

Language and cultural code peculiarities within the framework of cross-cultural communication

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Abstract

The article deals with the peculiarities of linguistic and cultural code-specific features which have a significant impact on the successful communication process within the framework of intercultural interaction. According to the research work, the basic ground of cross-cultural communication operates with definitions and cultural elements, which are of primary importance in the language-mastering process and adaptation procedure to the foreign language environment. The authors of the research work analyze the concepts of code existing processes in modern linguistics, considering the key components of the linguistic and cultural code, stressing the complex nature of intercultural communication procedure due to the subjective application of individual background knowledge of a person while adapting to a foreign country's language and culture environment. Special attention is paid to the process of code-switching, which entails a stage of the new coding system. The analyzed process is a system of subcodes transformation procedure while sub coding information is carried out using an unlimited number of verbal and nonverbal communication signs. The article presents the author's ideas about the strategic influence of Standard British English on the language and cultural conditions of such language variants as Nigerian English. Being used as the official language, Nigerian English presents a hybrid type language variant, adapting British English phonetics, lexis and grammar to the needs of local cultures and languages. The code-switching process from local languages into English in formal communication is a typical process for Nigerians. While analyzing the specific features of the code-switching process in Nigerian English, the authors stress the necessity of paying attention to all language group variants: basilect, mesolect and acrolect, which are equally used in Nigerian society. One must admit code-switching process results in the popularity of Nigerian Pidgin English which has become the most popular unofficial language to nearly all Nigerian social groups thanks to its simplification in all language levels. Nigerian cultures and languages made Standard British English adapt to the local environment due to the needs of speakers. To conclude, the authors stress the specificity of the speaker is revealed in the process of cross-cultural communication and adaptation based on the peculiarities of the peoples' mentality as well as on a communicant's national character specificity.

Key words: cross-cultural communication, language contact, linguistic and cultural code, code-switching, code-mixing, mentality

Introduction

In modern society, the issues of cross-cultural interaction turned out to be one of the most urgent parts of researchers' analysis characteristics in linguistics, sociology, cultural studies and other science branches. Analyzing the specifics of the structure, essence and content of the intercultural communication theoretical foundations, domestic and foreign researchers adhere to the position of the necessity for a strict distinction between cultural phenomena of native and non-native cultures peculiarities. The researcher B. Katchru stresses, "in the course of language contact, the criterion of penetration depth of communicants into the contacting cultures is of

cultural interaction, cultural understanding and cultural interconnection levels". (Katchru, 2006: 47)

According to the ideas by E.O. Bamiro "the analysis of theoretical foundations in the field of linguistic interaction proved that at the present stage of contact linguistics development, there are some leading approaches to the question of defining the essence of intercultural communication which are usually referred to linguistic approach (the processes of intercultural communication belong to this group due to the nature of speech activity) and cultural and anthropological approach (characterized by the attention which is focused on the cultural component in the process of intercultural interaction)" (Bamiro, 1991: 11).

The practical part of the research work is based on the example of peculiar features of such language variants as the Nigerian English type. Therefore, we take into consideration the works of Nigerian linguists of E. Bamiro, A. Banio, R. Blench, H. Igboanus, O. Okoro. We come to the conclusion that language peculiarities of mixed languages and language variants are to the main extent, dependent on the level of the foreign languages adaptation process to local cultures peculiarities.

Methods

Two groups of methods were used in the research work: general scientific methods and special methods. The group of general scientific methods includes analysis, synthesis, abstraction, and generalization. These methods are used to comprehend the relevant theoretical and practical material. The group of special methods includes a descriptive method that allows identifying the characteristic features and relationships of linguistic units, a method of component analysis that provides the interpretation of a language unit, a quantitative method used in the selection of linguistic material to measure the productivity of certain linguistic and cultural units in the speech of native speakers, a definitional method used in obtaining lexicographic information about the meaning of the language unit. In addition, methods of collecting and processing linguistic material were used, in particular, the method of illustrative examples selection for certain linguistic phenomena from written sources.

