

A Sociostylistic Account of Semantic Creativity in Nigerian English

*Esther Robert**

Abstract

This article examines the semantic features of Nigerian English (NE). It is based on and guided by Edgar Schneider's dynamic model, Weinreich, and the idea of nativization introduced by Braji Kachru. A qualitative method was adopted in the collection and analysis of the data. The data were drawn from wide-ranging sources such as Nigerian literary works, Nigerian newspapers, social interactions and political rallies. The analysis indicates that the variety of English spoken in Nigeria addresses the sociocultural realities of the country, distinguishing this variety from other world English varieties. Semantic analyses revealed aspects such as semantic extension/semantic shift and coinages. The implication of semantic lexicalisation is that an existing word loses its denotative meaning and becomes only meaningful in relation to its context of use. Most coinages in Nigerian English present themselves in different morphological shapes. Some are compound words put together to express the speaker's concepts. However, such compound words are very descriptive and transitional in nature. Examples of these include: Go-slow, Doctor-do-good, long-legs, legedez-benz and others functioning as slang, metaphors and euphemisms.

Keywords: *Nigerian English, semantic extension/shift, coinages, lexicalisation*

Introduction

The English language has had a long history in West Africa since the early part of 16th century as a result of the initial contact between the British, the French and the people of West Africa. When the colonialists came to West Africa, communication was a serious problem that actually crippled their engagement with the indigenous peoples, and so their trading and missionary activities were hindered. Centuries after, that early contact led to the contemporary trends of English in most West African countries: Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Cameroon. Boadi (1994), cited in Adika (2012), calls the kind of English used in those early years 'Mercantile English', which refers to the type of English that bears the characteristics of mercantilism.

*Lecturer, Department of English, University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, E-mail: estherrobert2@yahoo.com

Again, it is observed that the English language in West Africa has undergone several modifications. Arguably, English and the indigenous languages have exerted extensive influences on one another and have undergone tremendous modifications. Corroborating the foregoing assertion, Chilwa (2013) states that English has gone through localisation processes across countries and regions of the world. In fact, West African users of English from all walks of life and of different educational levels and backgrounds constantly engage in communication that depicts the localisation of English. The type of English used in communication in the regions that were colonized by Britain is certainly different from the one spoken in Britain. Expanding on the foregoing assertion, Spencer (1971) argues that the changes identified only show a difference and do not signal a degeneration of the language. This argument is akin to Ubanako and Anderson's (2014) position regarding the 'enthusiastic' use of English as a linguistic property by non-native speakers who confidently express a sense of ownership by the exhibition of diverse levels of creation of all sorts. This tremendous interaction is the result of what is today referred to as new Englishes. This paper provides an account of a cross-linguistic influence expressed in a number of semantic creativity, a technique which enables Nigerians to reflect their own unique socio-cultural norms.

Methodology/ Theoretical Framework

This article adopted a qualitative approach in the collection and analysis of data for this study. Due to the flexibility of this approach, data were drawn from a wide range of sources such as Nigerian literary works/music, Nigerian newspapers, social interactions and political rallies. However, a few of these data which are deemed to be quite relevant to this paper have been analysed. Data analysis and discussion are carried out in two sections: section 1 is concerned with semantic extension/shift and section 2 deals with coinages. However, a blend of linguistic approaches on language contact by Weinreich (1970), Kachru (1982, 1986) and Schneider (2003, 2007) is applied in the analysis. The approaches provide explanations about postcolonial Englishes from an evolutionary perspective and emphasize language ecology. This idea hinges on the scientific analysis and study of the interaction between organisms and their environment. Specifically, ecolinguistics emerged in the 1990s as a new paradigm of linguistic research which took into account not only the social context in which language is embedded, but also the ecological context in which societies are embedded. The approach shows how language evolves as

a process of competition and selection and how certain linguistic features emerge. It is an explication of how histories and ecologies determine language structures in different varieties of English and of how linguistic and social identities are maintained, constructed and negotiated.

