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## **EDITORIAL**

Every academic environment is sustained by learning through rigorous methods. Research is one and the focal point for assessment. A serious member of the academic community is measured by the quality and number of academic articles.

In spite of the desire to acquire many research reports, this edition has insisted on standards and quality. It is important to note that many articles have been rejected for not meeting our requirements.

The first and most obvious task of our journal is to provide a level playing field for researchers all over the globe in language-related disciplines, which is the vehicle for conveying knowledge. In this edition, thirty-one (31) articles have undergone academic scrutiny from our blind reviewers.

To our esteemed contributors and readers, thought-provoking articles are expected and we are ready to publish them in the next volume.

**PROFESSOR ALI AMADI ALKALI,**  
Editor-in-Chief,  
JAJOLLS: Jalingo Journal of Linguistics and Literary Studies,  
Department of Languages and Linguistics,  
Taraba State University, Jalingo.

## **FOR READERS**

This volume of JAJOLLS (Jalingo Journal of Linguistics and Literary Studies, Volume 8, Issue 1) adheres to the guidelines of the current edition of the American Psychological Association and Modern Language Association (APA & MLA) Publication Manual for editing and formatting the featured papers. Renowned for its clear and user-friendly citation system, the APA/MLA manual also provides valuable guidance on selecting appropriate headings, tables, figures, language, tone, and reference styles, resulting in compelling, concise, and refined scholarly presentations. Furthermore, it serves as a comprehensive resource for the Editorial Board, navigating the entire scholarly writing process, from authorship ethics to research reporting and publication best practices.

JAJOLLS

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## **Lexico-Semantic Features of Nigerian English: A Study of Zaynab Alkali's "The Stillborn"**

### **Abstract**

The paper attempts an analysis of lexico-semantic features of Nigerian English in Zainab Alkali's *The Stillborn* in order to show how lexical items such as words, phrases and sentences are used at the phonological, lexical, semantic, and grammatical (syntactic) and discourse levels in the text. It reviews studies on lexico-semantic features, carried out by some scholars. It adopts J.R. Firth's theory of contextual meaning or context of situation theory as a basis for the analysis of the data. The data which are the lexico-semantic features in the text are extracted from chapters one, three, five, seven and nine of the text. They are presented in statistical tables indicating the meanings and frequency of occurrences of the identified Nigerian English (NE) lexical items. They are presented in tables and simultaneously analysed using contextual theory of meaning where the semantic features of the lexical items are analysed. From the analysis of the data, it is discovered that in context or structure, there are lexical items which express Nigerian meaning in "The Stillborn". It is also discovered that Nigerian words or lexical items are coined into English to replace words which are absent in the English language; fixed standard expressions are modified to suit Nigerian concepts; British English expressions are used with extended meaning in Nigeria and standard British English is used in cultural expression in Nigeria. It concludes that a variety of English which is peculiarly Nigerian now exists among the varieties of English worldwide. It also concludes that of all the NE lexical items used in the text, direct translation from MT categories are more in number or are extensively used than the other categories because they recorded the highest percentage.

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### **Introduction**

Nigerian English (henceforth, NE) caters for the shortcomings of the Standard British English (henceforth, SBE), which cannot express the socio-cultural needs, thoughts and ideas of Nigerians in terms of communication. That is why Ngugi (1987), says if the culture does not exist in the foreign language, then the foreign language may not express the culture. This underscores the need for the SBE to be altered in order to suit the cultural needs of the Nigerian society through the process of domestication. In domesticating the English language in Nigeria, interference at all the language levels is inevitable. That is why NE has elements of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa lexis in its set up.

According to Jowitt (1991), NE is something real and identifiable as it is an everyday means of communication for a multitude of Nigerians of differing degrees of education. Similarly,

Osunbade as cited in Bemigho and Olateju (2007) asserts that NE is the variety of English that has developed in the Nigerian non-native English situation and has distinguishing features manifested at the phonological, lexical, semantic, grammatical (syntactic) and discourse levels. Based on the foregoing therefore, this paper attempts to analyse the lexico-semantic features of NE in Zaynab Alkali's- '*The Stillborn*'-.

