

Use and Attitudes towards Nigerian Pidgin English among Nigerian University Students

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1. Introduction

Attitudes towards language or language behaviour implicate social meanings relative to social norms in a given speech community. As demonstrated in the literature, language attitude study is not only a way of understanding how language is used, for example, as a symbol of identity or in-group membership, it also helps to illuminate the social importance of a given code or language (see Adegbija, 1994; Ihemere 2006; Salami 1991). Attitudinal studies of language are also important to linguistics because they could help to explain language maintenance and shift, which are apparently influenced by whether the change or maintenance is favoured or disfavoured by members of the speech community (Mann 1993; 1998).

In Nigeria, Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) used to be seen generally as the code of the non-literate as well as a bastardisation of English and its use was, therefore, considered a mark of the level of one's proficiency in English. For instance, Agheysi (1971:30) claims that the typical users of NPE are those that have little or no formal education. However, as Akande (2008:37) has noted, the sociolinguistic reality in Nigeria today is such that NPE is spoken by university graduates, professors, lawyers and journalists. It has also been demonstrated that NPE is not used only in informal settings but also in offices and other formal settings (Akande 2008). In other words, the claim that NPE is the code of the non-literate does not seem to have validity as there are a lot of educated speakers in Nigeria who can use both Standard English and NPE proficiently (Akande 2008).

In the present study, we report and analyse attitudes to, and use of NPE among, students in two Nigerian universities in the two cosmopolitan cities of Benin and Lagos. The city of Lagos is the commercial centre of Nigeria and its former capital. Although the Yoruba language is the major language spoken there, Lagos is a highly heterogeneous city because Nigerians from almost every ethno-linguistic group are well-represented there. In other words, in terms of mix, Lagos is the quintessential city for the use of NPE. Benin city, on the other hand, is a state capital with a population predominantly from the Edo-Delta region. However, the logic of its

location within a region where NPE is more or less a lingua franca contrasts with Lagos where the Yoruba language predominates. It was assumed at the inception of this study that this difference might reflect on university students' use of NPE and the attitude patterns towards it.

The objective of the study was to find out the degree of NPE usage among the students of these two universities and, moreover, to account for the students' attitudes. In doing this, we had considered that usage and attitudes would co-vary with the students' location.

We had assumed that the urban characters of the university towns are strong factors influencing the students' use of and attitudes to NPE. We hold that apart from their education, living within the university communities in the two cities, the students are very likely to enact more urban networks that are usually made up of multilingual and multicultural contents. It is worth mentioning that there are a large number of users of NPE in these communities, in addition to other languages they speak. For these users, NPE plays a number of crucial communicative functions in their social lives such as serving as the language of inter-ethnic communication as well as that of intra-ethnic communication. Furthermore, NPE is widely used in the major cities and towns in schools and market domains, in radio jingles, television adverts and drama/plays.

Mafeni (1971) observes that NPE has become a widely spoken lingua franca in Nigeria and that many town and city dwellers are at least bilingual in NPE and one indigenous language. According to Faraclas (2004), NPE is spoken, today, by millions of people, especially the younger generation representing various linguistic areas of the Nigerian society. Concerning the numerical strength of NPE speakers in Nigeria, Faraclas (2004:828) says:

Well over half of the 140 million inhabitants of Nigeria are now fluent speakers of the language [NPE], making NigP [NPE] the most widely spoken language in Nigeria, as well as the indigenous African language with the largest number of speakers. Given the rapid spread of NigP [NPE] among younger Nigerians, this proportion should increase to cover over seventy or eighty percent by the time the present generation of children reaches adulthood. There is no Creole language worldwide with nearly as many speakers as NigP [NPE].

Within Nigerian society, NPE seems to have an ambivalent status as some members have embraced and associated themselves with the language only by using it for interactions when the need arises. The use of NPE by Nigerians, however, has led to the growing status of the code in the country.

