

PREPOSITIONAL INTRAFERENCE IN ESL AND ITS TEACHING: THE EDUCATED NIGERIAN ENGLISH EXAMPLES

By

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the linguistic habit of "prepositional intraference" in Educated Nigerian English (ENE) with a view to establishing why and how Nigerians produce prepositional intraference variations and how the variations distinguish ENE morphosyntax from native English morphosyntax, particularly Standard British English (SBE). Intraference in this paper is a coinage and reconceptualisation for "the overgeneralisation of linguistic materials and semantic features" (Selinker, 1984), "internal language transfer" or "intralingual interference" (Richards and Sampson, 1984), and "the internal principle of linguistic variability (Labov, 1994)." Questionnaire, observation and the recording of spontaneous speeches were used to gather data to substantiate the incidence of prepositional intraference in ENE. The method of data analysis is mainly qualitative, involving a comparative and textual analysis and explanation of examples in tables and a graph. It was discovered that as a result of certain sociolinguistic factors, educated Nigerians redeploy prepositions in several ways and contexts in which native English speakers will not. These distinguish ENE morphosyntax from other internal varieties of English.

Key words: Prepositional Intraference, Sociolinguistics, Interlanguage, ENE (Educated Nigerian English), SBE (Standard British English).

INTRODUCTION

Intraference variations emanate from the redeployment of language features and dynamics from one area where they are acceptably used to another area of the same language where they hitherto did not apply. The transfer of rules and items happens within the same (second) language, unlike in interference where two languages are involved, i.e. the mother tongue (MT) and the target (second) language.

Ekundayo (2006) conceptualised intraference as the reverse of interference and identified five types of intraference in English (as a second language): phonological, lexico-semantic, morphological/morphemic, structural or syntactic and graphological/orthographic. Ekundayo's (2014) survey shows that intraference features are entrenched in Nigerian English. This paper isolates and expands the prepositional sub-set, which Ekundayo (2013) lumped under the morpho-syntactic type. The paper is divided into two parts: the theoretical part and the illustrative section in which the claims in the theoretical parts are demonstrated. It was

assumed that educated Nigerians redeploy prepositions in ways and contexts that may not be found in SBE and standard native English dictionaries. The following research questions guided the study: (i) Do educated Nigerians redeploy prepositions in ways not used in SBE? (ii) What are the sociolinguistic factors that constrain educated Nigerians to use prepositions in the way they do where SBE variants of the same meanings exist? (iii) How widespread is this habit among educated Nigerians? and (iv) What are the major prepositional intraference cases in (ENE)? The paper documents some remarkable examples in Nigerian English, the leading ESL model worldwide at present.

1. Methodology

The Internet, questionnaire, secondary sources, observation and recording of spontaneous speeches were used to gather data from 2004 to 2008. The data were updated from 2009 to 2013. Prepositional structures observed to be popular in ENE were gathered from speeches and written/published materials and some of them were used after in a questionnaire for a nation-wide

survey to establish their popularity and acceptance among the educated elite. The questionnaire consisted of twenty prepositional structures in multiple choice questions with options A to D, or A and B only. Option A contains the SBE or native English usage and sense while option B contains observed ENE usage and meaning. Forty-five additional prepositional structures were gathered from published materials and recorded spontaneous speeches. Altogether, sixty-five are examined in this paper. The sixty-five prepositional items were divided into the nature of their manifestation in ENE: prepositional substitution, mix-ups, superfluous use and omission.

The questionnaire, have been validated by two professors of English Literature and two professors of Measurement and Evaluation, was then administered to one hundred and thousand educated Nigerians in ten federal government universities and other higher institutions in five major geo-linguistic zones of Nigeria: the Yoruba South-west, the multi-lingual South-south, the Hausa-Fulani North, the Igbo South-east and the multi-lingual Middle-belt. The universities and institutions are Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Bayero University, Kano (North); University of Lagos, Federal University of Technology, Akure (West); University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (East); University of Ilorin, Ilorin, University of Abuja, Federal Capital Territory (Middle-belt); University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, and the University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt (South-South); four federal government owned polytechnics: Federal Polytechnic, Auchi (South-South), Federal Polytechnic, Ede (West), Federal Polytechnic Offa (Middle-Belt), Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna (North), Federal Polytechnic, Oko; four state government owned polytechnics: Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja, Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Lagos State Polytechnic, Isolo, and Delta State Polytechnic, Oghara; four government owned colleges of education: Adeniran Ogunsanya, Lagos, Federal College of Education, Okene, Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin and College of Education, Ekiadolor, Benin City.

