

Bilingualism And Language Contact: The Existing Relationship With Particular Reference To The Linguistic Situation In Nigeria

Ayeni, Godprovides Ayoyemi

Department of General Studies, Gateway (ICT) Polytechnic,
Saapade, Ogun State

Abstract: It is a known fact that when an individual or a community is vast in the use of two languages in communication, one can say that there is an existence of two languages in the linguistic repertoire of that individual or a speech community thus makes such an individual or speech community bilingual in nature. This paper unravelled the concept of Bilingualism and what gave rise to it. It further explored bilingualism and linguistic situation in Nigeria, bilingualism and language contact, paying attention to the relationship that exists between the duo. It further discussed the linguistic effects of English Language in contact with Nigerian languages using English/Yoruba as a case study. The consequences of language contact and bilingualism such as code-mixing, Nigerian Pidgin, and Nigerian English are also examined.

Considering the facts discussed in this paper, it was however concluded that Language contact gave rise to bilingualism and that when two languages come in contact, there tends to be influence on each other.

Keywords: Bilingualism, Language Contact, Speech community, Code-mixing, Code-switching, Nigerian English

I. INTRODUCTION

Bilingualism is a fact of life in Nigeria. Apart from over four hundred and ten (410) indigenous languages (Crozier, D. and R.M Blench (1992), Nigeria has an official language-English, the language inherited from her former colonial masters. When French was introduced as the second official language in 1997, the country officially became a bilingual country.

Even before Nigeria came under the tutelage of the British colonial administration in 1884, missionaries had been very active for several years bringing to us the western form of education which has spread to every nook and cranny of our country today. With the introduction of western education into Nigeria, our first crop of elite had their first contact with the English language which had up to the present day served as our official language of communication, used in all domains including politics, religion and education. But it should be realized that before the advent of British colonial rule in Nigeria, Nigerians had their indigenous language which Dada (1976) put at between 400 and 513. If educated Nigerians have

their mother tongue which many of them speak at home and which in fact is used as a medium of instruction in later years, it is obvious that they now have two languages in contact. The degree to which they are in contact we shall see as we proceed in this paper.

Linguists have found out that different languages come in contact through travels, trade, war and conquest, migration etc. But when such languages come in contact, certain phenomenon comes into play. These include language change, language assimilation, diglossia, language death, lingua franca, bilingualism and language domination. The thrust of this paper is to discuss the relationship between bilingualism and language contact with particular reference to language situation in Nigeria. This we shall explore in this paper by examining what is meant by bilingualism itself, the linguistic situation in Nigeria and also language contact. We shall look at the relationship that exist between them look at the relationship that exist between them paying attention to the effect of English language in contact with Nigerians languages at various levels of language with copious illustrations.

II. BILINGUALISM AND LINGUISTIC SITUATION IN NIGERIA

Bilingualism is simply the ability to use two languages. It is the use of two languages by an individual or a community. That is, the existence of two languages in the linguistic repertoire of an individual or a speech community.

However, Bloomfield (1933) considers bilingualism as the native-like control of two languages, what Laroussi (2004) refers to as “bilingue equilibre”. This is an ideal situation. Realistically, a bilingual is fully competent in one language and has an average or above average competence in another. Bilingualism is also described as the ability of an individual to produce update meaningful utterance in the other language. Haugen (1953) proposed that a pole of the continuum of bilingualism be the ability “to produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language”. Bilingualism is the practice of using two languages alternately. Considering the definitions of bilingualism given by the scholars above, one can say that a bilingual, therefore is an individual who can use at least two languages comfortably, with varying degrees of competence. A bilingual has at his or her disposal at least two world views.

Bilingualism can be viewed at two levels namely; collective/societal level and individual level. *Societal bilingualism* provides a base for national considerations. The focus of learning and using the foreign language (s) is on enhancing national goals, for instance democracy, peace, international cooperation, technological development (Adegbite 2004).

Considering the linguistics situation in Nigeria, where we have the use of various languages such as foreign language, hybrid language (Nigerian Pidgin) indigenous languages, one can say Nigeria is a multilingual society but bilingual when we consider the use of an indigenous language with that of English language by the individual communities in the country. Like other Anglophone countries in Africa, Nigeria adopted English as official language, having inherited it through British colonization. Missionary activities ensured its spread throughout the country. With about four hundred (410) indigenous languages in Nigeria, English appears to be the natural and most acceptable choice of administration, education and politics. The Nigerian constitution however allows for bilingualism on regional levels. Therefore, the three large population Nigerian languages, *Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo* are recognized as regional languages in the North, west and East of Nigeria respectively, while English enjoyed official status. At best we could say that bilingualism existed only at the regional level. The recognized dominated language of the region could be used and is still used and taught in schools. It is also used in the media (radio, television and newspapers), and informally for ordinary conversation.