- '*The Stillborn*'- depicts the experiences of women in contemporary Nigeria. The story revolves around a 13 years old girl named Li, who has lots of dreams and lust for city life but challenged by traditional values of her family, marriage and society. Zaynab Alkali is a well-known author that hails from Borno State, Nigeria. She obtained her B.A. degree from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is one of the very first women novelists to emerge from northern Nigeria. Professor Zaynab Alkali was a onetime lecturer at the University of Maiduguri and later Nasarawa State University, Keffi. In addition to - '*The Stillborn*'-, she has also written other literary works including - '*The Virtuous Woman*'-, - '*The Descendants*'-, and - '*The Cobwebs and Other Stories*'-. Just like other prominent Nigerian authors such as Wole Soyinka and Chinua Achebe; Professor Zaynab Alkali is also known for using NE expressions in her writings, hence the choice of - '*The Stillborn*'- as a text for study.

The text has Nine Chapters and a hundred and five pages (with an epilogue of five pages). Out of the nine chapters, Chapters one, three, five, seven and nine are selected for the analysis. The analysis is limited to the NE lexical items (words, phrases and sentences) used in the selected text and their meanings analysed based on SBE.

## 2.0 Literature review

This section reviews both conceptual and empirical studies of literatures related to the present study. Nigerian English, lexical features of NE and semantic features of NE form the conceptual review, while previous studies on NE forms the empirical studies.

## 2.1 Nigerian English

Nigerian English (NE) may be defined as the subset of English spoken and written by Nigerians (Eka, 2000). According to Adefolake (2016), NE is the variety used by Nigerians to communicate across socio-cultural boundaries. It has its own words, phrases, sentences or expressions that are only used in Nigeria by Nigerians and only understood very well by Nigerians. These definitions imply that NE is an adaptation of the foreign language into the Nigerian community. For instance, expressions such as 'drop here', 'go slow', 'stomach of the pumpkin', 'long leg' and 'son of my mother' are all Nigerian English expressions that are not easily comprehensible to speakers of other dialects of English. It is this Nigerian peculiarity of using the English language that differentiates it from Standard British English, American English, Australian English and other Englishes. Each variety is distinct but still in communion with the language as it is spoken by the speakers who hold the franchise. NE cannot be an exception as it is a form of English that has its roots in the Standard British English (henceforth SBE) but domesticated to suit the Nigerian cultural needs since culture and language are said to be inseparable.

The relationship between culture and language is further buttressed by Achebe (1975:62): "I feel that the English Language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience, but it will have to be a new English still in communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surrounding". The English envisaged by Achebe is one that is altered by the cultural imperatives of its new environment, which in this case is Nigeria. Attah (1998) is of the view that the divergence between NE and the other dialects of the language should be considered in terms of variations and deviations which enrich and add flavour to English expressions in the country. This deviation of the NE from the other varieties of English is also brought about by the fact that English is learnt in Nigeria as a

second language alongside other various indigenous languages. Hence, elements of interference and borrowings in NE expressions are unavoidable.

According to Ogunsuji (2001), new words and expressions are almost coined on daily basis to express the Nigeria lingua-cultural realities. This is corroborated by Odebunmi (2006) who asserted that the socio-cultural differences that exist between the English people and Nigerians allow new lexical items to develop. He further stated that prior to the arrival of the English language in Nigeria; the indigenous languages were used to express thoughts, customs, experiences, and the people's ways of life. These lexical items form the basis for lexico-semantic features of NE which are discussed below.

## 2.2 Lexical features of Nigerian English

There are large number of words or registers in NE that refer to food, dress, transport, religion and traditional customs. These words are realised through loan words, coinages, semantic shifts, direct translation or transliteration from Mother Tongue, transfer and insertion/omission of prepositions/articles. These are explained below:

### 2.2.1 Loan words

A loanword is that which "a recipient language has lifted from a donor language to mean the same object or practice to which it originally referred in the donor language" (Donwa-Ifode, 1995:135) NE has a great number of loan words that have no direct English equivalents but have rooted themselves into the dialect and have unique meanings. Examples are:

1. Agbada - a kind of flowing gown for men, especially among the Yorubas.
2. Babariga - a kind of long, loose dress for men, especially among the Hausas.
3. Akara - a food item prepared using beans. It is also called 'bean cake'.
4. Buka - a cheap eating place
5. Ogbono - name of a soup
6. Marghi Special- a kind of soup made with fish by the Marghis; a tribe in Borno state.
7. Danfo - a yellow bus used for public transport in Lagos State.
8. Okada - a commercial motorcycle used for public transport.
9. Moimoi - a kind of boiled tasty bean cake.
10. Alhaji/Alhaja - a muslim who has gone to Hajj or a rich man/woman and socialite.

(Ebunlola, 2007)

### 2.2.2 Coinages

This involves the creation of new words for expressing new experiences. Examples are:

1. Bush meat - refers to wild animals' meat
2. long leg - personal connection with an influential person
3. go slow - traffic jam
4. junior brother - younger brother
5. co-wife - a husband's additional wife usually in a polygamous family or marriage.
6. One one naira - meaning one naira per each.
7. Next tomorrow - meaning the day after tomorrow
8. Academician - used to refer to an academic person instead of academic
9. Sugar daddy - A 'womanizer' (cassanova) especially a Promiscuous old man, old enough to be his girlfriend's father.
10. Omo - Detergent, washing powder. The trade name has become the referent for all forms of detergents e.g. Omo, Elephant, Klin

(Ebunlola, 2007)

### 2.2.3 Neologisms

Just like coinages, neologisms also expand the frontiers of the vocabulary of the language. However, it does not only stop at describing the new phenomena, it may be an entirely new word, a modified form of an existing one or even an already existing one assuming a new meaning. They are easy to understand as the situation from where the words are formed suggests the meaning. They may not be listed in a dictionary but they are used locally in spoken and written forms. Examples are:

1. Area boys - Gang of unemployed youths indigenous of a town or area who harass both indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitants of a town.
2. Unfortunate-European - Albino
3. Chicken-change - A meagre amount of money
4. Ghana-must-go - fibre bag from Taiwan
5. No-hoper - someone who has lost all hope
6. Back-hand-business - illegal deal or transaction
7. God-fatherism - Favouritism shown to friends and family by influential personalities.
8. Naira-power - use of money for influence to change things in one's favour.
9. Kitchen-graduate - illiterate woman
10. Hand-set - Mobile phone

### 2.2.4 Semantic shift

According to Bamgbose as cited in Banjo (1995), there are words which have assumed a different role in expressing meaning different from their denotative meanings. In other words, their original meanings in British Standard English change completely, giving new ones in NE. They are also called Syllogisms. Examples are:

1. Sorry - an expression of sympathy, especially, when the sympathizer is responsible for what happened to the person.
2. Well done - a greeting to someone at work.
3. I am coming - instead of 'I will be back'.
4. Not on seat - meaning not on hand/available when required can
5. Father/Mother - refer to an elderly person but not necessarily One's biological parent as a sign of respect.
6. Convince - to persuade
7. Electorates - Voters
8. Good day - Good afternoon
9. Partner - Wife, Husband or Fiancé

### 2.2.5 Direct Translation or Transliteration from Mother Tongue

This is a very significant feature of Nigerian English. This entails the creation of new structures with words that are obviously English lexis but are direct translation from indigenous languages. Examples include: goat head, long leg, cow leg, bush meat, son of my mother etc.

### 2.2.6 Transfer

According to Adegbija (2004), this has to do with the transfer of culture, sense or meaning from the native language into English or reinterpretation or extension of an existing meaning in English to cover new areas of experience in Nigerian English.

### 2.2.7 Insertion/omission of prepositions/articles

NE - To advocate for (a policy) – insertion of preposition

SBE – To advocate (a policy)

NE – To condole (a person) – omission of preposition

SBE – To condole with (a person)

#### 'The'

NE – At alert – omission of the definite article 'the'

SBE – On the alert

NE – On the condition that – insertion of the definite article 'the'

SBE – On condition that

#### 'An'

NE – To have abortion – omission of indefinite article 'an'

SBE – To have an abortion

NE – To keep an open house – insertion of indefinite article 'an'

SBE – To keep open house

## 2.3 Semantic features of Nigerian English

Just like at the lexical level, the English Language exhibits traits of the Nigerian environment at the semantic level. The semantic components of Nigerian English consist of semantic extension, semantic narrowing, semantic reduplication, coinages, the Nigerianisation of idioms and proverbs and ambiguity.

