[1]Blessing Ugo Ijem; [2]Mohammed Adamu Baraya &[3]Malata Andrew Zakayo
[1]Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University, Wukari.
[2]Department of General Studies, Gombe State Polytechnic, Bajoga.
[3]Department of English, Gombe State University.

Sociolinguistic Analysis of L1 in the English Writings of Selected Students of the Polytechnic Bajoga, Gombe State

Abstract

This paper examines issue of sociolinguistic investigation of L1 in the written English of selected students of the Polytechnic Bajoga, Gombe State. Language is used, and learned in a social context and environment which can affect its utilisation. Consequently, various forms of a language present variations and varieties as in the case of English language in most parts of the world and particularly in the Nigerian society. Language has mainly been considered from linguistic perspectives but with the emergence of sociolinguistics its consideration encompasses social factors that affect the use of language in various domains. Hence, this qualitative descriptive survey of the English writings of some selected students of the Polytechnic, Bajoga. The objectives are to examine the role social factors play in the written expressions of the selected students; examine how the English language is shaped as a result of the L1 of the selected students and to determine the extent of use of the new variety of English created by the students. It reveals some forms of variations in the students' expressions that steam from the immediate society and its languages; English is shaped alongside indigenous languages where past participle forms are not obtainable, words are written on the basis of sounds as in phonemic languages; the extent of use varies among the students depending on their fluency in English. The implication points to the need for the standardization of these varieties that socially carter for the new environment where English is spoken.

1.1   Introduction

Society has effects on language and language impinges on the society. Hence, there is a relationship existing between language and society. The interdependency of these two entities– language and society led to the study of sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics is the

study of language in relation to society which examines how social factors influence language use, variation, and attitudes, and how language, in turn, shapes social structures and interactions.

Many scholars have discussed sociolinguistics and have come up with several definitions based on their individual perceptions. Fishman (1972, p. 9) defines sociolinguistics as the study of the characteristics of language varieties, the characteristics of their functions, and the characteristics of their speakers as these three constantly interact, change, and change one another within a speech community. Sociolinguistics is a term including all aspects of linguistics applied toward the connection between language and society, and the way it is used in different social situations, especially as it differs between groups separated by certain social variables like ethnicity, religion, status, gender, level of education, age and so on. Similarly, other scholars like Jaworski and Coupland (1997), Hudson (2001) and Holmes (2001) also refer to sociolinguistics in terms of language use based on certain societal variables and relations that affect its usage.

Language is seen as a unifying force and a common ground among various people through which effective communication is carried out. It has however been noticed that even within the same language, there are different ways or styles of speaking. The contact that English language had with Nigeria and her indigenous languages and a bid to communicate effectively across and within ethnic boundaries (cases of intra and inter-ethnic communication) has brought about various forms of usages of the English language within the Nigerian society.

Language is said to be a means of communication in speech or writing that has developed overtime and is used in the society by humans (Crystal, 1985; Sellers, 1991; Hornby, 2001; Babatunde, 2002 and Daramola, 2004). Therefore, without society, language cannot evolve. Language was borne out of the need for communication by humans. It serves as a cord binding together the fabrics of society; the various members of the society hence, its social function.

Today, in many parts of the world, the English language is used as a second language. This is exactly the situation in Nigeria, India, Kenya, Ghana, Singapore, Sierra-Leone, among others. The term, 'Second Language' is used to refer to a language that is learned and used extensively in addition to the first language. In other words, the term second language is used to describe the language a bilingual or multilingual person acquires and uses extensively after the first language. In this study, English is the Second language (L2) under consideration and Nigerian indigenous languages are the First language (L1). In the places where English is used as a Second language, it develops its own peculiar characteristics different from those of English as a First language. Such characteristics manifest in the areas of pronunciation, lexis and semantics, and to some extent, grammar (Syntax). Apart from being a major subject on the curriculum in Nigeria, English is also a medium of intruction right from the upper primary school to the tertiary level of education. This means that other subjects, apart from the indigenous and foreign languages like, Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, French, Arabic and others are taught in the English language.

How the students' first languages impinge on their English writings is the focus of this investigation. L1 has a significant influence on second language study. However, how L1 influences L2 is very complicated and abstract. This is as Lado (1957) avers that individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture—both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives.

In present–day societies it is rare to find someone who speaks only one language; most people around the globe know and use several languages in their daily lives. Within this context, the mother tongue might have influence on the L2. This phenomenon from the sociolinguistic view point is the concern of this study.