In other words, NPE has remained one of the languages with vitality in the society despite its unofficial recognition. Nonetheless, it has been observed that a large number of people across various sectors of the society including particularly those parents who are highly placed government officials, teachers, students in the universities tend to express disgust at its use by youths at home and school premises. This is because they see NPE as an inferior language meant for the semi-illiterates and low status members of the society (Agheyisi 1971). In place of NPE, they have extolled the use of English and the three officially recognised indigenous languages (i.e. Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) for communication.

NPE has assumed a significant role in communication in Nigeria, especially between and among ethnic groups that do not share a common language. It has also acquired some status that emanates from the roles that it plays in Nigerian society. Furthermore, it could be argued that NPE has enhanced the propagation of national ideas, socio-cultural, linguistic and political developments as well as peace and unity in the country since it is the only language that both the educated and the uneducated, irrespective of their ethnic affinities, can identify with. Akande (2008:38) notes that

There is a sense in which NPE could be regarded as a marker of identity and solidarity. It is an inter-ethnic code available to Nigerians who have no other common language.

NPE could therefore be seen as a language that in a sense reflects national identity in Nigeria. Thus many linguists and scholars have called repeatedly for the official recognition of NPE, but such requests have been turned down (see Awonusi 1990; Egbokhare 2003; Elugbe and Omamor 1991; Elugbe 1995; Mann 1998; 2000; Ndolo 1989). Lately the government has come to recognise the vital role that NPE plays in helping to get close to the masses. Jingles, posters, stickers and government campaigns for national awareness and mutual co-existence are now prepared in NPE and broadcast in the same language.

2. The linguistic ecology of Nigeria

Nigeria is the largest country in West Africa, with a population of over 138 million (Central Intelligence Agency, 2008). The country consists of 36 states plus Abuja, which is the Federal Capital Territory. Although no one can be precisely sure of the number of ancestral languages in Nigeria, the estimate has always ranged between 400 and 500 languages (Bamgbose 1971) with the number of ethnic groups ranging from 250 to 300. To further

complicate this sharply multilingual setting, most of the languages have different identifiable dialects. Nigeria is a highly multilingual and multi-ethnic setting with diverse cultures.

Of all these ancestral languages, only three are recognised as indigenous national or major languages: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria). While the three indigenous languages are considered as *major languages*, other indigenous languages are regarded as *minor languages* and have little or no recognition in the country. Examples of minor languages in Nigeria are Batta, Annang, Igede, Kamuku, Angas and Egun spoken in Adamawa, Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Niger, Plateau and Lagos respectively (Emenanjo 1995). The major and minor languages in Nigeria are officially distinguished based on factors including politics, geographical spread and numerical strength. Of these factors, the political struggles and successes of some eminent figures in the country seem to have contributed to making their languages 'major' ones. Many of the political heroes in Nigeria belonged to one of the three major regions. As an illustration, Tafawa Balewa, Nnamdi Azikwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo were the three heroes of the Nigerian independence movement from Hausaland, Igboland and Yorubaland respectively. As for numerical strength and geographical spread, each of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (i.e. the major languages) is spoken by well over 18 million people in the country and is spoken in at least five states of the federation. None of the so-called minor languages enjoys this kind of numerical strength and each of them is spoken only within a state or two.

Given the linguistic diversity in Nigeria, most people grow up speaking more than one indigenous language. The linguistic reality in Nigeria is such that the majority of speakers of minor languages tend to learn one of the major languages (sometimes in addition to English), especially the one that is dominant where they reside. And many of those who have one of the three major languages as their native language also acquire English, NPE or another language of the country. The vast majority of Nigerians are bilingual (Akindele and Adegbite 1999), and for many of these bilinguals, NPE is one of the languages known. NPE serves as a lingua franca across ethnic and regional boundaries and when people of different ethnic groups who cannot or do not want to use English meet, they can use NPE.

