**ENG 321
CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH USAGE**

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to ENG 321: CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH USAGE
ENG 321: Contemporary English Usage is a 3 credit one semester undergraduate course. It comprises 25 study units subdivided into 5 modules. The materials have been developed with the Nigerian context in view. This course guide gives you an overview of the course. It also provides you with information on the organization and requirements of the course.

COURSE AIMS

a)   To develop receptive and productive language skills
b)   To improve the students' language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing)
c)   To expand vocabulary and to develop grammatical competence
d)   To improve speech and oral competence
e)   To develop paragraph, essay and letter writing skills
f)   To use contemporary English forms in speech and writing

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To achieve the aims above, we have some overall objectives. Each unit also has objectives. These will guide you in your study. They are usually stated at the beginning of the each unit and when you are through with studying the units go back and read the objectives. This would help you assimilate the task you have set out to achieve. On completion of the course, you should be able to:

a)   Extend students' knowledge of English grammar in certain key areas.
b)   Make students aware of the underlying system of Modern English grammar in contemporary usage
c)   Equip students with strategies to deal with areas of contemporary English usage that may be encountered in real life situations not dealt with on the course
d)   Enable students to reflect on and appreciate the forms of contemporary English usage as objects of intellectual development
e)   Enable students to understand and explain why certain forms are unacceptable in contemporary English usage
g)   Enable students to manipulate the basic written, grammatical and technical structures of contemporary English usage
h)   Provide students with the grammatical concepts and meta-language forms that will prepare them for latter courses

WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To complete the course, you are required to read the study units and other related materials. You will also need to undertake practical exercises for which you need a pen, a notebook, and other materials that will be listed in this guide. The exercises are to aid you in understanding the concepts being presented. At the end of each unit, you will be required to submit written assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, you will write a final examination.

COURSE MATERIALS

The major materials you will need for this course are:

1. The Course guide
2. The Study units
3. The Relevant textbooks including the ones listed under each unit
4. The Assignment file
5. The Presentation schedule

STUDY UNITS

There are 25 study units in this course as follows:

Module 1   Introduction to Contemporary English Usage

Unit1   The Confines of Contemporary English
Unit 2   History of Contemporary English Usage
Unit 3   Categorization of English in Usage/Pedagogy
Unit 4   English Language and Standardization
Unit 5   Competence and Performance

Module 2   English Language Varieties and Usage

Unit 1   Varieties in Contemporary English
Unit 2   British English Varieties
Unit 3   American English Structure
Unit 4   Differences between British English (BrE) & American English (AmE)
Unit 5   Australian/New Zealand English Varieties

Module 3   ContemporaryNigerianEnglish

Unit 1   Form and Function in Contemporary English
Unit 2   Contemporary Nigerian English (NE)
Unit 3   Popular Nigerian English (PNE)

Unit 4   Other Varieties of Contemporary Nigerian English
Unit 5   Select English Language Varieties in Africa

Module 4   Contemporary English Speech/Writing

Unit 1   Forms of Contemporary English Writing
Unit 2   Contemporary Speech Forms in English
Unit 3   Formal and Informal Language Style
Unit 4   Linguistic Meaning and Speaker Meaning
Unit 5   Business English/ Business Writing

Module 5   Contemporary Forms of Usage

Unit 1   Use and Usage in Contemporary English
Unit 2   Tools of Usage 1: English Vocabulary
Unit 3   Tools of Usage 2: Idioms, Phrasal Verbs and Catch
                Phrases
Unit 4   Tools of Usage 3: Diction
Unit 5   Internet English/Web Writing

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

Certain books are recommended in the course. You may wish to purchase them for further reading

ASSIGNMENT FILE

An assignment file and a marking scheme will be made available to you. In this file, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain from these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignments will be found in the assignment file itself and later in this Course Guide in the section on Assessment.

TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMAS)

You will need to submit a specified number of the Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs). Every unit in this course has a tutor-marked assignment. You will be assessed on four of them but the best four (that is, the highest four of the fifteen marks) will be counted. The total marks for the best four (4) assignments will be 30% of your total work.Assignment questions for the unit in this course are counted in the Assignment File. When you have completed each assignment, send it, together with the TMA (tutor-marked assignment) form to your tutor. Make sure each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline

for submission. If, for any reason, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor to discuss the possibility of an extension. Extension will not be granted after due date except in exceptional circumstances.

FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

The final examination of ENG 321 will be of three hours' duration. All areas of the course will be examined. Find time to read the unit all over before your examination. The final examination will attract 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the type of self-testing, practice exercises and tutor-marked assignments you have previously come across. All areas of the course will be assessed. You are advised to revise the entire course after studying the last unit before you sit for the examination. You will also find it useful to review your tutor-marked assignments and the comments of your tutor on them before the final examination.

COURSE MARKING SCHEME

The following table lays out how the actual course mark allocation is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignments (Best three Assignmentsout of Four marked)	=30%
Final Examination	=70%
Total	=100%

PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

The dates for submission of all assignments will be communicated to you. You will also be told the date for completing the study units and dates for examinations.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This table brings together the units, the number of weeks you should take to complete them, and the assignments that follow them.

Unit	Title of Work	Week's Activities	Assessment (end of unit)
	Course Guide		
Module 1 Introduction to Contemporary English			
1	The Confines of Contemporary English	Week 1	Assignment 1

2	History of Contemporary English usage	Week 1	Assignment 2
3	Categorization of English in Usage /Pedagogy	Week 2	Assignment 3
4	English Language and Standardization	Week 2	Assignment 4
5	Varieties in Contemporary English	Week 2	Assignment 5
Module 2 English Language Varieties and Usage			
1	British English Varieties	Week 3	Assignment 1
2	American English Structure	Week 3	Assignment 2
3	Australian /New Zealand English Varieties	Week 3	Assignment 3
4	African English Language Varieties	Week 4	Assignment 4
5	Contemporary English and Acceptability	Week 4	Assignment 5
Module 3 ContemporaryNigerianEnglish			
1	Form and Function in Contemporary English	Week 5	Assignment 1
2	Contemporary Nigerian English (NE)	Week 5	Assignment 2
3	Popular Nigerian English (PNE)	Week 6	Assignment 3
4	Other Varieties of Contemporary Nigerian English	Week 7	Assignment 4
5	Select English Language Varieties in Africa	Week 7	Assignment 5
Module 4 Contemporary English Speech/Writing			
1	Forms of Contemporary English Writing	Week 8	Assignment 1
2	Contemporary Speech Forms in English	Week 8	Assignment 2
3	Formal and Informal Language Style	Week 9	Assignment 3
4	Linguistic Meaning and Speaker Meaning	Week 9	Assignment 4
5	Business English/ Business Writing	Week 10	Assignment 5
Module 5 Contemporary Forms of Usage			
1	Use and Usage in Contemporary English	Week 11	Assignment 1
2	Tools of Usage 1: English Vocabulary	Week 12	Assignment

			2
3	Tools of Usage 2: Idioms, Phrasal Verbs and Catch Phrases	Week 13	Assignment 3
4	Tools of Usage 3: Diction	Week 14	Assignment 4
5	Internet English/Web Writing	Week 15	Assignment 5
	REVISION	1Week	
	EXAMINATION	1 Week	
	TOTAL	**17** Weeks	

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE

In distance learning the study units replace the university lecturer. This is one of the advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suit you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to a lecturer. In the same way that a lecturer might give you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read your set books or other materials. Just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise, your study units provide exercises for you to do at appropriate points.Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. You should use these objectives to guide your study. When you have finished the units, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If you make a habit of doing this, you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course.The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from your course guides. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it. Follow the following advice carefully:

1.   Read this Course Guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment
2.   Organize a study schedule. Refer to the 'Course Overview' for more details. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write own dates for working on each unit.
3.   Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything you can to stick to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties

with your schedule, please let your tutor know before it is too late for help.

4.   Turn to Unit 1 and read the Introduction and the Objectives for the Unit.

5.   Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need for a unit is given in the 'Overview' at the beginning of each unit. You will almost always need both the study unit you are working on and one of your set books on your desk at the same time.

6.   Work through the unit. The content of the unit itself has been arranged to provide a sequence for you to follow. As you work through the unit you will be instructed to read sections from your set books or other articles. Use the unit to guide your reading.

7.   Review the objectives for each unit to ensure that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study material or consult your tutor.

8.   When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can then start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.

9.   When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. Consult your tutor as soon as possible if you have any questions or problems.

10.   After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the Course Objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

11.   Keep in touch with your study centre. Up-to-date course information will be continuously available there.

TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

There are 8 hours of tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments; keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must mail your tutor-marked assignments to your tutor well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone, e-mail, or discussion board if you need help. The following might be circumstances in which you would find help necessary.Contact your tutor if:

- You do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings,
- You have difficulty with the self-tests and exercises,
- You have a question or problem with assignment, with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to- face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussions actively.

SUMMARY

This course guide gives you an overview of what to expect in the course of this study. **ENG 321: Contemporary English Usage** introducesyou to the basic rudiments of contemporary English usage for use in writing and speaking. It deals with the central features of contemporary English grammar, contemporary English writing and general English usage paying particular attention to areas that are relevant and of interest to students of English in differentiating the old from the new forms of English language use. The course shall explore all the components of Contemporary English usage in order to enable the students appreciate the fact that English language is dynamic.

