Towards the Codification of Nigerian English: A Morphosyntactic Analysis of Popular Nigerian English among Nigerian Senior Secondary School Students

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Abstract
This paper investigates deviant and variant usages in Popular Nigerian English morphosyntax. The objectives of the study were to identify PNE morphosyntactic expressions in the essays of senior secondary school (SSS) students in Jos city, classify the usages and identify those that may be considered for standardization. 100 senior secondary school students were randomly sampled from two secondary schools in Jos city to participate in an essay writing exercise. 100 out of the PNE morphosyntactic usages identified in the students' essays were classified by using Jowitt's morphosyntactic categories of Classification, Inflexion, Selection, Copying, Ordering, and Restriction. The 100 items were thereafter put in a structured questionnaire administered to 100 postgraduate (master's degree) students of the University of Jos to identify the variants and the errors by choosing one of 'Acceptable, 'Unacceptable' and 'Not Sure'. Simple percentage was used for the analysis and so, following Jowitt's definition of a variant and an error, only usages that were acceptable to at least 60% of the postgraduate students were regarded as variants while all others were regarded as errors. The results showed that 28 out of the 100 expressions were found acceptable to the postgraduate students while the remaining 72 were deemed unacceptable. Therefore, the researcher concluded that the 28 acceptable usages are variants while the remaining 72 expressions are errors. Recommendations were then made to various stakeholders including lexicographers, governments, curriculum developers, teachers, etc. towards standardizing the variants and avoiding the errors in English usage by Nigerians.
Keywords: Popular Nigerian English, Standard Nigerian English, Morphosyntax, Error, Variant

Introduction

Through globalization, English is no longer the 'exclusive property of the English people' (Adegbija, 1998, p. 209). The spread of English to other parts of the world, first as a result of exploration with the European discovery of America in 1492 by Columbus (Banjo, *Making a Virtue* 62) and later through commerce, missionary activities, colonization and technology, has resulted in the emergence of distinct varieties of English called 'New Englishes' (NE). The 'origin' or coinage of this expression has been credited to Achebe by Banjo (1996, p. 126). A 'New English' is identical to 'English as a second language' and refers to a variety of English that has developed through the education system in an area where a native variety of English is not spoken by the majority of the population. It is used for various purposes and has ultimately been 'localized' or 'nativized' (Platt et al. 1984, p. 2). Such New Englishes include Nigerian English, Indian English, Singaporean English, Kenyan English, Ghanaian English, etc.

Nigerian English refers to 'the phonological, grammatical, and lexical properties that distinguish the English used by Nigerians from varieties of English elsewhere' (Jowitt, 2019, p. 1). It is the variety of English that is marked by Nigerian local 'colorations' or 'flavours'. It is a variety of English, spoken or written, that reflects the Nigerian culture or that expresses Nigeria's cultural peculiarities. Additionally, this is a variety of English that has been adapted to suit the Nigerian sociocultural environment. This adaptation of English in Nigeria is Hunjo's (2002) notion of 'pragmatic nativization' (pp. 61-62). Nigerian English is, therefore, a 'nativized', 'domesticated', 'indigenized', 'localized' or 'Nigerianized' variety of English because 'the English language has become the property of the entire world' (Banjo, 1996, p. 69) and by extension, of the Nigerian people. Thus, expressions in Nigerian English are termed 'Nigerianisms'. Different scholars have studied Nigerian English and in doing this, they have described it and identified its sub-varieties. One of these sub-varieties is 'Popular Nigerian English' (PNE).

Popular Nigerian English was proposed by Jowitt (1991) because, according to him, every category of English usage by Nigerians, representing 'graduates, WASC (now 'WASSC' for 'West African Senior School Certificate') holders and Primary VI certificate holders', contains non-Standard English forms i.e. errors and variants in varying degrees (p. 47). Both the errors and variants are the 'indexical features' of PNE, and a combination of these features with the 'common-core features', which are found in Standard English, produces Nigerian English (Jowitt, 1991, p. 48). He therefore defines Popular Nigerian English as 'the set of all non-SE forms, both errors and variants that … are idiomatic and regularly occurring forms' (Jowitt, 1996, pp. 46-47). PNE is, therefore, a set of unacceptable deviations (errors) and acceptable deviations (variants) in Nigerians' use of English. It refers to 'distinctive Nigerian usage' (Jowitt, 2019, p. 25) in English or 'Distinctively Nigerian Forms' i.e. 'DNFs' (Jowitt, 2022, pp. 3-4) in English. Both these terms refer to English expressions that characterize Nigerians and it is in this sense that PNE is synonymous with Nigerian English. Some of the 'usage' or 'forms' have become so widespread or common that they are, therefore, possible candidates for being regarded as Standard Nigerian English. The main aim of this research is to separate such acceptable variants from errors.