### 2.3.1 Semantic extension

This simply refers to the addition of meaning to a Standard English Word (Akindele and Adegbite, 2005). Examples are:

1. I stayed (lived) in Abuja for five years.
2. Aisha hears (understands) Arabic very well.
3. I had to give the police man kolanut (bribe) before I was released.

### 2.3.2 Semantic narrowing

In semantic narrowing, meanings of words are narrowed to have a contracted or condensed. Examples are:

1. Aisha is expecting a baby (girl) since they already have a boy.
2. Our globe (electric bulbs) shines brighter than yours.
3. With the removal of subsidy, fuel (petrol) is more expensive than kerosene.

### 2.3.3 Semantic shift

This involves redefining the characteristic pattern of a word within the semantic field and by doing so; the central context of the word becomes marginalised. Examples are:

1. His *machine* broke down. (machine for motorcycle)
2. NEPA did not bring *light* today. (light for electricity)

### 2.3.4 Semantic reduplication

These are unnecessary repetition of the same idea. Examples are:

1. **Repeat** what you just said **again**.
2. This is my **personal opinion**.
3. America's **past history** is worth studying.
4. I went to the **ATM machine**.

### 2.3.5 Nigerianisation of Idioms and Proverbs

Some Standard British English idioms and proverbs have been domesticated to suit our Nigerian environment. These Nigerianised idioms and proverbs are presented below with their SBE forms.

NE - Cut your cloths according to your size.

SBE - Cut your coat according to your size.

NE - One tree cannot make a forest.

SBE – One swallow does not make a summer.

NE – More grease to your elbow.

SBE – More power to your elbow.

### 2.3.6 Ambiguity

Most times, the omission of function words in NE expressions brings about ambiguity in semantics of NE. Examples are:

1. University demands change instead of 'The University demands change.
2. Sheep was talked about at the Abuja conference instead of 'The Sheep was talked about at the Abuja Conference.

## 2.4 Empirical studies on Lexico-semantic features of Nigerian English

Many studies have been carried out by different scholars from different perspectives on NE including lexico-semantic features. For instance, Edmund (1994) carried out a research entitled 'A Study on Lexico-Semantic Variation in Nigerian English in the novels of three prominent Nigerian authors: Chukwuemaka Ike, Kole Omotoso and Zaynab Alkali. The study identified ten categories of lexico-semantic variation which are: loan shift, lexico-semantic duplication and redundancy, ellipsis, conversion, clipping, acronyms, translation equivalents, analogical creation and coinage. The results of the study indicate that all the three authors consciously or subconsciously used NE expressions in their novels, which is an indication that NE usage cuts across not only various social and educational strata but also first language backgrounds.

In another relevant study, Okanlawon (2018) conducted a lexico-semantic analysis of Nigerian English usage in Olaoye's 'The River Gone Dry' and Adeniran's 'Imagine This'. In this qualitative research, the use of NE in the selected literary texts was analysed using lexico-semantic features of NE by Adegbija (1989) as cited in Adedimeji (2007). The results of the study showed that the Standard British English does not account for the English equivalent of every indigenous word which is peculiar to the various Nigerian cultures. Thus, speakers of Nigerian English have been able to translate their different socio-cultural backgrounds into English so as to express their thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Abel *et al* (2016), in a study entitled 'An Insight into the Grammatical and Lexico-Semantic Features of Nigerian English in a Bilingual Speech Community', examined

the place of English language in Nigeria and its intelligibility in Nigerian socio-cultural context by attempting to answer the questions whether what is called Nigerian English is indeed a concept that should be embraced, and if it is, what are those things that make its acceptance possible. Using only the lexico-semantic features of NE that among other features distinguishes it from the Standard British English, the researchers discussed the evolution of NE and explained that the influence of Mother Tongue on a target language is the major cause of the features. The result of the study revealed that though the innovations brought about by the lexico semantic features of NE give English in Nigeria a good status but non-Nigerians find it difficult to understand such variations and therefore international intelligibility is reduced. The results also showed that in a second language context, there is a need for extra-sensitivity to the context in which communication occurs because it holds the key to the genuine functions of utterances to avoid misinterpretations in a communication process.