Results and discussions

The definition of a code itself is one of the most actual questions in the theory of cross-cultural communication. It is stressed by M. Awonusi that "this code concept is "he unique type of information perceived in the conversion process transforming one signaling system into another one within the internal code (the so-called "language of thought" process) or external code process (which can be within verbal and non-verbal forms)". (Awonusi, 2002: 37)

The cultural and linguistic code is determined by the peculiarities of the mentality and is the reflection of the national character of its bearer, it is able to exert a significant influence in the process of selection, processing and presentation of information by the communicant, while the personal perception of information by the communicant has the ability to represent links in a chain of certain associations. The content of such a chain of associations is revealed by J. Baghana as "typical for representatives of different nations and ethnic groups as well as for people with different levels of background knowledge" (Baghana et al, 2018: 1075).

One must stress the process of information internal coding is in the reflection of certain words or phrases compatibility collaboration, explained by cultural identity. This is the reason why some kind of information is mistaken by some representatives. Sometimes, it is not equally understood by both communicants and, in some cases, can be absolutely mismatched (Baghana et al, 2019).

The practical part of the research work is based on the process of code-switching typical for such language variants as Nigerian English. Code-switching

(also code mixing) refers to the process of conversation or speech component. This process is characterized by the switching mechanism of the speaker from one language to another language or dialect. Code-switching is influenced by context peculiarities, and this phenomenon can be manifested in oral and written communication types (Okoro, 2004).

Switching codes process is a change of language, for example, when the main sentence can be taken or expressed using one language, and the subordinate part of the same sentence is performed by the same speaker using another language or dialects' elements, or even words or word expressions from another language. The code-switching process is a frequent case in the regions of several mixed ethnic, language and cultural groups.

In our research work, we have analyzed the peculiarities of the code-switching procedure of the Nigerian English language, which was formed on the basis of Standard British English and had to adapt to the conditions of local languages and cultures.

For Nigerians, as it is mentioned in works by I. Ajepe "English is a foreign language. Therefore, the autochthonous languages of Nigeria have a significant impact on the state of Nigerian English, which due to the influence of the creolization phenomenon, is forced to adapt to the local linguistic cultures". (Ajepe, 2016: 14)

The creolization process is typical for all language levels of Nigerian English. Transformation processes happen in its phonetics, grammar and lexis structure.

The phonetic structure of European languages in Africa is influenced by the phonetic system of the native languages of Africans. European languages studied as a second language are apt to be creolized due to the interference processes from the native language, and it results in the phonetic code-switching base of European languages to the hybrid type language adaptation version of the already existing phonetic system of the native language.

The phonetic specificity of Nigerian English is manifested in the vowel system transformation (vocalism) and the consonant system transformation (consonantism) processes.

While there are 12 monophthongs in the phonetic system of Standard British English, the phonetic system of Nigerian English has 11 monophthongs: the monophthong of Standard British English /æ/ is absent in Nigerian English. Often as it was mentioned in works by J. Baghana and T. Voloshina "instead of the monophthong /æ/, Nigerians use the sound /ʌ/ in the speech, and it is explained by the influence of autochthonous languages' peculiarities as they have no the sound /æ/ in phonetics system". (Baghana, Voloshina, 2019)

During the analysis of the diphthongs system, it was fixed that 7 diphthongs are typical for Nigerian English in comparison with 8 in Standard British English. The diphthong /eə/ is not used in the speech of Nigerians.

A characteristic feature of Nigerian English phonetics is the change of diphthongs in the form. Such phonetic processes have been fixed as typical to the basilect and mesolect language variants. For example, the diphthong of Standard British English /ɪə/ is transformed into the diphthong /ɪa/ in Nigerian English, for example, /hɪə/ - /hɪa/, /klɪəriŋ/ - /klɪariŋg/, /nɪəbaʊ/ - /nɪabaʊ/ (Bamgbose, 1995).

Diphthongs of Standard British English change into monophthongs in Nigerian English, for example /aʊ/, /aʊ/ turns into /ʌ/: /əraʊnd/ - /ərʌnd/, /traɪb/ - /trʌb/, /raʊnd/ - /rʌnd/ (Ejiofor, 2015).

Consonants devoicing is a characteristic of Nigerian English, which is explained as H. Igboanusi stresses "by the influence of native language interference processes and the desire of Nigerians to replace the sound with a more comfortable

analogue existing in autochthonous languages, for example: /θ/ - /t/: /θʌnk/ - /tʌnk/" (Igboanusi, 2008: 54).