The study is based on the morphosyntax of Popular Nigerian English. Morphosyntax is a blend of morphology and syntax. Morphology studies the structure of words while syntax studies the structure of sentences. Every sentence is made up of phrases and clauses which are in turn made up of words. Thus, syntax is the study of combination of words to make acceptable sentences. As suggested by the above explanation, there is a symbiotic relationship between morphology and syntax. While the former deals with the formation of words, the latter deals with the combination of words. Words have syntactic properties as suggested by collocation, and these properties must be considered for correct formation and combination of words in sentences. This is the notion of morphosyntax – the crux of this paper. When there is non-standard formation or combination of words, therefore, there is a morphosyntactic deviation or error which is defined as 'the breaking of rules for forming or combining whole classes or categories or words, and are not justified on semantic grounds' (Jowitt, 1991, p. 63). Among

others, morphosyntactic properties include the grammatical categories of number, tense, mood, voice and person (Crystal, 2015, p. 315).

While creative, stylistic and pragmatic deviations that occur at the levels of lexis and semantics in New Englishes are considered as acceptable variants, there is a consensus among language scholars that morphosyntactic deviations are errors and so they are unacceptable (Adegbite, 2016, p. 37; Jowitt, 1991, p. 62-63; Jowitt, 2019, p. 74). The reason for this is that such deviations in diatopic varieties of English are different from the exonormative standard and impede intelligibility. However, language is dynamic and so, in the course of time, certain unacceptable usages become standardized and are upgraded to the acrolectal variety of a language. When this happens, such usages are no longer regarded as errors but as variants. Hence, the variants are incorporated into the existing lexicon of the language and become the norm. An example is the word 'okada' (for 'motorcycle') which originated in Nigeria but now features in the 10th edition of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. 'Okada' is not in previous editions of the dictionary.

Most Nigerian educationists regard morphosyntactic deviations in English as unacceptable or as erroneous because they are unacceptable in Standard British English (Jowitt, 2019, pp. 74, 77; Adegbite, 2016, p. 37). However, considering the dynamism that is associated with language, whereby an expression that is regarded as an error today may become standardized tomorrow (Bamiro, cited in Adegbite 2016, p. 37), to what extent can such errors remain so? Jowitt has described PNE as made up of errors and variants but then, as far as this author knows, the two have not been separated especially with regard to the morphosyntax of Nigerian English. This is why this study aims to separate genuine errors from acceptable variants with the aim of proposing the former for standardization in Nigerian English.

Similarly, several linguists have advocated the codification or standardization of Nigerian English as a variety of the English language (Adegbite, 2006; Banjo, 1995; Jowitt, 2007; etc.). Some steps have already been taken by some scholars in this regard, either in the form of a dictionary (Adegbite, Udofot and Ayoola, 2014; Blench, 2005; Igboanusi, 2002) or a collection of Nigerian English expressions (Bamiro, 2015; Jowitt, 1991; Udofot, 2015; etc.). Central to the issue of the standardization of Nigerian English is its grammar or morphosyntax. This study is, therefore, an attempt to complement previous research efforts on the codification of Nigerian English by identifying PNE morphosyntactic expressions that may be considered for standardization.

The specific objectives of the study are to: identify PNE morphosyntactic expressions in the essays of SSS students in Jos city; classify PNE morphosyntactic expressions identified in the essays of the students; and identify PNE morphosyntactic expressions that might be considered as 'standard', and so acceptable, in Nigerian English usage.

Conceptual Review
Nigerian English. Nigerian English is a subset of 'World Englishes', a term coined by Kachru to mean different varieties of English spoken around the world. World Englishes are products of 'glocalization' (Schneider, n.d.) and this means that they emerged in an attempt to use English, a global language, to meet the local needs of its speakers in various countries of the

world. Therefore, Nigerian English is a localized variety of English spoken by Nigerians. Nigerian English was 'born' by British English because the English language was 'bequeathed' to the Nigerians by the British after colonization. Thus, British English can be said to be the superstrate while Nigerian English is a substrate of the English language.

