DEVIATIONS IN POPULAR NIGERIAN ENGLISH SYNTAX

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Abstract

Nigerian English has been recognized as a distinctive variety of world English. However, documentation of what constitutes Standard and non- standard forms of Nigerian English has so far been insufficient to establish a comprehensive grammar of Nigerian English. This study undertook to analyze syntactic deviations in Popular Nigerian English (PNE). Our aim was to identify peculiar syntactic features that characterize Popular Nigerian English and to examine factors responsible for the peculiarities. Three hundred Nigerian English speakers who have undergone studies in the English language were selected through a Stratified Random Sampling (SRS) technique from different Federal Institutions of learning and at various levels of educated usage in Nigeria. A quantitative approach using frequency count and percentages was adopted in the analysis. The peculiar PNE forms that have high frequency of occurrence and wide distribution in the corpus were analyzed and compared with Standard British English to determine the nature of deviations. The study revealed that popular written Nigerian English slightly deviates from Standard British English. The deviations are widespread and regular and the structures are intelligible both nationally and internationally. The forms emerged mainly as a result of new socio-cultural realities in the Nigerian environment. The study urges that PNE general deviations should be accepted both nationally and internationally.

Key Words: Popular Nigerian English, Syntax, Standard British English, Lexicon, Phonology

1.0   Introduction

English has been in use in Nigeria for more than four centuries, first as the language of the British colonial power and later after her independence in 1960, as the official language. Nigerian English (NE) is a cover term for the varieties of English spoken and written in Nigeria (Ogunsiyi, 2006). These varieties exhibit distinctive phonological, lexical, morphological and syntactic features stemming from regional linguistic differences. Many of these features converge into what can be considered as, "general features of Nigerian English". Although a wide range of studies on individual aspects of Nigerian English - phonology, lexis, semantics, syntax and pragmatics - have been done, the studies have so far not culminated in a comprehensive grammar of Nigerian English. So far, linguists agree that NE has established itself as a distinctive variety that is not to be mistaken for an impoverished version of the Standard British English (SBE), nevertheless the question of how unique or different Nigerian English is, compared to other varieties of English is open.

It has been established among scholars on language contact that whenever a language leaves its home and settles in another geopolitical region, it must acquire the local colour of its new environment (Awonusi, 2004). Since English has been used as a second and official

language in Nigeria for a long time, it is normal to expect the English in Nigeria, to manifest distinctive features which distinguish it as a bona-fide variety of world Englishes.

Nigerian English represents a network of relationships arising out of the functioning of English in the Nigerian setting, and social-cultural relations. It has to meet the demands that the users make on it and serve functions which are specific to their cultures. As Bamgbose (1995: 26) observed, the English language has been nativized, acculturated and twisted to express unacustomed concept and mode of interaction in Nigeria. Hence, its distinctive forms need to be identified and documented.

Adesanoye (1973) used occupation as a criterion, for looking at grammatical and lexical deviations in written Nigerian English. He identified three varieties of written Nigerian English and postulated that the variety three Nigerian English - the usage of post graduate class, university lecturers, supervisors, judges, and administrators - is the standard Nigerian English. Variety two is the non - standard variety, while variety one is written by semi- illiterate users. Okoro (2004) goes on to categorize NE into four. These are: common core features, peculiar Nigerianisms, local idioms and characteristic errors. Odumuh (1981; 1984) provided detailed studies on the syntactic features of NE. Other studies in the field of English studies in Nigeria have also focused on spoken Nigerian English. Brosnahan (1958) identified four levels of NE based on the educational levels of the speakers. Eka (1985) identified comprehensively phonological features that mark off Standard Nigerian English. Banjo (1971), based on international and national intelligibility identified four levels of spoken NE. Udofot (1997) was on the suprasegmental features, among others.

