

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE STATUS OF NIGERIAN PIDGIN IN NIGERIA'S LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE: ANOTHER EXAMINATION

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ABSTRACT

The study acknowledges Nigeria pidgin in Nigeria's linguistic landscape as a dynamic and adaptable language that has gained substantial traction across diverse demographic groups and regions within Nigeria. It explores the linguistics features that define Nigeria pidgin, tracing its origins from trade interactions to its current status as a language of informal communication, media and literature. Furthermore, the abstract delves into the sociolinguistic dynamics surrounding Nigeria pidgin, including its usage in formal settings, education and the media. It examines the attitudes of speakers and non-speakers towards the language, highlighting shifts in perception from stigmatization to acceptance and even pride in its cultural heritage. In the educational sphere, Nigerian Pidgin's role is a subject of ongoing debate. Advocates argue for its inclusion in formal education, citing its relevance to national unity and communication in multilingual settings. However, challenges such as standardization, pedagogical approaches, and perceptions of linguistic hierarchy remain significant hurdles. Looking ahead, Nigerian Pidgin shows promise as a language of creativity and innovation. Its adaptability and rich linguistic repertoire make it well-suited for expressing complex ideas and emotions. Furthermore, its widespread use across diverse demographics positions it as a potent tool for cultural exchange and social cohesion. Summarily, Nigerian Pidgin occupies a unique and evolving position in Nigeria's linguistic mosaic. While it faces challenges in terms of recognition and formalization, its resilience and popularity underscore its significance in shaping the country's linguistic landscape. Embracing and harnessing the potential of Nigerian Pidgin can contribute positively to linguistic diversity, cultural expression, and social harmony in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Status, Nigerian Pidgin, Nigeria's Linguistic, Landscape and Examination

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as multilingual nation has remained from inception of its nationhood without a national language. English, foisted on and bequeathed to us by our colonialists has hitherto become an official language. It is the language of education in which instructions especially from senior primary to tertiary levels are delivered, and examinations administered. Official business of government at arms and tiers are conducted in English. Legislation, court proceedings, budgeting and national economic planning are enunciated in the language. Language of mass media, trade and commerce, literature and entertainment, international relations, etc. English bestrides in the country dominating other indigenous languages for more than a decade. Neither any of the Nigeria's three major languages of Ibo, Yoruba and Hausa nor the other well over 400 languages have been able to enjoy the acceptability and use English enjoys. Again, its global acceptability as a world's lingua franca has also become

a major boost to Nigeria in its quest for language of wider communication even as it is seen as an elitist language.

In spite of the seemingly indispensable roles English language plays in the country, do Nigerian speakers of English at all social levels have a sense of accommodation? Similarly, Simpson and Ayetade (2008, p. 172) ask a related question that has bearing on the future of English language in Nigeria:

“if people in Nigeria were to be given the opportunity to reformulate national language policy as they wished, might one expect a different official language structure to be requested, perhaps with one or a combination of indigenous languages as a replacement for English, or is the current English-centred structuring of officialdom felt to be satisfactory and appropriate given the ethnic configuration of the country?. “

These two questions coupled with the problem of social imbalance created by the use of English still stare everyone in the face, as a greater chunk of the nation’s population can hardly use the language fluently impeccably both in writing and in speech. It is understood and agreed that Nigeria is the most populous nation in the continent of Africa with about 220 million people, and that a greater number of this population cannot read and write even in their indigenous languages, not to talk of in English. Since no Nigerian has English as his/her native language, but as an official language and lingua franca, it requires that everyone learns it formally after he/she has acquired the first language. Learning a second language is often done through formal education which most Nigerians are not privileged to have. This has therefore resulted in the inability of most Nigerians to speak English with fluency and without flaws, thereby amplifying the need for an alternative lingua franca that would aid easier communication across social and ethnic strata of the nation as English seems to be an exclusive reserve of the educated.

Nigerian Pidgin, (henceforth, NP) a homegrown language has hitherto emerged to fill this linguistic gap, and its acceptability and spread have taken many by surprise as all regions of the country find it easy to use NP with pride and sense of ownership since there is no fear of domination and supremacy by any segment of the country.