The indigenous languages serve as primary means of communication. They are used for intimate conversation at home and are the language of customs and tradition. The mother tongue was recommended in the 1981 constitution as the medium of communication from the upper primary school, while English is the medium of communication from the upper primary school to the university. The child thus is able to consolidate the knowledge of his mother tongue before being

introduced to another ‘foreign’ language. However, English is the language of choice, when an individual finds himself in a part of the country whose language he does not speak. Officially, Nigeria was a monolingual country. Up till 1997, French was an optional second foreign language in the Nigerian educational system. Late in 1997, the then head of state, late General Sani Abacha gave French a new status, declaring it Nigeria’s second official language, thus Nigeria became *officially an English/ French bilingual country* and this was documented in the national policy on education (NPE) in 1998. Having two official languages creates a diglossic situation. The question then arises; what role is there for French to play that English or the indigenous languages cannot or are not playing? Some of the reasons that motivated the adoption of French as a second official language include the following:

- ✓ Nigeria is surrounded by Francophone countries; therefore French as an official language will facilitate communication and interaction with the country’s neighbours.
- ✓ The seat of ECOWAS is in Abuja, Nigeria; there are nine (9) francophone and five (5). Anglophone countries in ECOWAS. French therefore, is the natural choice being the language of the majority.
- ✓ In a world that is fast becoming a global village, French can only be an advantage. There will be access to foreign materials and other opportunities available in terms of communication, technology, and international politics.
- ✓ There will also be job opportunities for individuals in organizations such as African union, United Nations, UNESCO and other multinational companies who require their employees to speak French.

The Federal governments thus decreed that French is compulsory in schools through does nothing to enforce it. As a result of the decree, Nigeria became English/French bilingual officially so we could say that at collective/societal level of bilingualism Nigeria is a bilingual country officially (considering the two official languages English and French) and that considering the linguistic situation where we have various indigenous languages in use, hybrid language, and English language, one can say Nigeria is a multilingual country, where three or more languages are used alternately.

At the level of *individual bilingualism*, a bilingual person is fully competent in one language and has an average or above average competence in another. An average educated Nigerian is a bilingual in English and his mother tongue, whatever “the mother tongue” is. He or she uses English in formal situations and the mother tongue in less formal situations and for informal conversations. There are also Nigerians who are multilingual, with or without English. Others are monolingual who speak only their mother tongue, which may be an indigenous language in the case of the illiterate, or English in the case of children who have been brought up exclusively with English. An individual may speak any language fluently but may not be able to write or even read it. As long as he or she can understand, speak and function within languages, in other words socialize, he or she is a bilingual (Ogunkeye 2007).

For emphasis, someone that speaks Yoruba and English or Igbo and English and is fully competent in one of the

languages and has an average or above average competence in the other is a bilingual. The degree of proficiency in these languages varies according to the individuals.

However, it is pertinent to say here that bilingualism does not just exist in void; it is as a result of languages coming in contact. According to Mackey, (1968) an important feature of bilingualism is that it is a consequence of language in contact which deals with the direct or indirect influence of one language on the other. We shall now examine below language contact as the cause of bilingualism.

III. BILINGUALISM AND LANGUAGE CONTACT

Language contact gave rise to bilingualism. Language contact is described as a phenomenon where by two or more distinct languages are spoken within a speech community.’’ Two or more languages according to Weinreich (1974), are said to be in contact if they are used alternately by the same persons’’. Yusuf (1999: 159) is of the view that ‘‘language contact should be seen in the broad sense of contact between two cultures that can be as a result of conquest, wars, migration, and colonization etc.’. Whenever two languages come in contact within an individual or a community, such an individual or host community inevitably becomes bilingual (cf. crystal 1997)

Each of the two languages has its own distinct phonological, lexical, grammatical and discourse rules. Each therefore forms a code of communication in the community or individual who uses it. In Nigeria, there are bilinguals who speak only Yoruba and English, Hausa and English, Igbo and English, Efik and English and some others alike.

One major source of bilingualism is *colonialism* which is of imperialism. In the process of ruling the indigenes of a particular state through their traditional ruler, the language and culture of the colonialist are introduced through the process of education into the social economic and political life of the nation involved. It is through this process that many African states particularly those ones occupying the Anglo- regions e.g. Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya became bilingual in English and their mother tongues.

Migration and wars of conquest also bring about language contact whereby a powerful nation embarks on a war in order to be able to control the politics of a weaker nation. English and its culture were automatically introduced to the nation conquered by the British.

Language contact can also be traced to an *attempt by an individual or community to trade with another individual or community*. This results in bilingualism. This act of trading with another individual or community brings about exchange of languages and cultures of those involved. This is why many Nigerians are able to speak their mother tongue in addition to other indigenous languages. The European traded with Nigerians establishing a port in Benin Kingdom and as such their language was introduced to Nigerians as a tool for communication.