A close examination of variety differentiation in NE reveals an undeniable and diffuse occurrence of non-standard forms in Nigerian English. It is the occurrence of non standard forms in Nigerian English usage that led Jowitt (1991) to coin the expression 'Popular Nigerian English (PNE)' to refer to stable Nigerianisms, that is, distinctive Nigerian forms. Jowitt explained that the usage of Nigerians is inconsistent and diverse to be represented into a neat hierarchy. He recognized the fact that Nigerianisms (distinctively Nigerian Forms) are found in all sub-varieties of Nigerian English though not in uniform regularity. Jowitt observed the English usage in Nigeria to be in continuum with two polarities: greatest deviations and the standard, respectively. He observed that all speakers (whether by education or occupation criterion) of NE have certain features in common; the presence of some non-standard forms in their usage which is most proficient NE speakers and native speakers would regard as errors and those that they would regard as variants. Jowitt made a comprehensive catalogue of the peculiar forms of NE at different grammatical levels and tagged these Popular Nigerian English. According to Jowitt, PNE is a set of forms that are stable and occur regularly in the usage of Nigerians in general but not in uniform regularity. These are stable Nigerianisms which occur in the usage of near total of Nigerian English speakers but differ from Standard British English. Jowitt observed that PNE constitutes a unit which is found in every-sub-variety of Nigerian English. Expantiating on this issue, Jowitt (2007) observed that some PNE expressions that are widespread may in future be recognized as national Standard. PNE is therefore the indexical features of Nigerian English (Jowitt 1991). It is the   English usage of Nigerians in general. Jowitt maintained that the term "popular" is not a derogatory term rather it implies widespread use. PNE grows through nourishment from Nigerian roots into national standards.

In this study, PNE is defined as widespread Nigerian English usage that inevitably reflects and is coloured by Nigerian linguistic peculiarities, settings and culture. These are

typical expressions that are widespread and regularly occur in the usage of most educated Nigerians at a low level of education that is, expressions which deviate from SBE.

Deviation is a term in linguistic analysis used to indicate forms that are different from the native speakers' varieties of English (see Crystal, 1975). In this study, deviation refers to peculiar structures that reflect the growth of English in Nigerian setting. It is an acceptable departure from the norm. Deviation is a way of writing that is attributive to a peerson or a society. Such forms do not tamper with the grammatical rules of a language. Adeniran (2005) describes deviations as usage the syntax of which does not do any communicatively disenabling violence to the grammar of English as used worldwide .The aim of the study is to identify the peculiar syntactic features of popular written Nigerian English and to examine the factors responsible for the peculiarities. We will examine the differences between PNE syntax and SBE.

1.1 Statement of Problem
For some decades, there has been an intermittent debate about the emergence and nature of varieties of the English Language in different countries around the world which continue to employ the English language extensively as a second language in education, law, government, journalism as well as commence. Such countries display in their usages occasional deviations from SBE. In a country like Nigeria where English is employed as a second language, occasional deviations from Standard British English are bound to occur. As Grieve (1964) pointed out, the fact about English in Nigeria is not just that it is different from British English; rather there are varieties of English in NE. The issue is that while some scholars appear confident that genuine deviations exist at various language levels in NE, and that the only problem is to identify their features and codify them, to some other scholars, NE is all about errors or bad English.

Indeed the developments in NE have reached such a proportion that its distinctive features need to be identified, documented and awareness created to encourage national acceptability and international intelligibility. In view of these facts the researcher set out to examined the undeniable diffused occurrence of distinctively Nigerian English forms in the written English of varieties one and two NE exponents at the level of syntax. The study will not only contribute to the understanding of the characteristic feature of NE but also create awareness of its peculiarities.