These higher institutions were selected because they are strategically located across Nigeria and the fact that they use a Nigerian Federal Government policy called 'Quota

System', or 'Federal Character,' to admit students from 'catchment areas' and all the regions of Nigeria. The "Federal Character" or "Quota System" policy stipulates that admission and employment in federal government owned schools and ministries be equally spread to all the federating units, not necessarily on merit or standard, but on equal representation. This ensures that all federating units are equally represented.

Subjects were between 19 and 70 years of age. The subjects consisted of professors, lecturers and final year students of English Literature, Linguistics, and Communication Departments. These groups of Nigerians are considered to be, or should be, models of English use and usage in Nigeria. About seventy thousand of the questionnaire sheets were collated, because the researcher had difficulties collating all of them from the various respondents across Nigeria. Fifty thousand of the seventy thousand were analysed manually from 2005 to 2013. Subject responses for the prepositions are presented in simple percentile and frequency tables. The percentage of users for each tested is simply indicated in front of each example. 30-39% is tagged 'emerging trend,' which means that the variant is not popular in ENE, 40-49 is a 'variant' or 'free variant,' 50-59 is 'common,' 60-79% is tagged 'widespread' and 80-100% is tagged 'entrenched' or 'institutionalised.'

The method of analysis is basically qualitative. The paper explains the theoretical underpinnings and psychosociolinguistic causes of the prepositional cases in this paper. However, it also accounts for the specific ordinal numbers of prepositional intraference types in tables, the percentage and frequency of use, which is quantitative. The combination of these methods enabled the researcher, and will enable readers too, to appreciate easily and quickly the claims, data presentation and findings of the paper.

1.1 Theoretical Background and Review of Related Scholarship

The paper is based on the concept of intraference which flows from Selinker's (1971, 1984) "Interlanguage," Richards and Sampson's (1984) "intralingual interference", Labov's (1994, 2001) propositions about variationist sociolinguistics

and Ekundayo's (2006 and 2014) (re)conceptualisation of these concepts as intraference. Selinker (1984) describes the fifth facet of "Interlanguage" as the "overgeneralisation of linguistic materials and semantic features" (p.37), which Richards and Sampson (1984) tag variously as "systemic intralingual errors," "internal language transfer" and "intralingual interference" (pp.13-18). Labov (1994) conceptualises them as the internal principles of linguistic change. For economy and precision of terms which are more preferable in linguistics, these long terms have been lexicalised and reconceptualised as intraference, a term informed by the memory of interference (Ekundayo, 2006, 2014).

Labov (1994) says, that the forces and properties of language change and variations "are in the grammar and they constrain the grammar, and they cannot be described" without reference to the grammar. Further, he asserts that morphological and syntactic variables are informed by "semantic distinctions and/or structural configurations whose development can be traced in the history of the language" (p. 84). Besides the grammar of the language, both linguistic and extralinguistic factors, like contextual and cultural influences, work together to engender variations and varieties of a language (Labov, 1994, 2001). This proposition is very true of interlanguage and English as second language (ESL), which Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik (1985) say is interference variety. However, the prepositional cases depicted here emanate from intraference, not interference. According to Bayley (2007):

Research in variationist approach, in contrast to research that seeks a single overarching explanation, assumes that interlanguage variation, like variation in any language, is likely to be subject to the influence of not one but multiple contextual influences. That is, variationist research, whether on native or non-native languages, adopts what Young and Bayley (1996) have referred to as the principle of multiple causes. (p.135)

The interplay of both linguistic and extralinguistic determine the way in which prepositions are deployed in ENE. Educated Nigerians are naturally placed in a linguistically heterogeneous (second) language situation that is far

away from a native English setting. Secondly, their competences are not on a par with those of native English speakers. Also, their daily socio-cultural experiences are different, among other psycho-sociolinguistic constraints. So, in ENE, educated Nigerians redeploy English prepositions to convey meanings which are already well expressed in some other well established prepositional structures in SBE.

