

## Reverse Back the Car: Reduplication as Language Variation in Nigerian English Usage

God'sgift Ogban Uwen<sup>1</sup>, Mercy Imoh Ugot<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Centre for General Studies, Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, Nigeria

**Corresponding Author:** God'sgift Ogban Uwen, E-mail: godsgiftuwen@yahoo.com

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history

Received: April 11, 2022

Accepted: June 19, 2022

Published: July 31, 2022

Volume: 11 Issue: 4

Advance access: July 2022

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

### ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the use of reduplicated English elements as aspects of Nigerian English usage in the speech events among participants in Calabar, a multilingual city in Southern Nigeria. The study adopts Variationist Sociolinguistics and Sociopragmatic Competence as the theoretical foundations because both account for the occurrence of variation and semantic change resulting from interference from L1 and other factors. The data for the study were generated through a two-year field investigation by means of participant observation and audiotape recording of interactions among participants who are bi/multilingual in English and one or more Nigerian indigenous languages. The active sites where the data were extracted include interactions among participants in the University environment, markets, churches and other social gatherings, and discussants on television and radio programmes. The findings indicate that the use of reduplicated elements cut across ages, gender, social status, and the diverse ethnolinguistic and educational backgrounds of Nigerians. These features of Nigerian English occur as lexical reduplication which combines identical elements in the open class system and the semantic reduplication that denotes redundancy and other contrastive forms. The features generate new semantic forms that perform several sociopragmatic functions within the Nigerian sociocultural context indicative of variant of new Englishes as outcome of English contact with indigenous languages.

**Key words:** Language Contact, Lexical Reduplication, Semantic Reduplication, Nigerian English, L1 Interference.

### INTRODUCTION

The increasing global spread of English is remarkably introducing variants and features that distinguish the new forms from the native speaker variety because of its presence in non-native environments. The implantation of English in nations other than the native speakers' environments manifested through colonialism, annexation, trade and commerce, missionaries' activities, international communication and contact issues, multilingualism, education, among others. So, the position that "English was implanted in Nigeria by the colonial masters in addition to the existing indigenous languages is an indisputable fact" (Uwen, Bassey & Nta, 2020: 400). English is unarguably (one of) the major colonial legacies that is increasingly dominant in the diverse, multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual and heterogeneous Nigeria. The Nigeria's complex sociolinguistic situation facilitated the interface between English, indigenous languages and Nigerian sociocultural worldview. This interface has developed innovations in the lexical and structural patterns occurring in Nigerian English usage to produce typologies that express the Nigerian sociocultural context (Akere, 1982; Odumuh, 1987; Jowitt, 1991; Bamiro, 1994; Mckay & Herberger, 1996; Banjo, 1996; Udofot,

2003; Adegbija, 2004; Eka, 2005; Ajani, 2007; Bemigbo & Olateju, 2007; Onuigbo & Eyisi, 2008; Oniemayin, 2012; Obasi, 2022). The emergence and domestication of the Nigerian variant of English is principally because speakers "find it easier to identify with the standard that evolved within their own linguistic culture and experience, and so strive for greater competence and more effective performance in what is practically their own regional variety of this world language" (Adeniran, 1979: 235). This position corroborates Kachru's (1986) prediction that the increasing spread of English is bound to evolve non-native Englishes that partly perform localised communicative functions. Linguistic variation in this description, is a human activity that occurs diachronically, and change is a universal law which language also obeys across cultures and time (Aitchison, 1991). This universal phenomenon operates in a way that when one language interfaces (or is in contact) with the other, there is the linguistic tendency for the target language learners or speakers to view the lexical components of the L2 in the system of their L1 (Alterton, Skandera & Tschichold, 2002). These social dynamics often stimulate the "emergence of new words, expressions and constructions" (Nwoko, 2016: 90). The innovations in the Nigerian English usage are therefore

expressed in “the domestic acceptable adaptations, deviations, modifications, redefinitions and recontextualisation of English expressions that convey mutually intelligible frames among speakers” (Uwen & Nta, 2021: 68). It is this variant that reflects the Nigerian sociocultural environment, expresses the collective worldview and performs sociopragmatic functions within the Nigerian context of English usage (Adegbija, 2004; Bemigbo & Olateju, 2007; Onimayin, 2012; Okurinmeta, 2014; Opara, 2016; Ikoro, 2018). In this perspective, Nigerian English expresses the linguistic context of Nigeria showing remarkable variations at all levels of language that capture the indigenous concepts, ideas, social norms, values and cultures. Nigerian English in this context, is a variety of World Englishes because it has its peculiarities and performs unique sociopragmatic functions in the communicative activities involving Nigerian participants.