2.1 Literature Review

Through contrastive analysis (CA) the influence of the first language was thought to have a negative effect on the L2, therefore the term interference was used to refer to this phenomenon as supported by Weinreich (1953). This was closely related to behaviourism, as established by Skinner (1957). In the 1950's and 60's the term transfer was used, which originated in Psychology where it indicated any previous knowledge being applied to new knowledge. Odlin (1989) refers to it as the effect of any other language that has been previously acquired. Selinker (1972, 1992) also uses this term but Kellerman and Sharwood-Smith (1989) introduce the term cross-linguistic influence (CLI), which is now widely used in the field. CLI refers to the many ways in which the knowledge acquired in one language can affect the understanding and use of another.

2.1.1 Historical Overview of L2 Writing

Writing was defined "merely as an orthographic representation of speech" (Matsuda, 2011, p. 21). This notation overshadowed second language writing until the last decade of the 20th century. He further states that the emergence of L2 writing is often connected to the increment of the number of international students going to the US for higher studies after the World War II, particularly during the 1950s. This was also supported by Hinkel (2002). Thus, the presence of non-native speakers of English in higher education institutions initiated the development of second language writing, as the way the L1 speakers of English were taught could not really work to the non-native speakers of English. To cater for the writing needs of those non-native speakers of English, many remedial writing classes were offered to the students belonging to this group of the population. For this reason, L2 writing was exclusively connected to L2 studies, rather than composition studies, because of its disciplinary nature.

With the increase of non-native speakers of English, writing teachers began to compare and contrast between their native and non-native students' language use with a hope of finding some resolutions to those challenges encountered by non-native speakers of English. The earliest scholar to study L2 writing through contrastive rhetoric perspective was Kaplan (1966). Comparing the rhetorical organizations in L2 writers' texts, he claims that the "idiosyncratic rhetorical patterns" are because of the influence of their native languages. In a similar vein, Kubayashi (1985) differentiates how Japanese learners of English and the native speakers of English would organize the information in their essays. She states that Japanese learners of English organized their ideas in a composition inductively (specific to general), whereas the native speakers of English organized the information deductively (general to specific).

Emig (1971) introduces writing as a process by studying how L1 writers of twelfth grade composed their essays while Zamel (1983) studied how students composed their texts in L1 and L2. In her study, she reports that there were no significant differences between composing processes followed by native speakers and the non-native speakers of English. However, she avers that whether or not writers were skilled was much more important than what language they speak natively or non-natively. Similarly, Cumming (1989) distinguishes writers as inexpert and expert in term of their writing skills and found that expert writers and inexpert writers used their native language differently. She suggests that inexpert writers use

their L1 for generating contents only, whereas expert writers use their L1 not only for gathering the information required for writing but also for checking whether or not their diction is appropriate.

From the 1990s, L2 writing has become a more interdisciplinary field of inquiry as it draws on and contributes to various related disciplines, including applied linguistics and composition studies. During this decade, the process approach and English for Academic Purpose (EAP) further proliferated in L2 studies. After the new millennium, there occurred post-process approach, which tries to apply the concepts of post-modernism in teaching and learning writing. This approach encourages the re-examination of the definition of writing as an activity, rather than a body of knowledge (Breuch, 2002). Another approach that emerged after the turn of the century is genre-based approach to L2 writing. Hyland (2002) and Tardy (2009) argue that each genre such as letters, essays and emails have their own defining features. So, the acquisition of these features can help L2 writers improve. These developments opened some additional avenues in the understanding of L2 writing and research scholarships.

Sociolinguistics is concerned with social and cultural influences on language behaviour. Communication takes place not only orally, but also in writing. For instance, writing, a relatively recent invention, has a great importance for a language whereby it plays an important role in the preservation of language realities. Sirbu (2015, pp. 405-6) says "Every act of language, be it written or spoken, is a statement about the position of its author within the social structure in a given culture"

English language in Nigeria has developed unique features due to series of transfer factors which are different from the parent "norms" of the language. Thus the socio-cultural cum economic and the accidental birth place of an individual dictate the types of deviations that are exemplified in the individual's language use. Apart from the localization of English through restructured, non-standard use, researches show that Nigerians find solace in typifying English language such as "Nigerian English". This sometimes ranges from something very near Standard English to the patois of the market place (Grieve, 1964; Spencer, 1971). Such identification ranges from the "Educated Nigerian English" (Odumuh, 1981), Standard Nigerian English (Adesanoye, 1973), "Nigerian Pidgin" to "Bad English" (Ubahakwe, 1999). All these point to the fact that the spoken and the written forms of English language in Nigeria, both by adults and children, educated elites and even school learners, come in various shades, deviant to what the native speakers would accept as the standard form used for academic purposes.

