A PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE TO SEMANTIC FEATURES OF NIGERIAN ENGLISH

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Abstract

The study examined the semantic manifestations of English words in the Nigerian contexts and the implications for teaching in Nigerian secondary and primary education. The data for this study were obtained from Roger Blench's (2005) Dictionary of Nigerian English (DNE) and Corpus of Global Web-Based English. While lexical items were culled from the dictionary, the contextual usages of the words, which were drawn from the dictionary were gathered through the Corpus of Global Web-Based English. Using Paradis' (2012) cognitive approach to lexical semantic relation, the study compared Standard English (SE) and Nigerian English (NE) by accounting for semantic shifts, semantic extensions, and morphologically marked neologisms in Nigerian English. Nigerians rarely utilize NE words that represent complete semantic shifts from BrE meanings. Unlike the 'total shift' situation, there is a disparity in the general usage of words to portray NE extended meaning. The conclusion from the study is that, it is evident that the English spoken in Nigeria is not the same as British English or American English, thus, examination bodies' insistence on BrE and AmE is futile and unreasonable. Nigerian English should be recognised by examination agencies; it should be developed and adopted as the Language of pedagogy for primary and secondary education in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Nigerian English, Contextual usages, Lexical-semantics, Semantic shifts, Semantic extensions, Language of pedagogy*

I   INTRODUCTION

The existence of Nigerian English as a variety of global English or World Englishes is no longer an issue of debate. Many scholars (Adetugbo 1987; Adegbija 1989; Banjo, 1995; Bamgbose 1995; Ekundayo, 2013; Opara; 2019) have identified with and acknowledged this variety of English; they have also given extensive scholarly positions. The earlier studies carried out by these scholars reveal that English language spoken in Nigeria is different from Standard British English. The English language in Nigeria has been nativized, domesticated, and localized as a result of cultural elements infusion (Achebe, 1975; Kachru, 1986; Odumuh, 1984; Adamo, 2007; Obasi, 2012, Kaan and Amase, 2013). It is sufficed to say that English is a foreign language in Nigeria, but Nigerian English is not. The Education system in Nigeria has played a huge role in the development of English in Nigeria (Opara, 2016:28). However, Nigerian English has not been recognized by the educational system and examination bodies in Nigeria (Onyemelukwe and Alo, 2015) leading to year-in/year-out mass failure of students in English examinations.

In January 2020, twenty-nine Nigerian English words and phrases were added to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED). This development seems to have brought some global awareness to the much-debated status of Nigerian English. Nevertheless, it does not solve the problem of 'Standard Nigerian English' question: can we accept Nigerian English as a standard variety of English? The words are aimed at enriching global English and not the status of Nigerian English. As stated by Salazar (2020) in a blog post on the OED official page, 'Nigerians have made, and are continuing to make, unique and distinctive contributions to English as a global language'. OED is not geared towards standardising Nigerian English; the incorporated words are to enrich British English. While present Nigerian students can embrace this reality and use some of these words, especially in examination writings, the added words and phrases are few and this will have little or no implication for the Nigerian students and Education in Nigeria.

Examination boards marking guides may pardon students for a few NE words and phrases in OED, while all other NE words will be regarded as deviations leading to the mass failures (less than 20% pass rate of students) in English Examinations. In order for students to overcome the dilemma of English usage and the strict examination adherence, there is the need to give Nigerian English shelter by incorporating it into pedagogy (Onyemelukwe and Alo, 2015:11-13), especially to teach General English. This feat can only be achievable if the Nigerian government constitutionalise NE in its National Policy on Education by making it the 'English language' of instruction for education at all levels. A full consciousness that the General English language is different from NE has the tendency of making

students aware of the varieties and to know which to appropriate when writing the secondary school leaving exams of the subject English Language.