MODULE 1   INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH USAGE

Unit 1   The Confines of Contemporary English
Unit 2   History of Contemporary English Usage
Unit 3   Categorization of English in Usage/Pedagogy
Unit 4   English Language and Standardization
Unit 5   Competence and Performance

UNIT 1   THE CONFINES OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, there is going to be an examination of the concept of contemporary English usage with particular interest in the differences compared with the old forms. There has been the controversy surrounding the differences between modern and contemporary English. What are the unique properties that make contemporary English have forms that mark it out as exhibiting different linguistic properties from the modern English forms? There have been the production of dictionaries of current English, modern English and contemporary English with quite unclear differences except the occurrence of new lexical forms and their usage which result from the open class sets of English usage. The question now remains: "should a language's contemporary form be restricted to the revelation of just the new lexical forms and their usage or other aspects of language forms?" In this unit, therefore, we shall critically study through the overview, the confines of contemporary English by examining the differences between the old English form, the modern English form and contemporary English forms

after which the rules of contemporary English shall be highlighted so that the clear difference in the forms will be made clear.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- differentiate between Old English and Modern English
- see the differences between Modern and contemporary English
- recognize the existence of contemporary English
- define contemporary English Usage
- make use of contemporary English rules.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a group of people cooperate or interact. Language is used essentially for communication. It also means that Language is a human activity by its being vocal, and it is based on random choice. Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. This means that only humans use language; it must be learned and must also follow certain rules to make meaning. Language is arbitrary; it is vocal; it is conventional and has multiple structures. Language cannot be equated with communication. Communication can take place perfectly without language as we find in the paralinguistic features. This brings us to the functions of language. Language is used by different people in different ways. It can be for the purpose of Phatic communion, that is, a social regularity; ceremonial purposes; as an instrument of action to keep records; to convey orders and information; to influence people; to enable self-expression; and to embody or enable thought-process. Because language is universal, these functions are for every language.

Language is variable. It is clear in everyday language use. Two individuals of the same generation and locality, speaking precisely the same dialect and moving in the same social circles are never absolutely the same in their speaking habits. This brings us to the question of what language variety means? Variety of language refers to the different purposes for which language is used and each variety having distinct features from the others. It also refers to the variation in a particular language. It explains the factors that can make two individuals speak slightly divergent dialects of the same language rather than identical language forms. Language variety is determined by the language in situation which in turn is the appropriateness of language to the context

of use. Language, therefore, is not a single homogeneous phenomenon but rather, "a complex of many different varieties in use in all kind of situations all over the world" (Crystal and Davy, 3). All these varieties have much more in common that differentiates them.

English is the most widely spoken of the Western Germanic languages, both in number of native speakers and in geographical distribution. It is the official language of Great Britain and the native language of most of the British empires. Together with Irish Gaelic (which is only spoken in some of the westernmost regions of Ireland) it is also an official language in the Republic of Ireland. Outside the British Isles, English is the official language in two other European regions, namely Gibraltar (although most inhabitants have Spanish as their native language) and Malta (where the inhabitants speak Maltese among themselves). As a result of the rise of the British Empire, the English language spread to many other countries and it is now the dominant language of the USA, Australia, New Zealand, and of Canada (where it is co-official with French). English is also the official language (or widely used as a lingua franca) in many other former British territories, such as India, Singapore, Hong Kong, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia. After the demise of the British Empire, English remained an important world language due to the rise of the USA as a new world power.

English has an extraordinarily rich vocabulary and willingness to absorb new words. The vocabulary of English is undoubtedly vast, but assigning a specific number to its size is more a matter of definition than of calculation. Unlike other languages, there is no Academy to define officially accepted words. Neologisms are coined regularly in medicine, science and technology and other fields, and new slang is constantly being developed. Some of these new words enter wide usage; others remain restricted to small circles. Foreign words used in immigrant communities often make their way into wider English usage. Archaic, dialectal, and regional words might or might not be widely considered as "English". The *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition *(OED2)* includes over 600,000 definitions, following a rather inclusive policy. It embraces not only the standard language of literature and conversation, whether current at the moment, or obsolete, or archaic, but also the main technical vocabulary, and a large measure of dialectal usage and slang.

The editors of *Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged* (475,000 main headwords) in their preface, estimate the number to be much higher. It is estimated that about 25,000 words are added to the language each year. Thus, with the regular growth of the English language as a result of the regular changes that occur in the language, it is developing consistently to accommodate the immediacy

of its need to the users in various regions and times. This is the basic reason for the emergence of different forms of the language from the Old to the Contemporary.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

"The nature of language is the basic reason for the development of different forms of every language." How does this relate to the emergence of Contemporary English?

3.2   Old English and Modern English: The Differences

Old English, the ancestor of Modern English, originated from the dialects that were spoken by the Germanic tribes from northwest Germany and Jutland that invaded Britain in the 5th century. The name *English* evolved from the name of one of these tribes, the Angles whose homeland was the angular (hence their name) coastal region of what is now the German state of Schleswig-Holstein. Another of these tribes was the Saxons; and Anglo-Saxons is the common name used for the Germanic tribes who conquered England. Eventually English replaced the Celtic languages that were dominant in Britain before these invasions, and they only survived in the most isolated areas.

Old English was actually a very different language from Modern English; it differs much more from its modern descendant than, for instance, Ancient Greek differs from Modern Greek. Nevertheless, much of the basic vocabulary of Old English is more or less recognizable for modern speakers of the language. Here are a few examples of Old English words that are similar to their modern counterparts (although sometimes their meanings have changed):

Old English	Modern English
wicu	week
cyning	king
scort	short
gærs	grass
eorþe	earth
deor	deer (orig. wild beast)
cniht	knight (orig. youth)

It is important to realize that the spelling of Old English differs considerably from the spelling of Modern English. For instance, in 'cyning' the letter 'c' is pronounced as /k/, the combination 'sc' in 'scort' (also spelled *sceort*) is pronounced as 'sh', and the 'y' sounds like the /u/ in French or the /ü/ in German (a vowel not found in Modern English). Furthermore, the examples above show that Old English uses

the letters 'æ' and 'þ' that are not used in Modern English anymore. Together with a third letter (ð), they later disappeared from the English orthography. The letters 'þ' (called thorn) and 'ð' (called eth) were borrowed from the Germanic runic script to represent the two consonants that are spelled 'th' in Modern English. With regard to the runic script, it should be noted that it co-existed with the Latin alphabet in England for many centuries after the Anglo-Saxons adopted the Christian religion. Only after England was conquered by the Normans, who brought the French language to the country, did the runes finally give way to Latin letters.

In the 11th century, England was invaded again, this time by the Normans. The Normans were descendants from Scandinavians (Norman = "North-man") who had settled in the part of France that is now known as Normandy. Although their ancestors of course spoke Norse, they had already adopted the language and culture of their new homeland at that time. So, the Normans spoke French and their language would become the language of the ruling class in England for several centuries. It will be obvious that this French from 11th century Normandy differed from French as it is spoken today. Some borrowings from Old French that still exist in English are not used in Modern French anymore, such as 'mortgage' (Modern French 'hypothèque'), and many others have changed more drastically in French than in English. An example is, for instance, the Old French 'warderobe' which became 'wardrobe' in Modern English but 'garderobe' in Modern French.

After the conquest of England, French became the language of the aristocracy and the higher clergy while the common people continued to speak Anglo-Saxon. But naturally Anglo-Saxon became heavily influenced by French in the centuries after the invasion; many thousands of French words were borrowed, and English lost even more of its inflectional character. Eventually the aristocracy became completely anglicized and English emerged again as the language of all the inhabitants of England. But although Modern English is basically still a Germanic language the French influence (and to a lesser extent the Scandinavian influence) has caused it to have a vocabulary that differs in many respects from that of its continental relatives. And due to this insular position, many Germanic words in English have become pronounced very differently from their cognates in the other Western Germanic.

A rather unfortunate heritage of the Norman invasion is the chaotic spelling of Modern English, which is partly due to the fact that is actually a mixture of two very different systems, Anglo-Saxon and French. And in some cases scholars made the situation even worse by introducing spellings like 'island' with an 's' that has never been

pronounced (this word originates from Old English 'iegland' and not from Old French 'isle', which indeed lost its 's' and became 'île' in Modern French). Another example is the word 'whore' to which the learned men added a 'w', although this word (originally Scandinavian) has always started with an 'h' in pronunciation (cf. Icelandic 'hóra' and Dutch 'hoer'). The English spelling does have one advantage, for instance, the word 'national' is easily recognized as a derivation of 'nation', even though the first vowel in 'national' is pronounced differently from the one in 'nation'. This would be less obvious in a spelling that better reflects the pronunciation (e.g. 'national' and 'naytion').

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

From your understanding of the diachronic review of Old and Modern English usage, explain the basic differences between them.

3.3 Modern English and Contemporary English: Any Difference?

Modern English is the form of the English language spoken since the Great Vowel Shift, completed in roughly 1550. Despite some differences in vocabulary, material from the early 17th century, such as the works of William Shakespeare and the King James Bible, is considered to be in Modern English, or more specifically, is referred to as Early Modern English. Most people who are fluent in the English of the early 21st century can read these books with little difficulty. Modern English has a large number of dialects spoken in diverse countries throughout the world. Most of these, however, are mutually intelligible. This includes *American English, Australian English, British English, Canadian English, Caribbean English, Hiberno-English, Indo-Pakistani English, New Zealand English, Philippine English, Singaporean English, South African English* and *Nigerian English* etc. These dialects may be met in different contexts; for example, some American actors in Hollywood or historical or mythic epics often employ British-derivative accents while many British, Australian, and non-native English-speaking international pop singers sing in an 'industry neutral' American accent to appeal to an international demographic.