The new varieties of English, which had emerged from the contact situations have been variously described as "indigenous" "nativized" or "local" varieties of English. But as each variety is fast established, its uniqueness and sociolinguistic legitimacy is different to what could be regarded as the standard or "National" Classroom English taught by the teacher. In Nigeria, for instance, there have been attempts advertently or inadvertently to naturalize, colonize or nativize English language. However, this is different to what obtains in academic English studied in our schools because academic text books are written in the Standard English variety but the language of peer group is informal, non-academic, too colloquial, casual and very vulgar in style. For instance, Nigerian Secondary School students (SSS) use the following expressions in their communicative act: "Sorry" for I beg your pardon. "Should in case" for in case. "I am coming" for excuse me or I'll be back in a moment. "Big man" for a wealthy man or an influential person. "Escort" for to see off or come with or accompany. "Latrine" for lavatory or toilet or convenience. "That guy/fellow" for that man/gentleman. This case is not peculiar to secondary School students but also to

students at the tertiary levels of education in Nigeria for which case, this paper seeks to investigate the level of interference of L1 on the written English (L2) of some selected students of the State Polytechnic, Bajoga based on the sociolinguistic backgrounds of the subjects.

2.1.2 Nigerian English Written Form

Adesanoye (1973) identifies three varieties of written Nigerian English. Though unique in themselves, these varieties have certain common core variations which make them essentially Nigerian in character. The first variety is exhibited by products of Primary and Modem Three Schools. The second variety is exhibited by secondary school students, Basic studies students and Colleges of Education students. This is the most widespread of the three varieties. The third variety is exhibited by University graduates. The feature of this variety can compare favourably with the educated written English variety.

2.1.3 How Does the First Language Has an Influence over the Learning of a New Language?

Kramsch (2013) says language is not only seen as a linguistic system, but as a coherent symbolic system for making meaning in a particular context. In this sense, the study of language cannot be separated from language learning, culture and the context that surrounds the learner, especially in reference to the learning of a foreign language. Besides culture, the first language (L1) of a learner might have an influence over foreign language learning, either by acting as a source for the learner to understand how the language works when the first language and the foreign language are similar (transfer), or by being a factor of interference if the two languages are very different (negative transfer) (Celaya, M., n.d).

Although some authors such as Krashen (1982) and Dulay and Burt (1974) claim that the process of learning the L2 is similar to the one of learning the L1, some researchers like: Kellerman and Sharwood-Smith (1986) use the term "Cross linguistic influence" to refer to aspects of language learning such as: transfer, avoidance and borrowing to renew the ideas of transference that appeared in the 50`s and 60´s giving some support to the ideas stated by Lado (1957) who says that: "individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings … of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture" (Lado, 1957). This is also reflected in the writings of students in English.

2.1.4 Characteristics of L2 Writers

It is, indeed, a challenging task to determine the characteristics of L2 writers as there can be several factors such as language background, rhetorical tradition with which they have prior familiarity, individual differences, and other factors that turn out to be very influential in the determination of L2 writers' characteristics. Nevertheless, many scholars based on their research studies have attempted to generalize some of the characteristic features that might be applicable to many L2 writers. Matsuda (2014) discusses three major characteristics of L2 writers with reference to L2 writers in the US academic contexts. First, is that they hardly ever have built their communicative competence, which involves "grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence" (Canale & Swain, 1980). Therefore, they might have shaky intuitive linguistic foundations. Second, is that they may have prior experience of writing in their L1 but might markedly differ in terms of the amount of experience of such previous writing practices. Although some of them might have been educated exclusively in the target language medium of instruction from the very beginning of their formal education, most of them bring their L1 writing experiences and practices, which sometimes might be facilitating and sometimes debilitating based on the extent to which their L1 and L2 differ in terms of rhetorical organizations, orthographic

systems, and genetic proximity. Considering this issue with reference to L2 writers of English, it can be said that there are miscommunications due to the use of their prior literacy practices and strategies that are drastically different from that of English. Third, L2 writers bring diverse educational experiences in their classroom as they are educated in different contexts and countries. While some might have been familiar with the classroom cultures and behaviours such as assumptions, expectations, and practices, many others might not. This can pose additional challenges.