Another researcher A. Banjo writes that "the loss of a sound or a group of sounds inside a word is a productive transformation process in Nigerian English too, for example: /munts/ - /munis/, /gudz/ - /gus/, /poltuks/ - /poltis/, /fi:ld/ - /fi:d/, /tʃaʊd/ - /ʃaɪd"/. (Banjo, 1995: 2018)

Sound adding transformation process is typical for the Nigerian English phonetics system. R. Blench insists "adding phonetic segments /ʌ/, /ə/ is often installed into the word in the position after the consonant sound, for example: /rəzɪgnetʃn/ - /rəzɪgnetʃən /, /brɪtʃ/ - /bɪrɪtʃ/, /krɪ:m/ - /kɪrɪm /; nasal segment /n/ is installed before the sound /t/, for example: /æntunetəl/, /æntunæntəl/, /fræktəl/ - /frʌnktəl /, /məθumætɪks/ - /məθumʌntɪks /" (Blench, 2012: 109).

The rank of the unique phonetic structural characteristics of Nigerian English includes anagram which is a permutation of letters in a word. The most frequent type of anagrams is the permutation of the phonetic cluster is /sk/, which according to the ideas by R. Mesthrie and R.M. Bhatt, R.M. "transforms into /ks/, for example: /ma:sk / - /ma:ks/, /fla:sk / - /fla:ks /" (Mesthrie, 2008: 209).

Specific kinds of individual words pronunciation is a key feature for Nigerian English phonetics, for example: /θru:/ - /tru:/, /dʒɛnjuərɪ/ - /dʒɛnuwərɪ/, /rɪpɛə/ - /rɪpiə/, /a:mən/ - /amɪ/, /mæθs/ - /mʌs/ (Okoro, 2006).

Describing the specific features of Nigerian English, Native English speakers stress that the personal perception of Nigerians plays a key role in the process of choosing certain lexical means for expressing certain units. Choosing one or another lexical unit, the inhabitants of Nigeria take into consideration the connection of language and culture, the overlap of the linguistic form of the lexical unit and the linguistic tradition of their native culture presented in the elements of everyday life. Lexical creolization reveals to be more productive than the phonetics creolization process.

A characteristic feature of Nigerian English is a specific lexical vocabulary that was particularly influenced by the missionaries. This lexical part can be traced in the lexemes composition associated with religious rites performed by missionaries, for example: "idol", "fetish" and others, as well as in the variety of lexical variations denoting animals, for example: "fox" denoting "a short horse or donkey", "rabbit" denoting "a giant rat" (Crystal, 2003).

The reason of the individual lexemes' meaning was connected with the fact that many of the first missionaries were of Sierra Leonean but not of European origin and therefore interpreted the English language that way.

At the beginning of the colonial era, when special attention was paid to the analysis of Nigerian flora and fauna biological properties, many biologists used lexical variants of autochthonous languages in the process of naming plant names, which later were replaced by the equivalents of colonizers language units, for example, "Canarium Schweinfurthii – African olive tree had the name bush-candle" (Blench, 2005: 11).

The creolization process is the reason for code-switching while using certain lexical units in the everyday communication of Nigerians. Lexical type of creolization is a characteristic feature of Nigerian English which is revealed in the transformation of word semantic changes through narrowing and expansion of the meaning.

The displacement of word meaning is one of the many ways to enrich the lexical composition of Nigerian English. It should be noted that this type of lexical meaning transformation is a very productive phenomenon for Nigerian English, for example:

- Station

The meaning of the noun "station" is "a place to stop" in Standard British English. For Nigerian English, the analyzed lexical unit has to be creolized, and its meaning is changed to "one's place of work or the location of one's official duties", for example:

"I will not be in my station for two weeks";

"I hope they don't sack me because I have been out of station for too long" (Igboanusi, 2002: 209).

The shift in the meaning of the lexical unit is explained by the influence of interference and is more characteristic of such language variants as basilect and mesolect.

Changing in words meaning is presented in two types of meaning transformations: expansion of word meaning and narrowing of word meaning.

Many lexical units are subject to the expansion of meaning in Nigerian English. It should be noted that the expansion of meaning is the most productive type of lexical transformation kinds. Nigerian English words acquire a number of new additional meanings in comparison with Standard British English, for example:

- "Action" – action, event, speech, activity.

The lexeme "action" denotes any type of activity or event in Standard British English. The meaning of it in Nigerian English is expanded and is interpreted as "to find a solution to the problem", for example:

The minister of education has been directed to take action on the matter with immediate effect (Igboanusi, 2010: 88).

- "Auntie" - a respected person.