The annexation of a community to another one also results in language contact and thus brings about bilingualism. A process whereby a community forcefully acquires another community is referred to as annexation. This process causes

the annexed community to be made a part of the acquiring community and members of the two communities and thus the two communities acquire each other languages.

Borderline area is another point that language contact can be traced to. For instance in Nigeria, the occupants of Idi-Iroko, a community which shares the boundaries of Nigeria and Benin Republic are bilinguals. This is because they interact with the Beninians who speak French and Lagosians who speak Yoruba. The people of Idi-Iroko speak Yoruba and French. They are also bicultural in experience.

The agglomeration of many languages in Nigeria has helped the country to evolve a virile bilingual culture. These languages perform different functions. From the foregoing, one can say that *language contact* gave rise to bilingualism. It is important to say here that language contact has some consequences; it gave rise to interferences at all the level of language description. Whenever languages are in contact interference are often promoted at all levels of language description. This we shall discuss next in this paper.

IV. THE LINGUISTIC EFFECT OF ENGLISH IN CONTACT WITH NIGERIAN LANGUAGES USING ENGLISH /YORUBA CONTACT AS A CASE STUDY

One of the effect of language contact is the *linguistic interference* and this happens at all the levels of language description namely phonology, syntax, lexical and also at the level of discourse. Basically because of the differences in linguistic system of languages in contact, linguistic interference cannot be prevented. The notion of interference is the use of the formal linguistic element of one language with the context of another language. The term implies a re-arrangement of patterns that result from the introduction of foreign elements into more highly-structured domains of language such as the bulk of the phonemic system, a large part of morphology and syntax and areas of vocabulary, culture and discourse (Weinreich 1974).

PHONIC INTERFERENCE

This is the transfer of the rules guiding the production of speech sound of a dominant language in a speech community. It can be realized at phonemic, stress and intonation levels. At the phonemic level, interference is predominant. This is because of the differences between the sound pattern of the mother tongue of Nigerian English bilingual and the sound patterns of the English language. In Yoruba language for instance, there are certain consonants and vowels of English language such sounds include *voiced bilabial plosive /b/ as in Brain, voiceless alveolar plosive /t/, /d/ as well as short vowels such as /i/, /u/ and /e/*. However, the absence of the English sounds such as voiceless bilabial plosive /p/, voiceless and voiced labiodental fricative /f/ and /v/ and the long vowels /i:/, /u:/ and /a:/ makes it difficult for Yoruba/English bilingual to acquire such sounds. As a result of that, retroactive interference occurs. Some Yoruba/English bilinguals substitute the voiceless bilabial plosive sound /p/ for /p/ (pronounced as 'kp' in Yoruba) and produce the word 'part' as

/kpa:t/, also the lack of sound such as the voiced labiodental /v/ makes him/her produce 'river' as /rifa/ and also absence of the voiced labiodental fricative makes him/her produce 'think' as /tink/

At *syllabic level*, Yoruba language lacks consonant cluster, what is present is CV syllable structure and as a result vowels are inserted immediately after the production of consonant sound. Thus, words like *brittle*, *bottle*, *little*, becomes /britu/, /botu/ and /litu/ instead of /britl/, /botl/ and /litl/

At the *level of tone*, it is often noticed at the stress and intonation levels. Yoruba language is a tonal language while English is a stress- timed and intonational. This creates some problems for Yoruba/English bilinguals in learning English sounds. Thus a Yoruba / English bilingual stress every syllable in the utterance he produces in English. Examples are:

to ta li ty instead of *totality*, *cha ra cter* instead of *character*. He may also places stress wrongly on some English words e.g. *ma dam* instead of *madam*

MARy instead of Mary

TOtem instead of totem

CARpet instead of carpet

At the *level of intonation*, because all the syllables are stressed, a repeated effect from the dialects of Yoruba language, it becomes difficult to understand what part of an utterance a Yoruba English bilingual is trying to emphasize. for example;

Kolapo is *washing*

Bolade is *coming home*

'*washing*' and '*coming*' is emphasized in a normal English utterance. It is difficult for a Yoruba/English bilingual to understand how different intonational patterns on a single sentence can form different meanings out of the sentence.

Examples: *she has varieties of lace (T1) (statement)*

She has varieties of sandals? (T2) (question)

he has some water? (T4) (doubt)

GRAMMATICAL/SYNTACTIC INTERFERENCE

the system of the mother tongue Yoruba intrudes into the target language because the two are of different models. This level of interference depends on the level of competence of the bilingual involved. For example, at primary school level, a Yoruba/English bilingual may utter '*my stomach is sweet*' which is the direct translation of the mother tongue '*inu mi dun*' which in English means I am happy or '*I can hear a smell*' a direct translation of the Yoruba sentence '*Mo n gbo oorun*'. Here, there is a direct translation of the mother tongue at the grammatical level. Other examples are:

'*They are calling you*' '*they*' referring to one person but because the cultural influence 'respect' where by 'e' is used for an elderly person, the speaker tends to bring it directly into his utterance in English thus resulting in a grammatical interference'.