In another similar study, Ekpenyong (2019) conducted a study entitled "A Lexico-Semantic Analysis of features of Style in Zaynab Alkali's *The Stillborn*, *The Virtuous Woman* and *The Descendants*. The data for the study was drawn from the three novels and their lexico-semantic stylistic features analysed using context of situation and the contextual

theory of meaning as theoretical framework. The results of the study indicate that lexical choices associated with education, dominate the three novels followed by medicine and Health. The results of the study also revealed that the author's stylistic nuances at the lexico-semantic level are dominated by figures of speech, collocation and idioms. It also demonstrates the novelist's vision and theme as a feminist writer and her cognisance of the rich vocabulary of the English Language. This study is similar to the present study as it also includes analysis of lexical items in a text written by the same author, Zaynab Alkali.

The above reviewed studies are relevant to the present study since it also attempts to analyse the lexico-semantic features of NE in Zaynab Alkali's '*The Stillborn*'. However, this study stands out because to the knowledge of the researcher, no such a work has been conducted previously.

### **3.0 Theoretical framework**

This study adopted J.R. Firth's (1957) theory of contextual meaning or context of situation theory. It asserts that meaning of what is said is limited to stretch of sounds we produce but to the pragmatic context in which it occurs. He expounded this idea where he argued that context is determined when expounding meaning. It is understood that since utterance occurs within a culturally-conditioned situation, meaning cannot be separated from the background and the way the speaker perceives himself. Context is situational. Situation where language functions is called context. The situation is where the language operates. It can be environmental, time, cultural, institutional, conventional, social and religious which can influence language use. To understand and identify context, one needs to understand context in terms of its features.

Features of context as identified by Hymes (1964) include the following:

- i. Participants: the people involved, who may be teacher-teacher, teacher-students, student-student; colleagues; football players; husband and wife etc.
- ii. Setting: the environment which may be home, school, organization etc.
- iii. Medium: the channel of communication– verbal or non-verbal.
- iv. Code: the style or dialect, etc.
- v. Message form: This may be debate, chat, etc.

It is important to clearly state that the features listed above are not necessary in all contexts as in some instance other factors such as status, education, and age are also considered as features of socio-cultural context. Therefore, the lexico-semantic features of the selected text were analysed bearing in mind the context in which such lexical items were used.

### **4.0 Methodology**

This section explains the methods used for data collection, presentation and analysis of data. The data for this study was obtained from five selected Chapters: Chapters 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 out of the nine chapters of the text '*The Stillborn*', where NE lexical items are identified for presentation and subsequent analysis. The data for the study is presented in statistical tables where the extracts of the identified NE lexical items, their meanings and frequency of occurrences are presented. The data presented in tables are simultaneously analysed using contextual theory of meaning as a theoretical basis where the semantic features of the lexical items are analysed.

#### 4.1 Data presentation and analysis

The data for this study is simultaneously presented and analysed using tables as follows:

**Table 1: Table showing lexical items denoting names of persons**

Lexical Items	Meaning /SBE form	Category
Habu	Referring to the name Abubakar in Hausa land. Abubakar is one of the four major companions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)	Coinage
Dan Fiama	Fiama's son.	Direct translation from MT
Sani	The Second (II), a word which is borrowed from Arabic.	Loan Word
Timbili	The pity woman	Loan Word
Hauwa	Eve	Loan Word
Alhaji	Alhaji refers to someone who has gone to Hajj and it indicates respect.	Loan Word
Mama	Mother, may be biological or an elderly woman.	Loan Word
Kaka	Grandfather or mother, may be biological. or not.	Loan Word

In table 1 above, it can be seen that NE lexical items denoting names given to persons and family relatives were used in the novel - 'The Stillborn-'. Most of the lexical items identified are loan words borrowed from the L1 (MT) of the setting which is Hausa language.