The lexeme "Auntie" of Standard British English is usually used to mean the person of a blood relative. The code-switching process influences the word meaning in Nigerian English and undergoes a meaning change in the form of expansion, resulting in adding cultural aspects. So, the lexeme "Auntie" is used addressing to "a respected old woman who may not be a close relative" (Falola, 2009: 78); it is the description of "a dear person or a lady of advanced age", for example:

"Please, auntie, where can I get a bus to Oshodi?"

"Auntie Grace will soon be back from the market" (Langlo, 2017: 22).

The first example describes the action taking place on the street, where a young man turns to an elderly woman with a request – he wants to find out where the bus stop is. The second example illustrates the respectful attitude towards an elderly woman, Madame Grace, who is expected to come at any moment.

- "Uncle" – the addressing model to any male adult.

A similar situation to the lexeme "Auntie" is the case of code-switching in Nigerian English with the lexeme "Uncle". The meaning in Standard British English is "a blood relative". While using this lexeme in Nigerian English, the meaning of the word is changed and "transformed to a model used to address to any male adult, usually by younger generations even if addressing to the parents' acquaintances". (Page, 2005: 65)

The analyzed form of address is often used by Nigerians trading in local markets as an expression of respect to the buyer, for example, "Uncle, what do you want to buy" (Blench, 2005: 16).

- "Cup" – a cup, a goblet.

The noun "cup" in Standard British English has the meaning of "a small container shaped like a bowl", usually, the "cup" is used for drinking tea or coffee.

The meaning of the word in Nigerian English is changed, stressing the volume of the analyzed container. "Cup" in Nigerian English is used while describing "a vessel for a liquid larger than a cup such as a glass or a tumbler" for example:

"Can I have a cup of water?" (Igboanus, 2002: 209).

Lexeme "cup" is a part of Nigerian English idiom "His cup is full" which means "He has so many sins" (Page, 2005: 64).

- "To swallow" – to eat.

The meaning of the verb "to swallow" is changed in Nigerian English and is expanded while using to denote the chewing of food process, for example:

"Do you know that some people cannot swallow eba without chewing it?" (Igboanus, 2010: 98)

It is important to note that the daily Nigerian meal consists of several dishes. Some of these types such as "foo-foo" (any chopped side dish, pre-cooked, and then shaped into balls), "amala" (local Nigerian food made from yams or cassava flour), "tuwo – tuwo" (thick pudding made from local rice which is soft and sticky and is usually served with various types of soups) do not require careful chewing procedure during the meal as they have porridge-like substance. This feature of the Nigerian gastronomic culture contributes to the change in the linguistic specificity of Nigerian English which is reflected in the daily communication of Nigerians.

Due to the fact that a common way of word formation in Nigerian English is the changing in word meaning such transformation process as narrowing in word meaning is of great importance, though it is less productive in comparison with meaning expansion.

Here are examples illustrating such changes in the meaning of lexical units as the narrowing of the meaning:

- "Academics" - teachers, especially in higher education institutions: "Academicians are poorly remunerated in Nigeria". (Igboanus, 2002: 109).

It should be noted the definition "Academicians" is used in Standard British English exclusively to describe a member of the Academy. However, for Nigerian English, the phrase "academic people" has the following meaning: "educated people, especially university lecturers or teachers of colleges" (Page, 2005: 65). Consequently, the example illustrates the narrowing of meaning to the lexeme "Academics". The reason for the change is connected with the difference in educational systems in England and Nigeria: the level of the common British person's education often exceeds the degree of Nigerians. If, for England, members of the Academy are often representatives of national humanitarian, scientific, technical, educational and other public organizations, and they necessarily have an honorary doctorate degree, then in Nigeria, only in the exceptional case of university teachers have a doctorate degree. Educated Nigerians represent a low percentage of the entire population of the country (18% of all Nigerians). Moreover, only 20% of them have a scientific degree. (Akinlotan, 2016)

The vast majority of Nigerians with a high level of education are university professors, diplomats and journalists who have received higher education which means that for Nigeria, university teachers are included in the rank of Academics, for example:

"These academic people are always going on strike!" (Igboanus, 2010: 222).

It should be noted that the profession of a university teacher is considered very prestigious in Nigeria. For the Nigerian society a high school teacher is a highly respected and revered person, although the salaries of university teachers are not included in the rank of the most prestigious Nigerian professions.

