

Aspects of Semantics of Standard British English and Nigerian English: A Contrastive Study

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Abstract : The concept of meaning is a complex one in language study when cultural features are added. This is mandatory because language cannot be completely separated from the culture in which case language and culture complement each other. When there are two varieties of a language in a society, i.e. two varieties functioning side by side in a speech community, there is a tendency to view one of the varieties with each other. There is, therefore, the need to make a linguistic comparative study of varieties of such languages. In this paper, a semantic contrastive study is made between Standard British English (SBE) and Nigerian English (NB). The semantic study is limited to aspects of semantics: semantic extension (Kinship terms, metaphors), semantic shift (lexical items considered are 'drop' 'befriend' 'dowry' and escort) acronyms (NEPA, JAMB, NTA) linguistic borrowing or loan words (Seriki, Agbada, Eba, Dodo, Iroko) coinages (long leg, bush meat; bottom power and juju). In the study of these aspects of semantics of SBE and NE lexical terms, conservative statements are made, problems areas and hierarchy of difficulties are highlighted with a view to bringing out areas of differences are highlighted in this paper are concerned. The study will also serve as a guide in further contrastive studies in some other area of languages.

Keywords : aspect, British, English, Nigeria, semantics

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