Sociopragmatics, in the general sense, is the coinage that represents the study of sociolinguistics and pragmatics with focus on the speakers’ understanding of how the different expressions in language usage account for meaning variation in contexts. Sociopragmatics is concerned with language appropriateness from the point of view of the users, their specific choices, situational constraints and the structure of meaning interpretation as prescribed by the linguistic norms of the speech community (Pei, 1966; Crystal, 2006; Alo & Soneye, 2014; Ekwelibe, 2015; Fatimayin, 2019). By this conception, new patterns of expressions arising from language contact often generate mutual intelligibility because of the shared knowledge of the constituents of the speech community (Kujore, 1985; Jowitt, 1991; Jega, 2020). Such expressions often “provide insights into the sociocultural and sociolinguistic motivations that delineate and create the differences in the linguistic choices [among speakers]” (Uwen & Ushie, 2022: 148-149). Therefore, participants in communicative activities are required to acquire perquisite sociopragmatic knowledge needed for the appropriate explication of situated discourse, because the lack of it often results in communication breakdown among participants (Sezgi, 2008; Xiaole, 2009). The sociopragmatic features in Nigerian English informed the appropriation of the language to suit the context which is governed by the social conventions of the Nigeria’s sociolinguistic milieu. These use and meaning variations “sufficiently account for, and suitably re-enact the Nigerian shared social, cultural, linguistic and situational experience and environment” (Uwen & Ukam, 2020: 91). These features manifest variants such as lexical and semantic reduplications with distinct interpretations that are mutually intelligible by Nigerian users of English.

Lexical and semantic variation and reduplication in Nigerian English usage have been viewed in two perspectives: some scholars see the occurrence as deviation and aspects of non-standard English, while others consider the features as innovations in English in its new sociocultural and linguistic context (Olagoke, 1981; Bokamba, 1982; Jowitt, 1984; Adegbija, 1989; Bamiro, 1994; Bamgbose, 1998; Igboanus, 1998). The features in their reduplicated forms often introduce alien elements to the standard structures of English, and thus perform sociopragmatic functions in the non-native environment (Weinreich, 1953; Wang, 2005). Weinreich

(1953: 1) also clarifies that contact situation “implies the rearrangement of patterns that result from the introduction of foreign elements into the more highly structured domains of language”. Such rearranged patterns can manifest at all levels of the language in contact (Cohen, 1956; Martinet, 1970). Viewed separately, Okoro (2000) argues that lexical reduplication in Nigerian English usage is a variety marker. For Akindede and Adegbite (2005), such features create semantic difference between users of English. In another study, lexical and semantic variations are conceived as “instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of familiarity with more than one language” (Adetuyi & Adeniran, 2017: 6). Also, Baghana (2018) claims that the features in this description, are evidences of Nigeria’s cultural influence on the use of certain English lexical items for the expression of traditional and customary practices, while Jega (2020) asserts that this lexical creativity is rather an aspect of Nigerians’ conscious efforts towards achieving mutual meaning and communicative goals. The varying arguments imply that meaning in communication is determined by culture-bound parameters such as intelligibility, appropriateness and acceptability of Nigerian users of English which mark the difference with the native English patterns (Ekwelibe, 2005; Adetuyi & Adeniran, 2017). The studies reviewed, however, are mainly focused on the sociopragmatic functions of reduplication in Nigerian English usage. This gap is the motivation for this study and what it strives to fill. The thrust of this study is to investigate the pattern of the lexical and semantic reduplications in Nigerian English usage with a view to explicating the sociopragmatic functions such linguistic innovations (arising from English interface with indigenous languages) perform within the Nigerian sociocultural context that shapes meaning orientation.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The linguistics approaches considered relevant to this study are Variationist sociolinguistics and Sociopragmatic competence. Variationist sociolinguistics is credited to Labov’s (1963) experimentation of the social motivations for sound variation in Martha’s Vineyard community. Labov’s further studies on linguistic variation and change in the Lower East Side of New York City (1966a, 1966b, 1994, 2006) establish reliable conclusion that language changes and varies depending on certain sociolinguistic variables. Labov observes that sound change is in synchronic variation that is directly connected to the prevailing social forces in the speech community. Weinreich, Labov and Herzog (1968) validate Labov’s observations where they proposed that language variation and change are transited by older speakers to the younger generation showing the change in linguistic and social structure, and by so doing, create awareness of the change and its actualisation. Further studies on the subject also evaluated that social variables such as social class, language migration and style shifting, are combined to shape variation and change (Blake & Josey, 2003; Pope, Meyerhoff & Ladd, 2007). Such variations sometimes cut across all levels of language and are in many instances consequences of post-con-

tact situations. Post-contact situation is concerned with the informed consequences that shape the social functions of linguistic items and how such functions are fulfilled. That is, the phonic, grammatical, lexical and semantic influences that one language may have over the other in contact situations to produce remarkable variants (Cohen, 1956; Matinet, 1970; Berry, 2005; Smith, 2010). This corroborates Kachru's (1986) position that the continuous acculturation of English in non-native environments are bound to produce variants. Variationist sociolinguistics is a methodological and analytical approach used to situate the understanding of existing relationship between language and its context. It analyses language and its variable nature in use. The approach encapsulates the interface between language variation, the development and variation of linguistic system, and the social meaning of language within a sociocultural context as it is the case in Nigeria's English usage.