Similarly, Silva (1993) reports some distinctive characteristics of L2 writers in terms of the composing processes they follow while writing essays in English. He maintains that L2 writers are less involved in planning and goal setting, which is why they have to invest a substantial amount of time for generating ideas. Often, the ideas they have generated in the planning stage are not included in their written texts. Another characteristic is that they are more laborious but less fluent and less productive compared to L1 writers because they might need to have some more time for consulting dictionaries or making mental translations of what they have thought to express in their essays or paragraphs. The other characteristic is that L2 writers are less involved in reviewing their outputs compared to their L1 colleagues. In the same vein, Hyland (2002) also reviews existing literature on L1 and L2 writing and gives similar features as presented by Silva (1993). However, two features are different from those of the ones given by Silva namely advanced L2 writers are handicapped more by a lack of composing competence than a lack of linguistic competence; and L2 writers are less inhibited by teacher-editing and feedback.

2.2 Empirical Review

This empirical review synthesizes key studies on L1 interference in ESL writing, covering contexts ranging from informal digital communication to formal academic settings. While each study highlights aspects of first language influence—such as grammatical errors, code-switching, and sociolinguistic factors—many focus on informal texts or broadly regional data. The present study fills these gaps by examining formal academic writing among students at Polytechnic Bajoga, Gombe State.

Hasanah, Pradina, Hadita, and Putri (2019) looked at Sociolinguistic influence in the use of English as a second language (ESL) classroom: Seeing from OGO's perspective. This study reviewed Ofodu's work and confirmed that sociolinguistic factors—particularly parents' occupation, followed by gender, age, religion, and class—significantly influence English usage among Nigerian students. It highlights how social variables beyond linguistic competence affect language acquisition in formal classroom settings. The study is evaluative and does not independently collect data. The present study fills this gap by conducting original empirical research in a similar sociolinguistic context.

On the other hand, Uwen, Bassey, and Nta (2020) in their study of emerging sociolinguistic teaching trends of English as a first language in Nigeria, explored how English is increasingly becoming the first language among children in Calabar due to factors like globalization, educational systems, and peer influence. With 37% of surveyed children speaking only English, the study reflects a sociolinguistic shift toward English dominance and the gradual erosion of indigenous languages, offering critical insight into evolving language patterns in Nigerian urban settings. This research is focused on early childhood and spoken language. The present study targets written English among older, academically engaged students.

Also, Elvis (2009) studied the sociolinguistics of mobile phone SMS usage in Cameroon and Nigeria. This study analyzed 300 text messages from Cameroonian and Nigerian informants, revealing creative linguistic adaptations such as unconventional

spelling, code-mixing, and stylized capitalization. It emphasized that sociocultural background and the technological medium significantly shape linguistic expression, even in informal digital contexts, making it a valuable addition to the study of sociolinguistic influence on English usage. The study centers on mobile text communication, not academic writing. The present study focuses on formal, classroom-based writing, offering complementary insights.

Abubakar, Yusuf, Ibrahim, and Usman, (2025) looked at effect of native language on students' academic performance in English in North–Eastern Nigerian Polytechnics. This region-wide study confirmed that L1 interference significantly affects English proficiency, especially in vocabulary and grammatical structure. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study illuminated broader sociolinguistic trends across institutions and emphasized the regional consistency of L1 influence in ESL learning. The study generalizes across institutions without deep focus on any single one. The present study contributes by offering an in-depth case analysis of one specific polytechnic—Bajoga.

Furthermore, Ojongnkpot (2019) carried out a study on Pidgin and L1 interference in ESL undergraduate writings at the University of Buea. This research examined how Cameroonian students' use of Pidgin and indigenous languages influenced English writing. While highlighting interference, the study also emphasized creative code-mixing and language identity, presenting a more nuanced view of L1 influence that blends linguistic challenge with cultural expression. While insightful, it examines a Cameroonian university context. The present study contributes to the Nigerian polytechnic context, which remains underrepresented.

Verla and Mohammed (2023) in their error analysis of Gombe State Polytechnic Bajoga students' posts on Facebook of grammatical errors by ND II students identified linguistic issues such as tense inconsistencies, subject–verb agreement errors, and lexical misapplications which are attributed to L1 interference. The study is significant for demonstrating how spontaneous, informal writing in digital spaces reflects deeper interlanguage development shaped by first language influence. The present study addresses the need for similar investigation in formal academic writing, where the stakes and structures are different.

Similarly, Koki (2022) carried out a study on error analysis in the descriptive ESL writings of Diploma II students of Kano State Polytechnic. This study categorized writing errors into grammatical, lexical, and syntactic types and found that many were predictable due to structural differences between students' L1s and English. Particularly, verb form misuse and sentence construction flaws indicated clear L1 transfer. The study serves as a relevant comparative foundation for understanding ESL writing challenges in similar institutional contexts. This work is limited to students from Kano State Polytechnic. The present study focuses on Gombe State Polytechnic Bajoga, offering localized insights for a region not yet extensively studied.