Other related ideas applied in the analysis of the data are those taken from Weinreich (1970) and the idea of nativization first introduced by Kachru (1982, 1986). These scholars claim that one of the ways to account for the variations and changes in a language at all levels of linguistic analysis is to consider the role of languages in contact. Weinreich (1970) explains that when two or more languages are in contact, mutual influence eventually becomes inevitable. The outcome of the contact is what he refers to as “interference phenomena” (Weinreich, 1970:1). He further notes that the interference phenomena involve “those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language...” (Ibid:1). These deviations may manifest themselves in such domains as pronunciation, grammar, meaning and lexis. The influence of language in contact is more obvious and pervasive in multilingual settings of some West African countries where English, which is the official language, has to co-exist with other indigenous languages (ILs). In Nigeria, the users of English are spread across the different ethnic groups of about 513 and the mutual influence that exists between the ILs and English as a result of contact is evident when people speak and write either in English or their first language. It is the postulation of these semantic innovations observed in Nigerian English expressions that can partly be accounted for in terms of the influences the ILs have on English. As Bamgbose (1971:47) has correctly noted, the influence of the indigenous languages on English as a second language is strong because certain “patterns of the local languages – (phonological, grammatical, semantic and lexical) tend to be transferred into English.”

It is also observed that a number of studies have been done on Nigerian English and investigations show that there are controversies regarding the appropriateness of their usage. For instance, Ajani (2001) examined the arguments on the existence or non-existence of a distinct variety of English known as Nigerian English. In addition, Kaan, Amase and Tsavmbu (2013) examined Nigerian English in the light of its unique characteristics and asserted that the semantic usages in Nigerian English pose a challenge to international

intelligibility and acceptability. Though Okunrinmeta (2014) advocates the use of endonormative model in the teaching and evaluation of Nigerian students to reflect the local variations that can satisfy communicative appropriateness, this paper seeks to assert that semantic shifts, extension, narrowing, reduplications and coinages should be viewed as a positive linguistic development, since they have a sociostylistic effects on the user of English in Nigeria. Just as an individual communicative performance could be influenced by a number of factors and examined as identifiable unique features of style, so is a speech community.

Data Analysis and Discussion

English in Nigeria has undergone domestication (Achebe, 1975), localisation (Kachru, 1983) and nativisation (Odumuh, 1993) and has resulted in a variety of semantic implications within the Nigerian environment. New words and expressions are coined daily to express the cultural realities of the new environment of the new language. Jowitt (1991) observes how language and society develop side by side to bring about linguistic insight into the workings of a society. The analysis is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with semantic extension/shift and the second section examines coinages.

Semantic Extension/Shift

Semantic components of Nigerian English consist of semantic extension, semantic narrowing, semantic shift and others. Some of the words which are used to express new meanings are: *‘kola nut, baby, corner, flash, go slow, express, soak away, paraventure, scratch, chicken change, poke-nose, settlement, political heavy weight, timbre and calibre, shine your eyes, high, kahki boys, eye service, bukateria, big, home people, bend down boutique, form, fleet, machine, soup, jamb question, return back, toast’, etc.*

Table1: Semantic Extension/Shift

S/N	Nigerian English	Meaning	Standard British English
1	Paraventure	Coincidental or mistakenly/probably	Probably
2	Hear	Understand	Understand
3	Machine	Motorcycle	A piece of equipment
4	Packer	Dustpan	Warm jacket or coat with hood
5	Home people	Family members	Country people

S/N	Nigerian English	Meaning	Standard British English
6	Bend down boutique	Where already used items are sold	Boutique
7	Return back	Reverse	Reverse
8	Branch	To call	To call at a place
9	Flash	To beep someone's phone	Beep
10	Barb	Haircut/to have a haircut	Hurt somebody's feeling
11	Off head	Recalling things by heart	Off hand
12	Go slow	Traffic jam	Traffic jam
13	Of recent	Recently	Recently
14	Form	To put on an air of importance	A blank document or template to be filled out
15	Toast	To woo	Proposed salutation during drinking
16	Express	A high way/ a wide road that connects two major cities	Moving or operating quickly
17	Fleet	Spray used to control or kill mosquitoes	A group of ship controlled by a company
18	Soakaway	A system of waste management	Sewage system
19	Bukateria	Cheap eating place for poor students	Cafeteria
20	Eye service	Hypocrisy and insincere behaviour	Hypocrisy
21	Housewife	A married woman who is not gainfully employed but stays at home	Woman managing household
22	Beat me	To be drenched in the rain	Expression used to paint a picture of misfortune and bad luck
24	Scratch	Beginning	Rub something with nails or any hard and sharp object
25	Big	Affluence and	Largeness in size