Many linguists have defined Nigerian English. According to Banjo (1996, p. 92), it is 'the totality of varieties of English spoken and written by Nigerians'. He also defines it as 'the written English of Nigerian graduates and the spoken English of some graduates and school certificate holders' (ibid.). By and large, the category of Nigerians used as models here (graduates) is expected to speak and write Standard English. Jowitt defines Nigerian English as 'English which has become 'nativized', 'domesticated', 'indigenized', and so on; it has taken on distinctively Nigerian qualities' (2019, p. 26). Thus, Nigerian English is a 'Nigerianized' variety of English. The 'distinctively Nigerian qualities' have produced 'distinctively Nigerian forms' (DNFs) i.e. 'separate individual linguistic forms that are produced by Nigerians in their speaking and writing' (Jowitt, 2022, p. 6). Those DNFs, whose focus is the written medium in this study, are otherwise known as 'Nigerianism'.

Popular Nigerian English. The term 'Popular Nigerian English' (PNE) was introduced into the literature on Nigerian English by David Jowitt to capture the various sub-varieties of English used by Nigerians. According to him, PNE refers to all non-Standard forms i.e. both errors and variants that occur regularly in the English usage of Nigerians (Jowitt 1991, pp. 46-47). In other words, PNE is a hybrid of deviations and variations in the English of Nigerians, and it is in this sense that PNE is synonymous with 'Nigerianisms' (Jowitt, 2005, p. 15). PNE is said to be 'popular' because it occurs in the English usage of every Nigerian across the basilectal, mesolectal and acrolectal continuum in varying degrees. The 'lectal' variation in language use follows Bickerton's continuum of the Guyanese English creole (Nichols, n.d.) and, in Nigeria, the three lects roughly correspond to primary school certificate holders, senior secondary school certificate holders and graduates of higher institutions. Because senior secondary school students are in the middle of the continuum (mesolect), their English is more typical of PNE than any other group of learners, and this is why they are the target of this study.

According to Jowitt, Popular Nigerian English can be given both a wide and a narrow definition. The wide definition conceives of PNE as containing only indexical features (errors and variants) of English usage among Nigerians while the narrow definition views PNE as containing both indexical features and common-core features i.e. Standard English expressions which are found in all varieties of English (Jowitt, 1991, p. 48). However, this researcher thinks that the application of the words 'wide' and 'narrow' to the definitions by Jowitt should have been reversed. This is because 'wide' presupposes 'general' or 'extended' while 'narrow' means 'restricted' or 'limited'. Thus, limiting the scope of PNE to only the indexical features is 'narrowing' it but extending it to cover both the indexical features and the common-core features is 'widening' it, not the other way round.

Standard Nigerian English. Different varieties of English have been identified, including standard, educated and interlanguage varieties (Aje, 1994). A standard variety of English is one

that is devoid of regional peculiarities and so could serve as a 'model' (Aje, 1994, p. 169) for spoken and written communication. It 'is supposed to be a prestige dialect (Queen's English) [or King's English], exclusively used by the wealthy, public school educated and properly bred upper socio-economic members of the society' (ibid.). He associates educated English with formal education and so, it is spoken by educated people (royal or common, rich or poor, native or non-native) whose English use has no local coloration but is universally intelligible and acceptable. Standard English is usually viewed as educated English because both are devoid of regional peculiarities and so, they are universally intelligible. The interlanguage variety, also a product of the school system, is used in former British colonies, such as Nigeria, where English serves as a second language. Thus, all New Englishes, such as Nigerian English, are interlanguage varieties of the English language.

Divergent opinions have been expressed by scholars on the standardization of non-native interlanguage varieties of English, and particularly, Nigerian English (Adegbite and Olarewaju, 2014; Mbisike, 2007, p. 29). According to Jowitt (2008), cited in Adegbite and Olarewaju (2024, p. 26), the attitude of scholars in Nigeria on the existence of standard Nigerian English can be classified into 'left', 'right' and 'centre'. The 'leftists' believe that standard Nigerian English already exists, the 'rightists' believe that it does not while the 'centrists' agree that although it exists, it has not been codified. This paper thus aligns with the 'centrists' and attempts to identify morphosyntactic expressions in Nigerian English that may be codified.