Sociopragmatic competence on the other hand, is a sociolinguistic concept, and an aspect of communicative competence that describes speakers' ability to understand the appropriateness and meaning of certain linguistic variants because of their shared sociocultural experience as members of a micro or macro speech community. Leech (1983: 10) describes sociopragmatic competence as "the sociological interface of pragmatics [which investigates] the social perception and underlying participants' performance and interpretation of linguistic action". Interpretation is a social function of language, and appropriateness in this context, is shaped by the mutual intelligibility of participants. Sociopragmatic competence therefore "examines the conditions on language use which derive from social situation" (Crystal, 2008: 379). It is this social situation that informs the appropriation of meaning by members of a speech community. The social situation is subsumed by the sociocultural context that directs the linguistic conventions of participants (Marmaridou, 2011; LoCastro, 2012). Therefore, the appropriateness of linguistic items is a cross-culturally determined phenomenon (Thomas, 1983, 2013), where sociopragmatic competence is informed by the linguistic choices language users make. These choices are often influenced by the linguistic factor (L1 interference), sociocultural factor (sociolinguistic conventions) and the socio-psychological factor (learner's variables such as the motivation, social inclusion and language attitude). The competence of this nature is utilised in shaping the shared intelligibility among participants which helps in decoding situated meaning of expressions. Variationist sociolinguistics and sociopragmatic competence are relevant to the study because they describe the variation of English usage as a result of certain factors and the competence speakers acquire to produce the appropriate interpretation of the Nigerian variety of English.

## DATA AND METHODS

The data for the study were generated through a two-year (2020 to 2021) fieldwork involving participant observation and audiotape recording of Nigerian English usage among participants in Calabar, a multilingual city in Southern Nigeria. The methods served different purposes. For instance,

participant observation enabled the researchers to freely observe the participants' usage of lexical and semantic reduplications that reflect the Nigerian communicative context. With the aid of smart phones, the researchers recorded the informal and formal interactions of educated and less educated Nigerian English users in different settings such as the University environment, market places, motor parks, churches and other social gatherings, and discussions on radio and television programmes. The samples of the recordings comprised of participants involved in communicative activities in different contexts; the interactants were of different ages, gender, social status, ethnic groups, educational levels, and were bi/multilinguals in English and Nigerian indigenous language(s). The researchers are Nigerian English users, and as participant observers, they performed the dual roles of listeners and users of the variant of English under investigation. This advantage made it easier for the researchers to extract the relevant data in the stretches of structures used by the participants, the pattern of usage, the meaning in the Nigerian context and the sociopragmatic functions they perform in the conversations. The extracted data were coded and categorised for analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings reflect the peculiarities in Nigerian English usage which were outcome of decades of interface between English and indigenous languages. The relevant extracts from the speech events of Nigerian English users were grouped, analysed and discussed in two sections: lexical reduplication and semantic reduplication. The analyses as presented below depict the various reduplicated elements, the change in the semantic forms and the sociopragmatic functions they perform in the Nigerian sociocultural context. The examples are numbered in numerals (1-80) with letters A and B representing the speakers while the reduplicated forms are italicised.

### Lexical Reduplication

In the perspective of the native speaker, Quirk et al (1985) define lexical reduplication as the kind of compounding where both lexical elements are either slightly different or identical, giving examples such as goody-goody and walkie talkie. According to the authors, in native speaker environment, lexical reduplication performs four definite functions which include the initiation of sound: rat-a-tat (knocking on the door), tick tock (of a clock), ha-ha (laughter) or bow-bow (the barking of a dog); to suggest alternating movements: seesaw, flip-flop and ping-pong; disparaging suggestion: hig-gledy-piggledy, hocus-pocus, wishy-washy and dilly-dally, and to intensify: teeny-weeny and tip-top. In the Nigerian English usage, lexical reduplication is the repetition of a whole word or phrase to generate new meaning (Pei, 1966; Okoro, 2000; Mgbemena, 2015). It is the conscious repetition of two (or more) identical lexical elements which alters the semantic form within the sentence for the purpose of performing sociopragmatic functions which are evidently transferred from L1 to L2 as outcome of interference or language contact. The reduplicated word class usually contains

elements of the open class system: adjectives, adverbs, verbs and nouns. In the examples, the sociopragmatic function of the reduplicated elements is in parenthesis while the meaning in Nigerian English usage immediately follows speaker B's response.

### Reduplicated adjectives

An adjective qualifies, modifies or gives information about the noun or its equivalent. It describes the predictable properties of what is being referred to, in terms of the shape, age, colour, size, value and origin, among others. However, in its reduplicated form in the context of Nigerian English usage, adjectives perform more functions that represent the local speech patterns of Nigerians. The examples are given below.