Also at this level, Yoruba/English bilingual do have *difficulty in using stative and dynamic verbs* because there is no difference between them in Yoruba language. Thus, he/she says;

I am hearing you (mo n gbo e) instead of I can hear you.

I am seeing you (mo n ri e) instead of I can see you.

Re- ordering of compound subjects involving first and third person is another interference that happens at this level. This is because there is no distinction between first and third person so, Yoruba/English bilingual will say:

'*I and Bola went to the church together*' instead of '*Bola and I went to the church together*'. This happens because in the mother tongue, the first person comes before the 3rd person. For instance the Yoruba utterance: '*Emi ati Bola ni a jo lo si church*'. Yoruba language articles 'naa' 'the' and 'kan (a/an)' are realized as qualifies as in '*okunrin naa*' (*man the*) *the man*. '*Iwe kan*' (*book a*) *a book*. So, Yoruba/English bilinguals omits function words such as '*the*' and '*a/an*'. It is also found among users of English at the tertiary or higher level of education. E.g

✓ I am going to church

✓ The baby gave me tough time

✓ Some of them are in hurry.

Answers to Negative questions are positive in Yoruba and as such it gave rise to interference in English usage. For instance in the Yoruba language utterance; '*Se o ti se tan ni?*' '*Beni mi o ti se tan*' which means '*Haven't you finished?*' '*Yes I haven't finish*' instead, the answer should be *No I haven't*.

LEXICAL INTERFERENCE

This interference occurs at level of words and can be described under five categories namely *semantic contrast*, *semantic extension* *semantic transfer*, (*loan creation*) and *borrowing*.

- *Semantic contrast*: some items in Yoruba language may have equivalent item in native English but express different meanings through them. For example; the item "masquerade" has do with ancestral cult worship in Yoruba but in native English, it means 'deceit' or hiding one's identity.
- *Semantic transfer*: this is another lexical interference that a Yoruba/English bilingual exhibits. Some items in Yoruba language are present in native English but the concept they express in the former are absent in the latter. E.g 'wife's (suggestion polygamy) , 'well done' said to someone passing by and not engaged in any work or 'sorry' where one is not responsible for what happened. Other examples include: *senior brother (elder brother)*, *drop (alight)*, *off head (off hand)*; *take in (became pregnant)*; *go-slow (traffic jam)*.

Hybridisation is another transfer one can see under semantic transfer that language contact of English with Yoruba causes. This refers to where there is a combination of a word or a sense of a word in the indigenous language with a word or sense of a word in English; for example '*Bukateria*' ('*buka*' in Yoruba means 'canteen'; while '*teria*' is clipped from English '*Cafeteria*'), '*kiakia bus*' which refers to a fast-moving bus or mini bus.

Outright transfer can be observed in loan words or borrowing of item. The wholesale transfer (or borrowing) of lexical items from Nigeria languages into English notably includes the following:

Agbada- a kind of flowing dress for men, especially among Yoruba: “Chief ogini wore agbada to the wedding ceremony”

Akara: an item of food, also referred to as ‘bean cake’. Others are; *akpu, banga, eba, egusi, ogbona, tuwo* (in various Nigerian language) as in

“Anytime I eat eba I have stomach upset”;

“Can I eat some tuwo rice?”

“I don’t like the smell of akpu”

“I will like to eat ewedu soup mixed with gbegiri”

Danfo, okada: a mode of transportation: e.g ‘You either go by *danfo* or you take an *okada*.

‘*oba*’, bush meat (eran igbe) are also examples. Such examples indicate that English coming in contact with indigenous languages has brought about the borrowing of items into the languages because they cannot be accurately translated into English. However once borrowed into English in Nigeria, they become part of the vocabulary of English. This establishes the features of language as systematic, conventional, dynamic, and human and culture bound.

- *Semantic Extension*: some items in Yoruba language may have equivalence in native English but express a wider meaning in the indigenous language for instance, *Chief, brother, father, mother* in addition to its meaning in native English. ‘*Chief*’ in the indigenous language is a social title awarded to important personalities. Also, there is the extension of existing meaning and use to cover new areas e.g ‘*father*’ does not refer to a male parent alone, but any adult male person of comparable age to one’s father. Other examples are ‘*trek*’ – walk a short distance; *station*; a place where one works, *long legs*- corruption involving nepotism, *big/senior boys*; men who are rich and influential *four-one-nine (419)*; a fraudster or cheat, ‘*machine*’ as in ‘*this machine broke down*’ (machine for motor cycle), *I want to drink minerals* (minerals for soft drink).