1.2 The Concept of Nigerian English

The term "Nigerian English" became popular in the 1960s (Jowitt, 1991) although studies in the variety may be traced back to the 1950s. The varieties of English used in Nigeria are often assessed against SBE and/or Standard American English (SAE). Region, formal education and (psycho) sociolinguistic parameters are mainly often used to classify NE varieties (Surakat, 2010; Jowitt, 2008). Many varieties can be identified with regions: Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo, Efik, Urhobo, etc. Each regional variety has its linguistic variations and peculiarities, on the one hand, and similarities to the others, on the other hand. Phonological deviations mainly differentiate regional varieties.

Several classifications have been made with formal education and linguistic features. Brosnahan's (1958), Banjo's (1970, 1996) and Odumuh's (1980) proposed varieties I, II, III and IV respectively. Banjo's (1970, 1996) model, which is the most popular, presents Variety I as the lowest, which reflects vulgar errors of grammar and broken structures often used by primary school pupils and those with half-baked formal education. Variety II, which is an improvement on Variety I, is used by secondary school students and school certificate holders. Variety III is spoken by highly educated people like graduates, teachers, lecturers, professors, writers, broadcasters, etc. Banjo proposes this model for Nigerian English. His Variety III is often referred to as Standard Nigerian English (SNE) or Educated Nigerian English (ENE). Lastly, Banjo's Variety IV is like native English variety spoken by few Nigerians who were born in native English-speaking countries or have a parent of English origin and consequently acquired English as their first language. However, most Nigerians regard this native-like variety as rather too foreign.

Using sociolinguistics, linguists identify and depict three

levels or –lects: basilect, mesolect and acrolect. The Mesolect is the lowest variety analogous to Banjo's Variety I. The Basilect is the most popular and widely used in Nigeria by junior civil servants, secondary school students and not-so-educated youths. The Acrolect is used by few very highly educated Nigerians (Ogbulogo, 2005). It has the greatest prestige and international intelligibility. Banjo's Variety III, which is also the acrolect on the sociolinguistic pyramid, is often recommended or preferred as the Nigerian standard. Nevertheless, these classifications are not well cut, for there are overlaps and "there can, in truth, never be any firm dividing lines" (Banjo, 1996, p.79). The habit of prepositional intraference cuts across all the varieties of NE. However, this paper concentrates on the cases in Educated Nigerian English.

Prepositional intraference cases are widespread in all varieties of Nigerian English and some of them are even institutionalised in the ENE of this study. Alo and Igwebuikwe (2012) asserts that "the domain of grammar has been observed to evince some significant differences between British and Nigerian English, such as omission and diverging use of articles, prepositions, and phrasal verbs; concord; modal auxiliaries; and pronouns" (p.14). Nigerian grammarians have presented some of them as errors and problematic areas of English for Nigerians (Jowitt & Nnamonu, 1985; Ekundayo, 2001; Eyisi, 2003; Ogbulogo, 2004). However, Kujore (1985, 1989) presents a good number of them as notable Nigerian English variations. Two quintessential examples, among the many cases entrenched in ENE, are "what an apology of a lunch your wife offered us!" (Kujore, p.25) and "I congratulate you for your success in the elections" (p.36) where SBE is "what an apology for..." and "I congratulate you on..." Some examples will be found also in Jowitt's (1991) glossary of 'Popular Nigerian English.' Ekundayo (2013b) conceptualises them as prepositional examples of morpho-syntactic intraference and documents few, but not exhaustive, examples. This paper isolates them from the major heading of morpho-syntactic intraference and examines them as prepositional intraference because its incidence is widespread and entrenched in ENE. Although, some Nigerian grammarians treat them and other variations as errors because they deviate from SBE usage,

many educated Nigerians yet use them regularly to communicate (Chime, 2006).

The syntax of prepositions in both ENE and SBE is fairly easy to predict or identify. Preposition manifest in several ways in sentence construction. It can occur individually as simple or single one-word preposition connecting two noun phrases or beginning a prepositional phrase; for example for and under in these sentences:

- a. This is an article for a journal.
- b. I see a cat under the chair.