The development of NE in OED is a progressive step; however, it gives NE only a breathing environment in Global English while it is still striving to get institutional recognition in Nigeria. NE is an independent variant and it will become a viable variety if it is adopted as the language of pedagogy at all levels in Nigeria. NE is not the same as BrE, therefore, there is the need to fully understand the areas of uniqueness beyond the coinages and borrowing that OED reveals. These areas include phonology, semantics, and syntax among others; what is the scope and meaning of BrE words and phrases in NE. While there are studies (Ekundayo, 2013; Christiana-Oluremi, 2013; Kaan and Amase, 2013; Opara, 2016) that have focused on semantic shifts in NE, the studies are just linguistic instigations to examine deviations in NE in relation to BrE. However, the interest of this study is to set BrE in parallel comparison with NE; to build on the suggestion to use NE as the language of instruction in education (Owolabi, 2012; Onyemelukwe and Alo, 2015); and to design a pedagogy template for teaching the English language (specifically BrE) with NE in primary and secondary education in Nigeria. In the light of these, this study sets out to explore the semantic features of Nigerians English; identify the semantic scopes of some NE lexicon and phrases; explain why NE lexical words and phrases need to be incorporated in pedagogy.

1.1 LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY IN NIGERIA

Nigeria passes as a multilingual state, because there exists in the country, over 500 indigenous languages spoken among many ethnic groups. As a thing of concern in education planning, it is expected that a country like Nigeria has issues with the language of instruction in pedagogy (Jummai, 2012). However, this is not the situation in Nigeria, as the National Policy on Education (NPE) carefully spelt out what should have been a complex situation of the language of instruction in schools (Olagbaju, 2014:67).

Nigeria as a nation does not have a language policy despite its multilingual situation. However, in Nigeria's National Policy on Education (NPE) that was published in 1977, and later revised in 1981 and 2004 there is a provision for language in education policy (Oyetade, 2003; Taiwo, 2009; Olagbaju, 2014). The position of the policy on the language of education, according to (Jummai, 2012:758) is in line with the 1922 Phelps-stock commission's emphasis on the use of the indigenous language of education. A development that would later inform the 1927 recommendation by the British advisory committee on native education in tropical Africa, that the indigenous languages should be the language of education in elementary years of primary education.

According to the NPE (2014), the English language should be introduced as a subject in the first three years of primary education, but the language of instruction should be an indigenous language. From the fourth year or primary education to tertiary education, the English language should not only be a subject, but also the medium of instruction. The issue of the language of education is spelled out in Section 1 and Section 4 of the NPE (2014, butit is interesting to note that while primary schools owned by the government may or may not comply with the NPE on the adoption of indigenous languages for the first three years, private nursery and primary schools' outright violation is a norm. A larger percentage of the private schools will not even permit speaking the indigenous languages in their school premises, some extent of punishing students for speaking 'vernacular' (Ogunbiyi, 2008; Olagbaju 2009).

There are reasons for the violation of the policy with respect to the language of instruction in early primary education. On the one hand, there is the failure on the part of the ministry of education to fulfil its responsibility of ensuring that schools abide by the provisions of the policy (Olagbaju 2009:3). On the other hand, the status of the English language in Nigeria has led to the relegation of other indigenous languages, and parents would pay extra money to ensure that their wards start speaking and writing in English from the early years of primary school. According to Christiana-Oluremi (2013:263), the medium of instruction in higher education will continue to be English because no indigenous language can rival it.

Given the introduction of English as the language of instruction from early primary school, it would have been expected that students will perform exceptionally well in English examination. The reverse is the case and the reason for this is not farfetched. Examination boards' marking guides maintain that for the English Language as a subject, students must strictly adhere to the use of either Standard British English or American English. Unfortunately, teachers in primary and secondary school also use Nigerian English unconsciously and there is no clear distinction of variety in the mental repository of the students (Onyemelukwe and Alo, 2015).

The NPE must be reviewed, and two major things should reflect. NE should be recognized and given the status of the language of instruction in primary and secondary schools, while English as a subject is retained with the focus of teaching the Standard British English and the American English as separate varieties, and an intention to equip Nigerians with global competence of English while also competent in NE. The second reflection is a binding force that would motivate the Ministry of Education to ensure that all schools follow the policy.