Tuffaha (2021) in his study Mother tongue interference in writing English as a second language by Arabic students provided a non-African comparative framework by identifying common ESL writing errors among Arabic-speaking students—such as article misuse, preposition errors, and verb inconsistencies. The findings mirrored many of the L1 interference patterns seen in African contexts, reinforcing the universal nature of language transfer in ESL settings. Although offering valuable insights, the study is based in an Arabic-speaking context. The present study provides a comparative view from a different sociolinguistic background—English language.

The reviewed literature reveals the significant role of L1 interference in shaping ESL writing but also exposes gaps in the investigation of formal academic contexts and localized experiences. The present study addresses these shortcomings by offering an in-depth analysis of structured writing at a Nigerian polytechnic, thereby contributing valuable insights for ESL pedagogy in the region.

2.3   Theoretical Framework

This study employs the sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction, culture, and context in shaping language use and acquisition (Vygotsky, 1978). According to this theory, language learning is a socially mediated process, where learners construct meaning through interactions with others and the social world around them. In the context of written essays, sociocultural theory highlights the importance of cultural backgrounds, social identities, and language learning experiences that students use while writing.

In applying sociocultural theory to the analysis of students' written essays, this study aims to explore how L1 influences students' language use, identity construction, and meaning-making processes in L2 writing. The theory provides a framework for understanding how students' social and cultural contexts shape their language choices, rhetorical strategies, and writing styles, and how these factors intersect with their L1 and L2 use.

3.1   Methods

This study is a descriptive survey that uses qualitative method of analysis of the elicited data. The National Diploma 2 (ND 2) students of the Gombe State Polytechnic Bajoga were the subjects used for the elicitation of data for this study. One hundred and fifty-eight ND 2 students wrote the assignment essay out of which one hundred were selected and used based on eligibility and clarity. An essay topic was given as an assignment to the students. This was used to test the sociolinguistic influence of the L1 on the written English of the respondents. The essays ranged between two to four fulscalp pages. The topic was "As an ND 2 student of Gombe State Polytechnic Bajoga (GSPB), what is your experience in the polytechnic from the first day to the present?" The topic was forwarded to the class representatives of the general studies class who in turn posted it on the students' platform. Two days were given for the exercise, after which the representatives collected the essays and handed them over to one of the researchers. The data was analysed by reading the essays, identifying the L1 instances, classifying them based on the sociolinguistic forms, describing the various forms and instances, and the extent of the use of the new variety by the students.

4.1   Data Presentation and Analysis

The data elicited from the written essay assignments are presented below based on the classification in accordance to the category/form that occurred in the writings that ensued from the influence of the first language (indigenous languages) on the second language which is the English language. There were: i) omissions of prepositions/wrong/inappropriate use of prepositions; ii) lack of pluralisation and overgeneralization of pluralisation; iii) omission of articles; iv) mix up in tense use, where past tenses were used for present tense and vice versa; v) words written based on phonemic sound as a result of lack of some English sounds in the indigenous languages; vi) incomplete subject/subject less constructions; vii) transliteration into English from indigenous languages; viii) repetition of words.

The following are the extracts from the written essays of the students; So many of these types of deviations abound in the essays but only a few are presented here as they are the same all through:

i)   Omissions of prepositions/wrong/inappropriate use of prepositions
- to the school   at the school
- in my first day   n my first day
- an opportunity to me   an opportunity for me
- pertaining of my study   pertaining to my study
- with yourself   by yourself
- found some security[men] in the gate   found some security[men] at the gate
- in the pages of   on the pages of
- always go to weekends   always go for weekends
- placed at the notice board   placed on the notice board
- in the last row   on the last row
- happy to be among the institution   happy to be in/within the institution
- in the end of the day   at the end of the day
- even one year later   even one-year after
- in Gombe State water board   at Gombe State water board
- the aim for this   the aim of this
- first day entering   first day of entering
- easy to me   easy for me

ii)   Lack of pluralisation and overgeneralization of pluralisation
- three section   three sections
- some component   some components
- some challenge   some challenges
- many new concept   many new concepts
- in some subject   in some subjects
- staffs   staff
- everybody are ready   everybody is ready
- everybody in the class were   everybody in the class was

iii)   Omissions of articles
- I am from Department of   I am from the Department of
- I (entered) car   I boarded the taxi/bus
- in hospital   in the hospital
- to present   to the present
- I learned more in course   I learned more in the course
- took him to hospital   took him to the hospital

iv)   Mix up in the tense uses, where past tenses were used for present tense and vice-versa
- a better tomorrow start today   a better tomorrow starts today
- I never done diploma   I never did diploma
- I experience many things   I experienced many things
- I learn   I learn(ed/t)
- I was offer   I was offered
- I meet them   I met them
- I was going   I went
- I get many   I got many
- I got alot of   I got a lot of
- I was arrive   I arrived
- that I was gain   that I gained
- I pass   I passed
- I was able to knew all these   I was able to know all these