Two prepositions can come together to function as one compound preposition either written as open or blocked compound word, for example into, without, unto, upon (blocked) and out of, as of, up to (open), e.g:

- a. Richie is into some shady deals.
- b. You can make do without it for now if you aren't out of your mind'.

Prepositions can combine with other classes of words like adverb, verb, adjective, noun and conjunction to have complex prepositional structures such as along with, together with (adverb+preposition); owing to, due to (verb+preposition); in conjunction with, in spite of (noun+preposition); but for, so as to (conjunction+preposition):

- a. The church members together with their pastor are waiting.
- b. They still sneaked out in spite of my advice against it.

The fourth way in which preposition may function in sentence construction is as particles of multiple verbs. Multiple or compound verbs are a combination of verbs and preposition or adverbial particles. Even though they constitute more than one word, they function as one word and can be paraphrased or replaced with a word or phrase wherever they are used. Multiple verbs come as (i) prepositional verbs (call on, insist on, ask for, be sure of, etc); (ii) phrasal verbs (call upon, go away, walk across, pull over, etc); (iii) prepositional phrasal verbs (go on with, put up with, look forward to, etc); (iv) verb+verb form (kick start, double date, etc); (v) verb+adjective combination (go straight, turn open, etc):

- a. I called on you last night (visited).

- b. Call upon me on the day of trouble (pray to).
- c. The author looks forward to your reading this article (expect).
- d. Please give me some money to kick start the plan (begin).
- e. Go straight there and turn that door open. That's the 'female convenience.'

There are other prepositions and verbs combinations which behave like mainstream multiple verbs; for example, upgrade, downgrade, downplay, download, etc. In these examples, the prepositions come before the verbs, but in the well known multiple verbs, the prepositions and particles come after the verb (Sources: Quirk, et al, 1985; Close 1975; Ogbulogo, 2004).

Educated Nigerians redeploy the competence or knowledge of these shades of the syntactic manifestations of prepositional structures in English. However, their competence is not on a par with that of native English speakers. Yet they must use English, their official language, for socio-economic interactions and scholarly expressions. In doing these, educated Nigerians substitute, mix-up, use unnecessary and omit necessary prepositions in syntactic structures, which distinguish ENE grammar from SBE's.

2. Discussion and Analysis

Twenty prepositions were used in a questionnaire and administered to one hundred thousand educated Nigerians. They are in three groups: (a) substitution and mix-up, (b) superfluous use and (c) omission.

2.1 Prepositional Intraference by Substitution and Mix-up

In substitution, the speaker or user picks one of two or more sets of similar prepositions to connect some structures; for example either by or through, on or in, at or in, for or against, down or up, etc. Mix-up of prepositions is similar to substitution, but in mix-up, two or several prepositional structures similar in meaning or homophonous in form intrafere with one another. Two excellent examples are round up versus round off, and in the night versus at night/by night. In usage, many educated Nigerians use one when they have the meaning of the other in mind. They do not often express their nuances during spontaneous performance. Many cases were gathered from published

or printed materials and speeches. The examples in tables 1 and 3 were tested in the questionnaire used for this study.

As displayed in the Table 1, the fifteen cases of substitution tested are all institutionalised or entrenched in ENE. They were first observed to be entrenched and the test confirmed them as so in ENE. However, there are some educated Nigerians who use the SBE variants, which shows that no matter how institutionalised a variant may be, there are yet some educated Nigerians who prefer and use the SBE variants. Other examples observed to be common, widespread or entrenched in ENE are given below. They were extracted from secondary materials and the spontaneous speeches of highly educated Nigerians like professors, senior university administrators, writers, etc. Although they were not tested as the fifteen cases in table 1, the researcher, being an ESL user and teacher, and based on his keen observation of usage patterns in Nigeria for several decades, has tagged them accordingly as common, widespread and institutionalised/entrenched.