S/N	Nigerian English	Meaning	Standard English	British English
		popularity		
26	Chicken change	Insignificant amount of money	Peanut	
27	Poke-nose	One who is unnecessarily concerned in other peoples' business	Interfere	
28	Settlement	Payment to influence decision, cover up crime and fraud	Corruption	
29	Kahki boys	Military men	-----	
30	Soup	Used for a full course meal	Appetiser	
31	Political heavy weight	People of high political class with a financial might	-----	
32	Timber and calibre	People of highsocio-economic or political class.	-----	
33	Shine your eyes	To be smart and alert	Intelligent	
34	High	State of drunkenness	Drunk	

The word *paraventure*, which appears in the table above, is used in Nigerian English to mean 'coincidental', 'mistakenly' or even 'probably'. This word is, however, non-existent in British English. In example 2, the word '*hear*' is expanded to mean 'understand' as used by the British. For example, 'Musa hears English very well'. Therefore, some Nigerians do not differentiate between the acts of hearing and understanding. In example 3, the word *machine* is a piece of equipment with moving parts that is designed to do a particular task. But in the Nigerian context, its meaning is extended to include motorcycle. For example, 'my machine broke down along Calabar-Itu highway'. *Packer* denotatively refers to a person whose business is to pack things for preservation or a software programme that compresses data. However, in Nigerian English it is used to refer to a dustpan. For example, 'please, give me the *packer*'. Like several words, meaning is associative, that is, it is functional, since words are best understood in their context of use. Again, the phrase *home people*, refers to the members of one's family. For instance, 'how are your home people?'

Moreover, *Bend down boutique* is an exquisite instance of the creative elasticity of Nigeria English that has social alignments. This phrase describes the place where second-hand items such as clothes, shoes, bags, etc. are sold. This is an expansion of the British word 'boutique', a shop where fashionable clothes, shoes, jewelleries, among other things are sold. Another phrase commonly used by Nigerians, especially the uneducated, is *return /reverse back*. This expression is usually used to refer to the word "reverse". For example, 'tell the driver to *return/reverse back*'. Reverse is, therefore, the Standard British English. In the same way a word such as *branch* has acquired a new meaning in Nigerian English to mean the British phrasal verb: 'to call'. For example, 'I just decided to branch your house'. Similarly, the word *flash* denotatively means to shine very brightly for a short time, so as to make something shine; but in the Nigerian English context, it means to beep someone's phone without the intention to call him/her or to signal the person to call you. It may also carry other communicative functions, depending on the context of use. For instance, 'I will flash you later'.

The word *barb* is a remark that is meant to hurt somebody's feelings in British English; however, in Nigerian English it means to have a haircut. For example, Nigerians say, 'I went to *barb* my hair'. The word *off-head* is non-existent in British English. It is a compound word of PREPOSITION+NOUN. In Nigerian English this expression means the ability to know things by heart. For example, 'I can spell the word *off head*'.

Furthermore, a widely used word in Nigeria is *419* (*Four-one-nine*). It is commonly used to refer to someone who is dubious or a fraudster. When a Nigerian says, 'Emason is a 419ner', he or she means that Emason is a fraudster. *Go-slow* is a compound word made up of VERB+ ADJECTIVE. In Nigerian English, it refers to traffic jam. For example, 'There was heavy *go-slow* on Ikpa Road yesterday'. This example reveals that Nigerian English is basically descriptive, since the word refers to the slow movement of vehicles on the road. The prepositional phrase *of recent* is a Nigerian English expression which means *recently* in British English. The Nigerian version has no place in the British usage, since an adjective cannot complement a preposition. For example, we hear Nigerians say, 'I saw Nkechi of recent'. In addition, the word *form* denotatively means a blank document or template to be filled out by a user. In Nigerian English usage, however, it is used as a verb to mean to put on an air of

importance. Forexample, 'The boy is just *forming*, that's not the way he speaks'. This expression is commonly used by the youth. It is also slangy in nature.