- we have went to   we have gone to/we went to
- and I see   and I saw
- before I come   before I came

v) Words written based on phonemic sound as a result of lack of similar English sounds in the indigenous languages

- Hard   heard
- Trough   through
- Fell   fill
- colligues   colleagues
- a dream come through   a dream come true
- diploma sertificate   diploma certificate
- their   there
- there   their
- fild   filled
- so   saw
- ware   were
- because   because
- we where taught   we were taught
- credencials   credentials
- still   steal
- beta   better
- fractical   practical
- secondry   secondary
- all presses be to   all praises be to
- what he taught   what he taught
- without any fair   without any fear
- fesh water   fetch water
- do their on   do their own
- shade tiers   shed tears
- at list   at least
- from raw to raw   from row to row

vi)   Incomplete subject/ subject less constructions

- Am   I am
- because am   because I am

vii) Transliteration into English from indigenous languages

- SLT is one of the hottest courses   SLT is one of the most difficult courses
- last two weeks   two weeks ago
  some years back   some years ago
- these are what I have experienced   these are the things that I experienced
- I never get good teacher   I did not have a good teacher
- I saw plenty students   I saw so many students
- me and some of my classmates   some of my classmates and I
- me and my colleagues   my colleagues and I
- time would seem to crawl a lot slower   time would seem to tick slowly
- I entered[the] car   I boarded the taxi/cab
- we climbed bike   we rode on a motor bike
- to take bike to school   to ride on a motor bike to school
- I find it hard   I find it difficult

-	The first day that I stepped my leg into	the first day that I stepped my foot into
-	with this I can stop here	with this I can end here
-	why, because	because
viii)	Reduplication of words	
-	so many many things	so many things
-	I cry[ied] and cry[ied]	I cried so much
-	new new words	so many new words/ very new words
-	gradually gradually I finished my ND1	with time/over time I finished my ND1
-	I fill [feel] very very bad	I feel very bad/so bad

All the various categories cited in the data above stem from the influence of the indigenous languages and the fact that these students come together in a common environment and in one way or another through communication a norm or culture is established in their language usage. For example, in the use of preposition, the indigenous languages have very limited number of them and the context of usage is also different from that of the native speakers of English. Whenever a native speaker might use the preposition 'on' a Nigerian would use 'in' or wherever 'at' is most appropriate the student use 'in'.

In the case of pluralisation, the effect of the indigenous languages is so glaring in that the plural forms of our languages are usually not on the nouns but a word indicating number therefore, the students' use of expressions like: 'some book', 'three section', 'many new concept'. Since words such as 'some', 'three' and 'many' come before the noun, it indicates the plurality.

The case of the articles is also the same, therefore, the omission of articles were observed in the writings of the students, as in iii above because most of the indigenous languages do not have articles as English. The same are obtainable for all the other types of usages as presented above.

Another thing observed was the influence of the social media form of communication where words are spelt in such a way that the sounds are mainly used to represent the words, for instance, sertificate [certificate], becouse [because], fild [filled], so [saw]. This points to the context where students interact and communicate with one another, therefore, a particular form of usage develops among them.

4.2   Discussion of Findings

This study found out that social factors such as the indigenous language, environment and context play major roles in influencing the use of English by students. There are forms of variations that steam from the immediate society and its languages. These forms are from the L1 language use, ethno linguistic based and the domains of sociolinguistics. The L1 is observed in the area of linguistic structure of the sentences used by the students. Their writings followed the indigenous language structure in expressing the English sentences as presented under Transliteration into English where certain elements are omitted in the structure.

As observed from the students' written essays, English is shaped alongside indigenous languages where past participle forms are not obtainable. Also, words are written on the basis of sounds as in phonemic languages, for example, colligues [colleagues], their [there], still [steal], fesh [fetch]. Other aspects are as presented in the analysis above.