Table 2 presents sundry examples of substitution gathered

S/N	ENE Variant	Percentage of SBE over 50,000	SBE Variant	Percentage of ENE over 50,000	Comment
1	He left UK to the USA*	46,000/92%	He left UK for the USA	4,000/8%	entrenched
2	Clinton was on a black suit.	43,000/86%	Clinton was in a black suit.	7,000/14%	entrenched
3	... for the mean time/ also written as 'for the main time.'	40,000/80%	... in the mean time/for the time being...	10,000/20%	entrenched
4	...gather from the grapevine.	48,000/96%	...gather on the grapevine.	2,000/4%	entrenched
5	She passed in flying colours.	47,000/94%	She passed with... colours.	2,000/4%	entrenched
6	He drove past with full speed/... in full speed.	48,000/96%	He drove past at full speed.	3,000/6%	entrenched
7	...adjourned to next week.	44,000/88%	...adjourned till next week.	2,000/4%	entrenched
8	They are not at par.	46,000/92%	They are not on a par	6,000/12%	entrenched
9	Congratulation for...*	38,000/76%	Congratulations on...	4,000/8%	entrenched
10	He keeps company of...	39,000/78%	He keeps company with...	12,000/24%	entrenched
11	Please, round up your work.	45,000/90%	Please, round off your work.	11,000/22%	entrenched
12	..ask after someone .*		..ask for/of someone.	5,000/10%	entrenched
13	I will check on you later.	45,000/90%	I will check you up later.	5,000/10%	entrenched
14	...organize a send forth...	35,000/70%	...organize a send off...	15,000/30%	entrenched
15	Travelling in the night...*	48,000/98	Travelling by night...	12,000/24%	entrenched

Table 1. Prepositional Intraference by Substitution and Mix-up

S/N	ENE Variant	SBE Variant	Observation
16	Does it have any link to the case?	Does it have any link with the case?	common
17	The panel comprises of five scholars.*	The panel comprises five scholars.	entrenched
18	Please, attach it with the application.	Please, attach it to the application	common
19	Do it in accordance to the rules.	Do it in accordance with the rules.	widespread
20	I am here for your interest.	I am here in your interest	entrenched
21	Teachers ought to impart knowledge on their students.	Teachers ought to impart knowledge to their students.	widespread
22	Can you assist me to do it?	Can you assist me in doing it?	common
23	I'll remind you about it.	I'll remind you of it.	common
24	She deals on children's clothes.	She deals in children's clothes.	entrenched
25	He prayed with the conviction...	He prayed in the conviction...	entrenched
26	Why is she bent at divorcing him.	Why is she bent on divorcing him.	common
27	They are good in Mathematics.	They are good at Mathematics.	entrenched
28	Take the road by your right*	Take the road on your right.	entrenched
29	Be wary about fake drugs.	Be wary of fake drugs.	widespread
30	I'm anxious of hearing from him.	I'm anxious about hearing from him.	entrenched
31	You're soaked with/by the rain.	You're soaked in the rain.	entrenched
32	They are on queue.	They are in queue.	widespread
33	In reference to...	With reference to...	entrenched
34	Check on me later.*	Check me up later.	widespread
35	Fall back on...	Fall back to...	entrenched
36	Please come on time. *	Please, come in time.	entrenched
37	It is below my dignity...	It is beneath my dignity	widespread
38	She died after a brief illness.*	She died in/during a brief illness.	entrenched
39	I am on a bus going to Lagos	I am in a bus going to Lagos	entrenched
40	It was in consideration for him...	It was in consideration of him...	entrenched
41	I told you from the outset.	I told you from the onset.	entrenched
42	I'm in a bus going to Lagos.	I'm on a bus going to Lagos.	entrenched
43	Stand on your feet.	Stand to your feet.	entrenched
44	He did not succeed with it.	He did not succeed in it.	entrenched
45	Did you read the Guardian of 6th June?	Did you read the Guardian on 6th June?	widespread
46	I had the opportunity to meet him.	I had the opportunity of meeting him.	widespread
47	This is an affront on the authorities.	This is an affront to the authorities.	widespread
48	He was charged to court for robbery	He was charged to court with robbery	common
49	It was juxtaposed to it.	It was juxtaposed with it.	common
50	She imparted knowledge on them.	She imparted knowledge to them.	widespread
51	Stop beating around the bush.	Stop beating about the bush.	widespread
52	*Attestation of plagiarism check.**	*Attestation to plagiarism check".	widespread