2.0   Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework adopted in this study is the Halliday's Systemic functional approach to language. The Systemic function theory (SFT) is basically designed to account for how language functions to convey meaning that language users want to communicate. The central theoretical principle is that language is a systemic resource for expression in contexts. Language evolved in response to the specific demands of the society in which it is used. Its use depends on the context of situation and context of culture (see Halliday, 1985a). This implies that different cultures and social context lead speakers to choose differently from the repertoire of the language they have at their disposal. The systemic functional theory is a theory of communication which seeks to analyze how language users express meaning. Language is studied with reference to its function in any given culture. SFT is a meaning based theory. According to Halliday (1973) language users unconsciously say what they choose to say out of several options available to them in the language they use and the choice is functionally determined. This implies that function influences the structure and organization of language.

In Halliday (1985) scheme, meaning comes from functions of language. All languages involve three generalized functions or meta functions: Ideational meta function (through this a speaker expresses his experience of the external world and his own world of consciousness.) The Interpersonal meta function is concerned with the interaction between speaker and addressee ie the grammatical resources for enacting social roles in general . The textual meta function weaves together the other two functions to create texts. A text occurs in a context of situation (COS) which uses sociolinguistic factors to facilitate interpretation. Thus the systemic functional theory provides the framework for analyzing   patterns of deviations in PNE syntax.

3.   Methodology

The subjects for this study were three hundred Nigerians of varied educational levels and some junior workers with Ordinary National Diploma certificate (OND) from different Federal Institutions in Nigeria: two Federal Government Secondary Schools and two Federal Universities in the south east geopolitical zone in the country. The subjects were selected by a Stratified Random Sampling (SRS) technique. Our yardstick for stratification was the years of exposure to English language because our focus is on features that are stable and widespread in PNE. The subjects were grouped into three categories: group one consists of those who have been exposed to formal English learning for a period of nine to eleven years – junior and senior secondary school graduates (JS3 and SS3). The years 1 and 2 undergraduates who have been exposed to formal learning of the English language for the period of twelve years were in group two. Junior Civil Servants employed in Federal institutions with Ordinary National Diploma certificate (OND) or National Certificate in education were in group three. They have studied English for a period of fourteen years.

The selection of the subjects from Federal Government in the Southeast is significant, in that the institutions are expected to have among their students / staff population, students and staff from different ethnic groups in Nigeria. The subjects were instructed to indicate their tribes.

We also ensured that the subjects were taught English by teachers who are Nigerians and in the Nigerian settings, because the study is aimed at identifying forms that are peculiar to Nigerian English speakers.The students used for the study were given four essay topics to write on one. The essay topics were:

   (i)   My most memorable day in life
   (ii)   The career I like best.
   (iii)   Should kidnappers be executed?
   (iv)   My school or my campus on saturday

The essay topics were administered to the subjects during their mock examination and for the undergraduate when they were writing their assessment tests. One hundred personal files of the junior workers were randomly selected; we also made sure that different cadres of junior workers were examined so as to ensure that features documented were widespread and regular. The cadres included the departmental secretaries, computer-operators (typists), security men and technical officers. Different types of letters were read. These were: petitions for promotion or increment in salary, answers to queries and letters asking for permission to go on different kinds of leave. These contexts equally call for the creative use of the language.

In all, three hundred scripts were read. The corpus consists of three hundred essay scripts written by junior and senior secondary school graduates as well as Years one and two undergraduates. One hundred different types of letters written by the junior workers in different departments were gone through.   The distinctive PNE syntactic features were identified and analyzed.Two native speakers were employed to give the SBE equivalents. The typical PNE structures were classified into different grammatical categories.   The frequency count and percentage values were used to determine the   distribution of peculiar PNE syntactic features at the levels under study.

## 4.0	Presentation of Data

There were instances of syntactic deviations in PNE data. Deviations were found in the following forms in PNE syntax.