1. A: My *sick sick* friend. (recurrence)  
B: I am much better.  
My sickly friend.
2. A: *True true*, John stole it. (reassurance)  
B: I believe you!  
I am sure that John stole it.
3. A: Run *fast fast*, we are waiting. (urgency)  
B: Okay.  
Run faster.
4. A: Kate is always making *long long* hairstyle. (emphasis)  
B: That is an expensive hairdo.  
Kate likes long hairstyle.
5. A: Peter goes on *new new* cars these days. (emphasis)  
B: He has a lucrative job.  
Peter drives new cars these days.
6. A: My friend is living *large large*. (profusion)  
B: Yes, he has enough to waste.  
My friend lives a flamboyant lifestyle.
7. A: I am going to beach market.  
B: That's where they sell *cheap cheap* goods. (uniformity)  
That's where prices are affordable.
8. A: My children attend Jordan Academy.  
B: That school has *quality quality* teachers. (emphasis)  
That school has qualified teachers.
9. A: Break the stones into *small small* pieces. (uniformity)  
B: That's a hard job to do.  
Break the stones into smaller pieces.
10. A: It's raining, drive *small small*. (caution)  
B: I'll do just that.  
It's raining, drive carefully.
11. A: Will you attend the party?  
B: No! It's for *small small* children. (plurality)  
No. It's children's party.
12. A: Reduce the radio to *small small* volume! (sound)  
B: Okay.  
Reduce the volume of the radio.
13. A: Pour the rice *small small*. (emphasis)  
B: I am doing that.  
Pour the rice little by little.
14. A: Joys scared me.  
B: Don't mind her. She's a *shaky shaky* girl. (habitual action)  
Don't mind her. She is often frightened.
15. A: *Fear fear* man does't dare. (habitual action)  
B: He has no courage.  
A coward doesn't dare.
16. A: Juliet has failed the exams.  
B: I am not surprise. She is a *sleepy sleepy* student. (habitual activity)  
I am not surprise. She is a lazy student.
17. A: Daddy said you should come *quick quick*. (urgency)  
B: I am on my way already.  
Daddy said you should come immediately.
18. A: What quantity do you want?  
B: I need *half half* bag. (uniformity)  
I need half bag each.
19. A: Okon is a *sharp sharp* man. (habitual action)  
B: You are correct!  
Okon is a cunning man.
20. A: Mfon gave her testimony *sharp sharp*. (accuracy)  
B: I trust her.  
Mfon testified accurately.
21. A: I need to travel to see my girlfriend.  
B: There are *fine fine* girls on campus. (emphasis)  
There are beautiful girls on campus.
22. A: Ogban won't let us sleep with his night prayers.  
B: Leave that *holy holy* student. (habitual activity)  
Leave that extremely religious student.
23. A: The pastor has *big big* churches in the city. (plurality)  
B: That is because he has rich members.  
The pastor has several big churches in the city.
24. A: The lecturer speaks *big big* grammar. (habitual activity)  
B: I hardly understand him.  
The lecturer uses ambiguous grammar.
25. A: Your friend wears *big big* clothes. (frequency)  
B: Don't you know the father is a politician?  
Your friend wears expensive clothes.
26. A: Maria is a rich student.  
B: She uses *big big* phones too. (plurality)  
She uses expensive phones too.
27. A: Dr Ukam knows Mathematics *well well*. (emphasis)  
B: You are correct!  
Dr Ukam is knowledgeable in Mathematics.
28. A: I ate the meal *well well*. (satisfaction)  
B: It was actually delicious.  
I ate satisfactorily.
29. A: Have you bought the shirt?  
B: He has only *white white* shirts in the shop. (plurality)  
He has only white shirts in the shop.
30. A: There are *bad bad* boys in this street. (plurality)  
B: Every street has one or more of them.  
There are male criminals in this street.
31. A: Drug trafficking is a *bad bad* business. (illegality)  
B: I pray that those involved be caught.  
Trafficking is a dangerous business.
32. A: He sells his goods at *low low* money. (uniformity)  
B: I better buy from him.  
He sells at cheaper prices.
33. A: The previous year was just full of bad news.  
B: This is my year of *doube double* promotion. (plurality)  
This is my year of accelerated promotion.

Three categories of adjectives occur in the examples above: the attributive adjectives that precede and modify nouns to perform attributive functions, the predicative adjectives that occur within the predicator slot or post-verbal position and the postpositive adjectives that occupy the (subject) position after noun but before the predictor. The reduplicated adjectives are in the positive order, not in the comparative and superlative forms. They altogether reflect the peculiar usage and meaning in the Nigeria's context.

### Reduplicated adverbs

Adverbs traditionally modify other elements and answer questions on how, when, where, in what way and to what extent? In this manner, adverbs perform a descriptive function at the sentence level. In Nigerian English usage, identical adverbs are often reduplicated to represent domesticated meanings that sociopragmatic functions. The examples are given below.

34. A: James is really rich. How does he gets all the money?  
B: Yes, he is paid huge *monthly monthly* salaries.  
(frequency).  
He is paid huge salaries.
35. A: The wedding is tomorrow.  
B: Then, the groom should be here *today today*. (emphasis)  
The groom should arrive today unflinchingly.
36. A: Where is Mr Daniel's house?  
B: He lives *down down* the street. (emphasis)  
He lives at the end of the street.
37. A: Mary's family lives *inside inside* the village. (emphasis).  
B: It will be difficult to trace them.  
Mary's family lives in the interior part of the village.
38. A: The two twins were closer *before before*. (in the past).  
B: I don't really know why they fell apart.  
The twins are not as intimate as they used to be.
39. A: *Before before*, things were cheaper. (in the distant past)  
B: Those were the good old days.  
Things were much cheaper in the past.
40. A: The snake is *back back* the fence! (emphasis)  
B: We better find and kill it!  
The snake is behind the fence.
41. A: I can't understand my boss on my promotion matters.  
B: *Softly softly*, you will reach the peak of your career.  
(continuity)  
With carefulness, you will reach the peak of your career.
42. A: Drive *slow slow*, the road is bad. (emphasis)  
B: Sure, I will.  
Drive carefully, the road is bad.
43. A: The cost of living is *up up*. (emphasis)  
B: It's really not easy.  
The cost of living is high.
44. A: I failed my promotion.  
B: Don't bother, promotion is *yearly yearly*. (frequency)  
Don't bother, promotion is on yearly basis.
45. A: Mummy said you should come *now now*. (urgency)  
B: I hope everything is fine?  
Mummy said you should come immediately.