The phrase "acada woman" is an elliptical form from "academic woman", and it is used while describing "a young student or graduate who is considered very smart, since she receives a higher education", for example:

"She is acada woman. Therefore she is so smart" (Page, 2005: 65).

One should stress having profound education is a very important aspect affecting the quality of a child's future life. If parents can provide their child with higher education, this literally means his or her future success.

The lexeme "academics" in Nigerian English ("academic work" or "activities" or even "the profession of a teacher") is understood as a professional activity of a teacher or a teacher in general, for example:

"Why I like academics is that it gives me enough time to do other things". (Igboanusi, 2002: 199)

Standard British English uses the lexeme "teaching" but not "academics", for example:

"Why I like teaching is that it gives me enough time to do other things". (Blench, 2005: 19)

- "Baby" – a female child.

The noun "baby" is used in Standard British English to refer to a child from birth to one year old, regardless of gender. The meaning of "baby" in Nigerian English is "a female child", in contrast to a male child, which in Nigerian English is represented by the lexeme "a male baby", for example:

"She gave birth to the baby again!" (Langlo, 2017: 24).

- "Countryman" – the representative from the same ethnic group.

The noun of Standard British English, "countryman" is used to address a person born in a certain state or living in the same country. The meaning of this lexical unit is interpreted as "a person from one's own town or ethnic group" for the Nigerians, for example:

"He is a countryman from Ibadan" (Blench, 2005: 21).

The reason for the narrowing of the meaning of the lexical unit is the peculiarity of the local culture. A countryman is a person to share a common fatherland with the Englishman, but to Nigerian ethnicity plays the key factor in determining the idea of the analyzed word, especially the ancestral connection with the ethnic group of the ancestors.

- "Force" – Army.

In Standard British English the lexeme "Force" is used to denote "strength" in the context "to resist external or internal influences", it is used as the ability to perform any actions or start new things. The meaning of the lexeme is changed in Nigerian English to narrowing and is used in the meaning of "Army" or "The Armed Forces", for example:

"My ambition is to join the force". (Igboanusi, 2010: 209)

The reason for the change in the meaning of the noun "Force" in Nigerian English is determined by the peculiarities of the historical development of Nigeria, which was characterized by a regular change of power carried out with the help of numerous military coups. The Nigerian army often served as a means of suppressing uprisings.

Though English is the official language in Nigeria, the majority of Nigerians use Nigerian Pidgin English in their speech. Nigerian Pidgin English is recognized by many modern Nigerian linguists as an unofficial interethnic language. The choice of this language option is due to its maximum proximity to the British English language, and it has many lexical words from local languages. The question of assigning the official status to Nigerian Pidgin English is of controversial nature

due to a highly simplified grammatical system and a limited vocabulary system. It is the lexical composition of Nigerian Pidgin English that represents its key advantage in everyday life by the majority of Nigerians since it contains lexical units from the main autochthonous languages: Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo.

The host of one of the most popular Nigerian programs "Wazobia" Stephen Onu stresses, "to be easily understood by an ordinary person, one needs to speak freely in a language that he clearly understands; so you have to switch to his usual broken English" (Okoro, 2006: 22); he continues saying "Pidgin English in Nigeria is changing daily, people are inventing their own dialects, mixed languages, this is a so-called delicious language, it's interesting and easy for communication, and it's just a pleasant entertainment" (Okoro, 2006: 28).

However, not everyone in Nigeria is thrilled with the growing popularity of the local Pidgin English productivity. Thus, literature teachers and philologists dispute the danger of blurring the boundaries of British English, the official language of Nigeria. Teachers of English at colleges and universities are sure that "Pidgin English really breaks the usual norms of Standard English. This language is the reason for many mistakes in written and oral English" (Awonusi, 2002: 34).

Success in Nigerian society is obtained by having a higher education level, which is carried out exclusively on the basis of the English language. High education undoubtedly increases the status of the British English language in Nigeria. However, only the elite part of Nigerian society is able to pay for higher education. Thus, taking into account the social factor, there is the tendency to believe that Nigerian Pidgin English has every chance of becoming the official language of Nigeria over the years.

Pidgin as a language form is a socially and historically conditioned neoplasm formed as a result of ethnocultural, trade-economic and military-political interactions of representatives of unrelated cultures originally in Nigeria. Pidgin is a hybrid form of the language, and it is distinguished by specific structural phonetic innovations, a rather simplified grammar system that leads to a maximum analytical system of the language, isolation and partial agglutination. It should be noted that the hybrid form of the language promotes the use of a limited system of lexical vocabulary, its own sociolinguistic norm and sufficient communicative adaptability, which contributes to mutual understanding in limited areas of interethnic communication.