3. Nigerian Pidgin English as a marginal variety

Out of many common manifestations of language marginalisation, only one has been extensively researched in Nigeria: the non-recognition of minority languages at the local, state or national level (Oyelaran 1990). However, marginalisation can also come in the form of limited space or attention given to a particular language in printed or electronic forms. A language is considered marginal only when there are other languages to which we can compare it within the same speech community. There is a sense in which NPE can be regarded as a marginal language when we consider the fact that its written form, compared to the written forms of languages like English, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo, is on the margin. Not many literary works have been produced in NPE in Nigeria. When we compare the literary works written in any of the four languages mentioned above (i.e., English, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo) in Nigeria with the few ones written in NPE, it would be apparent that NPE has been marginalised in the print medium. Apart from the fact that only a few novels or drama texts exist in NPE, most Nigerians do not often read or pay any serious academic attention to works written in NPE. This is born out of the attitudes that they have to the language. More importantly, while English and the other three national languages are codified, NPE is not.

Politically, NPE is marginalised. While English and other major languages are recognised in our constitution, NPE is not *at all*. Two major reasons can be hypothesised for this. First is the fact that most Nigerians, including the elites, see NPE as a mere contact language which cannot be said to belong to any particular region unlike the three major languages which are regionally or ethnically based. As such, it (NPE) is not the language of any ethnic group. We can more or less see it, therefore, as being ethnically marginalised. Secondly, while each of Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo and English is studied as a discipline in Nigeria's secondary schools and higher institutions, as far as we know, there is no secondary school where NPE is taught as a subject. Similarly, there is no department of Nigerian Pidgin English in any higher institution in Nigeria although there are some dissertations which have examined one aspect or the other of NPE. This also implies that NPE is marginalised in Nigeria's curriculum. The non-introduction of NPE into the curriculum is political. The existence of such a department where NPE stands out as a discipline would mean that the government as well as universities in Nigeria will have to fund it. Ours is a country where the existing programmes in the nation's citadels of learning and the entire university system are not properly funded by the government

not to talk of introducing another one. So, the continuous marginalisation of NPE is indirectly linked to the lack of interest on the part of the government.

4. Attitudes to NPE in Nigeria

Generally speaking, language attitudes can be studied from two theoretical frameworks: the behaviourist approach which focuses on the responses speakers of a language make about the social functions of the language (Fasold 1984) and the mentalist approach which considers attitudes as internal states that can be used to predict other behaviour (Ihemere 2006). In this study, we adopt the mentalist approach as many scholars have done (Apel and Muysken 1987; Baker 1992; Ihemere 2006; Long 1999; Zhou 1999). As Ihemere (2006) and Fasold (1984) have noted, the mentalist framework cannot account for how the mental states of users of a language can be studied directly without having to make inferences from the behaviour, however.

Although theoretically speaking, no language is linguistically minor or major, legitimate or bastardised, people tend to perceive NPE as a corrupt, bastardised or lesser language (Igboanusi 2008; Mann 1996). As pointed out by Elugbe and Omamor (1991:146), attitudes to NPE are not determined by any objective criteria. In spite of the fact that NPE is used by more than two-thirds of the total population of Nigeria today (Faraclas 2004; Igboanusi 2008) and despite its use by people from different walks of life including graduates and professionals (Akande 2008), the general attitudes of the majority of Nigerians towards NPE are still not encouraging. Concerning this, Deuber (2005:183) says:

Although a major lingua franca, it has no official recognition; even without any policy statements, it performs a growing range of functions, including, for example, that of a medium of public broadcasting, but no efforts have been made to develop it in order for it to be able to cope with these functions, as has been done for the major and to some extent also for minor indigenous languages.

Deuber (2005:183) also notes that NPE is the most neglected language in Nigeria since no major roles are assigned to it.

Elugbe and Omamor (1991) and Egbokhare (2003) suggest that NPE be given the status of an official or national language while Igboanusi (2008) calls for its use as a medium of instruction in the early stage of primary school education especially for NPE-speaking children. One major argument in support of the adoption of NPE as a national language is that it

is a neutral code as it has no ethnic base. Igboanusi (2008:69) examines how NPE could be empowered in Nigeria and remarks that education is ‘the most important institution through which to raise the value of NP[NPE]’. However, Igboanusi’s (2008) study shows that there is no consensus among his subjects as to whether NPE should be given any official or national status as some of them believe, among other things, that NPE has no economic value.