- *Coinages (loan creation)*: some items are peculiar to Nigerian indigenous language and so the items are borrowed into or coined in local English to suit the Nigeria environment to such an extent that when they are used they immediately mark a statement or a piece of writing as characteristics of Nigeria English. Examples are:

Been-to: a person who has return to Nigeria after a long stay overseas.

Chewing-stick: a piece of wood which can be softened by chewing and moistening and which serves the purpose of teeth cleaning.

Cover-cloth: a long piece of cloth usually wrapped around the body when one lies down to sleep.

Half current: from electricity that is not fully generated.

Overload: an excess number of passengers or goods carried by a vehicle. E.g ‘*The lorry has bad tyres yet it is carrying overload.*’

Scale through: move easily through the solving of a problem. E.g ‘*At least I have scaled through the hurdles of writing exams.*’

New lexical items are derived via *prefixation, suffixation, and reduplication or compounding.*

DISCOURSAL INTERFERENCE

This interference mostly is pronounced in greetings. Nigerians have for example developed all form of greeting norms using English in line with a style of greeting that is prevalent in their cultures. In Yoruba culture there is greeting for virtually everything done on the surface of the earth. Thus, the phrase ‘*well seated*’ is used to greet someone who is sitting down; it is a translation from Yoruba ‘*E ku ijoko*’, traditionally used to greet someone who is sitting.

Politeness phenomena in the indigenous languages have been transferred into English in such a way that the names of the people addressed are hardly mentioned at all, especially if they are older than the person addressing them. Thus, one often hears modes of address like *chief, Prof., Doctor, Sir and Pastor* as used in the example; ‘*Good morning, chief*’. Indeed in recent years, Nigerians have been adding ‘*sir*’ to the chosen title in order to show extreme respect or politeness, as in ‘*Prof sir, can I take the book?*’ It is considered impolite to address people in positions of authority, or people who are older than oneself, by their actual name. Recently however, the use of such words as daddy, uncle and auntie as politeness phenomena has emerged in the use of English in Nigeria.

The system of greetings is also observed via the production of lengthy greetings in place of casual greeting which characterize the English discourse. For instance, in place of ‘*Hello/Hello*’ the Yoruba/English bilingual goes further to say “*how are you? How is your family? How is your work?*”

Having considered the various levels of language description in which interference occur as a result of language contact rendering their users bilinguals, it is also important to say at this juncture that language contact and bilingualism also gave rise to code-switching, code-mixing, bilingualism and biculturalism and also creation of new languages such as Pidgin and Creole.

V. CODE-SWITCHING AND CODE-MIXING AS CONSEQUENCES OF LANGUAGE CONTACT

By code, we mean language, speech variety or dialect. Code-switching therefore refers to the act of alternating the use of two or more languages. Code-mixing has been distinguished from Code-switching. In Code-mixing, pieces of one language are used, while in Code-switching, a speaker is basically alternating the use of two different languages. The pieces taken from another language in Code-mixing are often words, though they can be phrases or large units (Araromi 2006). Someone who code-switches uses two languages or dialects interchangeably in a single communication. This switching can be interlingual or intralingual. A communication which may involve native tongue and a foreign language starting with one of the two languages and concluding with the other. The reason for this Grosjean (1982) gives as:

- ✓ To fill a linguistic need for lexical item, phrase, discourse marker or sentence filler.
- ✓ Continue the last language used (triggering).
- ✓ Quote someone.

- ✓ Specify addresses.
- ✓ Mark and emphasize group identity.
- ✓ Specify speaker involvement (personalized message).
- ✓ Mark and emphasize group identity(solidarity)
- ✓ Convey confidentiality, anger, and annoyance.
- ✓ Exclude someone from conversation.
- ✓ Change role of speaker, raise status, add authority and show expertise

The formal type of code-switching refers to the linguistic realization of code-switching from one language to the other. There are *three sub-types* under this category. *Code-switching* is the first sub-type and it refers to a complete change from one language to another language A or language B. E.g:

'Mummy travelled last week. Won de pada de lana. I asked her what she brought. Won wa fun mi ni epa ati abugburu.' (an intersentential code change realizes switch that take place across sentences)

There is another switch which take place within a sentence at major constituent boundaries such as noun phrases, verb phrases and clauses. It is called *intrasentential code change or switching*. E.g

'Baba kan fun mi ni a list of items-pe go and buy them and make me a delicious meal.'

The last is *Code-mixing* which is the third sub-type. It refers to a situation whereby two languages are used in single sentence within major and constituent boundaries. The mixing of items occurs almost at word level. Examples include:

- ✓ *'Awon cultist yen lo de maa cause awon troubles yen'*
- ✓ *'Sade fun mi ni advicel ati lo see woman yen'*

A Yoruba/English bilingual tends to code-switch in as much he or she is vast in the use of the language and thus uses it in his/her daily interaction with people.