1.2 NIGERIAN ENGLISH

Language and culture cannot be separated because they are intertwined; the language spoken by people should preserve and express their culture (Onuh and Uwadiegwu 2014:64). When a foreign language is used by society, the foreign language becomes adapted and incorporated in such a way to reflect the culture of the new society. This is one of the responsible factors for having a new variety of a language. The situation of English in Nigeria is like the aforementioned. The status of English in Nigeria and its usage has led to the emergence of Nigerian English as a variety. It has been an official language and the second language in Nigeria, and its unique features have distinguished it as a potent variety of world Englishes (Adamo, 2007; Amase, 2013; Onyemelukwe and Alo, 2015; Ugorji, 2015; Opara, 2019).

According to Kachru (1986), as explained by Kaan and Amase (2013:76), The English spoken in Nigeria is "in the outer centric circle". The cover term for that variety of English is Nigerian English. The variety is marked with lexical, morphological, syntactic, and phonological features that are only intelligible to Nigerians and the Nigerian context (Adamo, 2007; Opara, 2019).

Opara (2016:30) terms NE as "Popular Nigerian English" which he defined "as distinct Nigerian forms that are widespread and inevitably coloured by Nigerian socio-linguistic peculiarities, experiences and culture." Some other terms that have been used in place of NE are "Educated Nigeria English" and "Standard Nigerian English" (Ekundayo 2013:20).

Because of the multi-ethnic and multilingual situation of Nigeria, NE has variants. Although there are questions surrounding which variants should be regarded or adopted as the standard variety, the focus of this paper is not to meddle in such debate. The variants have been classified by scholars by region, education status, and social status (Ekundayo 2013:20).

While addressing the classification by region, Okoro (2004:9) explains that in the real sense, NE varieties will not accommodate all the varieties that may be suggested by over two hundred indigenous languages. He restricted the regional (which he terms geographical) classification to major ethnic groups - Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Efik, Edo and so on. Each of these variants is predominantly different from one another by phonological features.

The common educational classification is the one presented by Banjo (1996). While reviewing Banjo's classification, Ekundayo (2013) explains:

> The most popular classification is Banjo's Varieties I, II, III and IV. Variety I is associated with primary school pupils and leavers, II is common with secondary school students and leavers and a majority of Nigerians. It is characterized with interference and grammatical deviations. III is associated with educated Nigerians as depicted in the next paragraph. Banjo proposes Variety III as Nigerian model because it has 'intranational' prestige and international intelligibility. Variety IV is identical to SBE or RP, or SAE used by very few Nigerians who acquired English in native English-speaking settings or have a native-English speaking parent.

Apart from the register, there are no significant variations of NE at the social classification. According to Okoro (2004:9), "a high social status does not necessarily imply a correspondingly high standard of education or exposure to the language."

As it has been earlier stated in this paper that the issue of the standard variety of NE will not be meddled with, NE in the light of this study shall mean the English Language that is spoken intelligibly in Nigeria; a language that fully expresses the worldview and the socio-cultural realities of the Nigerian people. NE may not be an indigenous language, but it can be termed 'Native' to Nigerians. As findings from earlier studies suggest, it is the most common language to everyone, and it is used for virtually all kinds of communication. It is without a doubt that it is not an indigenous language of many Nigerians; however, its reality is like the First language in Nigeria. While BrE is learnt in schools, NE is acquired

in society (Kaan and Amase, 2013:77). The relationship between NE and BrE in Nigeria is like the situation of first language and second language, respectively.