The reduplicated adverbs, aside from yielding situated meanings in the Nigerian context of usage, they also point to the manner, direction, frequency, among others clues they provide.

### Reduplicated verbs

A verb is an action (doing) word. The reduplicated forms are in the category of lexical verbs (regular and irregular form morphologically inflected in relation to the marking of the perfect and past tense) which should function independently in the sentence. The examples as extracted from the communicative activities of the participants are given below.

46. A: Where are the kids?  
B: Those *play play* children are out again. (habitual activity)  
Those playful children are out again.
47. A: Peter has refused to pay me the debt.  
B: *Borrow borrow* people often have excuses.  
Debtors often have excuses.
48. A: *Cry cry* babies are often disturbing. (habitual activity)  
B: Honestly!  
Crying babies are often disturbing.
49. A: Pray not to have a *blow blow* girlfriend. (habitual activity)  
B: Such girls are expensive to keep.  
Pray not to have wasteful girlfriend.
50. A: *Look look* could be dangerous. (emphasis)  
B: It's really not a joke.  
Staring absentmindedly could be dangerous.
51. A: Jane and her friends don't have morals.  
B: Don't mind those *fuck fuck* girls. (habitual activity)  
Don't mind those promiscuous girls.
52. A: Jerry has been summoned for what he said the other day.  
B: *Talk talk* can really get one into trouble. (habitual activity)  
Talking carelessly could get one into trouble.
53. A: Some girls are really wasteful.  
B: Those are the *blow blow* girls.  
Those are the wasteful girls.

### Reduplicated nouns

Nouns are tangible or abstract entities that function as the head of noun phrases (as subject, object, adjunct or predicative complement in the clause). Nouns have separate inflectional forms for possessive or genitive case and for number (singular and plural), and are often derived from other word classes by the introduction of suffixes. The reduplicated nouns could generate meanings that are explicated in different word class. The examples in this category are explained below.

54. A: When next are you visiting me?  
B: That your *corner corner* street! (emphasis)  
That your street with many bends!
55. A: You are no longer eating?  
B: The food is *stone stone*. (plurality)  
The food has stones.

56. A: To be free from *boy boy* requires some patience. (continuity)  
B: That's true!

To be free from housemaid requires some patience.

57. A: My girlfriend is very demanding.

B: I can't cope with such *money money* girls. (emphasis)  
I can't cope with such materialistic girls.

58. A: I have just been introduced to a profitable online business.

B: Are you sure is not *yahoo yahoo*?

Are you sure it is not a fraudulent business?

Lexical reduplications as they appear in the open class system above, are viewed as the manifestation of L1 interference on English. This type of reduplication is a dominant linguistic feature in Nigerian indigenous languages. For instance, *kwa mgbe kwa mgbe* (frequently), *ngwa ngwa* (quickly) in Ibo, *kia kia* (quickly), *fio fio* (high), *dara dara* (beautiful) in Yoruba, *tura tura* (pushing), *bugu bugu* (hitting) and *santal santal* (tall) in Hausa, are a few of the many reduplicated elements in Nigerian indigenous languages used to perform several socio-pragmatic functions. These linguistic practices are consciously transferred to English as outcome of the interference of L1.

### Semantic Reduplication

Okoro (2000) defines semantic reduplication as the repetition of the same idea using two different lexical items. They occur in a set of two different words that tend to express the same idea. The identified categories of semantic reduplications in the participants' interactions are discussed under the subheadings: collocational reduplication, varieties-induced reduplication and contrastive reduplication below.

#### Collocational reduplication

Collocation is the habitual co-occurrence of two words or their natural selection in the sentence that help in meaning orientation. The associated words determine the intended, referential and/or contextual meaning depending on the category of speakers. Uwen (2020: 149) argues that "the choices are selected from the English open class elements which are lexical and content words collocating in compatible relationships for meaning orientation". In this context, collocational reduplication is used to refer to the use of two unidentical words that represent the same idea or semantic form within the sentence. Such forms identified in the speech events among Nigerian English users are explained below.

59. A: Do you know who Mr Unya gave the new car?

B: He gave it to her *own* mother.

The third person singular feminine gender possessive (objective) pronoun *her* has provided the necessary information on whom the new car was given to. This makes redundant the collocating attributive adjective *own* because it also denotes the possession of the car that is being mentioned.

60. A: I haven't seen Prof Bassey recently.

B: He is on his sabbatical *year* at the University of Lagos.

In the academics' tradition, sabbatical is for a period of one year, this make *year* in the expression redundant.

61. A: Which party is going on there?

B: Mr Johnson's daughter is celebrating his fifth *year* birthday.

Birthday is traditionally an annual event, the inclusion of *year* in the expression is unnecessary because it does not provide additional information.

62. A: Dr Nwankwo's death is a painful one.

B: Yes. The Head of Department has asked that we make *voluntary* donations for the burial.