THE CONCEPT OF PIDGIN

Pidgin is a contact language - not necessarily a native language of any of its users - and like all contact languages, it comes into being under conditions of interaction among people of different linguistic backgrounds for the purpose of trade and/or colonialism. It usually emerges to meet the communication needs of two or more groups of people who speak different languages and who are in a contact situation. According to Akmajian (2001, p. 585), “Pidgin is a simplified version of some language, often augmented by features from other languages”. Pidgins usually evolve from the fusion of foreign languages and indigenous languages. Crystal ((1998) explains that most of the present day Pidgins grew up along the trade routes of the world especially in those parts where the British, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch built up their empires. Consequently, we talk of Pidgin English, Pidgin French and so on, depending on which language the Pidgin is derived from. So the language that donates more words to form the pidgin becomes the superstrate or lexifier language, and the other language(s) that donates grammatical features or less lexical items becomes the substrate language. In the case of Nigeria Pidgin, (NP, henceforth) English is the superstrate or lexifier language, while other Nigerian indigenous languages become the substrate languages. Put differently, NP, sometimes referred to as Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE), has English as its superstrate (lexifier) while the indigenous languages of the nation form the substrate.

Initially, NP used to be seen generally as the code of the non-literate as well as a bastardisation of English and its use was, therefore, considered a mark of low level of one's proficiency in English. For instance, Akande and Salami (2010, p. 70) quote Agheyisi (1971) as the latter claims that "the typical users of NPE are those that have little or no formal education". That might have been then, but now the reverse is the case. The sociolinguistic reality in Nigeria today is such that the NP is spoken by even the highly educated such as university graduates, professors, lawyers, journalists, broadcasters, etc. Uguru (2003, p. 2) observes that "Nigerian pidgin is a national language but not yet an official language". It has to a high degree, solved the intercommunication need among Nigeria's numerous language groups

It has also been demonstrated that even though it is not an official language in Nigeria, the NP is not used only in informal settings but also in offices and other formal settings. The airwave cum broadcast media industry throughout the country is awash with programmes in the NP on daily basis. In other words, the claim that NP is the code of the non-literate does not have validity as there are a lot of educated speakers in Nigeria who can use both Standard English and NP proficiently.

Furthermore, the use of the NP has become a common phenomenon in various walks of life ranging from homes, educational institutions, hospital, commerce, literary works, to mass media, to politics and government circle. It has become a lingua franca in Nigeria. It enjoys a larger population of speakers than any of the over 400 Nigerian languages as it is used in almost all sectors of Nigerian economy. Ndimele (2014) estimates that the Nigerian Pidgin (NP) is a native language to approximately 3 - 5million people in Nigeria. It is a second language (L2) for another 75 million. Nigerian Pidgin is most widely spoken in the oil rich Niger-Delta where most of its population speak it as their first language. So it has developed to Creole in this area. Diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria can converse in Pidgin language freely, though they usually have their own additional words or local flavor to reflect their cultural milieu and identity.

The concern of the work is not, in any way, to determine if the NP is a language of the educated or the illiterate as it has long been established and seen that its use cuts across all social strata of our society, and therefore is not a substandard language. Rather, we are presently going to establish the fact that the NP is a language in its own right, but not a dialect of the Nigerian English (NE). Perhaps this and its wide spread and acceptability have made some linguists advocate for its elevation as a national language, (Uguru (2003, Patrick 2005 and Ekundayo2018)

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE NP

Whatever controversies that arise from the origin of the NP do not have any impingement on the fact that the NP is a vestigial legacy of the European contact with Africa. The NP is one of the traces of the incursion of the Europeans into Africa and Nigeria precisely. Their trade activities, exploration and colonisation deeply touched the heart of Africa. From the Western coast of Africa, the Portuguese explorers crept into Nigeria, and later Britain stepped in to rule for many years. Within these years of Western exploit and colonisation, the NP emerged as a contact language. Knapik (2009) cites Robert Hall (1966, p. 9) as the latter speaks of the circumstances in which many types of English-based pidgins were created in the following words: "... the various types of Pidgin English arose in various regions, as a result of the same basic stimulus: English seamen and traders (many of whom have voyaged to more than one region) were moved to simplify their language when they were dealing with indigenous peoples – an example of the process termed stimulus diffusion".

