

English Loanwords in Nigerian Languages: Sociolinguistic Survey

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Abstract : English has been in existence in Nigeria since colonial period. The advent of English in Nigeria has caused a lot of linguistic changes in Nigerian languages especially among the educated elites and to some extent, even the ordinary people were not spared from this phenomenon. This scenario has generated a linguistic situation which culminated into the creation of Nigerian Pidgin that are conglomeration of English and other Nigerian languages. English has infiltrated the Nigerian languages to a point that a typical Nigerian can hardly talk without code-switching or using one English word or the other. The existence of English loanwords in Nigerian languages has taken another dimension in this scientific and technological age. Most of scientific and technological inventions are products of English language which are virtually adopted into the languages with phonological, morphological, and sometimes semantic variations. This paper is of the view that there should be a re-think and agitation from Nigerians to protect their languages from the linguistic genocide of English which are invariably facing extinction.

Keywords : linguistic change, loanword, phenomenon, pidgin

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