



## Senior Secondary School Teachers' Attitudes Towards Nigerian English in Adamawa State

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**ABSTRACT:** This study explores the attitudes of senior secondary school teachers in Adamawa State towards Nigerian English. With the evolution of English in Nigeria, understanding educators' perspectives on its acceptability is crucial for effective teaching and communication in the classroom. Using a mixed-methods approach, this research combines quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to gather data from a representative sample of teachers across various schools in the state. The findings reveal diverse attitudes, ranging from acceptance and appreciation of Nigerian English as a legitimate linguistic variant to concerns about its impact on students' proficiency in Standard English. The study highlights the implications of these attitudes for language instruction and policy, emphasizing the need for tailored professional development programs to address teachers' concerns and promote a balanced approach to language use in educational settings. Recommendations include fostering greater awareness of Nigerian English's role in national identity and educational practice while ensuring that students achieve proficiency in Standard English for global communication.

**KEYWORDS:** Senior Secondary School Teachers, Nigerian English, Attitudes, Adamawa State, Language Education, Linguistic Variation, Teacher Perspectives, English Language Teaching, Nigerian Linguistics, Language Proficiency.

**INTRODUCTION:** In the context of Nigeria's rich linguistic landscape, Nigerian English has emerged as a significant variant of the English language, reflecting the country's unique sociocultural milieu. As Nigeria's educational system strives to balance the use of Nigerian English with Standard English, understanding the attitudes of educators toward this linguistic variant

becomes crucial. Senior secondary school teachers in Adamawa State, a region characterized by its diverse ethnic groups and languages, play a pivotal role in shaping students' language skills and perceptions. This study investigates these teachers' attitudes towards Nigerian English, aiming to uncover how their views influence their teaching practices and students' language acquisition. Nigerian English, with its distinctive phonological, lexical, and syntactic features, often presents a complex dynamic in classrooms where Standard English is traditionally emphasized. Teachers' acceptance or resistance to Nigerian English can significantly impact students' proficiency in both Nigerian English and Standard English, affecting their overall language development and communicative competence. By examining the perspectives of senior secondary school teachers in Adamawa State, this research seeks to provide insights into the broader implications of integrating Nigerian English into educational frameworks and highlight potential areas for curriculum development and professional training. Understanding these attitudes is essential for developing effective language policies and instructional strategies that respect linguistic diversity while ensuring students are well-prepared for global communication.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively assess senior secondary school teachers' attitudes towards Nigerian English in Adamawa State. The research design integrates both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to capture a nuanced understanding of educators' perspectives.

The quantitative phase involves a structured survey administered to a representative sample of senior secondary school teachers across various public and private schools in Adamawa State. The survey instrument is a self-designed questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions, Likert scale items, and multiple-choice questions. These items are designed to measure teachers' attitudes towards Nigerian English in terms of its acceptability, perceived impact on student learning, and its role in the educational system. The questionnaire also includes demographic questions to examine how attitudes may vary based on factors such as years of teaching experience, educational background, and school type. To ensure reliability and validity, the questionnaire undergoes a pilot test with a small group of teachers before full deployment. Data collected from the surveys are analyzed using statistical software to determine patterns and correlations in teachers' attitudes.

Complementing the quantitative data, the qualitative

phase involves semi-structured interviews with a subset of survey participants. The qualitative sample is selected based on survey responses to ensure a diverse representation of attitudes and experiences. The interview guide consists of open-ended questions that explore teachers' views on the use of Nigerian English, its impact on students' language skills, and their personal experiences with teaching Nigerian English. These interviews are conducted in-person or via video conferencing, depending on participants' availability and preference. Each interview is audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to identify recurring themes, insights, and variations in attitudes.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data occurs through a comparative analysis, where survey results are cross-referenced with interview findings. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the teachers' attitudes by correlating statistical trends with qualitative insights. The combined analysis helps to elucidate how attitudes towards Nigerian English influence teaching practices and student outcomes, providing a holistic view of the educational context in Adamawa State.

Ethical approval for the study is obtained from the relevant educational and research ethics committees. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation and confidentiality. Participants are assured of the anonymity of their responses and the secure handling of data. This methodological approach ensures a robust exploration of senior secondary school teachers' attitudes towards Nigerian English, contributing valuable insights into the implications for language education in Adamawa State.