II   MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study adopted both the qualitative approach and quantitative approach in data gathering and analysis. The study makes use of Roger Blench's (2005) draft of Dictionary of Nigerian English (DNE). The dictionary was selected because it is one of the attempts to pilot NE lexical items towards pedagogy and to justify the NE words used in this study. A dictionary is a conscious attempt towards codification and standardization of a language, and one for Nigerian English must be commended (Tunde-Awe, 2014:490). Drawing insights from Padaris (2012) approach to lexical-semantic relation, ten NE words (borrow, yellow, beetle, sexed, dash, garage, bitter-leaf, bride-price, bush-cow, sugar mummy) were selected from the dictionary based on semantic change (6) and morphologically marked neologism (4). The ten words do not include any of the recent 29 NE words/phrases (Agric, barbing salon, buka, bukateria, chop, chop-chop, danfo, to eat money, ember months, flag-off, to flag off in flag, gist (n), gist (v), guber, Kannywood, K-leg, mama put, next tomorrow, non-indigene, okada, to put to bed, input, qualitative, to rub minds, sef, send-forth, severally, tokunbo, zone, and zoning) or any NE words that have appeared in OED. The selected words are random samples of words selected to pilot future pedagogical investigation. The DNE served as the source of the meanings of the selected words, while OED served as the BrE meanings. Although, there are possibilities of many definitions for a word in OED, the selection of definitions for this study is based on meaning relation with NE words.

While employing a qualitative approach, each of the ten NE words was searched on the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE). GloWbe provided the frequency of usages of the words by frequency and in their Nigerian contexts of usage. The frequency of the general usage of each usage of the word was recorded (which includes the usages in standard BrE) and a further focus on the frequency in terms of semantic change and neologism as manifestations of NE. Two examples of contexts of usage were selected and subjected to a lexical-semantic analysis as well as contrastive linguistic analysis to explain the manifestation of semantic shifts, extension and, morphologically marked neologism. This is in line with first tier of meaning relation, which are words that share the same form but mean different things, as explained by Paradis (2012).

Using the qualitative approach, the lexical-semantic analysis was appropriated to explain the meaning of the words in relation to the contexts of manifestation. According to Padaris (2012:33-57), the interest of Lexical semantics is "the meaning of words. Lexical semanticists are interested in what words mean, why they mean what they mean, how they are represented in speakers' minds, and how they are used in text and discourse". As an approach that overlaps with pedagogy, Lexical semantics gives room for Applied linguistics, especially, language learning and acquisition. The approach was adopted to explain how perceived deviations of NE (Okoro, 2017; Opara, 2016) can be used in the teaching of BrE in schools. This implies that NE was hypothetically tested in place of a first language for the teaching of BrE as a Target language.

III   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1   FINDINGS AND RESULT

The tables below present the results of the NE words selected from the DNE. Their definitions by DNE and their frequencies from GloWbE search in their contextual manifestations were identified. The meanings of these words were compared with their BrE definitions. The semantic manifestations of the words were examined and grouped.

Word/phrase	NE (shifted) meaning	Frequency NG context (NE usage)	Percentage of NE usage	BrE meanings (TL)
Borrow	to lend (v)	664 (7)	1.05%	To take (a thing) on pledge or security given for its safe return (v)

Yellow	light-skinned (n, adj)	934 (38)	4.07%	of relating to people of South-East or East Asian ethnic origin: - now usually regarded as derogatory and offensive (adj)

Table 1: Manifestation of semantic change as total shift in NE words

The words in table 1, do not just have different connotative meanings in NE, their meanings are directly opposite to the meanings obtainable in BrE. The semantic change here is a total shift from BrE convention. The word 'borrow' has 664 occurrences in the Nigerian context, only 7 (1.05%) usages bear the NE meaning while 657 usages align with all other BrE usages. Like 'borrow', 'yellow' has 934 occurrences, with only 38 (4.07%) of them aligning with NE shifted meaning. Owing to the frequency as reflected by GloWbE, the table indicates that Nigerians seldom make use of NE words that reflect a total semantic shift from the BrE meanings. Nevertheless, the existence of these usages is not deniable.