Therefore, the origin of NP can be traced to the contact which was established between multi-lingual coastal communities and Portuguese merchants who were joined later by the Dutch and the English. Bashir (2014) believes that the Nigerian Pidgin was initially Portuguese-based as the Portuguese were the first Europeans to establish contact in Nigeria. As it developed, it was gradually replaced by English-based Pidgin. The English-based Pidgin is what is spoken in Nigeria today. The source cites Jowit (1991) as he states “Nigerian pidgin undoubtedly originated and developed its standard forms during the period of 300 years that elapsed between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Its vocabulary is drawn from English, with Portuguese probably the source of such common words as *dash*, *palaver*, *Sabby* (or *sabe*)”. This assertion lends credence to the monogenetic theory of Pidgins which holds that all pidgins and creoles have their origin from a single European language – Portuguese. The theory assumes that some type of pidgin language, dubbed West African Pidgin Portuguese (WAPP), based on Portuguese was spoken from the 15th to the 18th centuries in the forts established by the Portuguese on the West African coast. This variety was the starting point of all the pidgin and creole languages.

The NP, undoubtedly, falls under this linguistic gene pool. In Nigeria, The NP has rapidly developed and spread to all areas of the country, and it is used in almost all sectors of the Nigerian economy for easier communication. Ndimele (2014) estimates that the Nigerian Pidgin (NP) is a native language to approximately 3- 5million people in Nigeria. It is a second language (L2) for well over 75 million. Nigerian Pidgin is most widely spoken in the oil rich Niger-Delta where most of its population speak it as their first language. Pidgin has therefore developed to Creole in this area. Ethnic groups in Nigeria can converse in Pidgin language, though they usually have their own additional words and local flavor signposting their cultural diversity and identity.

THE STATUS OF THE NP AMONG NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

Nigeria as a multilingual nation is made up of different speech communities and diverse ethnic groups. Past studies on linguistic situation in Nigeria have brought to the fore the complexity of the native languages in the country. Bamgbose and Okike cited in Ndiemele (2014) put the figures of Nigerian indigenous languages to three hundred and seventy-four (374) and four hundred (400) languages respectively. Adebijia as cited in Basir (2014) claims that there are over five hundred (500) languages spoken in Nigeria. The glaring fact, therefore, is that Nigeria is a community made up of different ‘tongues’, and this, to a great extent, necessitated the adoption of the English language, a colonial legacy, as both the official and second language of the country. Predominant among the many languages are Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa and Nigerian Pidgin. However, the NP enjoys greater population of users in the country than the three major languages put together. Jowit (1991) cited in Basir (2014, p. 36) confirms the popularity of NP thus: “The situation today is that pidgin flourishes as a medium of inter-ethnic communication, especially in the large cities with many non-indigenous residents (Bendel, Benin, Port Harcourt, etc.) or throughout states with many ethnic groups...” Therefore, in respect of the roles played by Pidgin in Nigeria, neither any of the three major languages nor the official language (English) can match up the NP in terms of spread and usage among Nigerians of all walks of life and social strata.

The vital roles NP plays in Nigeria determine the attitudes adopted by Nigerian speech community towards the language. Studying the attitudes of laymen, educated Nigerians, government and linguists towards the language, Basir (2014) in his work entitled, “Language Attitude and Nigerian Pidgin”, argues that in spite of the fact that NP was confronted with a lot of challenges such as Nigerian government’s inability to recognize and

give it its proper place as a language of wider communication; the dismissive or spiteful attitude of some educated members of Nigerian society towards the NP; low status accorded to the language as the language of the illiterate member of the society; its non-recognition in the education and political life of the country; its undeveloped syntax and orthography; its rejection as an aftermath of colonization, there is still a strong hope that the language will survive, grow and gain its proper place in the scheme of things in the country. Despite the enormous challenges faced by the NP, its prominence over all the Nigerian languages and even English as a means of communication in all nooks and crannies of the nation and in all sectors of national life is undeniable. Besides, NP, like water, is neutral and so evokes no tribal sentiment like the linguistic troika – Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa. It is still spreading and expanding to schools at all levels of education. In fact, in tertiary institutions, apart from the fact that it has not been institutionalized as a medium of instruction, both students and lecturers use the NP regularly in their informal interactions with one another. No single Nigerian language has ever been able to enjoy this level of popularity.

In conclusion, the attitudes of educated Nigerians which comprise students and teachers of higher institutions, public/civil servants, lay people (market people, commercial drivers and motorcyclists, artisans, etc.) the media, literary artists, musicians, government education policy makers and religious institutions, comedians and entertainers favour the use of the Nigerian Pidgin as they are able to express themselves better in it more than any of the many indigenous languages in the country.