**4.1.1	Transitive Verbs used as Intransitive Verbs:** The study observed a deviation in the use of transitive verbs in PNE data. The direct objects of transitive verbs were frequently omitted in their structures. There were 438 instances of intransitive use of the transitive verbs in PNE data representing 7%. Examples are in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Transitive Verbs Used Intransitively

	PNE	SBE
1.	I will appreciate if you grant my request	I will appreciate it if you grant my request.
2.	We will appreciate if you send us details soon	We will appreciate it if you send us details soon
3.	On Fridays we pluck the oranges from the trees and keep in the store for sale	On Fridays we pluck the oranges from the trees and keep them in the stores for sale.
4.	He collected my provision and took to matron.	He collected my provision and took it to the matron
5.	We carried the lockers outside, swept the dormitories and arranged again.	We carried the lockers outside, swept the dormitories and arrange them again
6	On saturdays we enjoy	We enjoy ourselves on saturdays.
7.	That day mum prepared a delicious meal for me and I enjoyed.	Mum prepared a delicious meal for me and I enjoy it.

In the table above the words appreciate, enjoyed, keep, arrange, etc which function as transitive verbs in SBE were used intransitively in PNE. The subjects showed their knowledge of the fact that context aids interpretation. According to Halliday (1985) there is a relationship between context and structure in a language. PNE exponents assumed that their audience knew the activities going on hence the direct objects of the verbs are retrievable from the context. This may be the reason for the omissions of the direct objects in their structures. We observed that in popular written Nigerian English the distinction between transitive verbs and intransitive verbs is much more than the traditional distinction, the context and the attendant situation are equally important (See Halliday, 1978)

**4.1.2	Preference for Indefinite Pronouns:** Preference for indefinite pronouns is another type of deviation observed in the PNE data .Words that are not specific in communications

were preferred where SBE would have used nominal. PNE has 324 instances of this type with 5.4%. Examples are:

(i)   Someone told me about the school.
(ii)   The students do their own thing on Saturdays.
(iii)   We wash our things on Saturdays
(iv)   Dad branched somewhere on our way to school to buy me something.
(vi)   I went to find out something from my lecturers that day.
(vii)   With reference to the things happening to me I wish to apply for causal leave.
(viii)   We do the usual things on Saturday.

This peculiarity relates to ideational function of language, the subjects exhibit their rights to choose the information to give and the one to withhold. It also relates to interpersonal function of language because the relationship between the writer and the audience does not require detailed information about the writer's activities. The interpersonal relationship between the participants influenced the choice or preference for the indefinite pronouns of those forms. However, indefinite items are employed to express the information worthy of concealment in communication milieu and they do not lead to communication breakdown among the participants.

4.1.3   Resumptive Pronouns/ Redundant Pre- modifiers: The data revealed twmain types of focused constructions: Resumptive pronoun and redundant pre –modifiers. Resumptive pronouns refer to occurrence of noun, followed immediately by a pronoun with the same referent within a sentence. Unlike in SBE, resumptive pronoun is grammatical in most Nigerian languages. There are 490 instances of resumptive pronouns/redundant pre-modifiers in PNE data representing 8.1%. In fact, the use of double subjects in these contexts resembles the use of topicalization which is common in SBE as illustrated in this sentence: John Coker, he is to blame (SBE), which contrasts the PNE form: My father he is the Principal.

The two processes are slightly different since the pronoun in topicalization is in apposition to the noun, in contrast to the resumptive pronoun in PNE. Bamiro (1985) refers to such usage as focalization. Focalization is a common linguistic feature in Nigerian languages. Resumptive pronoun is used to achieve emphasis in a statement. The use of resumptive pronouns and redundant pre- modifiers   are therefore of inter-language origin. Since English language operates in Nigerian context it is expected that features of the indigenous languages filter across to English. However, focalization is restricted to informal conversations (cf Bamiro, 1985). As Halliday (1978) observed, the mode affects the structure. PNE exponents use informal forms in a formal context. This is another source of deviation. See Table 2 below for examples.