The structural features common to all pidgins have common features: simplicity of the phonetic composition of speech weakly expressed morphology, and limited syntax options. There is reason to believe that the stabilization of the pidgin largely depends on the social and demographic situation in the country.

Nigerian Pidgin English is used along the coast of West Africa and the African Diaspora throughout the Atlantic. Among these close varieties, the Cameroonian Pidgin has much in common with the Nigerian Pidgin variant. It has significant differences from the Jamaican Pidgin. However, all these varieties of pidgins and creoles have a great number of semantic, grammatical and phonological similar features and structures.

The question of the Nigerian Pidgin English origin is still debatable. It is impossible to have a true determination whether the Nigerian Pidgin developed based on market contacts between European traders and various ethnic groups along the coast or if it was developed under the influence of Sierra Leone missionaries.

Nigerian Pidgin English differs from about 400 other Nigerian local languages, and its main advantage is that it is used by residents of all regional, ethnic, linguistic and religious groups of Nigeria. Nigerian Pidgin English is widely spoken by the representatives of all socio-economic groups, while only those who have received high education for several years can claim to speak Standard British English.

Despite the fact that Nigerian Pidgin English is more of a logical choice as a means of interethnic language, this language has not received the support of

government officials in the field of language policy. The attitude towards the Nigerian Pidgin as to the possible official language remains hot to discuss and even negative to some extent. It is explained by its primitiveness and inconsistency with the norms of Standard British English.

Nigerian Pidgin English today can be described as the most productive spoken language of the indigenous peoples of Nigeria. Nigerian Pidgin English is chosen by residents of the whole country as a means of interethnic communication type. It is commonly used not only in the largest metropolitan areas such as Lagos, Kano and Port Harcourt; this language is spoken by Nigerians in slums such as Aegunle and Mushin. Recently, Nigerian Pidgin English has been widely used as a broadcast language in the media when transmitting news, and all types of advertising in order to reach large masses of Nigerians, for whom this language is either the first, the second or the third.

The use of Nigerian Pidgin English is widespread throughout Nigeria, especially in informal spheres of communication. For example, in the Niger Delta region, where there is a rapid speed of creolization language processes, Nigerian Pidgin English is more widely used in formal communication, for example, in teaching, both at the primary and secondary school levels. Similarly, in most higher education institutions, Nigerian Pidgin English is widely used by students to present oral answers as well as in informal communication. That is why Nigerian Pidgin English is often called the unofficial Nigerian language of interethnic communication.

The code-switching process, implemented in the combination of British English and Pidgin English structures, is in the hybridization of the lexical composition of British English and units of autochthonous languages which are taken as the result of new lexical units formation due to semantic association, as it is stressed in work by H. Igboanusi, for example:

- "úbók gum" – hand/gum – a mean or selfish person: "He's such a úbók gum, don't deal with he";
 - "ái monkey" – roamy monkey – a thief: "No business with he, he áí monkey";
 - "tíñ ké church" – stop nagging: "Common, tíñ ké church!"
- (Igboanusi, 2010: 99)

A characteristic feature of the Nigerian Pidgin English is the so-called combination of elements from two lexical formations to create a new lexical unit. Such hybrid words are mainly used to create aesthetic and comic effects, for example:

- "Fantabullous – fantastic/fabulous: The party was really fantabullous;
 - overgasted – overwhelmed/flabbergasted: I not want to see him after his overgasted behaviour;
 - flabberwhelmed – flabbergasted/overwhelmed: New shop is flabberwhelmed, you buy everything;
 - carnibration – carnival/celebration: The carnibration was so great!;
 - edutainment – education/entertainment – My daughter liked the edutainment in new school;
 - terrubious – terrible/dubious –Last time he was terrubious".
- (Igboanusi, 2002: 65)

Such a specific type of lexical word formation has become widespread among the youth of Nigeria and, in particular, in the keggite social media group, which consists mainly of students.

A unique feature of Nigerian Pidgin English is the fact that its lexemes gradually succumb to word-formation changes, acquiring affixes and, thus, developing a specific complex morphological system. For example, words such as "misyarn" - misfire, "blacky" – pencil, "shorty" - shorty which function in the language in order to identify contrastive and expressive meanings.