According to recent statistics, there are over 900 million speakers of English as a first or second language as of 2003, a number dwarfed only by the Chinese language in terms of the number of speakers. However, Chinese has a smaller geographical range and is spoken primarily in mainland China and Taiwan and also by a sizable immigrant community in North America. In contrast, English is spoken in a vast number of territories including the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, the United

States of America, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, and Africa. Its large number of speakers, plus its worldwide presence, has made English a common language for use in such diverse applications as controlling airplanes, developing software, conducting international diplomacy, and business relations.

Modern English began in England during the Elizabethan era which is also around the time of the great poet, William Shakespeare. English was imposed in regions around the world such as the United States, India, and Australia through colonization by the British Empire. As Great Britain began colonizing North America, Asia, and Africa, the English language and other customs and ideas spread around the world. This is considered an aspect of the Columbian Exchange. Early Modern English lacked uniformity in spelling, but Samuel Johnson's dictionary, published in 1755 in England, was influential in establishing a standard form of spelling. Noah Webster did the same in America, publishing his dictionary in 1828. Public education increased literacy, and more people had access to books (and therefore to a standard language) with the spread of public libraries in the 19th century. Many words entered English from other languages as a result of contact with other cultures through trade and settlement and from the migration of large numbers of people to the United States from other countries. World War I and World War II threw together people from different backgrounds, and the greater social mobility afterwards helped to lessen the differences between social accents, at least in the UK. The development of radio broadcasting in the early 20th century familiarized the population with accents and vocabulary from outside their own localities, often for the first time, and this phenomenon continued with film and television.

Contemporary English is the current English usage which is in line with the immediate communication requirements of the users. It surely cannot be the language of TV soap operas or TV Newscasts or popular speeches of politicians seeking office. Nor is it likely to be the language used by scientists to convey information one to another in learned articles or to the world in a semi-popular idiom. This is an odd form of modern language because it has features which are not found in modern forms of English spoken on the streets, on radio and TV. In the compilation of the Contemporary English Bible, the following were adhered to:

i.   Ceasing to use the second person singular forms of pronouns and verbs, using "You/Your" instead of "Thee/Thou/Thine."

ii.   The avoidance of all words and phrases deemed to be archaic, such as "vouchsafe" and "beseech". No archaisms, please.

iii.   The rejection of the ordinary (historical) form of the collect, which employs a relative clause following a pronoun, and the replacing of this relative clause with a declarative clause. So, for example, instead of "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open…" we get, "Almighty God, to you all hearts are open." It seems as though the worshippers are now telling God what he ought to know instead of remembering in his presence what he has told them!

iv.   The cutting down to a minimum the use of adjectives and adverbs. It seems to be that nouns and verbs are all that are basically required to convey meaning. So we do not need to say "precious death" and "mighty resurrection" and "glorious ascension."

v.   The simplifying of grammar and syntax. We must note that modern grammatical structures are simplified for clarity.

vi.   There have been increasingly marked attempts to minimize the use of names and to bring in models, metaphors and names that are deemed to be either neutral or feminine in grammatical gender.

It will be noted that points (i) and (ii) concern changes in grammar and vocabulary, (iii) and (v) concern simplifications in sentence structure and syntax, (iv) and (vi) concern simplification (actually diminution) in vocabulary. It would seem that "Contemporary English" is an *ad hoc* description, rather than a coherent concept. However, rather like the difference between 'pressboard' and 'wood', or 'patent leather' and 'real leather', contemporary English seems artificial, rather than being the natural mode of discourse. So the "contemporary" defines itself not by comparison with the rest of the contemporary but as selective rejection of the traditional.

Modern English began the attack on archaisms while contemporary English finished the war. The fact is that contemporary English is beyond archaism (even though there are still relics of archaisms in the usage) as it encompasses new forms, old forms and consistent borrowings in lexical and syntactic forms from other languages. This makes Contemporary English a kind of parody of the traditional, with the intention to bring 'newness' into the language in line with the current sociolinguistic requirements of the users.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Critically assess the statement that "Contemporary English is a newer version of Modern English in current use"

3.4   Rules/Reasons for Contemporary English

The causes of language change are enormous. English language has undergone several changes in the course of history. Contemporary English usage is a result of the changes which cumulated with time as a mode of using English for communication in the present dispensation. Some of the rules and/or reasons for the evolvement of this type of English usage include:

1.   Articulatory Simplification

To make articulation of words more and more simple, People leave certain complicated consonant clusters. People want articulatory simplification so they avoid complex clusters. This is the reason for changes in pronunciation. The simplification of sounds basically states that certain sounds are easier to pronounce than others, so the natural tendency of the speakers is to prefer the hard-to-say sounds to easier ones. An example of this would be the proto-Romance word /camera/ "room" changing into early French /camra/. It is hard to say /m/ and /r/ one after another, so it was "simplified" by adding /b/ in between, to /cambra/. A more recent example is the English word "nuclear", which many people pronounce as "nucular".

2.   Natural Process

Neo-grammarians state that changes are automatic and mechanical, and therefore cannot be observed or controlled by the speakers of the language. They found that what to a human ear is a single "sound" is actually a collection of very similar sounds. They call it "low-level deviation" from an "idealized form". They argue that language change is simply a slow shift of the "idealized form" by small deviations.

3.   Immigration of Speakers

The case of children incorrectly learning the language of their parents does not happen often. Children of immigrants almost always learn the language of their friends at school regardless of the parents' dialect or original language. Children of British immigrants in the United States nearly always speak with one of the many regional American accents. So in this case, the parents' linguistic contribution becomes less important than the social group to which the child belongs.

4. Social and Cultural Identity

At the beginning, a small part of a population pronounces certain words that have, for example, the same vowel, differently from the rest of the population. This occurs naturally since humans do not all reproduce exactly the same sounds. However, at some later point in time, for some reason this difference in pronunciation starts to become a signal for social and cultural identity. Others of the population who wish to be identified with the group either consciously or unknowingly adopt this difference, exaggerate it, or apply it to change the pronunciation of other words. If given enough time, the change ends up affecting all words that possess the same vowel, and so that this becomes a regular linguistic sound change.

We can argue that similar phenomena apply to the grammar and to the lexicon of languages. An interesting example is that of computer-related words creeping into standard American language, like "bug", "crash", "net", "email", etc. This would conform to the theory in that these words originally were used by a small group (i.e. computer scientists), but with the boom in the Internet, everybody wants to become technology-savvy. And so these computer science words start to filter into the mainstream language. We are currently at the exaggeration phase, where people are coining weird terms like "cyberpad", "cyberspace" and "dotcom" which never exist before in computer science.

5. Changes in Languages

There are several changes which occur in every language as a result of historical and linguistic reasons. Some of them are:

a)   ***Phonological Changes*:** There have been many phonological changes between Old English and Modern English as the rules governing flapped and glottal stop variants of /t/ have been added to American English. An important set of extensive sound changes affecting the long (tense) vowels occurred at the end of the Middle English period.

b)   ***Lexical Changes*:** From old English times to the present, new words have continuously been added to the English language as English has borrowed a lot of words from French language such as, text, prince, judge, prayer, religion, army, navy, enemy, fashion, etc. In this way vocabulary of a language also changed.

c)   ***Changes in Morphology*:** Language changes have occurred in shape of words as suffixes are borrowed from French to make new words. People assume that a word has a morphological composition that it did not originally have (root + affix, usually)

and remove that affix, creating a new word: back formation. The assumed model was the class of regular plural nouns ending in -s Another model is agent nouns in –er , -er usually added to verbs to form an agent noun and sometimes removed from nouns to form new verbs as *letch* from *lecher*. Historically the inflections had caused mutation of the vowel before them (o to e from old to eldest)

d)   ***Changes in Pronunciation***: Linguistic change occurs over time; for example, the differences in spelling and pronunciation between Middle English *niht* and Modern English *night* represent linguistic changes that developed between (roughly) the fourteenth and the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries.

e)   ***Semantic Changes***: In old English, one word is used for only one specific thing but now we use one word for many things. In the past, the word "aunt" is used for maternal aunt only but now it is for any aged relative. When one word changes from limited to expanding use it is called *semantics broadness*. When the meaning of a word becomes less general then it is called *semantics narrowness* as we use word *hound* for only *hunting dog* but in past it was used for every *dog*.

f)   ***Syntactic Changes***: These include rule addition. A syntactic rule that has been added to English since the Old English period is the particle Movement .as the sentence pairs of the type *John threw out the fish* and *John threw out* did not occur in Old English. A syntactic rule that has been lost from English is the morpho-syntactic rule of Adjective Agreement. At one time adjectives required endings that had to agree with the head noun in case, number, and gender. This rule is no longer found in English, since most of the inflectional endings of English have been lost.

g)   ***Changes of Verbs***: Contemporary English makes a distinction between auxiliary verbs and main verbs, a distinction reflected in questions (only auxiliary verb fronted in question, as in "can you leave"?), negative sentences (only auxiliary verb can take the contracted negative 'n't', as in 'you can't leave' and tag questions (only auxiliary verb can appear in tag, as in "you can leave, can't you?). Focusing now only on so-called modal verbs (*can*, *must*), it is interesting to note that prior to the sixteenth century these syntactic distinctions between main verb and auxiliary did not exist. At that time it was possible for main verb to take 'not', and examples such as "I deny it not" (instead of "I don't deny it") and "Forbid him not" (instead of "Don't forbid him") can be found in Shakespeare's writing.