The extent of use of L1 in English (L2) varies from one student to the other. Some essays had minimal deviations while some had many deviations. But there were none that did not have one form of deviation or another. The most interesting part is that the deviant forms are basically the same across the 100 students which points to the sociolinguistic

context/environment. Probably if a different locality/environment is used there might be variations.

4.3   Conclusion

The influence of Nigerian indigenous languages on the use of English cannot be overemphasized. Consequently, with the use of English in the Nigerian coloration, it is imperative for these varieties to be fully developed and documented for use in teaching and so on for the standard to emerged that carters for the peculiar communication needs of the Nigerian English speakers.

References

Abubakar, I. A., Yusuf, J., & Musa, A. B. (2025). The impact of native language on academic performance in English: A regional study across North-Eastern Nigerian polytechnics. *Journal of Language and Education Research*, 9(1), 54–68.

Adesanoye, F. A. (1973): A Study of Varieties of Written English in Nigeria. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Ibadan.

Adeyemi, D. A. & Kalane, M. S. (2011). English in Botswana Junior Secondary School Curriculum. *International Journal of Education Sciences*, 3(2), 119-127.

Alonso, R. (2016). L1 influence on Second Language Acquisition and Teaching: New Trends and Issues. *Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol. 2(9),p.136–149, https://doi.org/10.18844/prosoc.v2i9.1094

Babatunde, S. T. (2002). Introduction. In S. T. Babatunde & D. S. Adeyanju (Eds.) *Language, Meaning and Society*. Haytee Press, pp. 1 – 16.

Breuch, L. M. K. (2002). Post-process "pedagogy": A philosophical exercise. *The Journal of Aesthetic Education, 36*(1), 119–150. https://doi.org/10.2307/3333291

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.

CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers. (2014). College Composition and Communication. http://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/secondlangwriting. (retrieved November 7th, 2021)

Celaya, M. (n.d.). The Role of the L1 in the Acquisition and Use of the L2: New Perspectives. Retrieved July 20th, 2016, from: http://www.raco.cat/index.php/bells/article/viewFile/98198/148953

Crystal, D. (1985). *Linguistics*. Penguin Books.

Cumming, A. (1989). Writing Expertise and Second-language Proficiency. *Language learning*, 39(1), 81-141.

Daramola, A. (2004). The Nature of Language, In A. B. K. Dadzie & S. Awonusi (Eds.) *Nigerian English – Influences and Characteristics*., pp. 112 – 120. Concept Publications

Dulay, H., & Burt, M. K. (1974). Natural Sequences in Child SLA. *Language Learning*, *24*(1), 37-68.https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1974.tb00234.x

Elvis, F. W. (2009). The sociolinguistics of mobile phone SMS usage in Cameroon and Nigeria. *The International Journal of Language Society and Culture*, (28), 25–35. Retrieved from http://www.educ.utas.edu.au/users/tle/JOURNAL/

Emig, J. A. (1971). The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders. National Council of Teachers of English.

Fishman, J. (1972). *Sociolinguistics*. Newbury House.

Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., & Hyams, N. (2007). *An Introduction to Language* 8th Ed. Wordsworth.

Fujieda, Y. (2006). A Brief Historical Sketch of Second Language Writing Studies: A Retrospective. *Kyoai Bakuen Maebashi Kokusai Daigaku Ronsyuun,* 6, 59-72.

Gass, S. & Selinker, L. (1992). *Language Transfer in Language Learning*. John Benjamins. https://wwwjstor.org>stable. (November 21st 2021)

Grieve, D. W. (1964). English Examining. African University Press and West African Examination Council.

Hasanah, L., Pradina, S., Hadita, A. and Putri, W. C. (2019). Sociolinguistic Influence in the Use of English as a Second Language (ESL) Classroom. *Journal of English Language Studies*, 1(1), pp. 28-32.

Hinkel, E. (2002). Second language writers' text: Linguistic and rhetorical features. Mahwah, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Holmes, J. (2001). *Learning About Language: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics.* Longman.

Hornby, S. (2001). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 6th Ed. Oxford University Press. Hudson, R. A. (2001). *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (2002). Authority and Invisibility: Authorial Identity in Academic Writing. *Journal of Pragmatics: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Language Studies*, 34(8), 1091-1112.
Jaworski, A. & Coupland, S. (1997). *Sociolinguistics: A Reader Course Book*. Palgrave.

Kaplan, R. (1966). Contrastive Rhetoric and Teaching of ESL Writing. https://ww.researcgate.net/publication. (November 21st 2021)

Kellerman, E. & Sharwood, M. (1986). *Crosslinguistic Influence in Second Language Acquisition*. Pearson College Division.