However, mostly word-formation transformation changes are used in Nigerian Pidgin English for creating humor and achieving the maximum comic effect. A distinctive feature of Nigerian Pidgin English is the inability to distinguish homonyms. For example, words like thin – thing – tin, can all be pronounced as /tu/, the reason for this phonetic similarity lies in the fact that the relationship between sound and spelling in Nigerian Pidgin is more stable than in Standard British English. Phonological reduction and neutralization of phonemes lead to the appearance of a large number of homophones in Nigerian Pidgin English compared to Standard British English. It should be noted that there are no generally accepted spelling rules in the Nigerian Pidgin English system. Therefore, everyone prefers a writing system that is a vivid reflection of sound. The only way to distinguish homophones is the use of supra segmental outlines on the letter, for example, such as tone and intonation, for example:

"Pálè no gree me come" - (My) father didn't allow me to come;

"Chelsea bin bayla Arsenal well" – Chelsea defeated Arsenal glaringly.
(Page, 2005: 79)

The homophones "pale" - father in the first example and "bayla" - defeat in the second example can only be distinguished contextually; phonetically, they are identical.

Despite the simplified structure of Nigerian Pidgin English, its lexical composition includes borrowings from European languages, primarily British English, French and Portuguese, which previously functioned on the territory of Nigeria and have become the integral part of the modern lexical composition, for example:

- borrowings from Portuguese:

"sabi" — to know, "dash" — to give something to a person,

- borrowings from French:

"boku" — plenty, "rundevu"— reckless spending,

- borrowings from English:

"go slow" — hold up, "machine" — new car, "houseboy" — male servant.

(Blench, 2005: 16)

Nigerians prefer to choose autochthonous languages as a means of communication or use a language such as Nigerian Pidgin English in the informal communication type. The development of Nigerian Pidgin English and the interpenetration of the various language families of Nigeria indicate the extent to which Nigerian communities interacted with their African neighbors and European traders. Most of these mixing or hybrid word processes also have functioned in the speech due to the long historical process of changing urban centers and migration processes. Nigerian Pidgin English is recognized as an unofficial means of interethnic communication among the majority of Nigerians.

The code-switching process, combining one lexical sentence unit from Standard British English and British Pidgin English, is a typical characteristic feature of a new variant of English (Blazhevich, 2019). The reason for this process is the desire of communicants to be easily understood by all social groups of Nigerian society.

Taking into account the sociolinguistic differentiation of Nigerian society into several groups, it is necessary to distinguish several language variants equally functioning on the territory of the country, and these types are basilect, mesolect and acrolect. One must stress all language variants are of use on the territory of Nigeria and are part of the code-switching process.

A variant of the language that was developed during the period of post-Creole contact interaction and was the result of mixing the Creole language being its basic source language, is called basilect. This language variant is used by poorly educated people. Sometimes this language variant is interpreted as a popular, mass language, and it is taken as the language for poorly educated or uneducated Nigerians living in urban areas.

Language variant mesolect developed during the contact interaction of the original language and the Creole language. Mesolect is a transitional language type variant between a basilect based on creole and an acrolect which is close to the original language – Standard British English. The language variant mesolect is used by Nigerians who have received secondary education. This group of Nigerians includes the small urban and rural bourgeoisie and some representatives of the political and economic elite.

The acrolect language variant, which developed in the post-Creole period during the mixing of the Creole language and the original language, has a certain degree of standardization. Unlike the basilect and mesolect language variants, it takes the highest step in the hierarchy of language variants of the post-Creole continuum. Acrolect is used by educated people and the upper strata of society and has the highest social prestige.

The language situation in Nigeria is characterized by the complex nature of all sociolinguistic groups' interaction process, which causes the emergence of a vertical language continuum and is also characterized by the appearance of several linguistic variants within one language.

The intentional use of two language variants within one sentence border is a frequent case of switching codes among Nigerians, and the most typical is the intentional decreasing form from acrolect to mesolect and from mesolect to basilect language variant within one sentence.

Examples:

"It is the Government idea to implement the new money structure, but the purse of the state cannot accommodate such a huge bill for now";

"National cake should be used by Nigerians";

"Rub is a popular brand of cream used for the treatment of cold or relieve pain". (Igboanusi, 2010: 101)

The first example illustrates the peculiar features of Nigerian English – switching code process from acrolect to mesolect language variant. The lecturer from the university (acrolect group), while educating students, gives an example using specific word choice. The noun money instead of salary (which would be used in Standard British English in this case) as well as the usage of the noun purse (instead of British money) are used in the example to be easily understood by students. In the analyzed example, one can see such stylistic trope usage as a synecdoche which is a kind of metonymy.