Opposing views on regional standards of English cannot stand in view of the sociolinguistic reality of the functions of English among non-native speakers. According to Strevens, cited in Mbisike (2007), the ultimate essence of a language is to meet the communicate needs of its speakers, be they native or non-native. Nigerian English meets the communicative needs of Nigerians and so, it is high time a Standard variety of Nigerian English was developed to perform the functions of a standard language in education and other spheres of life in Nigeria. This is the position of this paper. Models of Standard Nigerian English are graduates (Banjo, 1996 and Jowitt, 2019), which is why master's degree students are the model in this study.

Morphosyntax. Morphosyntax is a blend of 'morphology' and 'syntax'. Morphology is the study of 'the structure or forms of words' (Crystal, 2015, p. 314). By the 'structure' of words is meant 'morpheme' which is 'the 'smallest functioning unit in the composition of a word' (Crystal, 2015, p. 313). As such, 'morphology' may be defined as the study of morphemes. 'Syntax is the study of the structure of phrases, clauses and sentences' (Dada, 2021, p. 8). Since phrases and clauses are components of sentences, syntax may simply be defined as the study of the structure of sentences.

In morphosyntax, 'morphemes' (the core of morphology) exist in a syntagmatic relationship within the structure of 'sentences' (the core of syntax), and this relationship may affect the formation of words (morphology) or combination of words (syntax). Hence, 'morphosyntax' may be defined as the study of the relationship (of formation or combination) within the structure (morphemes, words, phrases or clauses) of a sentence. This relationship, which Jowitt refers to as 'combinatorial properties' (1991, p. 107), manifests in the grammatical

categories of number, person, case, gender, voice, tense, aspect, etc. Morphosyntax is synonymous with 'grammar' because, according to Bloomfield, cited in Tomori (2015, p. 21), grammar is made up of morphology and syntax.

Morphosyntactic Variation in Nigerian English. 'By variation is meant that in a certain linguistic context use is made of an item different in certain respects from the Standard item' (Jowitt, *Nigerian English Usage* 58). Thus, variation in English means any instance of language use that is different from its Standard British or Standard American form. Hence, 'variation embraces both errors and variants' (Jowitt, *Nigerian English Usage* 59). An error is an instance of unconventional language use and it is thus a break or violation of the linguistic norm. An error contrasts with a mistake in that while a learner can correct the latter, he or she cannot correct the former (Crystal, 2015). With respect to Nigerian English, Jowitt (1991, p. 62) defines an error as 'a non-SE form that is unacceptable to a significant number of educated Nigerians, while a variant is an idiomatic non-SE form that is acceptable to and used by most educated Nigerians'.

The words 'most' and 'significant' in Jowitt's definition above are vague but according to https://www.quora.com/What-percent-does-the-word-most-mean-wnen-citing-statistics, "While 'most' literally means more than half, it is best used to mean something like 60% to 90%". On the other hand, 'significant' is a relative term that is subject to individual interpretation based on context or prevailing circumstances. Based on this and within the context of this study, this researcher suggests that in Jowitt's definition above, 'most' means 'at least 60%' while 'significant' means 'at least 20%'. Therefore, a variant is a non-Standard English form that is acceptable to at least 60% of educated Nigerians while an error is a non-Standard English form that is unacceptable to at least 20% of educated Nigerians. 'Variant' is synonymous with 'variance' or 'variation' while 'error' or 'solecism' is synonymous with 'deviant', 'deviance' or 'deviation'.

A violation of the relationship between the units of a sentence results in a morphosyntactic or grammatical deviation or error which is defined as 'the breaking of rules for forming or combining whole classes or categories or words' (Jowitt, 1991, p. 63; 2019, p. 75). Most Nigerian educationists regard morphosyntactic deviations in English as unacceptable or as erroneous because they are unacceptable in Standard British English (Jowitt, 2019). Hence, while they consider phonological, lexical, semantic, pragmatic and stylistic differences between Standard English and Nigerian English as acceptable deviations, they view morphosyntactic differences as unacceptable deviations. (Adegbite, 2016). However, considering the dynamism that is associated with language, whereby an expression that is regarded as an error today may become standardized tomorrow (Bamiro, cited in Adegbite, 2016), to what extent can such errors remain so? This is why this study views such usages that are different from Standard English by Nigerians as variations (errors and variants) rather than only deviations (errors). This view agrees to that of PNE which has been described as made up of both errors and variants.