The word *toast* has different meanings. It means to make something brown by exposing it to heat or to say nice words before drinking a glass of water or wine in honour of a person or an event. It has acquired a new meaning which is synonymous with the phrase *to woo*. Like the preceding example, it is fondly used by the youth. It can therefore be surmised that some Nigerian youth create English expressions in their daily interaction with English.

Similarly, the word *express* denotatively means to show what one feels or thinks by using words, looks or actions. Meanwhile, in Nigerian English, it is used to refer to a high way, that is, a wide road that connects two major cities. The word *fleet* in the dictionary refers to a group of ships or all the ships in a navy or a group of vehicles that are controlled by one company. In Nigerian English, it means to spray a liquid substance from a container so as to control or kill insects or mosquitoes. The word *soakaway* in Nigerian English means a waste management system, while it is called a sewage system in British English. The Nigerian English word *bukateria* with a clipped form *buka* refers to a cheap eating place which is similar to a cafeteria in British English. For example, 'Most indigent students in the universities eat at the *bukateria*' (Adegbite et al, 2014).

The compound word *eye-service* refers to a service done to/with the eyes. It is a combination of NOUN + NOUN. However, in the Nigerian context, it connotes hypocrisy and insincere behaviour where someone does things only for people to see. When a Nigerian says, 'I hate *eye services*', he or she means s/he hates hypocrisy. Again, in the Nigerian context, a woman who is not gainfully employed but stays at home to take care of her family is referred to as a *housewife* (a stay-at-home mother). The two words are both nouns. So it becomes NOUN + NOUN. For instance, 'My mother is a housewife'. The expression, *beat me*, in Standard British English is often used connotatively to paint a picture of misfortune and bad luck. In Nigerian English, it denotes being soaked in the rain. Thus, instead of saying the rain drenched me, a Nigerian speaker of English would prefer to say 'the rain *beat me*'. For British English speakers, *scratch* means to rub something with the nails or any hard and sharp object. In Nigerian English, it means *beginning*. For example, 'we have to start from *scratch*'. The

word *big* denotes largeness in size' in standard British English. In Nigerian English, it refers to affluence and popularity. For example, Prince is a *big* man.

Furthermore, *chicken-change* in the Nigerian context is used to refer to an insignificant amount of money, sometimes called *peanut*. For example, 'These people only pay chicken change' (they only pay *peanuts*). The Nigerian English word *poke-nose* is a colloquial English word which means *interfere*. 'Your friend likes to poke-nose in other peoples' affairs'. In the Nigerian context, the word *settlement* is a payment for someone to carry out an illegitimate assignment, for instance when a payment to influence people's decision or cover up crime and fraud is done. It is a euphemism for bribe or greasing of somebody's palm. Idiagbon and Olaniyi (2011) aver that *settlement* is replacing *kickback*. *Kahki boys* refer to the military. The phrase is historical. It depicts Nigeria's history of long and dictatorial military rule. The word *soup* in the Nigerian context has a broader semantic range than it has in British English. In British English, the word *soup* is an appetizer which comes at the beginning of a meal, whereas in Nigerian English *soup* is what is used for a full course meal: this is an example of semantic extension. In the Nigerian context, *political heavy weight* refers to people of high socio-political or economic class. The other phrase used in a similar sense is 'man of timber and calibre'. This phrase is metaphorically used in the sense that the tree 'timber' is a very strong and valuable wooden beam used for engineering purposes and is not easily attacked, and *calibre* also speaks of the man's high quality. This explanation therefore reveals the man's political strength. Recently, Simi Ogunleye, an Afro-pop artist, released a song entitled *Jamb question*. JAMB is an acronym for Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board, a body that conducts entrance examinations for tertiary institutions. But today, *jamb question* has shifted in meaning to reflect unnecessary romantic interactions. Having examined semantic extension/shift in Nigerian English, I now examine how coinages are realised in Nigerian English expressions.