Word/phrase	NE (extended) meaning	Frequency NG context (NE usage)	Percentage of NE usage	BrE meanings (TL)
Beetle	Volkswagen car (n)	25(13)	52%	The class name for insects of the coleopterous order (n)
Sexed	to have sex with someone (v)	6(3)	50%	having sexual appetites, feelings, or functions of a specified nature or intensity (adj)
Dash	to give someone. something for free (v)	221(68)	30.77%	A gift, present, gratuity; = dashee (n)
Garage	bus-station (n)	223(22)	9.87%	A building, either private or public, intended for the storage and shelter of motor vehicles while not in use (n, adj)

Table 2: Manifestation of Semantic Change as Extension in NE Words

The words in table2 have extended meanings in NE beyond the BrE meanings. The word 'Beetle' is used to mean 'Volkswagen car' in 13 (52%) instances out of 25 contexts of use; the word 'sexed' has 3 (50%) manifestations of NE extended meaning in 6 occurrences; 'dash' occurs 221 times with 68 (30.77%) instances of NE extended meaning; 'garage' appeared 223 times with 22(9.87%) instances of NE extended meaning. Unlike in the 'total shift' situation, there is a disparity in the general usage of words to manifest NE extended meaning; while some words (beetle, sexed) are almost used to reflect

NE extended meaning as much as BrE meanings, other words tend to have fewer manifestations of NE extended meanings when compared to usages bearing BrE meanings.

Word/phrase	NE (extended) meaning	Frequency	Morphological process	BrE Equivalence (TL)
Bitter-leaf	mucilaginous leaf, used to make draw soup.	10	compounding	mucilaginous leaf
Bride-price	payment by a man to the parents of his wife at marriage or before technical anthropological term	11	compounding	dowry
Bush-cow	buffalo	11	compounding	buffalo
Sugar mummy	older woman who supports younger man in exchange for sex	63	Compounding	nil

Table 3: Manifestation of Descriptive Morphological Neologism

Table 3 is the representation of neologisms that are created through the compounding of General English words. The elements of the new words are descriptive of the meaning they convey, but the newly created words do not exist in BrE, they are only found in NE and their usages appear on GloWbE. Out of the four new NE words NE, three have English equivalences while one does not have. 'Bitter-leaf' in NE has 'mucilaginous leaf' as equivalence in BrE; 'bride-price' has 'dowry' as BrE equivalence; 'bush-cow' has 'buffalo' as BrE equivalence, but 'sugar mummy' does not have an equivalence.

3.2 DISCUSSION

Semantic change in this study shall be defined as a change in the meaning of words (Fortson, 2003:648). This change occurs as a result of the emerging contextual usage of such lexical items. Changes in meaning can be an extension of the initial meaning (additional meaning which has is referred to as extended meaning) or a total departure from the initial meaning (an opposite meaning which is referred to as radically shifted meaning). One of Akhmanova's (1969) definitions of neologism is the drive of this discussion. He defines neologism as – a new word or expression that has not received the right for citizenship in the national language and thus is perceived as belonging to a specific, often substandard style of speech (Akhmanova 1969:263). To capture this study in line with Akhmanova's (1969) definition, NE and BrE will be used in place of 'specific style' and 'national language' respectively.

3.2.1 SEMANTIC CHANGE

The areas of semantic change are very instrumental in the teaching of connotations in BrE. Lexical items in NE, with total contrast with the BrE meanings, are a plus for teachers of BrE to NE speakers. Sometimes, contrast is a useful tool in L1 to L2 teaching and learning process (Rao, 2017). The students who use the word for the NE meanings are likely not to be aware of the BrE equivalence of what they intend to say, or they do not know when to use what. The advantage of this to pedagogy is that this seeming deviation may be identified as an error in BrE but correct in NE. It is an easy point for teachers to teach students new words and their meanings because it is easily identifiable that the meanings of some words in BrE as not the same in NE. Since this semantic shift is the antonym of the BrE meaning, then it can also be then this may be the starting point to teaching the concept of antonymy in the English language. Consider the contextual usage of words below.

> (1) Better yet, I'll get the book by Dale Carnegie (How to win friends and influence people) and see how I can make more photographer friends that will be willing to **borrow** me their camera (if I don't want to rent from eloPhotos) whenever I have jobs.

(2) By the way, let me use this medium to **borrow** the ignorant author some pure wisdom: do not attack the train of end-time prosperity.

(3) Yes, the fairest girl I dated was that bit of golden-sunshine-**yellow**-honey-brown shade.