5. Data Collection and Methods

In this study we have made use of the interview-questionnaire approach to elicit the attitudes and perceptions of the informants to NPE. We sampled 100 subjects, 50 of whom were purposively selected from each of the two universities (University of Lagos and University of Benin) that served as the settings for this work. The sampled subjects in each of the universities were stratified according to sex (25 males and 25 females) and age as shown in Table 1 and mother tongue as shown in Appendix A.

University	Age bracket & Sex (10-19)		Age bracket & Sex (20-29)		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
	UNILAG	2	7	23	
UNIBEN	3	5	22	20	50
Total	5	12	45	38	100

Table 1: University by sex and age bracket

The instrument used for this study is a structured questionnaire which contains 16 items focusing both on the use as well as the attitudes and perceptions of the subjects to the code (Appendix B). The subjects were from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Appendix A). The sampling was purposive as we focused mainly on meeting the criteria of studentship, sex and age. The informants’ attitudes to NPE were inferred from the responses they have toward the language, their responses calculated in percentages showing their comparative behaviour in terms of use of and attitudes toward NPE.

6. Results and Analysis

6.1 Respondents’ use of and attitudes to NPE.

In this section, we present the analysis of our data. While the responses of the subjects to yes/no questions regarding the use and attitudes to NPE are

collapsed into one table (Table 2), responses to questions requiring more than a yes/no answers are treated separately for the sake of clarity.

	Questions	UNILAG		UNIBEN	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Use	Do you use NPE?	84%	16%	98%	2%
	Do you read materials written in NPE?	80%	20%	92%	8%
Attitudes	Should there be more books, magazines written in NPE?	52%	48%	100%	0%
	Should there be more television programmes in NPE?	48%	2%	90%	10%
	Is NPE a language?	46%	54%	74%	26%
	Do you think it is a variety of English?	42%	58%	82%	18%
	Should NPE be taught in school?	12%	88%	24%	76%
	Should NPE be one of the mediums of instruction in primary school?	22%	78%	54%	46%
	Should NPE be adopted as an official language in Nigeria?	16%	84%	62%	38%
	Does NPE have the capacity to express any area of our thoughts and feelings?	58%	42%	78%	22%

Table 2: Responses to yes/no questions on use and attitudes of subjects to NPE

Table 2 shows that 84% of the students at UNILAG claim that they use NPE while only 16% of the students say they do not. On the other hand, at UNIBEN 98% of the students claim to speak NPE while only 2% do not. We can thus say from the data that UNIBEN students use NPE more than UNILAG students. Since the vitality of a language can also be enhanced by the availability of literature in it, we also sought to find out if the students read materials written in NPE. We can see that 80% of the students at UNILAG indicate YES to reading materials written in NPE, 20% of them indicate NO. At UNIBEN 92% of the students indicate YES and only 8% indicate NO to reading in NPE. While 52% of UNILAG students answer YES and agree that there should be more books and magazines in NPE, 48% say NO. On the contrary, at UNIBEN, 100% say YES to the above question, and none indicates NO. This suggests that UNIBEN students are more attuned to NPE than the UNILAG students and, as Akande (2008) has noted, the explanation for the preponderant use and positive attitudes to NPE in this area might have historical explanation. We can thus say that

UNIBEN students' attitude towards the availability of more books and magazines in NPE is more positive than that of UNILAG students.