**Table 2: Table showing lexical items denoting family or social relationships**

Lexical Items	Meaning /SBE form	Category
Son of my mother	Brother may be biological or social.	Direct translation from MT.
Closest friend	Bosom friend	Coinage
Big sister	An elderly sister may be biological or an elderly lady.	Coinage
Son of the chief	Prince	Direct translation from MT.
Chief of the village	King or Traditional Ruler	Direct translation from MT.
Father's brother	Uncle	Direct translation from MT.
Children of my mother	Siblings	Direct translation from MT.
Big men	Influential persons	Neologism
Daughter of the land	An indigene or citizen	Direct translation from MT.
The son of my friend	My friend's son.	Direct translation from MT.
Owner of the building	Landlord	Direct translation from MT.
Houseboys	Housekeeper or servant	Coinage
The woman of my house	Spouse or wife	Direct translation from MT.
Kinsman	Relatives	Coinage

In table 2 above, NE Lexical items denoting family ties and social relationships were used in the story. Most of these lexical items are arrived at through direct translation of their meaning



from the MT. For instance, 'Son of my mother' refers not only to one's biological brother but it also indicates social brotherhood as obtainable in a typical Nigerian Society where an individual who is old enough to be a brother or father is considered or addressed as one, out of respect or courtesy.

**Table 3: Table showing lexical items denoting names of things, creatures or places**

Lexical Items	Meaning /SBE form	Category
Waist beads	A locally made jewelry originally worn around the waist by African women.	Coinage
Water calabash	A container used in carrying water or other goods. Calabash is made from bottle gourd, a tropical plant which produces a large fruit, outside of which becomes hard when dried and can be used as container.	Coinage
Cooking hut	A small shelter made from thatch that is used for cooking. It represents Kitchen.	Coinage
Behind the hut	'Toilet' To go behind the hut means to visit the toilet.	Direct Translation from MT.
Bag of waters	Amniotic sack/amniotic fluids... A sack in which babies are born with	Direct Translation from MT.
Libira	A word borrowed from Arabic meaning 'Needle'	Loan word
River goddess	A female deity in charge of a river.	Direct Translation from MT.
Bean cake	Refers to a variety of fried food made from beans that looks like a cake. It is also called Akara.	Coinage
Crack-crack of the dishes	Sounds made by dishes when washing it.	Direct Translation from MT.
Prayer house	Church or Mosque	Coinage
Clothes line	A line tied in between two poles for drying clothes. It refers to clothes drier or dryer.	Coinage
Meat sellers	Butcher	Direct translation from MT.

In table 3 above, it can be seen that NE Lexical items denoting names of things, places or creatures were used in the story. Most of these words were coined to better express the socio-cultural background needs of the people, which the SBE cannot cater for. Hence; the need for having more of the direct translation from MT category as shown in the table above.

**Table 4: Table showing lexical items denoting neologism and Nigerianised idioms/proverbs**

Lexical Items	Meaning /SBE form	Category
Waist beads	A locally made jewelry originally worn around the waist by African women.	Coinage
Water calabash	A container used in carrying water or other goods. Calabash is made from bottle gourd, a tropical plant which produces a large fruit, outside of which becomes hard when dried and can be used as container.	Coinage
Cooking hut	A small shelter made from thatch that is used for cooking. It represents Kitchen.	Coinage
Behind the hut	'Toilet' To go behind the hut means to visit the toilet.	Direct Translation from MT.
Bag of waters	Amniotic sack/amniotic fluids... A sack in which babies are born with	Direct Translation from MT.
Libira	A word borrowed from Arabic meaning 'Needle'	Loan word
River goddess	A female deity in charge of a river.	Direct Translation from MT.
Bean cake	Refers to a variety of fried food made from beans that looks like a cake. It is also called Akara.	Coinage
Crack-crack of the dishes	Sounds made by dishes when washing it.	Direct Translation from MT.
Prayer house	Church or Mosque	Coinage
Clothes line	A line tied in between two poles for drying clothes. It refers to clothes drier or dryer.	Coinage
Meat sellers	Butcher	Direct translation from MT.