Donation is a voluntary act of giving money or something without any expected reward. This makes the adjective *voluntary* preceding the plural noun *donations* unnecessary.

63. A: I don't understand, sir!

B: Pay attention, I won't repeat (it) *again*.

Repeat is saying or doing something again. The inclusion of *again* in the sentence is of no semantic value.

64. A: Did the Vice Chancellor attend the event?

B: Yes. He was *physically* present.

To be present means to be at a particular place physically (in person). The adverb *physically* which denotes the form of presence at the event makes no additional meaning to the expression.

65. A: The *current* incumbent chairman is visiting us tomorrow.

B: That's serious!

Incumbent indicates a current office holder which makes the inclusion of *current* irrelevant because the adjective *incumbent* has given the description of the category of chairman who is visiting.

66. A: The police officer did not impress me.

B: What do you expect from a *new* recruit?

A recruit is someone newly enlisted into an organisation. *Recruit* provides adequate information on the expected experience of the police officer which subsumes the descriptive value of *new* in the sentence.

67. A: Will you attend the funeral *ceremony* on Friday?

B: No. I will be travelling.

Funeral is a ceremony for the dead before it is lowered to the grave. The repetition of *ceremony* in the sentence brings no new idea and therefore unnecessary.

#### Varieties-induced reduplication

Another category of semantic reduplication used by Nigerian speakers of English is the typology tagged varieties-induced reduplication in his study. The status of English as a second language in the Nigerian socio-linguistic context implies that it is learned, and in some instances, attention is not paid to the lexical differences between American and British English. This makes some English speakers in Nigeria to use the lexical version of the two varieties to describe the same item. Such examples are given below.

68. A: I am looking for Dr Godwin's residence.

B: Go to the *extreme end* of the street.

69. A: Mrs James is always in *short(s) knickers*.

B: You notice that too?

70. A: *Should in case* it rains, remove the clothes from outside.  
B: Okay.
71. A: I don't like Tom's lifestyle.  
B: His parents are rich, *still yet*, he can't eat good food.
72. A: It appears there is danger ahead!  
B: Please, *reverse back* the car.
73. A: I need a good haircut.  
B: Go to the next *barbing saloon*.
74. A: The Calabar – Cameroon road is dangerous to drive.  
B: Yes. The road has many *bending corners*.

In example 73, *barber shop*, the American version of *saloon* in British English is domestically modified and shortened to *barbing* to indicate the continuity of the service provided, while in 74, *-ing*, the continuous tense marker is introduced to *bend* to show continuous but specific activity to be practiced by road users (that is, the act of bending) to get through such spots along the particular road.

### Contrastive reduplication

Contrastive reduplication is operationally used in this study to mean a set of reduplicated expressions which suggest contrastive meaning to what is exactly expected. The contrasting expressions conventionally occur within the sentence but the sociocultural meanings they generate among Nigerian English users are far removed from the literal meaning of the lexical items. The meanings of the italicised contrastive reduplications are in parenthesis following the sentence they occur in. The examples are explained below.

75. A: Children are becoming quite insulting.  
B: When they insult you, just *see* and *no see*. (overlook)
76. A: Jacob refused to respond to the abuses on him.  
B: He is *seeing* and *not seeing*. (ignoring intentionally)
77. A: I don't bother about worldly possession.  
B: If you *have everything*, it means you *have nothing* without Jesus. (one has fulfilment through salvation)
78. A: The President said he belongs to *everybody* and belongs to *nobody*. (he is detribalised)  
B: Let us watch out!
79. A: Joshua has ignored a lot.  
B: He is *deaf* and *hears* what he wants to. (he is selective on what to respond to)
80. A: I pity Mrs Ephraim.  
B: Yes! She has *many* children and has *none*. (all her children are irresponsible)

### CONCLUSION

Although the examples are inexhaustible, the study has demonstrated that the contact between English and Nigerian indigenous languages has produced remarkable evidence in lexical and semantic reduplications in Nigerian English expressions. Such reduplications represent the manifestation of L1 interference on English that results in its domestication to capture the Nigerian sociocultural context meant to perform certain sociopragmatic functions in interactive engagements. The reduplicated expressions are used daily

by Nigerian English speakers to construct local ideologies and native concepts. This reinforces the indigenisation of English in the Nigerian context as aspects of other forms lexical and semantic variants of new Englishes. The variations are indications of linguistic patterns often devised by second language users to serve their local communication needs, and simultaneously demonstrate language change resulting from geographic migration of English. The study also establishes that there exists some variations between Standard English and Nigerian English at all the levels of linguistic analysis. Variation, as a linguistic norm, is capable of posing some intelligibility problems to native speakers of English in non-native environments. Although this language practice appears to be predominantly evident among less educated Nigerians, the linguistic situation calls for some restraint in its usage in formal and pedagogic contexts. This is because of the comprehension barrier it could pose especially in formal interactions involving speakers who use English as their L1.