Theoretical Framework

Jowitt's (1991, pp. 111-124) approach forms the basis for the classification of the PNE morphosyntactic expressions. It is as briefly reviewed below.

a. **Classification:** This is the error of wrong classification and comprises various categories such as: class or category shift in which a word belonging to one class in Standard English (SE) is given the syntactic characteristics of another class in PNE; countable and uncountable nouns in which uncountable nouns in SE are treated as countable nouns in PNE and vice versa; state verbs and event verbs in which case stative verbs in SE are made dynamic in PNE; object patterns where a verb that does not require an object (an intransitive verb) in SE is assigned one (made transitive) in PNE and vice versa; prepositional and non-prepositional verbs where a prepositional verb in SE is made non-prepositional in PNE and vice versa.

b. **Inflexion:** Henceforth spelt as 'inflection', according to Jowitt (1991, p. 116), this means 'syntactically motivated changes in the shape of words'. This may take the form of wrongly inflecting a noun with the 's' suffix, a verb with the 'ed' suffix', or various other inflectional forms. Examples include: double marking whereby double past tenses are wrongly used (e.g. 'I didn't came'), addition of 'ed' to irregular verbs e.g. 'grinded', addition of 's' to irregular nouns e.g. 'wifes', addition of 's' to zero plurals e.g. 'sheeps', dropping of 's' from pluralia tantum e.g. 'trouser', etc.

c. **Selection:** Here, a learner wrongly chooses a word as a realization of a syntactic category. This is common in the use of prepositions where, for instance, 'at' is used in PNE for names of big towns, cities, etc. instead of the SE 'in'. It is also found in tenses whereby the past perfect marker 'had' is used in PNE in place of the present perfect marker 'have'. Other tense selection errors occur in the use of sequence of tenses, the awkward use of 'might have' in present tenses, etc.

d. **Copying:** It is an error of redundant or unnecessary use of words. Examples include subject copying as in 'my sister she', 'the man who his', 'the money which it', etc. Others are: 'should in case', 'still yet', 'although … but', 'return back', 'no any', 'must have to', 'more taller', etc.

e. **Ordering:** This is syntactic distortion in that it concerns moving words from their rightful syntactic positions in Standard English. It involves: wrong sequencing of determiners such as demonstrative + possessive + noun as in 'this your house' instead of the Standard 'this house of yours', wrong sequencing of the first person pronoun as in 'I and Peter will travel' instead of the Standard 'Peter and I will travel', etc.

f. **Restriction:** This concerns the avoidance of syntactic forms found in Standard English. The learner is, therefore, said to restrict or limit himself to certain structures or forms. Restriction occurs with: reflexive tags and echo questions whereby learners in PNE use 'isn't it?' as a tag after all statements; tenses and auxiliaries in which learners avoid using future perfect tenses, perfect progressive tenses and the auxiliaries 'ought to', 'needn't', 'dare' and 'be to'. Others are avoidance of passives, ordinals, contractions, the curative 'have', etc.

Methodology

The study adopts a survey research design to gather opinions from respondents on certain questions. There were two research populations and two research instruments. The first population was all the senior secondary school students in Jos metropolis out of whom one hundred students were selected by simple random sampling technique from two schools to take an essay test (first instrument) on given topics. Their essays were marked and PNE morphosyntactic usages identified in the essays were classified by using Jowitt's morphosyntactic parameters of Classification, Inflection, Selection, Copying, Ordering, and Restriction and structured into a questionnaire (second instrument). The questionnaire was administered to 100 master's degree students (second population) of the University of Jos. 20 students were randomly selected from each of the five faculties of Arts, Education, Law, Management Sciences and Natural Sciences. There was no preference for any faculty because it is believed that students at this level of education should have enough competence in English to identify acceptable and unacceptable expressions. Besides, the research aimed to test the widespread usage or otherwise of the expressions among Nigerians of various disciplines, as represented by the different faculties.

The aim of the questionnaire was to test which of the morphosyntactic expressions were acceptable to the postgraduate students. Thus, they were to choose from the options 'Acceptable', 'Unacceptable' and 'Not Sure'. Simple percentage, a table and a chart were used for the analysis. Following Jowitt's definition of a variant and an error as earlier explained, only expressions that were acceptable to at least 60% (most) of the graduates (educated Nigerians) are regarded as variants while those that were unacceptable to at least 20% (a significant number) of the graduates and those they were not sure of were regarded as errors.