The changes that took place between Old English and Modern English, and between Modern English and contemporary English are typical of the kinds of changes that all human languages undergo over time, and after enough years have passed the latest language can be very different from its ancestor language. Moreover, language change offers important indirect evidence about the nature of human language namely, that it is rule-governed. We see that major language changes occurred in English language during Old English and Middle English period are best viewed as in the sets of rules characterizing. Afterwards one can choose, not simply accept, the phrases that will best cover the meaning, and then switch round and decide what impressions one's words are likely to make on another person. This last effort of the mind cuts out all mixed images, all prefabricated phrases, needless repetitions, and humbug and vagueness generally. But one can often be in doubt about the effect of a word or a phrase, and one need rules that one can rely on when instinct fails. If you simplify your English, you are freed from the worst follies of orthodoxy.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Explain the various factors responsible for the evolution of contemporary English with ample examples

4.0   CONCLUSION

English usage today is an area of discourse - sometimes it seems more like dispute - about the way words are used and ought to be used. This discourse makes up the subject matter of a large number of books that puts the word *usage* in their titles. Behind *usage* as a subject lies a collection of opinions about what English grammar is or should be, about the propriety of using certain words and phrases, and about the social status of those who use certain words and constructions. A fairly large number of these opinions have been with us long enough to be regarded as rules or at least to be referred to as rules. In fact, they are often regarded as rules of grammar, even if they concern only matters of social status or vocabulary selection. Many linguists believe that Contemporary English has nothing to do with archaism, with the salvaging of obsolete words and turns of speech, or with the setting-up of a "Standard-English" which must never be departed from while others believe on the contrary, that it is concerned with the scrapping of every word or idiom which has outworn its usefulness. The plain truth is that it has nothing to do with correct grammar and syntax, which are of no importance so long as one makes one's meaning clear, or with the avoidance of Americanisms and other clichés or with having what is called a "good style."

5.0 SUMMARY

It is clear that English, like every other language, is dynamic as it responds regularly to changes. Diachronically, it has often responded to the immediacy of its need among its users in time and place. Beginning from the Old English period through to the Modern English usage, English language has often exhibited the large position of absorbing changes and complying with the immediacy of its usage. It is clear in this unit to understand that the Old and Modern English forms are different in structure and syntax as can be seen in the language of Old English writers as compared with those of the modern writers. There are marked lexical and syntactic differences between the Old and the Modern English forms. The modern English, on the other hand, has slight differences with the Contemporary English even though both types seem to use almost the same lexical forms as can be seen in dictionionaries of modern English and those of contemporary English. One seems to notice the increment in words in Contemporary English because of the increasing technological factors which encourage the formation of new words to accommodate the invention in the mainstream of the language. Just like every other form of the English language, Contemporary English is a response to certain linguistic changes which English, like every other language has to undergo in order to remain relevant to its users in communicating ideas within the immediacy of its application in sociolinguistic situations.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully from your understanding of this unit:

1. Define 'Contemporary English', in the light of its emergence.
2. Explain the marked differences between the Old and Modern English forms.
3. "Modern English and contemporary English are different yet related". Discuss the relationship and the differences.
4. "Contemporary English is more concerned with increased vocabulary". Defend this statement.
5. "Language change results in language forms". Discuss the various linguistic changes which might result in the new form of a given language.

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UNIT 2 HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH USAGE

CONTENTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the historical development of contemporary English usage. This study shall take us through a historical exploration of the development of English language philology, grammar, semantics and phonology. We explore the changes and the various developmental patterns of usage which resulted in much of the new grammaticality of contemporary English. Each of these changes shall be treated with detailed scrutiny in order to present in depth the properties that make up the changes.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the various changes in the history of standard English
- apply the changes in their use of contemporary English
- recognize the new grammaticality resulting in the changes
- accept that like other languages, English language is dynamic
- distinguish the various changes whenever they occur in usage.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

The history of the English language really started with the arrival of three Germanic tribes who invaded Britain during the 5th century AD. These tribes, *the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes*, crossed the North Sea

from what today is Denmark and northern Germany. At that time the inhabitants of Britain spoke a Celtic language. But most of the Celtic speakers were pushed west and north by the invaders, mainly into what is now Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The Angles came from *Englaland* and their language was called *Englisc*, from which the words *England* and *English* are derived.English is a West Germanic language originating in England, and the first language for most people in Australia, Canada, the Commonwealth Caribbean, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America (also commonly known as the Anglosphere). It is used extensively as a second language and as an official language throughout the world, especially in Commonwealth countries such as Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and South Africa, and in many international organisations. Modern English is sometimes described as the global lingua franca. English is the dominant international language in communication, science, business, aviation, entertainment, radio and diplomacy. English is one of six official languages of the United Nations.

The English vocabulary has changed considerably over the centuries. Germanic words (generally words of German, or to a lesser extent, Scandinavian origin) which include all the basics such as pronouns (*I, my, you, it*) and conjunctions (*and, or, but*) tend to be shorter than the Latinate words of English, and more common in ordinary speech. The longer Latinate words are often regarded as more elegant or educated. However, the excessive or superfluous use of Latinate words is, at times, considered by some to be either pretentious (as in the stereotypical policeman's talk of "apprehending the suspect") or an attempt to obfuscate an issue. George Orwell's essay "Politics and the English Language" criticises this style of writing, among other perceived misusages of the language. An English speaker is in many cases able to choose between Germanic and Latinate synonyms: *come* or *arrive*; *sight* or *vision*; *freedom* or *liberty*. In some cases there is a choice between a Germanic word (*oversee*), a Latin word (*supervise*), and a French word derived from the same Latin word (*survey*). The richness of the language arises from the variety of different meanings and nuances such synonyms harbour, enabling the speaker to express fine variations or shades of thought. Familiarity with the etymology of groups of synonyms can give English speakers greater control over their linguistic register.

An exception to this and a peculiarity perhaps unique to English is that the nouns for *meats* are commonly different from, and unrelated to, those for the animals from which they are produced, the animal commonly having a Germanic name and the meat having a French-derived one. Examples include: *deer* and *venison*; *cow* and *beef*; or *swine*/*pig* and *pork*. This is assumed to be a result of the aftermath of the

Norman invasion, where a French-speaking elite were the consumers of the meat, produced by English-speaking lower classes. English is noted for the vast size of its active <u>vocabulary</u> and its fluidity. English easily accepts technical terms into common usage and imports new words and phrases that often come into common usage. Examples of this phenomenon include: *<u>cookie</u>*, *<u>Internet</u>* and *<u>URL</u>* (technical terms), as well as *<u>genre</u>*, *<u>über</u>*, *<u>lingua franca</u>* and *<u>amigo</u>* (imported words/phrases from French, German, modern Latin, and Spanish, respectively). In addition, <u>slang</u> often provides new meanings for old words and phrases. In fact, this fluidity is so pronounced that a distinction often needs to be made between formal forms of English and contemporary usage.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Trace the historical development of English Language in England.

3.2 Lexical History/Changes

The historical development of words in English has been steady. On the American side of the Atlantic, the puristic strictures of Edward S. Gould, originally newspaper and magazine contributions were collected as *Good English* in 1867. He acknowledged the justness of Moon's criticisms and then appended a few parting shots at Moon's English, before tacking on an assault on the spelling reforms of Noah Webster and a series of lectures on pulpit oratory. Moon replied with *The Bad English of Lindley Murray and Other Writers on the English Language*, 1868, listed by H. L. Mencken as being in its eighth edition in 1882, under the title *Bad English Exposed*. Language controversy sold books in America as well as in England. The most popular of American 19th-century commentators was Richard Grant White, whose book *Words and Their Uses* (1870) was also compiled from previously published articles. His chapters on "misused words" and "words that are not words" hit many of the same targets as Gould's chapters on "misused words" and "spurious words," but White's chapters are longer.

Hall produced a whole book, *Recent Exemplifications of False Philology* (1872), exposing White's errors, and returned to the attack again with *Modern English* in 1873. Hall belonged to a new breed of commentator, bringing a wealth of illustrative material from his collection of examples to bear on the various points of contention. Hall's evidence should have been more than enough to overwhelm White's unsupported assertions, but it was not. Hall's collection of examples became part of the foundations of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Sir Ernest Gowers came into usage commentary from a different direction: he was asked to prepare a book for British civil servants to help them avoid the usual bureaucratic jargon of British official prose. The result was *Plain*

Words, 1941. This slender book has gone through several editions, growing a bit each time. In 1965 a new edition of Fowler appeared, edited by Gowers, to which Gowers added a number of his own favourite topics. In addition to Fowler and Gowers, the work of Eric Partridge, particularly *Usage and Abusage*, 1942, has been influential. In recent years, while some English books about usage have concerned themselves with traditional questions of propriety, others have taken a different path, explaining the peculiarities of English idiom to learners of English.