Table 2. Additional Cases of Prepositional Intraference by Substitution

from various sources. The ones asterisked are institutionalised in ENE. For example, 'congratulation for regularly appears in some universities' 'Statement of Result' and 'Certificates' issued to students. 'Attestation to plagiarism check' is now put as a page on the students' theses in Nigerian universities. 'Ask after' and 'ask for' are often not differentiated in ENE. 'Ask after' in SBE often denotes stronger purposes or reasons for going to see someone, such as illness, bereavement, passion, etc while 'ask for' is used when you visit one for the fun of it, to greet or interact with one. In ENE 'ask after' is often used for both. Similarly, 'in the night', 'at night' and 'by night' have shades of differences in SBE, which are not often observed in ENE. 'In the night' is generally deployed in ENE for SBE 'by night', 'at night' and 'last night'. Most educated Nigerians do not also set apart or observe the nuances between 'outset' and 'onset', 'on time' and 'in time'.

2.2 Intraference by the Superfluous Use of Prepositions

This denotes the unnecessary intrusion or use of preposition

in a structure where SBE will do without it. Here, the nonnative user applies the memory of similar prepositional structures to form an analogical one. An example which is entrenched in ENE is "comprise of", which invokes the sense of "consist of". Five examples were tested. The results are presented in table 3.

Table 3 shows that the five cases tested are popular in ENE. While 53 and 54 are entrenched, 54 and 55 are widespread, but 57 is not yet entrenched in ENE. Other examples from various sources of spoken and written ENE are given in table 4 and tagged accordingly under the observation column.

Table 4 presents eleven cases which are mainly entrenched and widespread. Prepositional intraference also manifests in the omission of pronouns in context where native speakers will use them.

2.3 Prepositional Intraference by Omission

Prepositional intraference by omission refers to the non-use

S/N	ENE Variant	Percentage	SBE Variant	Percentage	Comment
53	It comprise of...	44,000/88%	It comprise...	6,000/12%	entrenched
54	He emphasized on...	46,000/92%	He emphasized...	4,000/8%	entrenched
55	They are advocating for...	30,000/60%	They are advocating...	20,000/40%	widespread
56	Make him to do it... (Afejuku, 2011)	32,000/64%	Make him do it...	18,000/36%	widespread
57	What of if he fails...?	26,000/52%	What if he fails...?	24,000/48%	common

Table 3. A Table of Superfluous Use of Prepositions

S/N	ENE Variant	Similar structures and sources of intraference	SBE Variant	Observation
58	Where are you going to?	As in go to, refer to	Where are you going?	entrenched
59	He stressed on...(Moses, 2011)	As in call on, speak on.	He stressed...	entrenched
60	...reverse back...	As in go back, flash back, throw back, etc	...reverse ...	entrenched
61	...return back...	As in turn back, look back, etc.	...return...	entrenched
62	He has ejected out the tenants.	As in push out, come out, play out, etc.	He has ejected out the tenants.	entrenched
63	This is the man to whom she gave the money to.	Superfluous redeployment	SBE will drop either the first or the last to.	entrenched
64	This is the house where we live in.	Superfluous redeployment	This is the house (in) where we live.	entrenched
65	Demand for...	As in ask for, sue for, etc	Demand...	entrenched
66	Solicit for...	As in the above-given	Solicit...	entrenched
67	The secret still leaked out.	As in sneak out, break out	The secret still leaked.	entrenched
68	They arrived at about 1 .pm	Superfluous use	They arrived at about 1 .pm	entrenched

Table 4. Additional Examples of Superfluous Use of Preposition

of a preposition in context in which SBE will necessarily use it. A number of examples from different spoken and written texts are given in the Table 5.

In all, eighty cases have been treated in this paper, fifty-two for replacement, sixteen for superfluous use and twelve for omission of preposition. Although the eighty here are the most popular, they are not exhaustive of all the types used in ENE and other varieties of Nigerian English. Table 6 shows the frequency of each type examined here.

The total number of the cases examined is 80, of which the substitution type has 52 and the other two types share 16 and 12 respectively. The percentage of each type is presented in the bar chart Figure 1.