VI. BILINGUALISM-BICULTURALISM AS A CONSEQUENCE OF LANGUAGE CONTACT

Akindele and Adegbite (2005:43-44) declares that as ...language reflects, expresses and records culture, the possession of language inevitably means the acquisition of culture. However, while we can say that a monolingual person is essentially monocultural, not all bilinguals can be said to be bicultural (except a coordinate bilingual), since bilingualism and biculturalism are no co-existence (cf.Haugen 1956). Indeed a monolingual person may be bicultural in some circumstances (e.g some second or third generation immigrants with two cultures in the U.S.A.) the extent of bilingualism and biculturalism can be demonstrated in four ways in terms of the high (H) and low (L) scales thus: H-H, H-L, L-H and L-L.

A speaker's purpose of learning a second language can determine his acquisition of second language. If he aims at identification and assimilation, he becomes both bilingual and bicultural. Bilingualism may end up being transitional towards monoculturalism and the second language and the second language. Children and youth who are bicultural may rebel against the language and culture of their parents in an attempt to show civilization. An example of a bilingual and bicultural Individual or community can be likened to the inhabitants of the borderline areas. Idi-Iroko for instance shares the

boundaries of Nigeria and Benin Republic, they are bilingual and bicultural because they interact with the Beninous who speaks French and Lagosians who speak Yoruba and also learn the culture of the Beninous community. They are bicultural in experience.

VII. NIGERIAN PIDGIN AS A RESULT OF LANGUAGE CONTACT

Pidgin is a trade language, a medium of communication that originated as a result of the development of trade and commerce most especially traced to the contact between the Europeans and the coastal people in (Calabar) .It has no defined standard grammar or model. It is used specifically for the purpose of trade transactions. Pidgin are formed when speakers of one language engage in a trade with speakers of another, or work on plantations managed by speakers of another and neither knows the other's language. For instance, *the case of the Portuguese that established Port Gwatho in Benin Kingdom and the need for a language of communication brings about a contact and this contact led to the development of the indigenized foreign language called Pidgin in Portuguese as a language of trade.* Pidgin is no one's mother tongue. It is a blend of indigenous languages of the West African Coast and those of the foreign traders in order to grant the need for a language which could be understood by partners in the trade and such a language must necessarily be a neutral acceptance to both parties. Therefore, we can say that Pidgin is a 'contact English'. The simplified structure of Pidgin and its adaptability to local situations make it possible for both literate and non-literate Nigerians to use it. Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa speech communities pidgin is considered as a trade language. It is also considered as Lingual Franca (language of wider communication. LWC) Some of the surviving words from the early pidgin are '*pikin*', '*domot*', '*comot*', '*sabi*'.

In forming the variety of English called Nigerian Pidgin English; it has come to notice that the greater percentage of the vocabulary of present-day English is made of borrowed words and blending. Some of the examples of this blending are:

Nigerian English	Standard English
Comot	come + out
Putam	put + it
Sidon	Sit + down
Troway	throw + away

Borrowing arose in order to develop and enrich its lexicon. Nigerian Pidgin English has borrowed words from Portuguese and some indigenous languages which it has adopted into its own phonological processes. Examples are the following:

Nigerian Pidgin	Standard English
Waka	walk
Faya	fire
Sukul	school
Soja	soldier

Nigerian Pidgin	Meaning	Source
Anikilija	dilapidated	Igbo

Oga	boss	Yoruba
Wahala	trouble	Hausa
Boku	plenty	French

Clipping is also noticed in Nigerian Pidgin formulation. There are a few instances of deletion of at least one syllable from a word in Nigerian Pidgin. Examples are:

Nigerian Pidgin	Standard English
Friend	befriend
Wait	await

Compounding also is one of the areas in which Pidgin English is most productive (Osoba 2004:242) a compound can be generally described as a unit consisting two or more bases. Compounds may contain lexical item from the same or different classes. They may be written together, hyphenated or separated. In Nigerian Pidgin, four types corresponding to the four major word-classes—nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are found. Examples are:

✓ COMPOUND NOUNS

Nigerian Pidgin	Composition
Big-man	Adj + N
Bitter-kola	Adj + N
Cashmadam	N + N
Duckfowl	N + N
Sufferhead	V + N

✓ COMPOUND VERBS

Nigerian Pidgin	Composition
Sidon-look	V+V
Join-hand	V + V

✓ COMPOUND ADJECTIVES

Nigerian Pidgin	Composition
Bone-face	Adj + N
Long- throat	Adj + N
Tight-hand	Adj + N

✓ COMPOUND ADVERBS

Nigerian Pidgin	Composition
Just now	Adj + adv
One time	Det. + N
Any day / anytime	Det. + N