THE STATUS OF THE NP AS A LANGUAGE

The NP is a bridge between English and the numerous indigenous languages of Nigeria, aiding communication across all social strata of multi-linguistic Nigerian nation. As mentioned earlier, it derives the bulk of its vocabulary from English, its superstrate language, while its structure and function are closely affiliated to Nigeria's indigenous languages, its substrate languages. It is reputed to be the most widely spoken language in Nigeria with 3 to 5 million native speakers and more than 75 million second language speakers (Elugbe 1995, Faraclas 1996, Egbokhare 2001, en.wikipedia.org) as cited in Aziza (2015). Its speakers cut across geographical locations, ages, educational and socio-economic statuses, mainly because it is ethnically neutral. It is commonly spoken in cities and urban centres, campuses of tertiary institutions, military and police barracks, bus and taxi stations across the country. As a result, it has many regional and social varieties but its standard variety is spoken in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, particularly in cities like Benin, Sapele, Port-Harcourt and Warri, where it has creolised and has an identified community of mother tongue speakers.

The question here is, is NP a language or a dialect of the NE? To answer the question, it is important to decompose the linguistic chemistry and semantic anatomies of "language" and "dialect". Language is an umbrella term incorporating dialects. We can talk of language in isolation of dialects; but we cannot talk about dialect without mentioning language, because dialect is a variety of language. Olaoye (2007, p. 152,) is also of the view that "language as the super-ordinate term can be used without reference to dialects, but dialect is meaningless unless it is implied that there are other dialects and a language to which they can be said to belong". A dialect is a variety of a language that has mutual intelligibility with other dialects whose difference may be only in phonology, morphology and accent. So one language can have many dialects distinguishable only in accent, morphology and phonology. So many dialects of a language have similar syntactic and semantic features. From the foregoing, we therefore have no hesitation in averring that the NP has assumed the status of

a substantive language in its own right. It would appear very illogical and speculative to state, by a mere assumption, that the NP is a language, but not a variety of the NE, without advancing the conditions for considering a linguistic system a language. Comprehensive examination of phonology, syntax, semantics, vocabularies and even the prospect (based on scope and population of usage) of a linguistic system could suffice as parameters in judging its status as a language. Viewing the status of the NP on this prism, it could be established that it has assumed the position of a language and will continue to occupy greater position of one of the most widely spoken African languages as it has attained rapid geographical and population spread of users. Corroborating this Uguru (2003, p. 63) states "... it (NP) is not a variety of English but a 'hybrid' language with its own identity; the indigenous languages are also its ancestors and this should not be ignored". In fact, ethnic and linguistic plurality of the nation has even facilitated its wider spread as its users speak it with great verve laced with their peculiar local creativity thereby creating different varieties or dialects of it based on diverse cultures of the peoples of Nigeria with no fear of linguistic hegemony. In fact, there is a recent report that the NP has begun to enjoy international patronage and usage especially in China. Solomon (2015, p. 36) makes reference to Wardhaugh (1986) as the latter gives credence to this assertion when he states:

"Nigerian pidgin is not just a "bad" variety of the English language but a language with its own history, structure, array of functions, and the possibility of winning recognition as a language. "This is empirically true. Recently, the Nigerian Television Authority reports that Nigerian pidgin has been adopted for use in China. The Chinese have acknowledged the efficiency of the pidgin for transactions with Nigerians in China. The language has been performing many arrays of functions in: the entertainment industry, the media, politics, and commerce as well as in the social life of Nigeria."

Ekundayo (2018, P, 39), in his sublime study of the language situation in the country and the place of the NP examines the works of and agrees with Mafeni (1971) and Ofuana (1981, 1982) as he cites them thus:

"As early as 1971, Mafeni studied the vocabulary, phonology and grammar of NigP (Nigerian Pidgin), noting that Naija, with mutually intelligible varieties, is the most popular language used in Nigeria. He observes that although it is 'convenient to regard' Naija as English-based, it is hugely modified by many 'substrate' (underlying) local languages The English-surface appearance of Naija gives many people the impression that it is a variety of English, a sub-standard variety. Mafeni states that Naija (NP) is not a variety of English, but a language of its own. Ofuani (1981, 1982) also demonstrates that Naija has its verb tense, aspect and mood patterns different from those of English language. Indeed, a comparison of English and Naija verb and auxiliary systems will show clear syntactic differences."

The above factor showing the difference in verb patterns, mood and other varying grammatical structures of the two codes has made the NP different from the Nigerian English; thereby making it a language.