The second example represents a part of a politician's speech who shares ideas with his voters. It should be stressed common Nigerian people usually have secondary education and an elementary or intermediate level of English. Therefore, politicians use language units easily understood by the Nigerian majority. So, in the analyzed example, the phrase "National cake," meaning "material privileges," stresses the desire to be close to all social groups of potential voters and be easily understood by all of them.

The third example is taken from the Nigerian advertisement text. For the norms of Standard British English, "to rub" has the meaning of a verb, but Nigerian culture adapted this verb's meaning to local cultural needs. So, Nigerian use the word "Rub" undergoing through process of substantiation, and its meaning is "face cream".

The substantiation process is a most productive feature for Nigerian English in the language shifting process from mesolect to basilect language process, for example:

"Take waterproof with you wrap the book it" (Igboanus, 2002: 34).

The adjective of the Standard British English waterproof denotes such a quality of an object as water resistance, and it denotes a waterproof object. In Nigerian English, the adjective waterproof can be used by uneducated people the meaning "cellophane". As the example depicts, Nigerian English, used by uneducated people, has great amount of mistakes in comparison with Standard British English. Local languages influence on the conditions of English functioning on the territory of Nigeria, therefore, it goes through a lot of grammar transformations. For example, the infinitive constructions are used in Nigerian English without the particle to: wrap the book instead of to wrap the book (Standard British English). Moreover, the language variant basilect is often characterized by the omission of prepositions in the speech of uneducated Nigerians who use prepositions not corresponding to the language norm – Standard British English. One must stress, one third of Nigerians are uneducated people, and this is the reason why sometimes educated people (if they want to be perfectly understood) have to use such language variants as basilect in their speech, for example:

"Go in school is a must all Nigerian kids" (Page, 2005: 54).

The example represents the case of a school teacher sharing his ideas with parents. In his speech, the school teacher emphasizes the importance for all students to go to school – "Go in school" – is used with the preposition *in*, while the expression "a must all Nigerian kids" illustrates the omission of the preposition "for" to stress the desire of a teacher to be easily understood by all parents and the need to have basic primary education.

Cultural peculiarities often make a strong influence on the lexical word usage of the language. Therefore, several language variants function in the frame of one sentence. The use of adjectives in Nigerian English is strongly influenced by the specific features of local cultures, for example:

- Black:

The adjective "black" is a part of many phrases, denoting something mysterious or even forbidden: black axe – a coinage for a secret cult popular on university campuses; black pepper – a spice with pungent taste, it is believed to have medicinal values; black soap – soap made of palm oil, believed to have medicinal effect;

- Blue:

It is used by Nigerians to denote a powdery liquid of blue color which is used for dyeing laundry – "Buy blue" – means "to buy laundry detergent" (Voloshina, 2019: 120);

- Green:

In Nigerian English, the adjective "green" is used for green vegetables. This application is observed in all language variants: acrolect, mesolect, and basilect, for example:

"Green is a type of vegetable usually very greenish, used for cooking soup, stewed meat, sweet potato porridge" (Falola, 2009: 67).

The shift of the language variant from acrolect to mesolect type and from mesolect to basilect type was dictated by the desire of a more educated communicant to be understood by a less educated participant in the conversation. Code-switching in the used examples was motivated and was accompanied by spontaneous switching of the speaker from one language variant to another.

Conclusions

Competent participation in the process of successful cross-cultural communication requires a gradual mastery of the cultural and linguistic code of the target language. The transformation of codes is typical in this process. Code changing is expressed in the formation of a certain relationship type between the internal universal-subject code and the external code that a person masters in order to participate in the cross-cultural communication process. The code-switching process, in the example of Nigerian English is a unique process that was greatly influenced by the conditions of the local cultures and language adaptation. It should be noted that switching codes may have or may have no motivation in the speech. Nigerian society is characterized by such language variants usage as basilect, mesolect, acrolect. Code-switching is the process that is typical for decreasing language variant usage from acrolect to mesolect and from mesolect to basilect. The border of codes can even pass inside closely related words, phrases, and sentences, and it is explained by the necessity to be understood by the representatives of all social and language groups and variants.

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