As shown in the table, 48% UNILAG students agree that there should be more TV programmes broadcast in NPE while 52% indicate No to the question. At UNIBEN, 90% students indicate YES while only 10% indicate NO that there should be more TV programmes in NPE. We can thus say that UNIBEN students agree more to the encouragement of TV programmes in NPE than UNILAG students. On whether NPE is a language or not, 46% UNILAG students see NPE as a language by indicating YES while 54% do not agree with this. At UNIBEN, 74% believe that NPE is a language while 26% think it is not a language. Thus, we can say that UNIBEN students claim to see NPE as a language more than UNILAG students. In other words, UNIBEN students' attitude towards NPE is more favourable than that of UNILAG students. Similarly, while 42% students from UNILAG indicate YES that NPE is a variety of English, 58% indicate NO. On the contrary, 82% students of UNIBEN perceive NPE as a variety of English while only 18% disagree with this. One thing that can be inferred from the responses of UNIBEN students is the ambivalence that surrounds the status of NPE and this ambivalence emanates, as Akande (2008:50) points out, from the fact that 'the same people who refer to it [NPE] as a separate language can refer to it as a variety of English'. For instance, 74% of UNIBEN students perceive NPE as a language and 82% of these same people see NPE as a variety of English. The lack of clear status of NPE as either a language or a variety of English is compounded by two factors: (1) that NPE is spoken as a native language by many Nigerians, especially people from the Niger Delta and (2) that NPE not only has historical affinity with English, but both English and NPE also share, to a large extent, the same vocabulary.

Only 12% of UNILAG students believe that NPE should be taught as a subject in school while 88% of these students think it should not be taught. At UNIBEN, 24% of the students agree that NPE should be taught as a subject in school while 76% students also say it should not be taught. We can see therefore that the majority of the subjects in each of the two locations do not subscribe to the teaching of NPE as a school subject. At UNILAG, only 22% of the subjects are of the opinion that NPE is fit to be a medium of instruction in primary school while 78% think it should not be. At UNIBEN, however, 54% of the informants claim that NPE can be used as a medium of instruction while 46% consider it as unfit to be used for this purpose. It is clear again that, although more than half of the subjects at

UNIBEN have a positive attitude to the adoption of NPE as a medium of instruction, the overall picture in the two universities indicate that the majority of the subjects do not subscribe to the adoption of NPE as a medium of instruction in primary school. In spite of the fact that the majority of the subjects do not want NPE to be adopted for instructional purposes in school, 68 of them (29 at UNILAG and 39 at UNIBEN) agree that NPE has all a language takes to express its users' thoughts and feelings. Because of what seems to be a contradiction in their views, we then probe them further on their attitudes toward NPE by asking them what their opinion is about NPE (see Section 7.0).

The responses of the subjects to the non-polar questions (i.e. questions which require yes or no as answers) are as presented below.

a) What do you read in NPE?

University	EVERYTHING	MAGAZINE	NOTHING
	24%	48%	32%
UNIBEN	50%	62%	4%

Table 3: Materials read in NPE

We can observe that 24% of the UNILAG students read everything readable in NPE, 48% of the students read only magazines in NPE, while 32% of the subjects read nothing at all in NPE. At UNIBEN, 50% read everything in NPE, 62% read magazines in NPE while only 4% claim that they do not read anything written in NPE. If we compare the two locations in terms of what they read in NPE, we can say that UNIBEN students read more in NPE than UNILAG students.

b) How often do you speak NPE?

University	Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Rarely
UNILAG	12%	34%	22%	32%
UNIBEN	60%	28%	10%	2%

Table 4: Frequency of use of NPE

34% of UNILAG students claim to speak NPE occasionally, 22% seldom speak it, 32% rarely and only 12% speak it often. But at UNIBEN, 28% of

the respondents speak it occasionally, 10% speak it seldomly, only 2% rarely and the majority of UNIBEN students (i.e. 60%) speak it often.

c) When did you start learning NPE?

University	Childhood	Primary School	Secondary School	University
UNILAG	34%	14%	18%	34%
UNIBEN	60%	4%	36%	0%

Table 5: Where NPE started to be used

34% of UNILAG students learnt NPE in their childhood, 14% of them learnt it at primary school, 18% in secondary and 34% learnt it at University. On the contrary, 60% of UNIBEN claim to have learnt NPE in their childhood, 36% of them in secondary school, while none learnt it at University. A comparison of the two institutions then show that UNIBEN students had early exposure to NPE than UNILAG students and this might also be connected with the positive attitudes that UNIBEN have to NPE.

d) Where do you normally use NPE?