Looking back from the late 1980s, we find that the 1920s and 1930s were a time of considerable interest in the examination and testing of attitudes and beliefs about usage and in a rationalization of the matter and methods of school grammar. Various publications written by Charles C. Fries and Robert C. Pooley, for example, seemed to point the way. They had relatively little influence in the following decades, however; the schoolbooks by and large follow the traditional lines, and the popular books of usage treat the traditional subjects. A notable exception is Bergen and Cornelia Evans's *A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage* (1957). The book takes the traditional view of many specific issues, but it is strong in insisting that actual usage, both historical and contemporary, must be weighed carefully in reaching usage opinions.

Articles in scholarly books and journals (like American Speech) evince continuing interest in real language and real usage in spite of a strong tendency in modern linguistics toward the study of language in more abstract ways. If the popular idea of usage is represented by the continuing series of books produced by the journalists Philip Howard (in England) and William Safire (in the United States) and by the continuing publication of traditionally oriented handbooks, there is also some countervailing critical opinion as shown by such books as Dwight Bolinger's*Language: the Loaded Weapon*, Jim Quinn's *American Tongue and Cheek*, Dennis Baron's *Grammar and Good Taste*, and Harvey Daniels's *Famous Last Words*, all published in the early 1980s.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the major thrust of controversy in the lexicological development of English in Britain and America

3.3   Grammatical History/Changes

Grammatical changes have also been steady in English. Ben Jonson's book on English grammar appeared posthumously in 1640. It is short and sketchy and is intended for the use of foreigners. Its grammar is

descriptive, but Jonson hung his observations on a Latin grammatical framework. It also seems to be the first English grammar book to quote the Roman rhetorician Quintilian's dictum "Custom is the most certain mistress of language." John Wallis, a mathematician and member of the Royal Society, published in 1658 a grammar, written in Latin, for the use of foreigners who wanted to learn English. Wallis, according to George H. McKnight, abandoned much of the method of Latin grammar. Wallis's grammar is perhaps best remembered for being the source of the much discussed distinction between *shall* and *will*. Wallis's grammar is also the one referred to by Samuel Johnson in the front matter of his 1755 dictionary.

We need mention only a few of these productions here. Pride of place must go to Bishop Robert Lowth's*A Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762). Lowth's book is both brief and logical. Lowth was influenced by the theories of James Harris's Hermes (1751), a curious disquisition about universal grammar. Lowth apparently derived his notions about the perfectibility of English grammar from Harris, and he did not doubt that he could reduce the language to a system of uniform rules. Lowth's approach was strictly prescriptive: he meant to improve and correct, not describe. Lowth's grammar was not written for children. But he did what he intended to so well that subsequent grammarians fairly fell over themselves in haste to get out versions of Lowth suitable for school use, and most subsequent grammars- including Noah Webster's first- were to some extent based upon Lowth's.

The 19th century is so rich in usage lore that it is hard to summarize. We find something new in the entrance of journalists into the usage field. Reviews had commented on grammatical matters throughout the 18th century, it is true, but in the 19th century, newspapers and magazines with wider popular appeal began to produce good works. One result of this activity was the usage book that consists of pieces first written for a newspaper or magazine and then collected into a book along with selected comments and suggestions by readers (this type of book is still common today). Perhaps the first of these was *A Plea for the Queen's English* (1864) by Henry Alford, dean of Canterbury. Alford was vigorously attacked by George Washington Moon, a writer born in London of American parents, in a work that eventually became entitled *The Dean's English*. The controversy fuelled several editions of both books and seems to have entertained readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

The different approaches of the British and Americans to usage questions have continued along the lines evident in the last half of the 19th century. Fewer books devoted to usage issues have been produced in England, and the arena there has been dominated by two names:

Fowler and Gowers. H. W. Fowler's best-known work is *Modern English Usage*, 1926, an expanded, updated and alphabetized version of *The King's English*, which he had produced with one of his brothers in 1906. This book gained ready acceptance as an authority, and it is usually treated with considerable deference on both sides of the Atlantic.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

In the development of English grammar, the battle has been between prescriptions and rules. Discuss adequately

3.4   Phonological History/Changes

When someone communicates with us by means of language, he normally does so by causing us to hear a stream of sounds. We hear the sounds not as indefinitely variable in acoustic quality (however much they may be so in actual *physical* fact). Rather, we hear them as each corresponding to one of a very small set (in English, /p/, /l/, /n/, /i/, /ð/, /s/...) which can combine in certain ways and not others. For example, in English we have /sink/ but not *ksin. Similarly, there are observed historical changes in the patterns of stress and pitch in English. The sounds made in a particular language and the rules for their organization are studied in the branch of linguistics known as phonology, while their physical properties and their manner of articulation are studied in phonetics.

Pronunciation is a special case for several reasons. In the first place, it is the type of linguistic organization which distinguishes one national standard from another most immediately and completely and which traces the historical development of forms. Secondly, it is the least institutionalized aspect of Standard English, in the sense that, provided our grammar and lexical items conform to the appropriate national standard, it matters less that our pronunciation follows closely our individual regional pattern. This is doubtless because pronunciation is essentially gradient, a matter of 'more or less' rather than the discrete 'this or that'' features of grammar and lexicon. Thirdly, norms of pronunciation are subject less to educational and national constraints than to social ones: this means, in effect, that some regional accents are less acceptable for 'network use' than others.

In BrE, one type of pronunciation comes close to enjoying the status of 'standard' reformation in history: it is the accent associated with the English public schools, called 'Received Pronunciation' or 'RP'. Because this has traditionally been transmitted through the educational system based upon observed changes, it is importantly non-regional, and this - together with the obvious prestige that the social importance of its

speakers has conferred on it - has been one of its strengths as a lingua franca over the years in several varieties and regions. But RP no longer has the unique authority it had in the first half of the twentieth century. It is now only one of the accents commonly used on the BBC and takes its place along with others which carry the unmistakable mark of regional origin - not least, an Australian or North American or Caribbean origin.

There were remarkable phonological changes in English history. Human language is creative and flexible. It changes with the passage of time. Languages undergo changes. Slowly, to be sure, but they do change. English is measured in three "cataclysmic" changes that generally coincide with historical events that had a profound effect on the language. Around 1500, there was *a great vowel shift*, which brought the language into Modern English, which is where it is today. Based on this measure (approximately 500 years per shift), we may expect major changes in the language today. The Great Vowel Shift in English changed the seven long (tense) vowels of Middle English and moved them "up" on the tongue. Fromkin and Rodman posit that the Great Vowel Shift is responsible for many of the spelling "inconsistencies" today. Language change, however, is a highly regular process.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Comment on the effect of the Great Vowel Change in contemporary English. Make adequate research to back up your comment

4.0   CONCLUSION

Changes are constant features of every language. Changes in English language keep occurring by the minutes as the users interact, observe and adopt 'newness' in the language. To understand how opinions and rules developed in English, we have to go back in history at least as far back as the year 1417 when the official correspondence of Henry V suddenly and almost entirely stopped being written in French and started being written in English. By mid-century many government documents and even private letters were in English and before 1500 even statutes were being recorded in the mother tongue. This restoration of English as the official language of the royal bureaucracy was one very important influence on the gradual emergence of a single standard dialect of English out of the many varied regional dialects that already existed. English now had to serve the functions formerly served by Latin and French, languages which had already assumed standard forms and this new reality was a powerful spur to the formation of a standard in writing English that could be quite independent of variable speech. The process was certainly not completed within the 15th century but increasingly the

written form of the language that modern scholars call Chancery English had its effect in combination with other influences such as the newfangled process of printing from movable type. There was no special interest in language as such at that time. There were those who had their doubts about its suitability. Still the desire to use the vernacular rather than Latin was strong and some of the doubters sought to put flesh on the bare bones of English by importing words from Latin, Italian, and French- the European languages of learned and graceful discourse.

5.0   SUMMARY

The first appearance of English, as such, was when the Saxons invaded Britain. This form of English is called Old English and dates from approximately 449 to 1066, when the Normans conquered England, beginning the period of Middle English. It was during this period (1066-1500) that many of the Latinate words and spellings used in English today were introduced into the language. When we study language changes historically it is called *historical linguistics*. Any of the linguistic rules identified in Linguistics Assumptions and Principles may be changed: phonemes may be changed, added or removed, morphological rules may be added, changed, or lost, and even syntactical rules might be modified. Semantic rules and the lexicon change much more rapidly than the other three. Lexical changes (the addition, modification, or removal of words from the general lexicon) are perhaps the quickest changes in language. The semantic changes of words may broaden, narrow, or even shift in the meaning of such words. The historical changes observed in this unit have helped in several ways in the identification and development of Contemporary English usage.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   Identify the basic lexicological development of English language in history
2.   "Historical changes affect language stability" Comment on this assumption
3.   One clearly marked phonological change is the 'Great Vowel Change'. What does that mean?
4.   "Language changes are shrouded in controversy among scholars". Explain this assumption based on your understanding of this unit

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UNIT 3   CATEGORIZATION OF ENGLISH IN USAGE/PEDAGOGY

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall study the various terminological categorizations of English language teaching and learning. These categorizations have guided teachers in teaching English language and have also helped students in the learning of the appropriate English for each vocation. English as an international language has been relevant in the conduct of world affairs: business, Internet, communication, administration etc and countries with English as second language have been investing much in the teaching of the language so that the younger generations will not lag behind in world affairs. A country like China with the largest population on earth is investing in English because half of the countries in the world are now English language conscious. We shall study this categorization, also called varieties by Quirk et al.(1979), and relate them to contemporary English usage.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

- understand the reasons for categorization of English language teaching and learning
- recognize the various limits in each categorization
- use the relevant variety for each situation
- appreciate the essence of these categorizations
- distinguish the limits of each variety.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

In the pedagogy of English in contemporary times, we have such terms as ESL (English as a Second Language), ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) all referring to the use or study of English by speakers with a different native language. The precise usage includes the different use of the terms ESL and ESOL in different countries. These terms are most commonly used in relation to teaching and learning of English, but they may also be used in relation to demographic information. ELT (English Language Teaching) is a widely-used teacher-centred term, as in the English language teaching divisions of large publishing houses, ELT training, etc. The abbreviations TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), TESOL (Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages) and TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) are all also used. Other terms used in this field include EAL (English as an Additional Language), ESD (English as a Second Dialect), EIL (English as an International Language), ELF (English as a Lingua Franca), ESP (English for Special Purposes, or English for Specific Purposes), and EAP (English for Academic Purposes). Some terms that refer to those who are learning English are ELL (English Language Learner) and LEP (Limited English Proficiency).

