

Effects of Word Formation Dissimilarities on Yoruba Learners of English

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Abstract : English as a language has great reach and influence; it is taught all over the world. For instance, in Nigeria, English language is been taught and learned as a second language; therefore second learners of English in Nigeria have certain problems they contend with. Because of the dissimilarities in word formation patterns of English and Yoruba languages, Yoruba learners of English mostly found in the south west of Nigeria, and some parts of Kwara, Kogi, and Edo states of Nigeria have problems with word formation patterns in English. The objectives of this paper therefore, are: to identify the levels of word formation dissimilarities in English and Yoruba languages and to examine the effects of these dissimilarities on the Yoruba learners of English. The data for this paper were graded words purposely selected and presented to selected students of Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Oto-Ijanikin, Lagos, who are Yoruba learners of English. These respondents were randomly selected to form words which are purposively selected to test the effects of word formation dissimilarities between Yoruba (the respondent's first language) and English language on the respondents. The dissimilarities are examined using contrastive analysis tools. This paper reveals that there are differences in the word formation patterns of Yoruba and English languages. The writer believes that there is need for language teachers to undertake comparative studies of the two languages involved for methodological reasons. The author then suggests that teachers should identify the problem areas and systematically teach their students. The paper concludes that although English and Yoruba word formation patterns differ very significantly in many respects, there exist language universals in all languages which language educators should take advantage of in teaching.

Keywords : word formation patterns, graded words, ESL, Yoruba learners

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