(4) Honestly, light skin is attractive just like **yellow** is brighter than brown

The word 'borrow' in 1 and 2 is used in the sense of 'lend'; the exact opposite of the word 'borrow' in the BrE situation. There is no instance in the corpus where 'lend' is used instead of 'borrow', which means those who misuse 'borrow' in the BrE sense, are fully aware that 'borrow' means 'to receive', they only do not know that it does not mean 'to give'. For a teacher, 'borrow' is not an entirely new word. Rather than discard the meaning of borrow as to give, the teacher will only have to teach that the meaning borrow does not include 'to give' in BrE. Introducing the word 'lend' in such context of borrow make learning the new word effectively possible. Students will remember the lexical word that means 'to give' in BrE because it is a contrast of what borrow connotes in NE. Syntactically, 1 and 2 can also assist in the teaching of grammatical collocations in BrE. The verb 'borrow' in the examples has the receiver (1 - me; 2 - the ignorant author) at the object region, while in BrE, the receiver, in the context of the verb borrow is always at the subject region except in marker structures like passive utterances.

Like 'borrow' in 1 and 2, 'yellow' in 3 and 4 is like the antonym of what it means in BrE context. While it is used as a racial reference to Asians in BrE, it is a reference to fair-skinned people in these NE contexts of use, which seem to represent favourable preference. In 3, 'yellow' is an adjective that is modified by pleasant adjectives (golden-sunshine) while it is also modifying another pleasant adjective (honey), meaning the girl with yellow skin is preferable. In 4, 'yellow' is a noun that shares a meaning relation with 'light skin' which has been qualified as attractive, invariably, 'yellow' is attractive. This lexical item is relevant in the teaching of the English language, especially in the understanding of Global usages of items and politeness in relation to culture. Understanding that the word 'yellow' to qualify a person may be offensive, will equip the student with knowledge that some words should be embraced in a context must be avoided in another context.

(5) I am not sure I want to recommend his 1987 Volkswagen **Beetle** to my Councilor either considering that the thing will break into two on Ago Palace

(6) In those days, the **Beetle** car was sold for N2, 000.00

(7) here how she got a Murano Jeep from a fan. Hehehe when will someone **dash** me a Murano too.

(8) How can IBB "**dash**" one person a natural resource that belongs to all of us in this country.

(9) Chairman of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) at the Apete **Garage** would not agree to this.

(10) Buhari should consider the post of a motor park chairman in Katsina main **garage**. He will learn gradually what its take to become a leader.

(11) Will you be happy to see your mother or sister been **sexed** in movies?

(12) To her, no other man is necessary because to be **sexed** by you touches her and satisfies her on the deepest levels of her being.

The above examples are contextual manifestations of the semantic changes with extended meanings. In BrE, 'beetle' is an insect but its extended meaning in NE is the Volkswagen car that is designed like the shape of the insect. In 5 and 6, the lexical word 'beetle' appears as a noun and adjective, respectively. While it describes a Volkswagen car in 6, it is the Volkswagen describes it in 5. The word beetle emerged in NE as a description of the Volkswagen car. Therefore, if the word 'beetle' is used in the Nigerian context, a further investigation of collocate may be needed to understand the meaning of the word. In 5 and 6, words like 'Volkswagen' and 'car' are surrounding words that establish the connotation of the word 'beetle' as the reference of Volkswagen car.

While 'dash' means a lot of things (gift, present, and gratuity) in BrE, none of its meanings includes 'giving something to someone' as seen in 6 and 7. The origin of 'dash' as 'giving something to someone' can be traced to the Nigerian Pidgin. Since the word also exists in English as a gift, its incorporation into NE is inevitable. It is a transitive verb that usually has both indirect and indirect objects. One of the hints to identifying the NE connotation of 'dash' is the presence of the objects. In 7, 'me' and 'a Murano' are the indirect and direct objects, respectively. In 8, 'one person' and 'a natural resource' are the indirect and direct objects, respectively. In BrE sense, the speaker in 7, means 'when

will someone gift me a Murano' and the speaker in 8 means 'how IBB gift to one person the natural resource that belongs to everyone in the country'.