In a situation where two or more languages and cultures are in contact, there is bound to be linguistic and cultural interference. Of the 4000 to 5000 living languages, English is by far the most widely used. As a mother tongue, it ranks second to Chinese. It is also important to state that about three hundred million speakers of English are to be found in every continent of the world. Again, over two hundred and fifty million people use the language as a second language, and one-sixth of the world's population use it to make and announce decisions affecting life and welfare. Therefore, barriers of race, color and creed do not hinder the spread of the use of English.

Actually, English can no longer be claimed as a sole property of a group of people. Native speakers of the language can no longer make strong proprietary claims to it. They now share the famous language with most other peoples of the world. The popularity of the language in Africa can, in part, be traced to the fact that due to colonial imposition, it was the language of social mobility in the new order, and therefore the language most studied and used formally. In the unequal encounter, most African languages were neglected in terms of formal study and use, so that displacement replaced what should have been mutual translation between English and African languages. This is why the invention and

development in African languages of concepts and terms in modern sciences and technology are at such a low level. English is, therefore, often the mostly used linguistic tool for intra/inter societal communication in the African continent. In Nigeria, for instance, with a multilingual linguistic complexity, English is more than simply a means of communicating ideas and information; it also serves a very important means of establishing and maintaining unifying relationship with people of diverse cultures and mother tongues.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the basic reasons for the categorizations of English language pedagogy.

3.2   English as Native Language (ENL)

In a more strict sense, English as Native language is restricted to English English or British English (BrE) since English is the only language being spoken in the country. In this sense, English is the first and only language of the speakers. In Britain, English is the first and the only language of the people. Historically, English which was part of the Germanic tribes became the national language of British as a result of colonialism. The original language of the Britons is no longer being spoken. Thus, English is the only language of the people in a native sense. In most English language teaching abroad emphasis is usually on the native speakers as the most qualified for the job. Most factors resulting in the emergence of various varieties of English are results of the first language effect. Therefore, to be able to teach the language effectively, one has to be the native speaker with the assumed perfection in the spoken, written and behavioural expectations of a native. It is possible to be a native speaker of English without being a Briton if the person's sole language has been English irrespective of the linguistic background of the environment of the speaker. However, this last assumption has often been a matter of debate among linguists and sociolinguists in particular.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

From your understanding of the concept of ENL, is it possible to be a non-Briton and still be a native speaker of English?

3.3   English as a Second Language

ESL is another broad grouping in the use of English within the Anglosphere. In what Kachru calls "the inner circle", that is, countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States, this use of English is

generally by refugees, immigrants and their children. It also includes the use of English in "outer circle" countries, often former British colonies, where English is an official language even if it is not spoken as a mother tongue by the majority of the population. This second-language function is more noteworthy, however, in a long list of countries where only a small proportion of the people have English as their second language: India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya and many other Commonwealth countries and former British territories. Thus, a quarter of a century after independence, India maintains English as the medium of instruction in their schools. English is the second language in countries of such divergent backgrounds as the Philippines and Ethiopia, while in numerous other countries (like Thailand, South Korea and some Middle Eastern countries, for example) it has a second language status in respect of higher education. It is one of the two 'working' languages of the United Nations and of the two it is by far the more frequently used both in debate and in general conduct of UN business.

In the US, Canada and Australia, this use of English is called ESL (English as a Second Language). This term has been criticized on the grounds that many learners already speak more than one language. A counter-argument says that the word "a" in the phrase "a second language" means there is no presumption that English is the second acquired language. TESL is the Teaching of English as a Second Language. In the UK, Ireland and New Zealand, the term ESL has been replaced by ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). In these countries TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) is normally used to refer to teaching English only to this group. In the UK, the term EAL (English as an Additional Language), rather than ESOL, is usually used when talking about primary and secondary schools.

Other acronyms were created to describe the person rather than the language to be learned. The term LEP (Limited English Proficiency) was created in 1975 by the Lau Remedies following a decision of the US Supreme Court. ELL (English Language Learner), used by United States governments and school systems, was created by Charlene Rivera of the Center for Equity and Excellent in Education in an effort to label learners positively, rather than ascribing a deficiency to them. LOTE (Languages other than English) is a parallel term used in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Typically, this sort of English (called ESL in the United States, Canada, and Australia, ESOL in the United Kingdom, Ireland and New Zealand) is learned to function in the new host country, e.g. within the school system (if a child), to find and hold down a job (if an adult), to perform the necessities of daily life. The teaching of it does not presuppose literacy in the mother tongue. It is usually paid for by the host

government to help newcomers settle into their adopted country, sometimes as part of an explicit citizenship program. It is technically possible for ESL to be taught not in the host country, but in, for example, a refugee camp, as part of a pre-departure program sponsored by the government soon to receive new potential citizens. In practice, however, this is extremely rare.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

To study English as a Second language means that one must have proficiency in a first language. Defend this statement

3.4   English as a Foreign Language

According to Quirk *et al* (1979) "By foreign language we mean a language as used by someone for com-munication across frontiers or with people who are not his countrymen: listening to broadcasts, reading books or newspapers, commerce or travel, for example. No language is more widely studied or used as a foreign language than English." Therefore, the desire to learn it is immense and apparently insatiable. American organizations such as the United States Information Agency and the Voice of America have played a notable role in recent years, in close and amicable liaison with the British Council which provides support for English teaching both in the Commonwealth and in foreign countries throughout the world. The BBC, like the USIS, has notable radio and television facilities devoted to this purpose. Other English-speaking countries such as Australia also assume heavy responsibilities for teaching English as a foreign language. Taking the education systems of the world as a whole, one may say confidently (if perhaps ruefully) that more timetable hours are devoted to English than any other subject in the school system. The reasons are many. English is a top requirement of those seeking good jobs - and is often the language in which much of the business of 'good jobs' is conducted. One needs it for access to at least one half of the world's scientific literature. It is thus intimately associated with technological and economic development and it is the principal language of international aid. Not only is it the universal language of international aviation, shipping and sport: it is to a considerable degree the universal language of literacy and public communication. Siegfried Muller (former Director of the Languages-of-the-World Archives in the US Department of Education) has estimated that about 60 per cent of the world's radio broadcasts and 70 per cent of the world's mail are in English. Countries like Germany and Japan use English as their principal advertising and sales medium; it is the language of automation and computer technology.

EFL, English as a Foreign Language, indicates the use of English in a non-English-speaking region. Study can occur either in the student's home country, as part of the normal school curriculum or otherwise, or, for the more privileged minority, in an Anglophone country that they visit as a sort of educational tourist, particularly immediately before or after graduating from the university. TEFL is the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language; note that this sort of instruction can take place in any country, English-speaking or not. Typically, EFL is learned either to pass exams as a necessary part of one's education, or for career progression while working for an organization or business with an international focus. EFL may be part of the state school curriculum in countries where English has no special status. Teachers of EFL generally assume that students are literate in their mother tongue.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

EFL and ESL are for non-natives of England. State clearly the essence of teaching EFL

3.5   English as Lingua Franca

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) explains a way of communication in English between speakers with different first languages. Since roughly only one out of every four users of English in the world is a native speaker of the language Crystal (2003), most ELF interactions take place among 'non-native' speakers of English. Although this does not preclude the participation of English native speakers in ELF interaction, what is distinctive about ELF is that, in most cases, it is 'a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication' (Firth 1996:240). Defined in this way, ELF is part of the more general phenomenon of 'English as an International Language' (EIL) or 'World Englishes'. However, when English is chosen as the means of communication among people from different first language backgrounds, across lingua-cultural boundaries, the preferred term is 'English as a lingua franca'. Despite being welcomed by some and deplored by others, it cannot be denied that English functions as a global lingua franca.

However, what has so far tended to be denied is that, as a consequence of its international use, English is being shaped at least as much by its nonnative speakers as by its native speakers. This has led to a somewhat paradoxical situation: on the one hand, for the majority of its users, English is a foreign language, and the vast majority of verbal exchanges in English do not involve any native speakers of the language at all. On

the other hand, there is still a tendency for native speakers to be regarded as custodians over what is acceptable usage.