Coinages

Coinage is another semantic expression of Nigerian English that helps in distinguishing the variety from other varieties. Coinages present themselves in different morphological shapes. Some are compounds that are joined together to express a speaker's intention. Some of the compounds appear as NOUN + NOUN, ADJECTIVE + NOUN, and so on. A few of them are: *backyard*, *maradona*, *bottom power*, *long legs*,

fresh blood, Buharinomics, scale through, cool, long(er) throat, woman wrapper, busy-body, legedezBenze, doctor-do-good, june 12,1993,bla-bla-bla, borrow-pose, African time, rubber-hand. Some Nigerians make use of coinages to reflect local colour in driving home points during verbal and written communications, to demonstrate oratorical and linguistic expertise among English language speakers, to bridge the lacuna in Nigerian Standard English usage and to create some linguistic identity. The table below shows some such coinages created in the Nigerian sociolinguistic environment.

Table 2: Coinages in Nigerian English

S/No	Coinages	Meaning
1	Backyard	It is place behind the house where things are kept but the meaning is extended to describe a woman with or without a well-shaped/curved hips.
2	Maradona	Babangida’s style of leadership, coined from the Argentine player, Diego Maradona. It is also a nickname for Gen. Ibrahim Babangida.
3	Bottom power	Women obtaining favour from men through sex.
4	long legs	A person who uses his/her connection to his/her advantage.
5	Fresh blood	The word ‘fresh’ indicates ‘new’ while ‘blood’ represents hands (people).
6	Buharinomics	A word used to capture the economic meltdown in Nigeria under President Mohammodu Buhari.
7	Scale through	‘Scale through’ is used when one is successful in accomplishing a task. For instance: ‘Ekom scaled through that interview’.
8	Cool	It is from the phrase ‘cool down’. It is frequently used to indicate ‘calm down’ or to relax one’s temper.
9	Long- throat	This describes a greedy person.
10	Woman-wrapper	This phrase is used to refer to a man that is controlled by his wife or any other woman. It also stands for a gigolo.
11	Busy- body	Is a word used by Nigerians to express the attitude of a person who interferes in other peoples’ matters.
12	LegedezBenze	Is a coined word which signifies the use of legs as a means of movement from one place to

S/No	Coinages	Meaning
		another.
13	Doctor- do-good	These three words are compounded to signify a <i>cane</i> .
14	June 12, 1993	Annulled presidential election of Moshood Abiola
15	Bla-bla-bla	This expression is used in Nigeria to refer to other unlisted items.
16	Borrow-pose	It is a Nigerian coinage used to describe one who borrow things so as to feel important.
17	Rubber-hand	It is used to describe a stingy/selfish person.

The word *backyard* is a place behind the house where things are kept. But today, it is a vulgarism used to refer to a woman's *buttocks*. For example, 'The lady has a big *backyard*'. *Maradona* is another coined word used metaphorically to refer to Ibrahim Babangida, a former military ruler. According to the Guardian Newspaper (2006), Babangida was a shrewd political player who is remembered for his dribbling nature like Diego Maradona of Argentina. This picture agrees with Butler's commentary on the BBC when he said: Maradona turns like a little eel and comes from trouble, little squat man...comes inside Butcher and leaves him for dead, and puts the ball away ...and that is why *Maradona* is the greatest player in the world. By implication, the prowess of Maradona of Argentina, whose soccer technique is considered exceptional, is rather replayed in Babangida's style of leadership. The phrase *bottom power* came to the limelight as a result of women's use of sexual influence to secure favours. For example, 'she used *bottom power* to get her promotion'. In the same way, the use of the phrase *long-leg(s)* defies the ordinary meaning of legs as members/parts of the body, as it is used to imply movement from one level of achievement to another through personal connection or influence. The phrase *fresh blood* goes off the literary meaning. The word 'fresh' indicates 'new' while 'blood' represents hands (people). This describes new hands or new set of employees billed to perform specific roles. Here, we can see a type of figure of speech called metonymy: a thing or concept is called not by its name but by the name of something associated in meaning with that concept. This is why Idiagbon and Olaniyi (2011) claim that metaphors could be understood and used by educated speakers of English and metaphoric expressions demonstrate the users' cognitive superiority over ordinary learners of English. Fresh blood is also used euphemistically to refer to young girls, who are considered sexually attractive to old men.