Conversion is present in Nigerian Pidgin. It is a derivation process whereby an item is adopted or converted to a new word class without adding an affix. Examples are:

Nigerian Pidgin	Standard English / pidgin usage
Finishes (V---Adv.) (completely)	finish (V) dem don useless am finish (completely)
Useless (Adj. --- V)	useless (Adj.) (dem dey useless person for Yaba)
Friend (N---V)	friend (N) (in dey friend am)

Extension and reduplication are present in Nigerian Pidgin. Extension is a process whereby words are used to cover more situations than they do in their original languages. Examples of words in English which have their meanings extended in Nigerian Pidgin are : ‘softly o’ – take it easy which means carefully in standard English, ‘upstair’ –storey-building which means first floor in standard English and ‘follow’—befriend which mean accompany in Standard English.

Reduplication in Nigerian Pidgin involves the repetition of the first word without any morphological or phonological change. Examples are bro-bros (N+N), Luke-Luke (N+N), pikin-pikin (N+N), follow-follow (V + V), sabi-sabi (V+V), big-big (Adj + Adj), chop-chop (V+V), plenty-plenty (N+N),

waka-waka (V+V), now-now (Adv+Adv),one-one (Adv+Adv) and well-well (N+N).

From the above we have observed that Nigerian Pidgin make use of word-formation processes in other to enrich their lexicons. Nigerian Pidgin does not display much of affixation as a process of word-formation, whereas English effectively utilizes it to expand its vocabulary.

VIII. NIGERIAN ENGLISH AS A RESULT OF LANGUAGE CONTACT AND BILINGUALISM

Okoro (2004) opines that Nigerian English is simply English the way Nigerians speak and write. The contact between the indigenous languages in Nigeria and the native English gave rise to Nigerian English variety. Nigerian English is made up, on the phonological level, of the peculiar forms of pronunciation typical of the Efik, the Hausa, the Igbo, the Yoruba and the numerous other ethnic groups that make up Nigeria. On the lexical level of coinages, loans, blends, compounding and acronym, syntactic level by transfer of mother tongue structures. All these levels where interferences occur we have discussed in table 1.4 above using Yoruba/ English contact as a case study. In an attempt by Nigerians to communicate effectively in Nigerian context with the use of English gave rise to the Nigerian variety of English. However, some observed usage of the educated Nigerian show among many others the following ‘Nigerianisms’.

✓ PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

- Syllable-timed instead of stress-timed rhythm is employed with a reduced system of intonation. There are no alternations of strong and weak stresses.
- Where the stress falls on the second syllable most educated Nigerians still stress the first syllable e.g.

	B.E	N.E
Except =	/Ik sept/	/eksept/
Exact =	/Ig zam/	/ egza:kt/
Exam =	/Ig z æ m/	/egza:m/

- double stresses are given to most English compounds which lead to unintended meanings e.g.

B.E		N.E
‘Sitting room	becomes	‘Sitting ‘room
(that is, a room that sits)		

- In the most environments letter ‘h’ is not dropped where it should be dropped e.g.

B.E		N.E
Honour = /ɔnɔ/		/hɔnɔr/
Honest = /ɔnɪst/		/hɔnɪst/

- Consistent spelling pronunciation occurs in words ending in orthographic –mb - -ng and their derivatives e.g

	B.E	N.E
Bomb =	/bɔm/	/ bɔmb/
Bomber =	/bɔmɔ/	/b mbɔ/
Hang =	/hæŋ/	/ hang/
Hanger =	/hæŋgɔ/	/hanger/

✓ MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX

✓ Lack of differentiation between mass and count nouns. Thus, Nigerians say: furnitures, equipments, properties, informations, stationaries etc.

Nigerians also say: Mrs Ojo is a staff of Modern European Languages Department instead of 'a member of staff'

✓ dropping of 'to' from certain non-finite verbs (to-infinitive) e.g.

B.E	N.E
Enable him to do it	enable him do it
Enable him to go	enable him go

✓ use of prepositions where native people will avoid or will use a different preposition e.g.

B.E	N.E
Voice	voice out
Dicuss	discuss about
Vanish	vanish away
Congratulate on	congratulate for
Chatting to	chatting with

Pay a courtesy call to pay a courtesy call on

The clinic is on Kolade road The clinic is along Kolade road

✓ Adjectives formed from verbs tend to retain their 'participle' form e.g

B.E	N.E
An advance copy of the petition	an advanced copy of the petition
We had roast chicken for lunch	we had roasted chicken for lunch

✓ Use of other adjectives; or adverb to qualify adjectives that are beyond comparison e.g. wonderful, horrible, marvelous, superb.