In table 3 above, it can be seen that NE Lexical items denoting names of things, places or creatures were used in the story. Most of these words were coined to better express the socio- cultural background needs of the people, which the SBE cannot cater for. Hence; the need for having more of the direct translation from MT category as shown in the table above.

**Table 4: Table showing lexical items denoting neologism and Nigerianised idioms/proverbs**

Lexical Items	Meaning /SBE form	Category
A patient person could cook a rock and drink the soup.	SBE: The patient dog eats the fattest bone.	Proverb
The sun has set on you.	You have come of age.	Idiomatic expression
The chicken is better left in its feathers	SBE: Some things are better left unsaid.	Proverb
Toothless dog	Harmless	Neologism
Easy life	Comfortable life	Neologism
Return well	Used in Nigerian Hausa context to wish someone a farewell when travelling or going out.	Direct Translation from MT.
The moon will be full	Moon light	Direct Translation from MT.

In table 4 above, it can be noted that a few NE Lexical items denoting proverbs/ idioms or neologisms were used in the selected text for the study. The proverbs though coined within the Nigerian context but still maintain their meanings when expressed in the SBE forms. Other lexical items in the table include neologisms and direct translation from MT.

**Table 5: Table showing summary of distribution of lexical items according to category or type**

S/N	Lexical Category/Type	Frequency/Percentage of Usage
1.	Direct Translation from MT.	17 (46%)
2.	Coinage	9 (24%)
3.	Neologism	2 (5%)
4.	Loan Words	6 (16%)
4	Nigerianised proverbs/idioms	3 (8.1%)

5	Insertion or deletion of articles	0 (0%)
6	Total	37 (100%)

Table 5 above shows the summary of category or type of lexical items as presented in the previous four tables, their frequency and percentage of usage. It can be noted that Direct Translation from MT Category recorded the highest percentage of 46%, followed by coinages which recorded 24%, loan words recorded 16%, while neologisms and Nigerianised proverbs and idioms recorded 3% and 8%, respectively. The Insertion or Deletion of Articles category was not used in the story.

Based on the data presented and analysed in this study, it is discovered that Nigerian words or lexical items are coined into English to replace words which are absent in the English language; fixed standard expressions are modified to suit Nigerian concepts; British English expressions are used with extended meaning in Nigeria and standard British English is used in cultural expression in Nigeria. Aspects of each of these domestication methods were found in *'The Stillborn'* where Zaynab Alkali used Standard English to express aspects of Nigerian culture. This agrees with the Ngugi's famous stand that if the culture does not exist in the foreign language, then the foreign language may not express the culture (Ngugi, 1987). The culture of early marriage, polygamy, detest for western education and struggle of women in a patriarchal society which forms the theme of the novel are unknown to the British, but the author of *The Stillborn* 'tamed' the English language as Achebe suggested in order to convey her message to the world. This she did by using many expressions like *'The woman of my house'*, *'owner of the building'*, *the patient person could cook a rock and drinks the soup*, *son of my mother* etc. These expressions are akin to Achebe (1975) "he saw a one-handed spirit carrying a basket full of water", "his late father was poor in his last life; he should be rich when he comes again". These express the Nigerian culture using Standard English expressions as it is evident that the English language is being domesticated to carry the full weight of Nigerian culture.

From the analysis of the data in this study, it is also discovered that in context or structure, there are lexical items which express Nigerian meaning in *"The Stillborn"*. Therefore, the four tables presented above, contain culturally based lexical items and nuances domesticated in the text which include names of persons, places or things, coinages, neologisms and Nigerianised idioms/proverbs.

#### 4.0 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the use of NE Lexical items in *The Stillborn* expressing Nigerian socio-cultural realities and needs through domestication processes such as direct translation from MT, coinages, neologisms, Nigerian proverbs and idioms expressed in English to teach important lessons, the study concludes that a variety of English which is peculiarly Nigerian now exists among the varieties of English worldwide.

Also, based on the quantitative analysis of the categories of lexical items, the study concludes that of all the NE lexical items used in the text, direct translation from MT category are more in number than the other categories because they recorded the highest percentage.

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