Table 2: Resumptive Pronouns/Pre modifiers

	PNE	SBE
12.	Medicine it is the only profession I like	Medicine is the only profession I like.
13.	The principal he is my father.	My father is the principal.
14.	The politicians they are the ones that encourage kidnapping.	The politicians are the ones encouraging kidnapping.
15.	Us we are weak in science subjects	As students, we are weak in the sciences.
16.	The books they are being taken to the library.	The books are being taken to the library.
17.	My leave it was not granted last year	My leave was not granted last year.
18.	Kidnapping it will never stop in Nigeria	Kidnapping will not stop in Nigeria.
19	This my school is good	My school is good.
20	This our principal is good	Our principal is good.

4.1.4   Deviation in the Use of Reflective Pronoun: PNE differs from SBE in the use of reflective pronouns. We observed a misuse of the reflective pronouns. PNE   deviates from SBE in this aspect by having 477 occurrences of misuse of reflective pronouns with 8%.   Alo (2005) attributed this feature to the fact that most Nigerian languages do not make use of the distinctions. He explained that the Yoruba language has only one lexical item for both themselves and one another – '*arawo*'. Likewise the Igbo language has one lexical item for both one another and each other '*onwe – ha*'. This explains   the source of this kind of deviation. Table 3 below illustrates instances of this type of deviation.

Table 3: Deviation in the Use of Reflective Pronouns

	PNE	SBE
19.	They are deceiving themselves	They are deceiving each other.
20.	We discussed with ourselves about how to get our promotion.	We discussed among ourselves regarding getting our promotion.
21.	The leaders fought themselves after deceiving the masses	The leaders fought each other after deceiving the masses.
22.	My boss adviced us to cooperate and know ourselves better	My boss advised us to cooperate
23.	Girls always fight each other on weekends	Girls always fight themselves on weekend.
24.	We visit ourselves in the dormitory	We visit in the dormitory.

4.1.5   Pluralization of Non-count Nouns: Pluralization of non - count nouns is another major deviation in the data. The subjects imposed the plural forms on words and expressions that do not have plural forms in SBE. .Pluralization of non count nouns is partly as a result of an intra-lingual influence. The problem is that some nouns perform the functions of countable and uncountable nouns in English language. The students therefore found it difficult to distinguish special contexts where either countable or uncountable noun should be used.

Again, words that are semantically related are treated alike by the subjects, for instance, the words 'action' and 'behaviour' are synonymous. The subjects assume that since the word 'action' has a plural form 'behaviour' should also have a plural form. But absolute synonyms do not exist. As a result of this we have the following forms in the data: works, females, staffs,

foods, etc. Verman (1982) explained that plurality serves as a marker of power, prestige and respect in West African contexts. This fact is illustrated in the frequent use of plural pronouns for singular referents in the PNE data. Examples are in these sentences:

25) When I got to my department they (the secretary) told me to sign.

26) I applied last year but they (the boss) did not approve it.

In the above sentences 'they' is used honorifically to address an older member of the society. PNE data has an overwhelming 1138 instances of wrong plural forms representing 19%. Some of the cases of wrong plural forms are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Deviation in Plural Formations

	PNE	SBE
27	My mum gave me much advices whenever am returning back to school	My mother gave advice that will be useful when I return to school.
28.	They stole all my soaps in the dormitory.	They stole my soap in he dormitory.
29.	I ordered for myself foods and chicken parts and washed them with bottles of beer.	I ordered myself a meal and washed it down with a few bottles of beer.
30.	My father is six feets tall	My father is six feet tall.
31.	I hereby request that the following stationaries be supplied.	I hereby request that the following stationary be supplied.
32.	I observed that my university lacks infrastructures and laboratory equipments.	I observed that my university lacks infrastructure and laboratory equipment.
33.	I gave you an advice as my child, you rejected them.	My child, I gave you advice and you rejected it.
34.	I like eating with cutleries	I like eating with cutlery.
35.	They stole all the furnitures in our office.	They stole all the furniture in our office.
36	These information are what we need to survive.	This information is what we need to survive.
37.	We need these information as new staffs.	We need this information as new staff.
38.	I was in charge of all the staffs	I was in charge of all staff.