UNIVERSITY	HOME	SOCIAL GATHERING	CLASSROOM	ALL CONTEXTS
UNILAG	26%	48%	14%	14%
UNIBEN	38%	32%	28%	26%

Table 6: Context of use of NPE by university

We can see that only 26% of UNILAG students claim to use NPE in their homes, 48% of them use it at social gatherings, 14% use it in the classroom and another 14% use NPE in all contexts, social gatherings as well as in the classroom. At UNIBEN, 38% of the subjects use NPE in their homes, 32% at social gathering, 28% in the classroom, and 26% of them use NPE in all the above options. Thus, we can say that UNILAG students use more of NPE only in social gatherings, while UNIBEN students use it more in all the above options, i.e. everywhere with no restrictions. The analysis also indicates that while many UNIBEN informants use NPE at home, only a few of UNILAG subjects use NPE at home.

e) With whom do you often speak NPE?

UNIVERSITY	PARENTS	SIBLINGS	FRIENDS	ALL
UNILAG	0%	20%	60%	0%
UNIBEN	30%	50%	70%	30%

Table 7: Person with whom NPE is used by University

No UNILAG students claim to speak NPE with their parents, 20% speak it with their siblings. 60% speak it with friends and 0% speak NPE with all the above options. At UNIBEN, 30% of the subjects speak NPE with their parents, 50% with their siblings, 70% with friends and 30% speak it will all the above options. We can thus say once again that UNIBEN students use NPE more than UNILAG students as shown above, i.e. they use it more in all the above options than UNILAG students do.

f) What category of people do you think speak NPE?

UNIVERSITY	ALL CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE	NON-LITERATES AND SEMI-LITERATES	LITERATES	TOTAL
UNILAG	34%	66%	0%	100%
UNIBEN	78%	10%	12%	100%

Table 8: Perception of users of NPE by university

34% of the informants at UNILAG say that NPE is spoken by all categories of people, 66% of them say that NPE is spoken by illiterates and semi-illiterates and none claimed that literates speak it (Table 8). On the other hand, at UNIBEN, 78% of the subjects say that NPE is spoken by all categories of people i.e. the general public, 12% of them say it is spoken by only literates and only 10% say it is spoken by illiterates and semi-illiterates. There seems to be another contradiction in the subjects' responses here if we compare it to their responses to 'Do you use NPE?' in Table 2. In Table 2, 84% and 98% of the respondents at UNILAG and UNIBEN respectively claim that they use NPE. Considering the fact that they are literate, being undergraduates, the percentages recorded in Table 7, where at UNILAG and UNIBEN, 0% and 12% of the subjects think that NPE is used by literates therefore form a sharp contrast to the claim they made in Table 2. Arising from the picture we have in Table 8 above, we can say that

UNIBEN students' attitudes towards NPE in terms of the general public is more favourable than that of UNILAG students' attitudes.

7. Opinions of the informants about NPE

The responses of the subjects to the question: 'What is your opinion about Nigerian Pidgin English?' show that they have both positive and negative attitudes to it as summarised below:

7.1 Positive attitudes

- a. NPE is very easy to learn and speak.
- b. NPE is very close to English.
- c. NPE is good to teach pupils in the primary school.
- d. It is the language almost everybody can speak.
- e. It does not belong to any particular region, so it is acceptable as a lingua franca by all.
- f. NPE can facilitate unity in Nigeria.
- g. It makes communication between the educated and the semi-literate more effective and easier.

7.2 Negative attitudes

- a. NPE is adulterated English.
- b. NPE is not standardised and it would be difficult to standardise it.
- c. NPE could contaminate our English if it is allowed to thrive.
- d. The resources required to codify and standardise NPE would be much greater than the money required to enhance 'normal' English.
- e. We speak NPE only when we are joking, but not in any serious discourse.

