes population sampling, the data sources and instrument.

3.1 POPULATION SAMPLING

The research takes its sample from students of 300 Level in their casual conversation within the school premises and hostel. A population of one thirty students of three hundred levels was selected through the simple random sampling technique, by which one student out of every three was interviewed. A total of thirty students were interviewed on the same subject matter.

3.2 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

In the course of this research work, the formal interview and observation of the students' discourse were employed. Attempt is made to present the

data and analyse the data presented. The data is presented on the impact of pidgin English on students competence. The analysis is in such a way to enable the researcher to get a comprehensive result.

3.3 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

In this research, a qualitative method is employed to the analyses of the data. The descriptive analysis of the work is given. The data obtained by the observation method is analysed, interpreted and summarised. It is analyzed by appraising the influence of Nigerian pidgin (NP) which is identified in the written English language of the respondents and discussed. The responses that are gathered from the respondents are presented in the next chapter

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, attempt has been made to show various steps in which the data will be collected and analysed. Also the use of observation and interview is employed.

- Listening to how the students use pidgin among same class.

- Inter-ethnic discourse among the students
- Students response to some relevant question in Pidgin

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to explain how the students use pidgin in their academic discourse, classroom and casual discussion among them, looking into its impact in their phonology, lexical and syntactic peculiarities. At the end of the analysis, logical deductions and conclusions were made to the research problems stated earlier, while appropriate recommendations were given.

4.2.1 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The analysis is divided into two parts, academic discussion and students academic writing

ACADEMIC DISCUSSION

The students discussion is viewed in three ways:

- a. In the class room when the lecture is taking place

b. Interview in formal setting

c. When meeting their lecturers for complain and relevant formal setting.

Consider the following discussion between the lecturer and the students.

1) Lecturer : where is the class rep

Student : He just comot for our script

2) Class rep: Passing information to the class members, listen class, the lecturer order for typing the assignment because some student writing no well.

INTERVIEW IN FORMAL SETTING

Campus press Interviewwith the students on thewellbeing of the school

Press: Weldon

Students: Weldon bros

Press: Please, I want to ask you some questions if you wouldn't mind

Students: Go ahead

1a. Can you tell me any problem you are facing now in the University.

b. O boy problems plenty woo...

2a: So how do you think we can bring an end to these problems?

b. Hmm! Brother na only God go see us woo

3a. You mean we can't do anything?

b. Na so woo

4a: These issues of dress code, can you say anything about them?

b. As you can see, Danfodiyo no allow female students to dress indecents, if dey catch you, the security go carri you directly to the Vc Complex .

5a. Thank you very much for your cooperation

b. A! Da one no bi anytinnau

Another interview held with two students

a. May I know you please?

b. I bi Aliyu Abubakar

a. Please where do you come from?

b. Na Gombe man I bi

a. Can you tell me briefly about your educational background?

b. Okay, actually I started primary school in 1996, finish around that kind 2002, joined secondary school and finished 2009. Started my University in 2007 and I still bi student now.

a. So can you tell me why you choose to do your University here in Sokoto?

b. Na for here I get admission so I decided to come here and study

4.2 The impact of pidgin in the students' Spoken and written English. From the phonology, lexical choice and syntactic formation below are sample of the impacts in the students' performance:

OBSERVATION OF THE STUDENTS' DISCOURSE

1. People no deythere. (English version: People were not there/ There were no peoplethere)
2. A no enjoy the place. (English version: I did not enjoy the place.)

Similar Nigerian pidgin expressions include the following:

- a. A no de. (English version: I am not available or I was not around)
- b. A no want. (English version: I do not want)
- c. I no Kom dia. (English version: He did not show up there)

In Nigerian pidgin the lexical item 'no' is used as a negation. It is the equivalent of 'not' in English.

The word 'dia' in Nigerian pidgin is a homophone of the English place adverb 'there' and the determiner 'their'.

The respondent reveals his confusion by substituting 'their'(dia) for 'there'.

The respondent is also confused by the homophones as reflected in the misspelt word. Moreover, the lexical item of Nigerian pidgin 'de' sounds like the English word 'they'. 'De' (Nigerian pidgin) influences the pronunciation of the word 'they' of (English Language) and so are considered homophones.

The respondent reveals his confusion by writing the third person (personal) plural pronoun 'they' as the Nigerian pidgin word 'de'.

Furthermore, the structure of: 'People no dey there' and 'I no enjoy the place' portray the syntactic structure of Nigerian pidgin which avoids the use of verbs.

The Pidgin avoids grammatical complexity and so it makes less use of verbs. The syntactic structure of the sentences above is that of Nigerian pidgin.

These respondents have subconsciously written Nigerian pidgin in English language examination.

Samples of lexical selection errors that are discovered in the respondents' written

English include:

1. '... after 2 hours nothing will enter the brain again.' (English version: '... after two hours of study the brain will not assimilate anymore.')

The word 'enter', though English is used to mean assimilate and 'again', which also is English, is used to mean *any more*. In Nigerian pidgin, the following are examples of the use of 'enter':

Di moni don entamai hand (The money is in my hand or possession).

Di bolenta di net (The ball touched the net).