Recently, 'Buharinomics', a word used to capture the economic meltdown in Nigeria under President Mohammadu Buhari has resurfaced. The word was in use during Buhari's Military rule (see Udofot, 1999). It is formed through a morphological process called blending where two independent words are fused to form a new word. In essence, what we have here is **Buhari** + **economics** = Buharinomics. The phrase *scale through* implies a success achieved or an accomplishment. For instance, 'Ekom *scaled through* that interview'. *Long throat* is a phrase which describes a greedy person who is not satisfied with what he/she has. For example, 'Bassey is a long(er)-throat; he is never satisfied with the little he has'. This reveals how Nigerian users of English use body parts to communicate ideas/realities. Similarly, the phrase *woman wrapper* is not referring to the wrapper used by women, but it symbolically means a man that is controlled by a woman or his wife. In the Nigerian context, a man usually takes the lead and detects for a woman, but where a woman assumes authority, it is seen as abnormal.

The phrase *busybody* is an abusive term that describes an individual who interferes in other people's matters. For instance, 'Mr Efonke is a *busybody* wherever he goes'. Again, the word *legedezBenze* depicts the use of legs to move about as a means of transport. For example, 'Now that transport is high, many people use their *legedezBenze*'. *Doctor-do-good* is a metaphorical word for a cane used to correct naughty and arrogant children. The word doctor-do-good is a compound word derived from three free morphemes. A critical observation of the compound word shows an application of the literary meaning and function of each of those words. For instance, the word *doctor* relates to treatment of ailments. The word *do* signifies action and the word *good* has to do with something that is worthwhile. Therefore, putting the words together, the use of *cane (doctor-do-good)* produces a worthwhile effect of correcting a child who must have gone out of shape ethically. In Nigeria, certain phrases and nicknames are representations of events and situations and, as soon as they are mentioned, people quickly associate the names or dates to such events. An example of that is the *June 12, 1993* annulled presidential election. The result was a victory for Moshood Abiola of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) who defeated Bashir Tofa of the National Republican Convention (NRC). The election was annulled by the then military ruler, Ibrahim Babangida, leading to a crisis that ended with Sani Abacha heading a coup later in the year.

In addition, *bla-bla-bla* is used in Nigeria to refer to other unlisted items. For instance, 'she called her many abusive names such as lazy folk, busy-body, block-head and *bla-bla-bla*'. Another word, *borrow-pose*, is a Nigerian coinage used to describe an individual who borrows things so as to feel important. The expression 'Anamsemek is a *borrow-pose*. She hardly attends any occasion without borrowing a dress, a shoe or a bag' is an example. *Rubber-hand* is a compound word from two free morphemes and is widely used to describe a stingy/selfish person who does not give out easily to other people. For example, 'there is no need asking him for anything, he has a *rubber-hand*'. Other phrases and expressions that give information about Nigeria and perhaps her economy are *onshore-offshoredichotomy* and *resource control*. These phrases and expressions are about the equitability proposed by well-meaning Nigerians such as Obong Victor Attah, a former Governor of Akwa Ibom State who vehemently fought for the diversification of revenue generation as well as the reduction of hostility in the Niger Delta. Attah's position was a critical response to the fact that the principle of derivation over the years was highly compromised by various political and ethnocentric factors. Lastly, the phrase *step-aside* was used by General Ibrahim Babangida to describe his style of quitting office (see Ogunsiji, 2001).

Summary/Conclusion

From the foregoing, we see how English has successfully served a number of purposes influenced by sociocultural variables that shape the nature and pattern of English usage in the Nigerian context. Similarly, the vocabulary has been expanded by Nigerians to translate their thoughts into language. Such vocabulary items have undergone modification or semantic change from time to time in order to accommodate and cater for the communicative needs of the language users. In some cases, these changes reflect development in technology. This linguistic situation manifests itself in semantic extension, semantic shift and neologisms/coinages as discussed above. The simple reason these expressions are deemed necessary is because of the inability of the English language to perfectly articulate the native and cultural nuances of the Nigerian people. In addition, such expressions are also used to explain unique events that occur within a society and when such expressions are mentioned nearly every member of that society, except foreigners or visitors, knows their meanings and semantic underpinnings.