As reflected in the results in table 2, the meaning of 'garage' is in the NE context extends beyond its meaning in BrE. In 9 and 10, 'garage' is a nominal lexeme that represents public bus stations. In 9, 'NURTW' and 'Apete' give contextual information about the location of the place is called 'garage'. Apete garage is a known place in Ibadan Nigeria, and the location is a bus station, 'Apete' is just acting as a determiner to 'garage'. NURTW in Nigeria is a union for public transport workers, who usually converge at a location (here being referred to as garage) and the union has a chairman which in 9 would not agree to 'this'. In 10, 'Katsina', 'main, and 'motor park' serve as the contextual cue of the extended meaning of 'garage'. While 'Katsina main garage' is a popular bus station in Katsina state, 'motor park' in the utterance enriches the extended meaning of 'garage'.

In BrE 'sexed' is an adjective meaning 'sexual appetite' and 'sexual characteristics', but in the Nigerian English contexts, as in 11 and 12, 'sexed' is a verb with an extended meaning - 'to have sex'. In both instances, 'sexed' is used in the passive sense, positioning the object at the receiving end of sexual intercourse. In 11, 'mother' or 'sister' is the likely recipient of sex, in 12, 'her' is the recipient of sex. The knowledge of the semantic extensions in all the examples 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, will be a tool for teaching semantic connotations and how new meanings of a word emerge in a language.

3.2.2 MORPHOLOGICALLY MARKED NEOLOGISM

Morphology is usually resourceful when teaching the structure of the second language in the language learning situation. One way that is effective is to explain word formations in the target language by using examples from L1 for proper and efficient learners' comprehension. The NE words in table 3 are not just the regular words classified as neologisms; they were created by merging two English words to describe what they mean. All the neologisms considered in this study are formed by compounding. This is because of the provisions of the limitation of the DNE adopted and the appearances of words in GloWbE. A recommendation for an updated DNE is also the drive of this study. Some of the words have lexical equivalence in BrE. The words could have emerged because the users do not know the English equivalence and since indigenous Nigerian languages are descriptive, it is only natural to create new words by description. Consider below, the examples of these neologisms formed compounding in the Nigerian contexts.

(13) I do not know bitterness unless I chew onugbu **bitter-leaf** plant.

(14) Add the bunches of **bitter-leaf** (finely chopped) 10 minutes before the end of cooking time.

(15) In the olden days if u get pregnant without ur **bride-price** being pain you stand to be scorned.

(16) Just like the Christian parents who will not give out their daughter before a **bride-price** is paid forgetting that it is cultural not religious.

(17) One whose father was killed by a **bush-cow** does not use a **bush-cow** horn for drinking oil palm wine.

(18) Many times, the women of Uzuakoli would come and complain to Master Kapi about a large wild animal called **bush-cow** that was spoiling everything they planted on their farms.

(19) Here is an opportunity for you to make enough money from our rich **sugar Mummy** and Daddy and say goodbye to financial break down.

(20) I need a **sugar mummy** for sex and financial issues (tit for tat).

'Bitter-leaf' in 13 and 14 is the combination of 'bitter' and 'leaf' and it means a leaf that is bitter. The English equivalent of that leaf is 'mucilaginous leaf'. In both instances, it is evident that the leaf is an edible leaf. This is observable by 'chew' in 13 and 'cooking'. The two contexts present the different word classes that the word can reflect. While 'bitter-leaf' appears as an adjective in 13, it is a noun in 14.

'Bride-price' which by description means money that is paid to marry a bride. The equivalence of 'bride-price' in BrE is dowry. 'Bride' and 'price' are merged to realize 'bride-price'. In 15 the speaker tries to establish that a woman whose 'bride-price' has not been paid is not supposed to be pregnant. By implication, it is dishonourable for a woman to be pregnant before a man pays her dowry. In 16 the root of 'bride-price' is suggested to be cultural, one reason why the word emerged. The context of use also suggests that parents do not give out their daughters to marriage if the groom does not pay the 'bride-price'.