4.1.6   Stative Verbs Made Progressive Deviation is also noticeable in the use of stative verbs. This type of deviation occurred most in the scripts of JS3 and SS3 graduates. The most persistent forms were observed in the progressive use of the verbs 'to' 'have', 'hear', 'like', and 'understand' etc. PNE has 422 instances of progressive use of stative verbs, representing 7%. The persistent deviations identified in PNE data are shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Stative Verbs Made Progressive

	PNE	SBE
39.	I am doubting if the campus will improve before I graduate	I doubt the campus will improve before I graduate.
40.	The prospect of the medicine profession is very great, by this I am meaning expectations that go along with it.	The idea of the medical profession is very great,
41.	She is thinking that she is prettier than me.	She thinks that she is prettier than I am.
42.	Some of our staff are lacking morals.	Some of our staff lacks morals.
43.	The man is marrying my sister	The man is married to my sister.
45.	Our factory is consisting of six workers	Our factory consists of six workers.
46.	Am liking my teachers now that I am graduating	I like my teachers now that I am graduating.
47.	I am not hearing everything in class	I can't hear every thing in class.
48.	My principal is rich he is having many houses in Lagos.	My principal is rich; he has multiple houses in Lagos.

4.1.6 Deviations in Word Collocation Another aspect of deviation is in the area of word collocation. This type of deviation can be traced to failure to appreciate the syntactic and stylistics restrictions on the use of words. In this context, words that are synonymous   were endowed with similar syntactic potentials. The subjects did not acknowledge the fact that absolute synonyms do not exist. For instance, the sentence, 'We were invited but we did not ruminate it necessary to go' was based on the assumptions that the words 'consider' 'think' and 'ruminate' are synonymous. However, the sentence deviates from SBE because the verb 'ruminate' has been assigned to wrong grammatical category. The subjects did not recognize that notionally equivalent words do not necessarily satisfy the same functions. Also as Halliday (1985) noted the linguistic contexts also play a role in the choice of words in a language. The context of culture is equally important because it affects the choice of words. PNE has 294 instances of this form of deviation with 5%. Here are few instances of them.

(49) I complained to the matron that my stomach was "paining" (hurting).
(50) Our campus is characterized by coconut trees (decorated).
(51) Mum and dad do not understand with me (Agree).
(52) I don't rumurate it necessary to forfeit my leave this year (consider).

More so, these forms may be encouraged by the uncritical use of the dictionary and text books on synonyms. This situation enhances deviation in PNE syntax.

4.1.7 Simplification through Compounding: It was also noted in PNE data that   compound words were used to avoid or simplify complex structures or ideas. PNE has 268 compound words representing 5%. For example,
(53) Kidnappers are human – waste – street – boys.
(54) My dream is to be a big- time – politician.
(55) There are still well- meaning- lecturers.
(56) I was the most talk – about student in my school.
(57) Kidnappers are glorified – area boys.

(58) I am not a greener- pasture- seeker, I do my work.
(59) We observe pin- drop- silence in the presence of our teachers

These expressions are culture and context dependent. The phenomenon relates to ideational function of the language because the compound words were created to reflect common experience in the writer's linguistic settings. The fact indicates the creative power of the subjects.

4.1.8 Deviation in the Use of Word Class (Class shift) This type of deviation involves the use of one word class for another. The PNE data have 301 instances of class shift representing 5%. The interchange occurs mostly between nouns, verbs and adjectives than any other word class. There are clear cases of class shift. Either the status of an adjective is given to a noun, or the status of a noun is given to a verb.We observed that such patterns were as a result of users carelessness and ignorance of the language rules. Table 6 below shows the difference between PNE and BSE forms in this aspect.