Therefore, this paper on the sociostylistic account of semantic creativity in Nigerian English has attempted to show the inevitability of language contact and language dynamism in any socio-cultural setting because human beings will always meet, leading to cross linguistic influences. The long period of the marriage between English and the indigenous languages of West Africa has led to the indigenization, nativization and acculturation of English in the non-native land. This long period of interaction has also enabled the non-native users to become quite familiar with the language to the extent that the language has assumed a level of flexibility and morphological modifications by the users. The issue of flexibility becomes demonstrable in certain known English words, phrases and even sentences which have features that are referred to as semantic extension, semantic shift and coinages through derivation processes. It is hoped that new creations will always be possible since language contact and language dynamism, as earlier mentioned, are constant and should be seen as a rich linguistic development. Perhaps it is correct to conclude that for one to understand the meaning of these expressions, especially when they are used in interactive situations, one must be a Nigerian or must have lived in Nigeria for a long time.

References

- Achebe, C. (1975). *Morning yet on Creation Day: A Collection of Essays*. London: Heinmann.
- Abdullah-Idiagbon, M. S. & Olaniyi, O. K. (2011). Coinages in Nigerian English: A Sociolinguistic Perspective. *African Nebula*, 3.
- Adika, G. S. (2012). English in Ghana: Growth, Tensions, and Trends. *International Journal of Language, Translation and Intercultural Communication*, 1(1):151–166.
- Ajani, T. T. (2007). Is there indeed a Nigerian English? *Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*, 1(1). Retrieved 27 August 2016, from www.scientificjournals.org/journals2007/articles/1084.htm
- Bamgbose, A. (1971). The English Language in Nigeria. In J. Spenser (ed.). *The English Language in West Africa*. London: Longman, 35–48.
- Bamgbose, A. (1995). English in Nigerian Environment. In A. Bamgbose, A. Banjo & A. Andrews (eds.). *New Englishes: A West African Perspective*. Ibadan: Mosuro Publishers & Booksellers.

- Boadi, L. K. (1971). Education and the Role of English. In J. Spenser (ed.). *The English Language in West Africa*. London: Longman, 49–65.
- Boadi, L. K. (1994). *Linguistic Barriers to Communication in the Modern World*. Accra: Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- Chiluwa, I. (2013). West Africa English in Digital Discourse. *Covenant Journal of Language Studies*, 1.
- Jowitt, D. (1991). *Nigerian English Usage: An Introduction*. Ikeja: Longman.
- Kaan, A., Amase, E. & Tsavmbu, A. (2013). Nigerian English: Identifying Semantic Features as Variety Markers. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 16(5): 76–80.
- Kachru, B. B. (1982). *The other Tongue: English across Cultures*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Odumuh, E. (1983). *Sociolinguistics and Nigerian English*. Lagos: Sambookman.
- Ogunsiji, A. (2001). A Sociolinguistic Study of the Language of Attitude in Market Transaction. In H. Igboanusi (ed.). *Language Attitude and Language Conflict in West Africa*. Ibadan: Enicronfit Publishers, 68–96.
- Okunrinmeta, U. (2014). Syntactic and Lexico-Semantic Variations in Nigerian English: Implications and Challenges in the ESL Classroom. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*. Retrieved from file.scirp.org/pdf/OJML_2014060515053529.pdf
- Schneider, E. W. (2003). The Dynamics of New Englishes: From Identity Construction to Dialect Birth. *Language*, 79(2): 233–281.
- Schneider, E. W. (2007). *Postcolonial English: Varieties around the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Udofot, I. M. (2005). *An Introduction of the Morphology of English*. Ikot Ekpene: Development Universal Consortia.
- Weinreich, U. (1970). *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*. The Hague: Mouton.