Results and Discussion

A total of 216 PNE morphosyntactic expressions were identified in the essays of the students. However, only 100 of them were sampled for inclusion in the questionnaire used for spatiotemporal constraints. The table and chart below summarize the acceptable expressions otherwise called 'variants' and the unacceptable expressions called 'errors'.

SN	PNE Morphosyntactic Category	Variants Frequency	Percentage	Errors Frequency	Percentage
1	Classification	8	28.6%	12	16.7%
2	Inflection	5	17.8%	15	20.8%
3	Selection	10	35.7%	10	13.9%
4	Copying	1	3.6%	19	26.4%
5	Ordering	3	10.7%	7	9.7%
6	Restriction	1	3.6%	9	12.5%
	Total	**28**	**100%**	**72**	**100%**

Table 1: Variants and Errors Relating to the PNE Morphosyntactic Categories
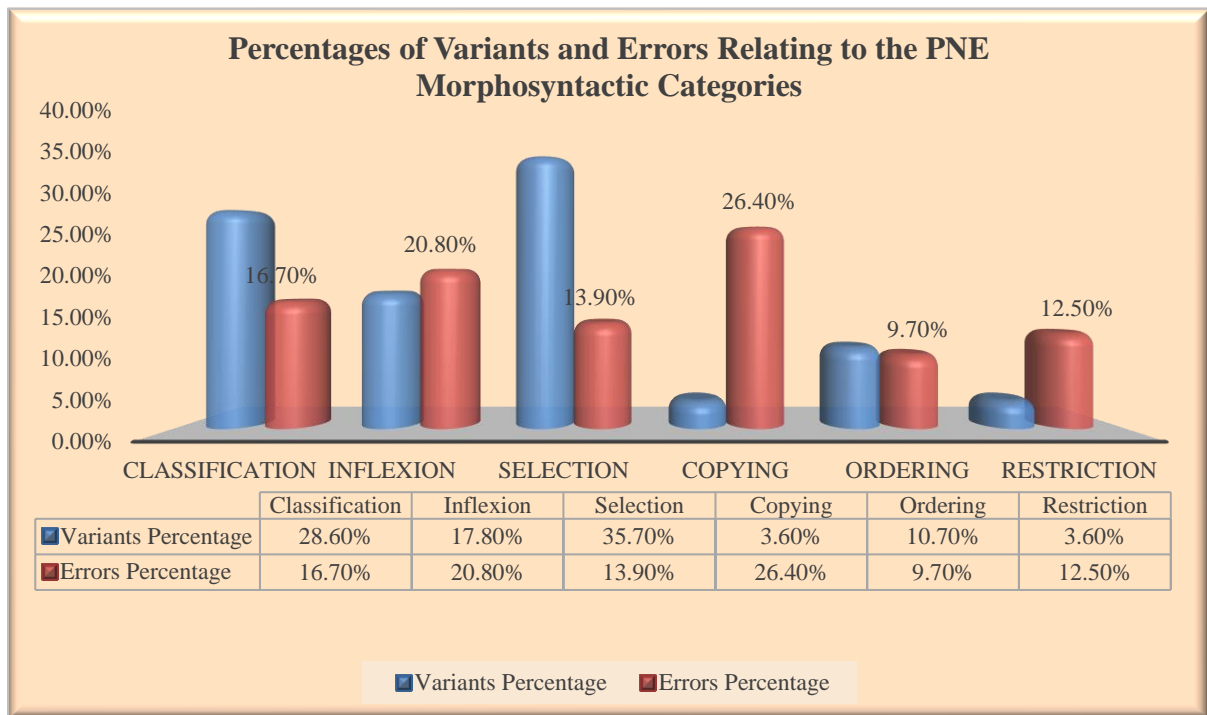
Figure 1: Variants and Errors Relating to the PNE Morphosyntactic Categories