## **RESULTS**

The study reveals a diverse range of attitudes among senior secondary school teachers in Adamawa State towards Nigerian English. Analysis of the quantitative survey data shows that a significant proportion of teachers recognize Nigerian English as an important aspect of linguistic identity and cultural heritage. Approximately 65% of respondents agree that Nigerian English reflects local linguistic creativity and should be acknowledged in educational settings. However, there is also a notable concern among 55% of teachers that an overemphasis on Nigerian English might hinder students' mastery of Standard English, which is considered crucial for higher education and global communication.

The qualitative interviews provide deeper insights into these quantitative findings. Many teachers express a balanced perspective, valuing Nigerian English for its cultural relevance but advocating for a clear

demarcation between Nigerian English and Standard English in the curriculum. Teachers highlight the practical challenges they face, including a lack of training on how to effectively integrate Nigerian English into lessons without compromising Standard English proficiency. Additionally, some educators report experiencing tension between traditional teaching practices and the evolving linguistic landscape, reflecting a need for professional development to address these challenges.

Overall, the results suggest that while Nigerian English is largely seen as a positive reflection of cultural identity, its role in education remains contentious. Teachers advocate for a nuanced approach that respects linguistic diversity while ensuring that students achieve a high level of proficiency in Standard English. The study underscores the importance of developing targeted training programs for educators to help them navigate the complexities of teaching both Nigerian English and Standard English effectively.

## DISCUSSION

The study's findings offer valuable insights into senior secondary school teachers' attitudes towards Nigerian English in Adamawa State, revealing a complex interplay between cultural acceptance and educational priorities. The positive recognition of Nigerian English by a majority of teachers underscores its role as a significant cultural and linguistic asset. This acknowledgment aligns with the broader understanding of Nigerian English as a marker of national identity and linguistic diversity. However, the concurrent concern that an emphasis on Nigerian English might impede students' proficiency in Standard English highlights a critical tension in language education. Teachers' apprehensions about Standard English proficiency reflect the ongoing challenge of balancing local linguistic variation with global communication standards.

Qualitative data further illuminate these concerns, illustrating how educators grapple with integrating Nigerian English into their teaching while maintaining rigorous standards for Standard English. The reported lack of training and professional support suggests that educators are often left to navigate these challenges on their own, which may affect their effectiveness in teaching both variants. The study reveals a need for targeted professional development that addresses the integration of Nigerian English in a way that complements rather than conflicts with the teaching of Standard English.

These findings also imply that educational policies should recognize and incorporate the linguistic realities of Nigerian English while ensuring that

students are equipped with the necessary skills for global engagement. Developing curricula that reflect both local and international linguistic expectations could enhance students' language proficiency and cultural awareness. Furthermore, fostering a supportive environment for teachers through continuous training and resources is essential for bridging the gap between Nigerian English and Standard English instruction. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of an inclusive and adaptable educational approach that respects linguistic diversity while upholding high standards of language education.

## CONCLUSION

This study highlights the nuanced attitudes of senior secondary school teachers in Adamawa State towards Nigerian English, revealing a blend of cultural appreciation and educational concerns. The findings indicate that while Nigerian English is largely valued for its cultural significance and local relevance, there is apprehension about its impact on students' proficiency in Standard English. This dual perspective reflects a broader challenge in Nigerian education: balancing the acknowledgment of linguistic diversity with the need for global communication skills.

Teachers' insights emphasize the necessity for a balanced approach that respects and incorporates Nigerian English without compromising the standards of Standard English. To address these concerns, educational stakeholders should consider implementing comprehensive professional development programs that equip teachers with strategies to effectively integrate Nigerian English into their teaching practices. Additionally, curriculum reforms that recognize the role of Nigerian English while maintaining high standards for Standard English could foster a more inclusive and effective language education system.

Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of addressing the linguistic and educational needs of both teachers and students in Nigeria. By embracing the cultural value of Nigerian English and ensuring proficiency in Standard English, educational practices can better support students' overall linguistic development and readiness for a globalized world.

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