Both the frequency table and bar chart show that prepositional intraference by substitution and mix-up, which account for 60/65% of the examples here, are most widespread in ENE. The question is why do educated

S/N	Type	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
1	Substitution	52	65%	1.23
2	Superfluous use	16	20%	5
3	Omission	12	15%	6
Total		80	100%	17

Table 6. Frequency Distribution for Prepositional Intraference

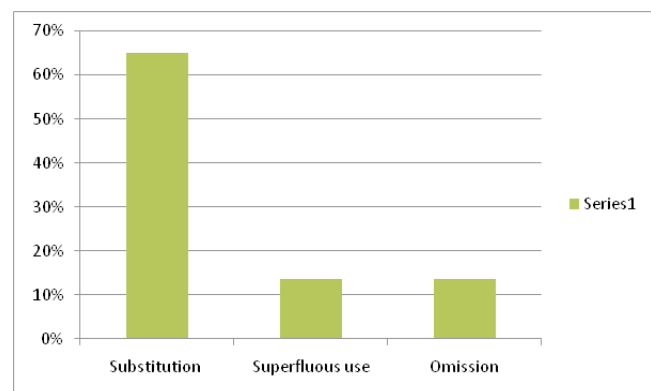


Figure 1. Summary Bar Chart for Prepositional Intraference

S/N	ENE Variant	SBE Variant	Observation
69	Punishment was meted ^ to them.	Punishment was meted out to them.	entrenched
70	He didn't reply ^ my letter (Jonah, 2006).	He didn't reply to my letter.	entrenched
71	Check me ^ at home this evening.	Check me up at home this evening.	entrenched
72	All you need ^ do is...	All you need to do is...	entrenched
73	Allow me ^ attend the party.	Allow me to attend the party.	entrenched
74	Help me ^ give it to him.	Help me to give it to him.	entrenched
75	She is not cut ^ for such things.	She not cut out for such things.	entrenched
76	Can you fill ^ these gaps?	Can you fill in these gaps?	entrenched
77	It is tied ^ with it.	It is tied up with it.	entrenched
78	Condole ^ him for the death...	Condole with him for the death...	entrenched
79	His house is adjacent ^ our house.	His house is adjacent to our house.	entrenched
80	Don't trespass ^ this land.	Don't trespass on this land.	entrenched

Table 5. Cases of Prepositional Intraference by Omission

Nigerians use prepositions in this way? Some psychosociolinguistic factors constrain educated Nigerians to redeploy prepositions in the way already demonstrated.

2.4 Psycho-Sociolinguistic Causes of Prepositional Intraference

The interplay of linguistic and extralinguistic factors constrains educated Nigerians to redeploy, mix up, overuse and omit prepositions. These factors are (i) sociolinguistic: environment, e.g. Nigeria being a heterogeneous nonnative English setting far away from native speakers from whom correct usage can be imitated, strategies of teaching and learning, e.g. mode of acquisition, the competence of ESL teachers, how preposition is taught, (ii) formal and educational, e.g. the institutionalisation of deviations and variations which learners and teachers further learn and spread (iii) psycholinguistic: awareness of usage and competence, conscious efforts to achieve standard and correctness, reorganisation of linguistic items in the mind, the desire to avoid sending negative meanings as in *send off*, which invokes sending a player off the field of play, hence the preference for *send forth*, etc; and (iv) purely linguistic, e.g. a plethora of prepositional structures in English, the memory of similar usages in SBE and their redeployment during performance. A combination of these factors forms the extenuating background in which ESL speakers redeploy prepositions and other structures in patterns different from native English and SBE's.

Conclusion and Implications

Teachers and grammarians of ENE often treat as errors most of the features of ESL, that do not conform to SBE's patterns. They invariably teach SBE as the model and examining bodies (WAEC: West African Examination Council, GCE: General Certificate of Education, NECO: National Examination Council, JAMB: Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board, UME: University Matriculation Examination; and Post-UME: the additional UME by universities to validate JAMB/UME) set questions from the Nigerian variants and use SBE variants as the correct answers. Although, some of the examination candidates do miss or get the answers right, it has not stopped them from using the Nigerian variants proudly in spontaneous

language events because they are entrenched and have fossilised in them. Unfortunately, however, Nigerian grammarians' tendency and preference for SBE patterns and teaching is not equally matched with perfect competence in SBE. Ugorji (2010) also emphasises this pedagogic confusion:

The reality at the moment is that the relapse of RP and the emergence of indigenised norms are trailed closely by some chaos-an evolving pedagogic anarchy, in which the RP is in practice not targeted, being inaccessible to current teachers, at least; and the complex of varieties are in need of codification and standardisation. Those who insist on the British standard for teaching and learning hold it only as a principle; and lack adequate capacity for its practical realisation. (p.26)

So, no matter how hard they try, they find it difficult or impossible to achieve total native English mastery of the language dynamics and they keep spreading the entrenched nonnative patterns unconsciously.