Secondly, the preponderance of proverbs and metaphorical expressions in the NP different from that of the NE has strengthened its status as a language and marked it off from being a variety of the NE. In such expressions, two or more words can be syntactically related, but with a meaning like that of a single word. Such meaning may not be understood from the meaning of any of its component lexical items. Examples are such expressions as:

- Bad belle (ill will, grudge).
- Bottom power (a woman's connection to favour/power through sexual inducement).
- Ajie butter (royal birth).
- Long leg (undue process of getting connection to the top).

Each of these constructions, though having some semblance of English, is quite different from English, collocation-wise and semantically. Ekundayo (2018, P, 40) shows that figurative expressions from local languages, speakers' creativity in the areas of politics, culture, music, science and technology "flourish in the NP for expressing wisdom, sharing knowledge and generating humour". Therefore, Nigerian English is one linguistic system while the Nigerian Pidgin is another.

The third reason is that the NP has its distinct grammar. For instance, the method of past tense formation in the NP is different from that of the NE. "*I don see-am*", (in the NP) which means "*I have seen him/her/it*" (in NE). It is observed that the lexical item "don" is always used as past tense marker in the NP, while a verb in the sentence would take some inflection to indicate the past in NE. The NP therefore has different grammatical structures from the NE, and this means that they are different languages. Ekundayo (2018, p. 41) citing Jowitt, argues that the NP has its peculiar grammar and not a variety deviating from standard form as some may hold. The source also substantiates this view with reference to the work of Faraclas (1989, 2005) as it fully describes and analyses the syntax, morphology, lexicon and semantics of the NP using data elicited from spontaneous speech events in public and private places in the south-eastern Nigeria. Therefore, it could be summed that the NP is a fully developed language with its own rich lexico-semantic features and syntax, which tend to capture the users' experience, feelings and temper that are better expressed in NP than in the NE because it is down to earth.

Interestingly, the syntax of pidgin can be quite unlike the languages from which terms were borrowed and modified. Yule (1996) lists the following as the common linguistic features of English-based pidgins:

- absence of any complex grammatical morphology and a limited vocabulary;
- Inflectional suffixes such as -s (plural marker) and -'s (possessive) on nouns in standard English are rare in pidgins, for example, 'a lot of cars' is translated as 'plenti plenti car'. 'Adaeze's house is very beautiful' becomes 'Adaeze house fine no bi small;
- Functional morphemes often take the place of inflectional morphemes found in the source language. For example, instead of changing the form of 'you' to 'your' as in the English phrase, 'your book', English-based pidgins use a form like 'belong' and change the word order to produce phrase like 'book bilong you'. Again, Pidgin language usually uses reduplication as intensifiers or modifying adverbs. For instance, in Standard English (SE). 'The soup is very palatable' is translated in Nigerian Pidgin (NP) as. 'The supu swit well well' (reduplication).

Pidgin has limited vocabulary. The 'word' 'well' could stand for 'fine', 'well', 'sick', good. The following examples illustrate this assertion:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| • I am well. (SE) | I dey well. (NP) |
| • She is sick. (SE) | She no de well. (NP) |
| • She did it satisfactorily (SE) | She do am well well. (NP) |
| • I am fine (SE) | I dey very well" or I dey well or fine. (NP) |

Ugot and Ogundipe (2011) in Ekundayo (2018. P, 42) have shown that reduplication is a highly productive linguistic habit which users of the NP deploy to express plurality, e.g. (plenty-plenty people), nominalization, e.g. (lie-lie, fake-fake, sabi-sabi, etc.), and adverbials, e.g. (sharp-sharp, now-now).

Lastly, NP whose rhythm and intonation like most African languages are a tonal, is rhythmically different from the Standard English that is stressed-timed. These are all peculiar linguistic features that mark the NP off as a different language from the NE. Therefore, it is wise to recommend that standard orthography should be devised for the NP, and it should be allowed to grow side by side with the NE. There should be a legislation on it. Language policy of the country should not be silent about the place of the NP in national development.

ASPECTS OF SYNTAX OF THE NP

Apart from the SVO (subject – verb – object) that is similar to that of the English, other syntactic features of the NP are not in any way similar to that of the English. The grammatical categories of English do not necessarily fit the patterns of pidgins and that of indigenous Nigerian languages. For instance, there is almost complete absence of grammatical categories such as number, gender, case, person, number, mood and voice in most of these languages, (Olaoye, 2007). Other noticeable areas we examine here are number-marking in nouns, number and gender marking in pronouns, absence of subject-verb agreement, compounding, reduplication, blending, clipping and affixation.

NUMBER MARKING IN NOUNS/PRONOUNS.