Table 6: Deviation in the Use of Word Class (Class Shift)

	PNE	SBE
59	Don't forget to horn before overtaking	Do not forget to honk before passing.
60.	I was chased out of the house because my boyfriend pregnanted me	I left home due to an unexpected pregnancy.
62.	I jealous our senior students because they have the right to punish us.	I resent the senior students due to their ability to punish us.
63	My boss rubbished my application for annual leave.	My boss tore my application for annual leave
64.	I have been opportuned to serve this company for three years.	I have been given the opportunity to serve this company for three years.
65.	We punish them because we seniored them	We punished them because we had seniority.
66.	He thinks I jealous him	He thinks I am jealous of him.
67.	God the silence listener answered my prayers	God the silent listener answered my prayers.
68	I wont forget the day dad rubbished my mum before me	I wont forget the day dad embarrass my mum before me
69.	I uselessed myself and my time working for a private company	I wasted my time working for a private company.

4.1.9 Deviation in the Use of Articles Deviation is seen in the misuse of articles in popular written Nigerian English. Popular written Nigerian English syntax is characterized by omission and misuse of articles. The study noted that this type of deviation persisted even five years after secondary school education in the written English of OND certificate holders as well as year one and two undergraduates. Deviations in the use of articles occur in the following forms:
 (i) In context where there should not be determiners, PNE employs them.
 (ii) The articles before singular nouns are omitted in PNE.
 (iii) In BSE, some determiners co-occur with one another in the nominal group but   PNE deviates from the norms by combining the wrong ones. There are 866 instances of omission and misuse of the articles. See the table below.

Table 7: Deviation in the Use of Articles

	PNE	SBE
70.	I told them that I am not in the possession of gun.	I told them that I do not have the gun.
71.	My happiest day is the day I will leave school and these teachers.	I will be happiest when I leave the school and all its teachers.
72.	I spent my holiday in town.	I spent my holiday in the town.
73.	We pay our fees in bank	We pay our fees in the bank.
74.	The day my daddy took me to post office to pick my admission letter was my happiest day.	The happiest day of my life was when my father took me to the post office to pick up my admission letter.
75.	I went to the court because I was sacked.	I went to court because I was fired.
76.	I returned back to village after spending my holiday in town.	I returned to the village after spending my holiday in the town.
77.	I don't want to loose my job, I can't afford to start from the scratch.	I don't want to lose my job. I cannot afford to start from scratch.

Non Native Amalgamation Another noticeable deviation in PNE syntax is the non native amalgamation. The study recorded 196 instances of non- native amalgamation with 3.2%. See examples in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Non Native Amalgamation

	PNE	SBE
78	Afterall	After all
79	Moreso	More so
80	Moreover	More over
81	Inspite	In spite
82	Incase	In case
83	Infact	In fact

4.10 Redundant Use of Prepositional Phrases Deviation is also noticeable in the use of prepositions in popular Nigerian English syntax. Instances of deviations involving prepositional phrases are widespread in the corpus examined. There exist some uncertainties about the usage. There is confusion among the subjects about idiomatic use of preposition because there is no precise rule governing the formation of collocation in prepositions. Each of the countless instances has to be learnt as separate units. PNE exponents were uncertain as to whether a particular word requires a preposition as a collocation partner or not. In the face of such circumstances, the temptation to assume that a set of words may collocate with the same preposition was very great. The writers have to depend on intelligent guesses based on analogy. Row and Webb observed that deviant use of prepositional phrases is also common among the SBE speakers .The frequency count of deviation in prepositional phrases is 752 representing 13%. See examples in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Deviation in the Use of Prepositions

	PNE	SBE
84.	To my opinion, am due for annual leave.	In my opinion am due for annual leave.
85.	My boss said it to my hearing	My boss said it within my hearing.
86.	I will do my job in accordance to the company's rule	
87.	I have replied to your letter sir.	I have replied your letter sir.
88.	The police demanded for N20 from our driver.	The police demanded $20 from our driver.
89.	Mr.Momodu is the principal for our school.	Mr.Momodu is the principal of our school.
90.	We had our morning assembly by 8.0clock.	We had our morning assembly at 8:00.
91.	Our company started with good plan, but on the long run, it failed.	Our company started with a good plan, but in the long run, it failed.
92.	We should refrain to attributing the attitudes of kidnappers to joblessness.	We should refrain from attributing the attitudes of kidnappers to joblessness.
93.	Some parents side their children in this evil act of kidnapping.	Some parents take side with their children in this evil act of kidnapping.
94.	Sir, we have earlier discussed about my leave.	Sir, we have already discussed my leave.
95.		
.96	They discuss about politics in our office everyday.	They discuss politics in our office every day.