Reduplication in Nigerian English usage is therefore conceived as a predictable and regular language practice which plays a vital role in the realisation of localised sociopragmatic functions and meanings at the lexical and semantic levels during communicative events. The reduplicated items, aside from changing the semantic form from the literal meaning to localised form, they sometimes influence the realisation of a different word class in the new meaning they generate. The derived Nigerian English forms also perform sociopragmatic functions such as the indication of uniformity, emphasis, habitual activity or action, continuity, profusion, urgency, frequency, plurality, reassurance, and the creation of redundancy, among others. The study is valuable because it has shown another aspect of variations existing as a result of the use of English in a non-native environment to produce mutually intelligible meanings in the context of speakers of English as a second language.

### REFERENCES

- Adegbija, E. (1989). Lexico-semantic variation in Nigerian English. *World Englishes*, 8(2), 165-177.
- Adegbija, E. (2004). The domestication of English in Nigeria. In S. Awonusi & E. A. Babalola (eds.), *The domestication of English in Nigeria: A festschrift in honour of Abiodun Adetugbo* (pp. 20-44). Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- Adedimeji, M. A. (2007). *The linguistic features of Nigerian English and their implications for 21<sup>st</sup> century pedagogy*. A paper presented at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual conference of Nigeria English Studies Association, 18-21 September, University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria.
- Adeniran, A. (1979). Nigerian elite English as a model of Nigerian English. In E. Ubakwe (ed.), *Varieties and functions of English in Nigeria* (pp. 27-42). Ibadan: African University Press.
- Adetuji, C. A. & Adeniran, A. A. (2017). Aspects of semantics of Standard British English and Nigerian English: A Contrastive study. *English Linguistics Research*, 6(3), 5-14.

- Ajani, T. T. (2007). Is there indeed a Nigerian English? *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(1), 1-19.
- Akindele, F. & Adegbite, W. (2005). *The sociology and politics of English language in Nigeria: An introduction*. Ile-Ife: OAU Press.
- Alo, M. A. & Soneye, T. O. (2014). Hagglng as a socio-pragmatic strategy in selected urban markets: An amalgam of English and Nigerian languages. *Marang: Journal of Language and Literature*, 24, 43-62. Doi-1816-7659/05/13/-9
- Aitchison, J. (1991). *Language change: Progress or decay?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Alterton, D. J., Scandera, P. & Tschichold, C. (Eds) (2002). *Perspective on English as a world language*. Basel: Schwabe & Co.
- Baghana, J. et al (2018). Some lexical features of territorial English version of Nigeria. *International Journal of Engineering & Technology*, 7(4), 1584-1586.
- Bamiro, E. O. (1994). Innovation in Nigerian English. *English Today*, 10(3), 13-15.
- Bamgose, A. (1998). Torn between the norms: Innovations in World Englishes. *World Englishes*, 13(1), 47-60.
- Banjo, A. (1996). *Making a virtue of necessity: An overview of the English language in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Bemigbo, V. & Olateju, M. (2007). The lexico-semantic features of Nigerian English in 'kegites' discourse: The OAU example. In M. Olateju, R. Taiwo & A. Fakoya (eds.), *Towards the understanding of discourse strategies* (pp. 149-170). Ago-Iwoye: Olabisi Onabanjo University Press.
- Berry, M. (2005). *An introduction to systemic linguistics*. London: Batsford Ltd.
- Blake, R. & Josey, M. (2003). The layl diphthong in a Martha's Vineyard community: What can we say 40 years after Labov? *Language in Society*, 32, 451-485.
- Bodha, A. S. (1994). Lexical innovation processes in Cameroon English. *World Englishes*, 13(2), 245-260.
- Bokamba, E. (1982). The Africanization of English. In B. B. Kachru (ed.), *The other tongue: English across cultures* (pp. 23-35). Urbana: Illinois University Press.
- Cohen, M. (1956). *Pour une sociologie du langage*. London: Editions Albin Michael.
- Crystal, D. (1987). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2008). *A dictionary of linguistics and pragmatics (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Eka, D. (2005). *From changes to divergences: Reflections on global Englishes*. 13<sup>th</sup> Inaugural lecture of the University of Uyo, 29 September, 2005.
- Ehieni, T. O. (2016). The socio-pragmatics of Nigerian English in Nollywood. *Studies in Linguistics*, 38, 493-510.
- Ekwelibe, R. (2015). Sociopragmatic competence in English as a second language (ESL). *Humanities and Social Sciences Journal*, 10(2), 87-102.
- Fatimayin, F. (2019). Nigerian English usage: Users' sociopragmatic perspective. *Dutsin-Ma Journal of English and Literature*, 4, 199-212.
- Igboanusi, H. (1998). Lexico-semantic innovation processes in Nigerian English. *Research in African Languages and Linguistics*, 2(1), 1-19.
- Ikoru, A. S. (2018). Nigerianisms: Interface between English language and Nigerian indigenous languages. *Nigerian Languages Studies*, 3(3), 264-277.
- Jega, A. S. (2020). A pragmatic analysis of lexical creativity in the use of Nigerian English. *Annals of Language and Literature*, 4(3), 27-34.
- Jowith, D. (1991). *Nigerian English usage: An introduction*. Lagos: Longman.
- Kachru, B (ed.) (1986). *The akhemy of English: The spread, function and models of non- native Englishes*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Kujore, O. (1985). *English usage: Some notable Nigerian variations*. Ibadan: Evans Brothers.
- Labov, W. (1963). The social motivation of language change. *Word*, 19, 273-319.
- Labov, W. (1966a). *The social stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, DC: Centre for Applied Linguistics.
- Labov, W. (1966b). *The social stratification of English in New York 2<sup>nd</sup> edn*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Labov, W. (1994). *Principles of linguistic change vol. 1: Internal factors*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Leech, G. (1983). *The principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Leech, G. et al. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of English*. London: Longman.
- LoCastro, V. (2012). *Pragmatics for language education*. New York: Routledge.
- Marmaridou, S. (2011). Paralinguistics and sociopragmatics. In W. Bublitz & N. R. Norrick (eds.), *Foundations of pragmatics* (pp. 77-106). Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Lusberg, H. (1998). *Handbook of the literacy rhetoric: A function of literacy study* (trans by Method Bliss). Netherlands: Brill Leiden.
- Martinet, A. (1970). *Éléments de linguistique générale*. Paris: Armand Colin.
- Mckay, S. L. & Hernberger, N. H. (1996). *Sociolinguistics and language teaching*. New York: Cambridge.
- Mesthrie, R. & Bhatt, R. M. (2008). *World Englishes: The study of new linguistic varieties*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mgbemena, J. A. (2015). Variations or language change? Lexical innovation processes in Nigerian English. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature*, 3(8), 37-50.
- Nwoko, C. N. (2016). Domestication of the English language in Nigeria: An examination of morpho-syntactic trends in Nigerian English. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 4(5), 83-91.
- Obasi, J. C. (2022). Patterns of lexical innovation in Nigerian English. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language*, 40(1), 65-86.
- Odumuh, A. (1987). *Nigerian English*. Zaria: ABU Press.
- Okoro, O. (2000). Exploring variety markers in Nigerian English: A study of reduplication. In C. Ogbulogo & P. Alo (eds.), *Issues in language and communication*