In 17 and 18 'bush-cow' means a wild cow, and its BrE equivalence is 'buffalo'. By combining 'bush' and 'cow', the word means a cow that is not domestic, hence a perfect description of a wild cow. In 17, the description of the 'bush-cow's' horn as a cup suggests how big the animal is. The wildness of the animal is also suggested in its ability to kill humans (father). In 18, the phrase 'large wide animal' is used as the reference of 'bush-cow' and it destroys plantations. This is just a perfect description of a buffalo.

Unlike other manifestations of morphologically marked neologisms, 'sugar mummy' does not have a lexical equivalence in BrE, although, it seems to be the female version of BrE's 'sugar daddy'. Since 'sugar daddy' in BrE means a man that spends money on younger girls in exchange for sex, the NE name for the female version of 'sugar daddy' is 'sugar mummy'. Therefore, 'sugar mummy' means an older woman who supports a younger man in exchange for sex. In 19 lexemes like 'money', 'rich', and 'financial' suggest that 'sugar mummy' has to do with financial support. In 20 'tit for tat' is a full description of what a 'sugar mummy', she offers sex and financial support.

3.3   IMPLICATIONS FOR PEDAGOGY

It is no doubt that NE has emerged and will keep emerging as a viable variety of the Global English language (Opara, 2016). Its global recognition by OED is a conscious awareness that while it is not officially recognized, it is the most utilized language for communicative purposes in Nigeria. It is a futile imagination to assume that BrE is the language of instruction in primary and secondary education. While it is perceived that BrE is taught, in actual practice, school teachers teach students using NE, leading to mass failure of many students who sit for the English Language in WAEC and NECO (Onyemelukwe, and Alo, 2015), because they obviously would naturally think they are competent to know BrE. It is a point to note that the variety or mixture of varieties of English students used in writing exams in all subjects (except the English Language) is not a determining factor in evaluating their performances. Therefore, the NPE should be reviewed and updated, to reflect the adoption of NE as the medium of instruction in primary and secondary education. The manifestations of deviations in NE should not be seen as errors, rather, signifying features that signify its uniqueness (Adamo, 2007). When this is done, the features of NE should be consciously taught, and these features should be used to teach the subject English Language (BrE) as explicated in this study. This practice will not only make students know that NE is different from BrE, but it will also be instrumental to effective and efficient teaching and learning process of BrE. An updated and adopted NE dictionary should be developed, for the sake of pedagogy. There are lots of studies on linguistic features of NE (Adetugbo 1987; Adegbija 1989; Banjo, 1995; Bamgbose 1995; Ekundayo, 2013; Opara; 2019); a further study in this area may not have a practical effect on scholarship or in pedagogy. Nevertheless, other studies that have practical implications could be carried out in other areas of linguistics (phonology, syntax, discourse) to buttress the hypothesis of this study.

IV   CONCLUSION

This study examines the features of Nigerians English from a semantic perspective with the goal of identifying these features as useful tools in the development of NE and improving its status to the preferred English variant for pedagogy in Nigeria. The semantic features of NE identified from the corpus are semantic change and morphological neologism. There are two forms of semantic changes; they are semantic shift and semantic extension. In semantic shift, the meanings of lexes in NE are the opposite of what they mean in BrE, while in semantic extension, BrE lexes only accommodate new meanings in the NE context. Morphological neologisms portray the descriptive nature of Nigerian languages as manifested in English. These identifiable features are viable to marking NE as standard English and should be seen as a variant of English. Therefore, NE should be standardized and made adopted as the distinct language of instruction in primary and secondary school education in Nigeria. This will reduce the dilemma (irregular variants of English) students are faced with. Nigerian English is clearly different from British English (BrE) or American English (AmE), examination boards' insistence on BrE and AmE is fruitless and unfair. NE should be recognized by examination boards' marking guides, and it should be promoted and embraced as the pedagogical language in Nigeria's elementary and secondary schools.

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