The derivation of the plural form of a count noun in the NP is often achieved by placing the independent plural marker “dem” after the noun, as in:

- *De prisoner dem dey work.* The prisoners are working.
- *We don pay de worker dem.* We have paid the workers.

This means that the syntactic structure of a plural noun is N+dɛm. It is important to note that “dɛm” is also the word for the third person plural pronoun (subject and object) in the NP structure, as in:

- *Dem say govment want tar de road.* They said government wants to construct the road.
- *Dem no get liva to challenge us.* They don’t have the gut to challenge/compete with us.

While “dem” is used as third person plural subject and object as shown above, “am” is most often used as a suffix after verbs to indicate third person singular object as follows:

- *We don see-am.* We have it/him/her
- *Dem go write-am.* They will write it.

USE OF THIRD PERSON POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

The use of third person singular possessive pronoun in English which are: his, her and its, are completely absent in the NP. The NP usually uses the word, “im” with no notion of gender to express the third person singular possessive pronoun, as in:

- *Im mama na teacher.* His/her mother is a teacher.
- *We don go im house before.* We have been to his/her house.
- *The dog wunjor im pikin.* The dog has injured its puppy.

Again, one important differentiation of the syntactic feature of the NP from English is in the use of the possessive pronouns. *His*, *hers* and *its* as possessives usually occur as complement of the subject (predicatively) after the nouns in English constructions, but in NP, “*im*” is used in all cases to function attributively (before a noun), as in:

- De car na **im** own. The car is his/hers.
- The husband na **im** own. The husband is hers.
- The footprint na **im** own. The footprint is its.

It is also noted that the third person plural possessive pronoun has two variants, *dem* and *dia* which are used interchangeably in the NP, as in:

- **Dem** house no far or **Dia** house no far. Their house is not far.
- All the foul get mark for **dem/dia** bodi. All the birds have spots on their body.

SUBJECT-VERB CONCORD

There is complete absence of subject-verb agreement in the NP. In English, a verb must agree with the subject in number and in gender. Examples:

- i. Ihn go school every day. He/she goes to school every day.
- ii. Dem go school every day. They go to school every day.

COMPOUNDING

Two or more words are combined to express a single thought in compounding. Examples:

Word	Derived from	Meaning
Badbelle	bad + belly	ill will
Longthroat	long + throat	greed/greedy
Stronghead	strong + head	
disobedient/stubborn		
Badmarket	bad + market	ill luck

REDUPLICATION

Reduplication is a mechanism for forming new words. It involves the repetition of a word (or part of a word) resulting in a distinct lexical item slightly different in meaning. It is used to create new words in lexical derivation. Examples:

Word	Meaning
Wuru-wuru	trick/deceit/corrupt
Jaga-jaga	disorderly
Waka-waka	wanderer
Copi-copi	imitation

BLENDING

This involves the merging of two or more words in such a way that at least one of them loses a part of its original form. Examples:

- Trowey throw + away
- Wunjo wound + injure

CLIPPING

Clipping has to do with the deletion or elision of one or more syllables from either the initial or final part of a word. Examples:

- Bros brother
- Pami palmwine
- Gree agree
- Tori story
- Naija Nigeria

AFFIXATION

When a morpheme is added to a word to influence its meaning or change from one grammatical class to another, such a morpheme is known as an affix. Examples:

- Blacki a dark person
- Lefti southpaw
- Sweeti a dearly beloved person

THE NIGERIAN-NESS OF THE NP

The NP is indisputably the most efficient means of inter-ethnic communication among the densely culturally and linguistically heterogeneous people of Nigeria, given its greater degree of linguistic simplicity which has attracted enormous grass root appeal. The language is currently undergoing a process of social expansion as a result of its dynamic socio-cultural relevance and increased communicative demands, thus, consistently expanding its lexicon and widening the range of application of the meanings of its lexical items to suit the peculiarity of diverse ethnic groups and cultural identity. It has helped to capture the peculiar feelings, culture and identity of the Nigerian people. Its simple grammar and versatile linguistic structure enables all peoples of the nation to adapt it to capture their social milieu through the use of new words, phrases and meaning that have become widely accepted as the nation's peculiar lexicon. For instance, such words as *tokunbo*, *mamaput*, *gist*, *k-leg*, etc.; and phrases such as next tomorrow, send forth, ember month, put to bed, etc. have come to be recognized globally as a linguistic brand peculiar to Nigeria and added to the Oxford Dictionary's lexicon.

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