- in Nigeria: Essays in honour of Emmanuel N. Kwofie (pp. 80-94). Lagos: Sam Orient Publishers.
- Okunrinmeta, U. (2014). Syntactic and lexico-semantic variations in Nigerian English: Implications and challenges in the ESL classroom. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*, 4, 317-332.
- Olagoke, D. O. (1981). Lexical deviation in Nigerian English. *JLAC*, 2(3&4), 35-57.
- Oniemayini, E. F. (2012). Innovation and deviation in Nigerian English: Implications for Nigerian English codification. *Journal of the Nigerian English Association*, 15(1), 56-66.
- Onuigbo, S. & Eyisi, J. (2008). *English language in Nigeria: Issues and development*. Nsukka: Global Publishers.
- Pei, M. (1966). *Glossary of linguistic terminology*. New York: City Garden.
- Platt, J., Weber, H. & Lian, H. M. (1984). *The new English*. London: Routledge and Kegan.
- Pope, J., Meyerhoff, M. & Ladd, D. R. (2007). Forty years of language change on Martha's Vineyard. *Language*, 83(3), 615-627.
- Schmitt, N. (Ed.) (2010). *Applied linguistics 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. London: Holder Education.
- Sezgi, S. (2008). Coping with sociopragmatic failure: Suggested activities. *ELT Journal*, 10(3), 87-102.
- Thomas, G. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 91-112.
- Thomas, G. (2013). *Meaning in interaction: An introduction to pragmatics*. New York: Routledge.
- Trask, R. (1999). *Key concepts in language and linguistics*. London: Routledge.
- Udofot, I. M. (2003). Nativization of the English in Nigeria: A cultural and linguistic renaissance. *Journal of Nigerian English and Literature*, 4, 42-52.
- Uwen, G. O. (2020). Collocational choices in the discourse activities of paramilitary agencies. *NDUNODE: Calabar Journal of the Humanities*, 17(1), 132-148.
- Uwen, G. O. & Ukam E. I. (2020). English as a language of integration in a multilingual country: A study of selected Christian songs. *Journal of the English Scholars' Association of Nigeria*, 22(1), 79-97.
- Uwen, G. O., Basse, V. O. & Nta, E. G. (2020). Emerging sociolinguistic teaching trends of English as a first language in Nigeria. *International Journal of Language Education*, 4(3), 398-407.
- Uwen, G. O. & Nta, E. G. (2021). Nigerian English usage in literature: A sociolinguistic study of Wole Soyinka's *The beatification of area boy*. *English Linguistic Research*, 10(1), 56-69.
- Uwen, G. O. & Ushie, G. O. (2022). "Happy wives" and "sad husband": A decrypting analysis of covid-19 humorous expressions. *European Journal of Humour Research*, 10(1), 146-167.
- Wang, S. P. (2005). Corpus based approaches and discourse analysis in relation to reduplication and repetition. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 37, 505-540.
- Weinreich, U. (1953). *Language and linguistics: An introduction to the study of language*. London: Heinemann.
- Weinreich, U., Labov, W. & Herzog, M. (1968). Empirical foundations for a theory of language change. In W. P. Lehmann & Y. Malkiel (eds.), *Directions for historical linguistics: A symposium*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Xiaole, G. (2009). *A study of interrelations between socio-pragmatic and linguistic competencies*. Harbin: Harbin Institute of Technology.