The table and chart above indicate that out of the 100 PNE morphosyntactic expressions in the questionnaire, only 28 are regarded as variants while the remaining 72 are regarded as errors. Under the variants, Classification has 8 variants representing 28.6%, Inflection has 5 representing 17.8%, Selection has 10 amounting to 35.7%, Copying has 1 amounting to 3.6%, Ordering has 3 giving 10.7% and Restriction has 1 giving 3.6%. Thus, Selection with a frequency of 10 and a corresponding 35.7% has the most variants while Copying and Restriction each with a frequency of 1 and 3.6% have the least variant. Under the errors, Classification has 12 errors making 16.7%, Inflection has 15 making 20.8%, Selection has 10 representing 13.9%, Copying has 19 representing 26.4%, Ordering has 7 amounting to 9.7% while Restriction has 9 amounting to 12.5%. Therefore, Copying with a frequency of 19 which corresponds to 26.4% has the most errors while Ordering with a frequency of 7 amounting to 9.7% has the least errors.

The main objective of this study was to identify PNE morphosyntactic usages that are acceptable and which may be regarded as standard in Nigeria. On this, the study found that out of 100 PNE morphosyntactic expressions sampled from those used by the SSS students, 28 can be regarded as acceptable variants while the remaining 72 are genuine errors. Most of the usages (72) are errors, thus confirming the assertion by Banjo (1996), Jowitt (2019), Adegbite (2016), among others that (morpho)syntactic deviations in English use by Nigerians are regarded as errors by most educated Nigerians.

Although morphosyntactic deviations are regarded as erroneous by most educated Nigerians as earlier noted, there comes a time when certain errors, by reason of common or widespread usage, become acceptable and are thus standardized (Bamiro). This is an attribute of every growing language – the dynamism that characterizes every 'living' language. Errors that have become common, widespread or popular among the users of a language, and which may eventually be standardized, are called 'institutionalized errors' (Jowitt *Nigerian English Usage* 61). Therefore, the implication of the 28 variants in the questionnaire is that they have become 'institutionalized' or acceptable among Nigerians and they may thus be proposed for standardization. This is the position of scholars such as Ekundayo (2013), Ogunjobi and Akindutire (2020), Ohakamike (2016), Opara (2019), among others on Nigerian English.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

The following are the major findings from the study. 216 PNE morphosyntactic expressions were found in the students' write-ups and they cut across the various categories of: Classification, Inflection, Selection, Copying, Ordering and Restriction. The following 28 PNE morphosyntactic usages are hereby presented for consideration as candidates for standard Nigerian English usage:

demand for	reply (v) a letter	to you and i
discuss about smth	operate smth	equipments
enjoy (intransitive)	horn (v)	uplifment
matured (adj)	academics (studies)	insultive
be opportuned (to do smth.)	'in' for small places	charge sb, for (a crime)
good in (skilful at)	so … to	round up (work)
on the long run	congratulate sb for	all what (happened)
'except' for 'unless'	result to	on my way going
'even' as a mobile adverb	indiscriminate order of adjectives	
other + number, and	deliver a baby.	

The PNE morphosyntactic categories contribute the variants in the following descending order: Selection, Classification, Inflection, Ordering, Copying and Restriction. The English language, having become a world language; hence its ownership transcends its ancestral home and the emergence of non-native varieties of the language (New Englishes) is a testament to this. Like British English, American English, Australian English or any other recognized variety, Nigerian English is used to express the cultural peculiarities of the Nigerian people. Nigerian English is, therefore, a product of the sociolinguistic reality of its users and this fact has been proved in this study with a description of the morphosyntax of Popular Nigerian English which is a sub-variety of Nigerian English.

The study has shown, among other things that, contrary to the notion of some scholars in the field, not all morphosyntactic expressions in Nigerian English can be regarded as errors. With widespread usage, certain expressions have become acceptable and so, established as the norm among the users of English in Nigeria. It is, therefore, important to differentiate between

genuine errors and acceptable variants in the language (as this study has done) so that, like the parent British English, Nigerian English can be standardized and thus be empowered to perform various roles among its users because 'it is what the users of the language do, not what a small elite would want them to do which counts in the end' (Kennedy, 1985, p. 7).

The study recommends that the 28 PNE morphosyntactic variants identified by this study should be standardized. Hence, lexicographers should include them in the Nigerian component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-Nig) and future editions of dictionaries of Nigerian English usage and other standard dictionaries. The Nigerian government at the federal, state and local government levels should organize seminars for teachers of English to acquaint them with acceptable variants of Nigerian English usage as found in this study.

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