B.E	N.E
I wish you best of luck	I wish you <i>every</i> best of luck
B.E	N.E
A unique occasion	A <i>very</i> unique occasion

✓ LEXIS AND SEMANTIC

New lexical items may be coined from existing lexical items. Where there is also no precise equivalent in English, new lexical items are also borrowed from local languages or from pidgin, either directly or in translation. Examples of such *coinages* are:

- Invitee (guest) from 'invite'
- Decampee (used to designate those who decamped from one political party to the other)
- Arrange (used to describe those convicted of or charged with illegal dealing in foreign currency)
- Head-tie (woman's headdress)
- go-slow (traffic jam)
- a been-to (a person who has travelled overseas)

Examples of *loanwords* are:

- Chewing stick (local tooth cleaner)
- Akara balls (bean cake)
- Bush meat (game)
- Adire cloth (cloth into which patterns are made by tying up parts of it before dyeing)

- Some lexical items acquire new forms /meanings e.g.
- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|----------------|
| B.E | = | N.E |
| -- a bend in a road | = | a corner |
| --an electric bulb | = | globe |
| -- to water flowers | = | to wet flowers |
| --Let me finish my speech | = | let me land |
| --A neighbourhood | = | environment |

In B.E, 'my dear' is used for addressing someone much loved while in N.E 'my dear' is used for addressing practically anyone including strangers.

- some totally *new idioms* are developed e.g.
- | | | |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|
| N.E | = | B.E |
| To put to bed | = | to give birth |
| To take in | = | to become pregnant |
| Off head | = | from memory |
| To take the light | = | to make a power cut |
| Not on seat | = | not in the office |

• Certain words and idioms acquire new forms or meanings e.g

As of now (B.E) As at now (N.E)
Bless you, hard luck and tough luck etc. (B.E) = Sorry (N.E)

Putting back the clock (B.E) = Putting back the hands of the clock (N.E)

He who pays the piper dictates the tune (B.E) = He who plays the piper dictates the tune (N.E). From the above, we can see various Nigerian way of using English and with that, we can affirm that truly there exists a Nigerian variety of English Language which simply means the way Nigeria speak and write English.

IX. CONCLUSION

So far in this paper, we have explore the concepts of Bilingualism an linguistic situation in Nigeria, Bilingualism and Language contact paying attention to the relationship that exist between Bilingualism and Language contact. We also considered the linguistic effect of bilingualism and language contact using Yoruba language as a case study. Other consequences of language contact and bilingualism such as code-mixing, Nigerian Pidgin, and Nigerian English are also examined.

Considering the facts discussed in this paper, we can conclude by saying that Language contact gave rise to bilingualism and that when two languages come in contact, there tends to be influence on each other.

REFERENCES

[1] Adamo, G.E. (2007) *Nigerian English*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
 [2] Adegbite, W. (2004) "Towards a Delimitation of the status and Functions of English in Nigeria" In Owolabi, A.K. and Dasyuva, A. (eds 2004) *Forms and Functions of English and Indigenous languages in Nigeria*. Ibadan: University Press.
 [3] Akindele, F. and Adegbite, W. (2005) *The Sociology and Politics of English in Nigeria*. Ile- Ife: O.A.U. Press.

- [4] Araromi, M. (2006) "Code-Switching and Code-Mixing Among Nigerians Bilinguals and Multilinguals" In *Journal of Studies in Humanities*. Ijebu Ode: Tai Solarin University of Education Publication.
- [5] Bloomfield, L. (1933) *Language*. New York: Henry Holt.
- [6] Bamgbose, A. (1971) "The English Language in Nigeria" In Bray, B. and Kachru, U. (eds) *The other Tongue: English Across Cultures*. Illinois: University of Illinois Press.
- [7] Crozier, D.H and Blench, R.M. (1992). *An Index of Languages*. Texas: Summer Institute of Linguistics.
- [8] Dada, A. (1976) *L'apprentissage du Français au Nigeria: Relation entre motivation: Contexte Pedagogique et Performance*. Ph.d Thesis. France: University of Bordeaux.
- [9] Grosjean, P. (1982) *Bilingualism in Society in Life with Two Languages*. Havard: Havard University Press.
- [10] Laroussi, F. (2004) *Sociolinguistique du plurilinguisme*. University de Rouen.
- [11] Ogunkeye, O. (2007) "Bilingualism and the Teaching Of English and French in Nigeria" In *Journal of Social and Cultural Studies*. Ibadan: University Press
- [12] Okoro, O. (2004) "Codifying Nigerian English: Some Practical Problems and Labelling" In Awonusi, S. and Babalola E.A.(eds) *Domestication of English in Nigeria*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- [13] Osoba, O. (2004) "Word-Formation Processes in English and Nigerian Pidgin" In Awonusi, S. and Babalola E.A. (eds) *Domestication of English in Nigeria*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- [14] Weinreich, U. (1953) *Language in contact: Findings and Problems*. The Hague: Mouton and Co.
- [15] (1974) *Language in Contact*. The Hague: Mouton

IJIRAS