8. Findings and Conclusion

Generally speaking, the data analyses presented above show that the attitudes of UNIBEN's students towards NPE is more favourable than the attitudes of UNILAG students. UNIBEN students use NPE in most domain; e.g. home, school, social gathering etc. unlike UNILAG students who use NPE mostly at social gatherings. Thus the frequency of use of NPE by UNIBEN students is much higher than that of UNILAG students. We can thus say that NPE has more vitality among UNIBEN students than among UNILAG students. This may have resulted from the fact that UNIBEN is situated in Benin, and NPE in Benin has grown from a mere contact language to a native language for many people. We note, however, that the

majority of the subjects of both universities do not have a positive attitude to the teaching of NPE. In fact, more than 75% of students from each of the two schools were not disposed to the teaching of NPE in Nigerian schools. This is one of the ways through which NPE has been marginalised in Nigeria. Also, as demonstrated by the subjects of this study, out of the 100 participants in both schools, 61 of them did not want NPE to be adopted as an official language. This is in spite of the fact that NPE is spoken by the majority of Nigerians. This study, however, shows that NPE is more marginalised at UNILAG than at UNIBEN and this reflects the general variation in attitudes to NPE between the Southwestern people where UNILAG is located and that of Southsouth people where UNIBEN is located.

Although we have tried to demonstrate, in this study, the contribution speakers' attitudes make to the marginalisation of NPE, the attitude of the government is also critical to this marginalisation. A language that is spoken by millions of people within a country would be expected to be standardised. However, that NPE is neither completely codified nor standardised is an act of marginalisation which it has been subjected to. From the foregoing, it can be concluded that NPE is not only socially marginalised but has received little or no political support from any government in Nigeria.

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Appendix A

UNIVERSITY AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND OF
RESPONDENTS

MOTHER TONGUE	UNILAG	UNIBEN
ISOKO	0	1
ITSEKIRI	0	1
ORA	0	2
TAROK	1	0
UKANNI	0	2
URHOBO	0	7
YORUBA	30	5
BINI	1	11
ESAN	0	1
ETSAKO	1	0
FRENCH	5	3
HAUSA	4	1
IGBO	2	7
IKA	0	4
NPE	0	2
ENGLISH	6	2
TOTAL	50	50

Appendix B

Questionnaires on the attitude of some university students to Nigerian Pidgin English

SECTION A

- 1 Gender: Male Female
2 Age group: A (16-19) B (20-29) C (30-39) D (40-45)
3 University University of Lagos University of Benin
4 Mother Tongue: -----

SECTION B

Please, tick either *yes* or *no* for each of these questions

- | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) | Do you use Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE)? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2) | Do you read materials written in NPE? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3) | Should there be more books, magazines written in NPE? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4) | Should there be more television programmes in NPE? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5) | Is NPE a language? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | | | |
| 6) | Do you think it is a variety of English? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | | | |
| 7) | Should NPE be taught in school? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | | | |
| 8) | Should NPE be one of the mediums of instruction
in primary school? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | | | |
| 9) | Should NPE be adopted as an official language
in Nigeria? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10) | Does NPE have the capacity to express any
area of our thoughts and feelings? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Please tick the option you think is appropriate for you in each of the following questions.

- 11) What do you read in NPE?
A) Everything B) Magazine C) Nothing
12) How often do you speak NPE?
A) Occasionally B) Seldom C) Rarely D) Often
13) When did you start learning NPE?

A) Childhood B) Primary School C) Secondary School D) University

14) Where do you normally use NPE?

A) Home B) Social Gathering C) Classroom D) All Contexts

15) With whom do you often speak NPE?

A) Parents B) Siblings C) Friends D) All

16) What category of people do you think speak NPE?

A) All categories of people B) Non-literates and semi-literates

C) Literates

SECTION C

What is your opinion about Nigerian Pidgin English?