Against this backdrop, how should we view these patterns? Should they be taught as correct structures in ENE or as errors? It is the position of this paper that prepositional features that have become entrenched or institutionalised, like from the grapevine, *congratulation for*, *pass in flying colours*, *for your interest*, among many others, should be treated as veritable ENE variations. This does not prevent those who prefer the SBE variants from using them. All considered, such differences exist between BrE and AmE, e.g. *on behalf of*, different from (BrE) versus *in behalf of*, different than (AmE).

In terms of teaching, two tendencies or positions are possible. The first is the prescriptive judgmental approach which may insist that these features are errors or 'bad English,' as some may argue, irrespective of whoever uses them, because they violate SBE patterns. But, this position may sound pedantic and correcting the so-called bad English may be difficult to attain. Quirk (1988) argues, that "good" or "bad" are far less objective when applied to linguistic usage. "Good is what we like and bad is what we dislike and a good deal depends on just who 'we' are... the comment 'their English is bad' may be based on sharply different criteria according to the English that is being

judged" (p.vi). Secondly, these features may be regarded as institutionalised variations which characterise ENE and should be taught alongside the SBE variants. Fortunately enough, a committee set up by NESAS, Nigeria English Studies Association with experienced linguists, is compiling a dictionary of Nigeria English just as the ICE (International Corpus of English) Project, anchored by Ulrike Gut and other eminent scholars, are gathering the features of Nigerian English on a general nation-wide scale. It is proposed that entrenched prepositional intraference features be included in the dictionary and in the Nigeria ICE Project. Once this is achieved, the anarchy which Ugorji and many other scholars have described may be settled to a reasonable extent, as teachers will now be able to refer to or cite some codified endonormic standards.

Appendix

Questionnaire On Prepositional Intraference In Nigerian English

Sex-----Age-----Qualification/rank-----School/Place of work-----

Department-----Native language-----

Date-----

The questions below are designed to generate data for a research work on Educated Nigerian English (ENE). Kindly shade, ring or tick any of the sets of expressions (A or B) that you use regularly when you speak or write, with particular reference to the items bold-faced. Be truthful with the ones you tick. The issue is NOT whether the option you regularly use is right or wrong, but whether you use it at all and/or regularly. Thank you very much for contributing to the success of this study.

1. A. He left UK for the USA. B. He left UK to the USA.
2. A. Clinton was in a black suit. B. Clinton was on a black suit.
3. A. In the mean time/for the time being. B. For the mean time/for the main time.
4. A. We gathered on the grape vine. B. We gathered from the grape vine.
5. A. She passed with flying colours. B. She passed in flying colours.
6. A. He drove past at full speed. B. He drove past with/in

full speed.

7. A. Let's adjourn till next week, please. B. Let's adjourn to next week, please.
8. A. They are not at par. B. They are not on a par.
9. A. Congratulations on your success. B. Congratulation for your success.
10. A. He keeps company with bad boys. B. He keeps company of bad boys.
11. A. Please, round off your work. B. Please, round up your work.
12. A. I asked after you yesterday. B. I asked for you yesterday.
13. A. I will check you up you later (visit). B. I will check on you later.
14. A. We organised a send off for him. B. We organized a send forth for him.
15. A. I like travelling by the night. B. I like travelling in the night.
16. A. The panel comprises five members. B. The panel comprises of five members.
17. A. He emphasized the second point. B. He emphasized on the second point.
18. A. They are advocating women's rights. B. They are advocating for women's rights.
19. A. We can make him do it. B. We can make him to do it.
20. A. What if he fails? B. What of if he fails?

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