Thus, the features of English which tend to be crucial for international intelligibility and therefore need to be taught for production and reception are being distinguished from the ('non-native') features that tend not to cause misunderstandings and thus do not need to constitute a focus for teaching production for those learners who intend to use English mainly in international settings. Acting on these insights can free valuable teaching time for more general language awareness and communication strategies; these may have more 'mileage' for learners than striving for mastery of fine nuances of native speaker language use that are communicatively redundant or even counter-productive in lingua franca settings, and which may anyway not be teachable in advance, but only learnable by subsequent experience of the language. More so, English language in many countries is regarded as a lingua franca in science and scholarship.

4.0   CONCLUSION

It is worth noting that ESL and EFL programs also differ in the variety of English which is taught; "English" is a term that can refer to various dialects, including British English, American English, and many others. However, for those who do not intend to change countries, the question arises of which sort of English to learn. If they are going abroad for a short time to study English, they need to choose which country. For those staying at home, the choice may be made for them in that private language schools or the state school system may only offer one model. Students studying EFL in Hong Kong, for example, are more likely to learn British English, whereas students in the Philippines are more likely to learn American English. For this reason, many teachers now emphasize teaching English as an International Language (EIL), also known as English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Linguists are charting the development of international English, a term with contradictory and confusing a meaning, one of which refers to a de-contextualized variant of the language, independent of the culture and associated References/ Further Reading of any particular country, useful when, for example, a Saudi does business with someone from China or Albania. Each categorization, however, is aimed at enhancing the proper teaching and learning of English in various situations and for various reasons. It will be right to conclude that these categories have been serving the desired purposes among those who accept and apply them.

5.0 SUMMARY

Language teaching practice often assumes that most of the difficulties that learners face in the study of English are a consequence of the degree to which their native language differs from English. A native speaker of Chinese, for example, may face many more difficulties than a native speaker of German, because German is closely related to English, whereas Chinese is not. This may be true for anyone of any mother tongue (also called first language, normally abbreviated L_1) setting out to learn any other language (called a target language, second language or L_2). Language learners often produce errors of syntax and pronunciation thought to result from the influence of their L_1, such as mapping its grammatical patterns inappropriately onto the L_2, pronouncing certain sounds incorrectly or with difficulty, and confusing items of vocabulary known as *false friends*. This is known as L_1 transfer or "language interference". However, these transfer effects are typically stronger for beginners' language production, and research has highlighted many errors which cannot be attributed to the L_1, as they are attested in learners of many language backgrounds (for example, failure to apply 3rd person present singular -s to verbs, as in 'he make'). While English is no more complex than other languages, it has several features which may create difficulties for learners. Conversely, because such a large number of people are studying it, products have been developed to help them do so, such as ESL, EFL, and ELF among other categorizations, which are often applied in pedagogy of English learning.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1. What are the major reasons for the evolution of EFL in countries with different L_1.
2. What requirements qualify a country for English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).
3. The teaching of English as a second language presupposes that the learner requires English for a global communication. Discuss properly.
4. ESL and EFL are taught in Nigeria, explain why Nigeria teaches the two.
5. Explain if Nigeria could be described as ENL country.

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UNIT 4   ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND STANDARDIZATION

CONTENTS

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the concept of Standard English and the existence of national English standards in many countries of the world. Since the essence of English studies is aimed at the standard form of communication and the need for international intelligibility, the need arises to study what is meant by 'Standard English' and why some Anglophone countries opted for their kind of standard in English. There are reasons why a language gets acculturated in different local settings. Language responds to settings and locales. It respects the linguistic behaviours of a given area and tries to subsume into it. We shall explore how English language varieties survive in most countries, irrespective of the various interferences inhibiting the emergence of a standard one.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the meaning of Standard English
- compare English language use in most countries to British Standard English
- appreciate the existence of national standards of English in most countries
- know the reasons for interferences in English use in many countries
- realize why Standard English forms are difficult to be achieved.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

The need to standardize English has been of prominent concern to English language linguists. The major problem in the realization of this vision is the existence of varieties of dialects of English existing worldwide. Within each of these dialect areas, there is considerable variation in speech according to education and social standing. There is also an important polarity of uneducated and educated speech in which the former can be identified with the regional dialect most completely and the latter moves away from dialectal usage to a form of English that cuts across dialectal boundaries. One would have to look rather hard (or be a skilled dialectologist) to find, as an outsider, a New Englander who said *see* for *saw*, a Pennsylvanian who said *seen*, and a Virginian who said *seed*. These are forms that tend to be replaced by *saw* with schooling, and in speaking to a stranger a dialect speaker would tend to use 'school' forms. On the other hand, there is no simple equation of dialectal and uneducated English. Just as educated English cuts across dialectal boundaries, so do many features of uneducated use: a prominent example is the double negative as in *I don't want no cake* which has been outlawed from all educated English by the prescriptive grammar tradition for hundreds of years but which continues to thrive in uneducated speech wherever English is spoken.

Dialects of a sort naturally tend to be given the additional prestige of government agencies, the learned professions, the political parties, the press, the law court and the pulpit - any institution which must attempt to address itself to a public beyond the smallest dialectal community. The general acceptance of 'BBC English' for this purpose over almost half a century is paralleled by a similar designation for general educated idiom in the United States, 'network English'. By reason of the fact that educated English is thus accorded implicit social and political sanction, it comes to be referred to as Standard English, and provided we remember that this does not mean an English that has been formally standardized by official action, as weights and measures are standardized, the term is useful and appropriate. In contrast with Standard English, forms that are especially associated with uneducated (rather than dialectal) use are often called 'non-standard'. We examine further the real meaning and bounds of Standard English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

The question of Standardisation is only possible within the educated users of English. How true is this statement?

3.2   The Concept of Standard English

According to Quirk *et al*. (1979), "the degree of acceptance of a single standard of English throughout the world, across a multiplicity of political and social systems, is a truly remarkable phenomenon: the more so since the extent of the uniformity involved has, if anything, increased in the present century. Uniformity is greatest in what is from most viewpoints the least important type of linguistic organization - the purely secondary one of orthography." In fact, printing houses in all English-speaking countries retain a tiny element of individual decision as in spellings (realize, -ise; judg(e)ment; etc), there is basically a single, graphological spelling and punctuation system throughout: with two minor subsystems. The one is the subsystem with British orientation (used in all English-speaking countries except the United States) with distinctive forms in only a small class of words *colour, centre, levelled*, etc. The other is the American subsystem: *color, center, leveled,* etc. In Canada, the British subsystem is used for the most part, but some publishers (especially of popular material) follow the American subsystem and some a mixture *color* but *centre*. In America, some newspaper publishers (not book publishers) use a few additional separate spellings such as *thru* for *through*. One minor orthographic point is oddly capable of Anglo-American misunderstanding: the numerical form of dates. In British (and European) practice '7/11/72' would mean '7 November 1972', but in American practice it would mean 'July 11 1972'.

In grammar and vocabulary, Standard English presents somewhat less of a monolithic character, but even so the world-wide agreement is extraordinary and seems actually to be increasing under the impact of closer world communication and the spread of identical material and non-material culture. The uniformity is especially close in neutral or formal styles of written English on subject matter not of obviously localized interest: in such circumstances one can frequently go on for page after page without encountering a feature which would identify the English as belonging to one of the national standards. Standard English is a guide towards avoiding those elements of imperfection resulting from social, environmental, cultural and political idealisms affecting the correct use of English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

A Standard language is a rule for checkmating errors in a language by the second language users. Is this true in the emergence of Standard English usage?

3.3   Pronunciation and Standard English

One of the basic criteria for identifying Standard English proper is that of pronunciation. This does not exhaust the regional or national variants that approximate to the status of a standard, but the important point to stress is that all of them are remarkable primarily in the tiny extent to which even the most firmly established, BrE and AmE, differ from each other in vocabulary, grammar and orthography. Pronunciation is a special case for several reasons. In the first place, it is the type of linguistic organization which distinguishes one national standard from another most immediately and completely and which links in a most obvious way the national standards to the regional varieties. Secondly, it is the least institutionalized aspect of Standard English, in the sense that, provided our grammar and lexical items conform to the appropriate national standard, it matters less that our pronunciation follows closely our individual regional pattern. As Quirk *et al.* (1979) emphasize, 'this is doubtless because pronunciation is essentially gradient, a matter of 'more or less' rather than the discrete 'this or that'' features of grammar and lexicon.'' Thirdly, norms of pronunciation are subject less to educational and national constraints than to social ones: this means, in effect, that some regional accents are less acceptable for 'network use' than others.

In BrE, one type of pronunciation comes close to enjoying the status of 'standard': it is the accent associated with the English public schools, 'Received Pronunciation' or 'RP'. Because this has traditionally been transmitted through a private education system based upon boarding schools insulated from the locality in which they happen to be situated, it is importantly non-regional, and this - together with the obvious prestige that the social importance of its speakers has conferred on it - has been one of its strengths as a lingua franca. But RP no longer has the unique authority it had in the first half of the twentieth century. It is now only one of the accents commonly used on the BBC and takes its place along with others. Thus, the rule that a specific type of pronunciation is relatively unimportant seems to be in the process of losing the notable exception that RP has constituted.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

A pronunciation pattern like the RP is not the only indication for Standard English usage. Discuss other criteria that determine language standard.