Kellerman, E. & Sharwood-Smith, M. (Eds.). (1989). *Crosslinguistic influence in Second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press

Koki, K. A. (2022). Error analysis in descriptive essay writing: A study of Diploma II students at Kano State Polytechnic. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Education*, 14(2), 88–104.

Kramsch, C. (2013). Culture in Foreign Language Teaching. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*. 1 (1), 57-78.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Pergamon Press.

Kubayashi, H., & Rinnert, C. (1992). Effects of first language on second language writing: Translation vs. direct composition. *Language Learning*, 42, 183–215

Lado, R. (1957). Linguistics across Cultures. *Applied Linguistics and Language Teachers*. University of Michigan Press.

Matsuda, P. K. (2011). Second language writing in the twentieth century: A situated historical perspective. In P. K. Matsuda, M. Cox, J. Jordan, & C. Ortmeier-Hooper (Eds.), Second language writing in the composition classroom: A critical sourcebook (pp. 20-36). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Matsuda, P. K. (2014). L2 Writers Experiences in the College Writing Classroom and Implications for Curriculum Planning.

Matsuoka R., & Smith I., (2008). Age Effects in Second Language: Overview. *J Nurs StudiesNCNJ,7*(1)Retrievedfrom www.ncn.ac.jp/04_for_medical/kiyo/ar/2008jns_ncnj06.pdf

Odlin, T. (1989). *Language Transfer: Cross-Linguistic Influence in Language Learning*. Cambridge University Press.

Odumuh, A. E. (1981). Aspect of the semantics and syntax of educated Nigerian English, Unpublished Ph.D thesis, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Ofodu, G. O. (2012). Sociolinguistics Inputs and English as Second Language classrooms. *English Language Teaching*, 5(8), Canadian Center of Science and Education, pp.157-163.

Ojongnkpot, C. B. (2019). Bilingual interference in English writing: Pidgin, indigenous languages, and undergraduates at the University of Buea. *Journal of Multilingual Studies*, 7(3), 112–127.

Olaoye, A. A. (2015). Peerglossia: A Sociolinguistic Study of Its Effects on the English Language Proficiency of Nigerian Senior Secondary School Students in Kano State, Nigeria. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts and Sciences*, 2 (3), pp. 90-96.

Rana L. B. (2018). L1 Use in L2 Writing: A Case of Multilingual Undergraduates in a Basic Writing Course, A Thesis Submitted in the Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TESL) Minnesota State University Mankato, Minnesota.

Romero, Y. & Manjarres, M. P. (2017). How Does the First Language Have an Influence on Language Learning?: A Case study in an English ESL Classroom. *English Language Teaching,* 10 (7), Canadian Center of Science and Education, pp. 123-139.

Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *IRAL: International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 10 (3), 203-232.

Sellers, S. (1991). *Language and Sexual Difference*. Macmillan Education Limited.

Silva, T. (1990). Second language composition instruction: Developments, issues, and directions in ESL. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language Writing: Research Insights for the Classroom.* Cambridge University Press.

Sirbu, A. (2015). The significance of language as a tool of communication. Conference Paper.

Skinner, B. F. (1957). *Verbal Behavior*. Appleton – Century - Crofts. https://www.worldcat.org>title>oclc.

Spencer, J. (1971). *The English Language in West Africa*. Longman.

Tardy, C. (2009). *Building Genre Knowledge*. Parlor Press.

Tuffaha, H. A. (2021). First language interference in the English writing of Arabic-speaking students: An error analysis approach. *Arab World English Journal*, 12(1), 169–183. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol12no1.12

Ubahakwe, E. (Ed.). (1999). *The Teaching of English Studies: Reading for Colleges and Universities*. Ibadan University Press.

Uwen, G. O., Bassey, 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. https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v4i3.15127

Verla, H., & Mohammed, A. B. (2023). L1 interference and error patterns in digital communication: An analysis of Facebook posts by students of Gombe State Polytechnic Bajoga. *Nigerian Journal of Language and Discourse*, 6(1), 32–47.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Process*. Harvard University Press.

Weinreich, U. (1953). *Languages in Contact*. The Hague Mouton. https://www.scrip.org>reference

Whitman, W. (2007). An Epigraph. In Fromkin et al. *An Introduction to Language,* 8th ed. Wordsworth.

Woodall, B. R. (2002). Language-switching: Using the first language while writing in a second language. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 11, 7-28.

Zamel, V. (1983). The composing processes of advanced ESL students: Six case studies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(2), 165-187.