Frequency of Peculiar PNE Syntactic Deviations
The table below presents results of the extent of deviation in written English of the subjects.

Table 10: Summary of Frequency of Peculiar Deviations in PNE data

	Deviations	JS3 frequency / %		SS3 Frequency / %		Year1&2UG frequency / %		OND frequency / %	
1	Transitive use of intransitive verbs	128	7%	106	7%	108	8%	96	8%
2	Preference for indefinite pronouns	102	6%	92	6%	68	5%	62	5.3%
3	Resumptive pronoun/redundant pre-modifiers	126	7%	144	9%	122	9%	98	8.4%
4	Reflexive pronoun	142	8%	121	8%	112	8%	102	9%
5	Pluralism	392	21%	266	16%	242	17%	238	20%
6	Stative made progressive	124	7%	108	7%	102	7%	88	8%
7	Wrong collocations	98	5%	78	5%	66	5%	52	5%
8	Simplificationthough compounding	82	4.5%	72	4%	72	5%	42	4%
9	Class shifts	86	5%	83	5%	74	4%	68	6%
10	Articles	268	15%	282	17.3%	212	15%	154	13.2%
11	Non-native amalgamation	68	4%	58	4%	38	3%	58	4%
12	Redundant use of preposition	232	13%	222	3%	196	14%	102	9%
	Total	1840	100	1622	100	1412	100	1160	100

5.0   Discussion

We have identified the syntactic deviations in popular written Nigerian English. We have also analyzed factors responsible for the deviations. The systemic functional model was applied in the descriptions and interpretation of the deviations in PNE. The written essays and letters by the subjects confirmed that there are wide spread distinctive PNE forms which distinguished PNE from SBE. PNE data have about 50% manifestations of deviations. However, they were minor deviations because the constructions do not temper with the word order arrangement in English language.

The results of the study showed that some deviations emerged as a result of the new socio-cultural realities in Nigerian environment as some of the structures were context specific. Others were of intra -language and inter -language influences. Furthermore, results confirmed that junior and secondary school graduates had a higher frequencies of the peculiarities than the Years 1&2 undergraduates and the OND certificate holders with a total of 3462 (29%) instances of deviations for JS3 and SS3   against 2572 (21%) instances for the undergraduates and OND certificate holders respectively. This observation reveals the transitional competence of the language users as they progress towards the standard usage.

Finally since our native speaker translators were able to give the SBE equivalent of nearly all PNE peculiar forms taken from the data, it is assumed that PNE syntax possess a degree of intelligibility nationally and internationally.

6.0   Summary and Conclusion

In the light of the foregoing, we summarize that popular written Nigerian English indicates differences. The deviations were as a result of socio- culture differences between the cultures represented by English and the Nigerian languages. Our analysis revealed that deviations in PNE syntax are not oddities but rather rule-governed dialect variations. They are different forms of the same language. The point is that no two languages have exactly the same way of transmitting experiences. Any human language can be expanded to express any human thought. It may by stretching the language, go beyond what is considered native- like usage. By studying the distinctive syntactic forms of PNE and its underlying principles we are now in a better position to appreciate how minor the differences between varieties of the same language are. PNE is a variety of Nigerian English that is used by majority of Nigerian English speakers at the low level of education. It has peculiar features that are widespread and regular and may as a result of its frequency in Nigerian English usage transform into national. Hence, the distinctive PNE forms that do not damage Standard English rules should be documented, accepted and taught in Nigerian Schools.

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