In these examples, 'enta' (enter) means 'in' and 'touched' whereas in the data, it means 'assimilate'.

2. '... that go distop you...' (English version:
'... that will disturb you...' Nigerian
pidgin version: dat go distob you...')

In this relative clause, the word 'go' is an English verb, which Nigerian pidgin has borrowed. In Nigerian pidgin, 'go' is used as an auxiliary verb. It does not function as a verb.

Examples of the use of 'go' in Nigerian pidgin include:

Wi no go gree (We will not agree). I go gree
(He will agree). A tell am a go chop laif (I
told him that I will enjoy life).

The errors identified above are errors of subconscious linguistic interference. The respondents assume that the structures of Nigerian pidgin

are one and the same as that of English language. Also, the semantics of Nigerian pidgin lexical items are expressed as English.

These respondents and some other candidates who express and write Nigerian pidgin in English language examinations have very little chances of scoring any appreciable mark that is enough to earn them a credit pass in English language examinations.

ANOTHER OBSERVATION OF STUDENTS' DISCOURSE

Interaction between three students on issues of Nigeria politics.

a. The issue of these ministers, you need to see what is happening in the senate.

b. What is happening

a. Ah u no go even imagine say, dey say Rotimi Amechi, the senate no wan approve an

C. wetin go happen bidat?

a. Mi I no no woo the thing surprise me self

b. But what I heard yesterday was that, dey say Amechi will be screened tomorrow.

a. That is the issue, but for now e bi like say those guys eh..... the petitions weydey write gainstAmechidey think dey bring wahala.

b. Na wawo, me wetin I see for TV yesterday nawahala woo, deywer saying dey will drop Amechi.....

a. But do you know the recent things, the president of the Senate even him, dey fear woo because of hin issue, he has pending issue. So me , I want dem approve Amechi because he bi good person,so we need him very very well.

b. I think government has to sit down and look into all these issues, and commot with good decisions.

a. But the thing bi say we pray Buhari will do something beta, but the country don day well spoil, dey con just put load for the guy.

b. MiI no fit carry dat position. I swear, the guy dey suffer.

c. No bi small small woo.....

The effect of pidgin English in both written and spoken English as the analysis portrays. In written English, the use of pidgin as a lingua franca leads many students to use inappropriate words and shifting of meaning, including coinaging in Nigerian languages. These words cannot be defined by students as whether they are in dictionary or not, whether the words carry the meaning they denote to them or not.

In the second part of the analysis, it is indicated that too much use of pidgin English among educated Nigerians affects their use of standard English in communicative competence because based on the interview conducted with them, hardly could educated Nigerian use purely standard English without the influence of the Nigerian pidgin in collocation coinage, shift and extension of meaning of words. This is saying Nigerian pidgin English affects teaching and learning of correct English in greater extend.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

It is observed that many of the students do not understand that English language is distinctly different from Nigerian pidgin. They do not know that the grammar and vocabulary of the pidgin are foreign and unacceptable to English. This set of students are fooled by the English language vocabulary they use in Nigerian pidgin to assume that the two languages are the same.

Solomon (2007:82) reports that this ignorance makes students to loan Nigerian pidgin vocabulary to the language. As a result of the ignorance, many students impose the grammatical structure of the former on the latter in their written English. These have grave effects on their performance in English language examinations.

As seen from the data above, Nigerian pidgin is a formidable and unassailable indigenous language in Nigeria. The co-existence of English language and the pidgin is an educational problem in Nigeria. The negative impact of the co-existence of the two languages exerts some

considerable negative effects on the effective learning of English. The ignorance of some students about the distinct features of the two languages has a grave implication on the learning of English language in the country.

Implication to Research and Practice

The school curriculum would have to be adjusted to accommodate Nigerian pidgin. Students need to be aware, right from upper primary school through to the end of junior secondary school, that Nigerian pidgin is different from English language. The differences should be taught alongside their negative effects when Nigerian pidgin interferes with English. This campaign should be sustained for the period suggested above so as to afford the students' sufficient time to learn how to handle the languages independent of each other. Teachers in primary schools as well as English language teachers in secondary schools need to acquire the requisite knowledge of Nigerian pidgin and its negative effect whenever it interferes with English language. The teachers will then be able to teach students as suggested above. Policy makers in Nigeria need no longer disdain or ignore Nigerian pidgin. Doing

the contrary is a disservice to the educational progress of the teeming population of the future leaders of the country.

Nigerian pidgin is a national linguistic force to reckon with in Nigeria. A well-articulated programme is of necessity, which needs to be developed. This will enable students and other users of the language to be conversant with the orthography and vocabulary of the language. It is envisaged that this will drastically minimise the interference of Nigerian pidgin with the English that students are taught in schools.

CONCLUSION

This project hopes that these measures will contribute to revamping the unsatisfactory poor performance of students in English language, which is vital to both their success and progress in formal education. The government, parents and teachers will achieve greater value from their investments, in both human and material resources, expended on education when the teeming population of students passes the all important English language examination. Teachers of English need to be equipped with

necessary provisions to enable students overcome the pressures of their massive exposure to Nigerian pidgin in the society. This call for a reappraisal of the teaching of English language is expected to enhance better returns on teachers' efforts.

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