3.4 National Standard English: A Variant of Standard English

English language varieties in most countries have assumed a national standard of English usage. These standards rather than the British Standard English are aspired to the educational institutions. Scots, with ancient national and educational institutions, is perhaps nearest to the self-confident independence of BrE and AmE, though the differences in grammar and vocabulary are rather few. There is the preposition *outwith* 'except' and some other grammatical features, and such lexical items as *advocate* in the sense 'practising lawyer' or *bailie* 'municipal magistrate' and several others which, like this, refer to Scottish affairs. Orthography is identical with BrE though *burgh* corresponds closely to 'borough' in meaning and might almost be regarded as a spelling variant. But this refers only to official Scots usage.

Irish English should also be regarded as a national standard for though we lack descriptions of this long-standing variety of English, it is consciously and explicitly regarded as independent of BrE by educational and broadcasting services. The proximity of Britain, the easy movement of population, and like factors mean however that there is little room for the assertion and development of separate grammar and vocabulary. In fact, it is probable that the influence of BrE (and even AmE) is so great on both Scots and Irish English that independent features will diminish rather than increase with time.

Canadian English is in a similar position in relation to AmE. Close economic, social and intellectual links along a 4000-mile frontier have naturally caused the larger community to have an enormous influence on the smaller, not least in language. Though in many respects (*zed* instead of *zee*, for example, as the name of the letter 'z'), Canadian English follows British rather than United States practice, and has a modest area of independent lexical use (*pogey* 'welfare payment', *riding* 'parliamentary constituency', *muskeg* 'kind of bog'), in many other respects it has approximated to AmE, and in the absence of strong institutionalizing forces it seems likely to continue in this direction.

South Africa, Australia and New Zealand are in a very different position, remote from the direct day-to-day impact of either BrE or AmE. While in orthography and grammar South African English in educated use is virtually identical with BrE, rather considerable differences in vocabulary have developed, largely under the influence of the other official language of the country, Afrikaans. For example, *veld* 'open country', *koppie* 'hillock', *dorp* 'village', *konfyt* 'candied peel'. Because of the remoteness from Britain or America, few of these words have spread: an exception is *trek* 'journey'.

New Zealand English is more like BrE than any other non-European variety, though it has adopted quite a number of words from the indigenous Maoris (for example, whare 'hut' and of course *kiwi* and other names for fauna and flora) and over the past half century has come under the powerful influence of Australia and to a considerable extent of the United States.

Australian English is undoubtedly the dominant form of English in the Antipodes and by reason of Australia's increased wealth, population and influence in world affairs, this national standard is exerting an influence in the northern hemisphere, particularly in Britain. Much of what is distinctive in Australian English is confined to familiar use. This is especially so of grammatical features like adverbials but or the use of the feminine pronoun both anaphorically for an inanimate noun (job... her) and also impersonally and non-referentially for 'things in general'. But there are many lexical items that are to be regarded as fully standard: not merely the special *fauna* and *flora* (*kangaroo*, *gumtree*, *wattle*, etc) but special Australian uses of familiar words (*paddock* as a general word for 'field', *crook* 'ill', etc), and special Australian words (*bowyang* 'a trouser strap', *waddy* 'a bludgeon', etc).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

What factors are responsible for the option of a national standard of English in many countries instead of British Standard English?

4.0 CONCLUSION

The important point to stress is English acquired by speakers of other languages, whether as a foreign or as a second language, varies not merely with the degree of proficiency attained but with the specific native language background. The Frenchman who says, '*I am here since Thursday*' is imposing a French grammatical usage on English; the Russian who says '*There are four assistants in our chair of mathematics*' is imposing a Russian lexico-semantic usage on the English word '*chair*'. Most obviously, we always tend to impose our native phonological pattern on any foreign language we learn. At the opposite extreme are interference varieties that are so wide-spread in a community and of such long standing that they may be thought stable and adequate enough to be institutionalized and regarded as varieties of English in their own right, rather than on stages on the way to a more native-like English or Standard English. There is active debate on these issues in India, Pakistan, Nigeria and several African countries, where efficient and fairly stable varieties of English are prominent in educated use at the highest political and professional level.

5.0   SUMMARY

Apart from the interferences from the local languages towards proper standardization of English, there is also the influence of *pidgins* and *creoles* of English in most countries. At the extremes of *Creole* and *Pidgin* there is especial interdependence between the form of language and the occasion and purposes of use: indeed the very name *Pidgin* (from 'business') reminds us that its nature is inclined to be restricted to a few practical subjects. *Creole* is usually more varied but again it tends to be used of limited subject matter (local, practical and family affairs). As to English taught at an advanced intellectual level as a second or foreign language, our constant concern must be that enough proficiency will be achieved to allow the user the flexibility he needs in handling public administration, a learned discipline such as medicine with its supporting scientific literature, and informal social intercourse. To create a standard means to obey rules for its existence. Thus, standardization of English seemed difficult as a result of regions, educational status, interference and other salient factors like the influence of L_1 and the emergence of corrupt varieties. Every learner of English aims at the attainment of almost an error free standard but it must be borne in mind that the native speakers of English are not conscious of errors in the language the way the second and foreign learners are conscious.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   Explain thoroughly the factors inhibiting the attainment of standard english teaching outside Britain.
2.   'Received Pronunciation' seemed a pronunciation standard for recognizing Standard English. What are the other linguistic criteria for attaining this standard?
3.   Differentiate properly between 'Standard English' and 'National English Standard'.
4.   Pidgins and Creoles are real problems in the standardization of English worldwide. Explain the concepts property with examples.
5.   Many English linguists like Quirk, Chomsky and Halliday believe that English language responds to changes. Is it possible to have changes and still retain standards?

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UNIT 5   COMPETENCE AND PERFORMANCE

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study two basic theories of language acquisition and language use which have influenced sociolinguistic studies. The first of the theories is the theory of 'Langue and Parole' by Ferdinand de Saussure while second of the theories is 'Competence and Performance' by Noam Chomsky. The basic notion of these theories is hinged on the concept of language, acceptability of language use and individual application of language codes. We will study the points of convergence and divergence between the theories and the sociolinguistic implications.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

•   understand the theories of langue and parole
•   know the theories of competence and performance
•   distinguish the two theories properly
•   realize the implication of the theories in sociolinguistics
•   accept that individual language use must be in line with societal needs.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Language acquisition and use is related to a society's growth and development. In traditional grammar and philosophy, language is believed to be a heavenly property which comes from birth and not

learned. Language was also seen as a prescriptive phenomenon whereby the users have nothing to contribute to it. In 1916, the publication of Ferdinand de Saussure's *Coursein General Linguistics* (posthumously by his students) marked a turning point in the study of human language. It marked the beginning of linguistics and the starting of scientific analysis of human utterance. De Saussure recognized the concept of 'Langue and Parole' in human language. Simply translated, "langue" and "parole" are "language" and "speech", however, such a translation is misleading because those terms are almost synonyms. Jonathon Culler, an American Deconstructionist who has written extensively on Saussure, defined langue and parole in the introduction as follows:"...Saussure's most fundamental contribution, on which all of modern linguistics rests, was the step by which he postulated a suitable object for linguistic study. If linguistics tries to concern itself with every fact relating to language, it will become a confused morass. The only way to avoid this is to isolate a coherent object which will provide both a goal for analysis and a principle of relevance. And that is precisely what he did, distinguishing with a bold stroke between language as a system (la langue) and the actual manifestations of language in speech or writing (la parole)...

This distinction between langue and parole has been important not only for linguistics but for other disciplines as well, where it can be rendered as a distinction between institution and event, or between the underlying system which makes possible various types of behavior and actual instances of such behavior. Study of the system leads to the construction of a model which represents the various possibilities and their derivation within the system, whereas study of actual behavior leads to the construction of statistical models which represent the probabilities of particular actions under specified conditions.

Roy Harris in his version of the CGL translates la langue using the terms linguistic structure (a bold and excellent translation). Three points are crucial to la langue:

1.   its theoretical character (it is invented to explain the occurrence and distribution of forms in parole),
2.   its systematic or relational character (its terms mutually define and compete with each other)
3.   it is an "institution" or social construct and by definition the inheritance of the many.

La langue then is shared linguistic structure. Saussure explained la langue as follows: "It is a fund accumulated by the members of the community through the practice of speech, a grammatical system existing potentially in every brain, or more exactly in the brains of a

group of individuals; for the language is never complete in any single individual, but exists perfectly only in the collectivity..." (*Course in General Linguistics*, Harris translation, 13). Note that this definition avoids aligning la langue with any particular definition of a language or a dialect: the "collectivity" remains undefined. However, among scholars, these concepts have generated a lot of controversies. Noam Chomsky gave his own version but he has a slight shift from those of Saussure.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the contributions of Ferdinand de Saussure in modern linguistics.

3.2   Competence Grammar versus Performance Grammar

The limitations of current language processing systems are not surprising: they follow immediately from the fact that these systems are built on a competence-grammar in the Chomskyan sense. Chomsky made an emphatic distinction between the "competence" of a language user and the "performance" of this language user. The competence consists in the knowledge of language which the language user in principle has; the performance is the result of the psychological process that employs this knowledge (in producing or in interpreting language utterances). The formal grammars that theoretical linguistics is concerned with, aim at characterizing the competence of the language user. But the pReferences/ Further Reading that language users display in dealing with syntactically ambiguous sentences constitute a prototypical example of a phenomenon that in the Chomskyan view belongs to the realm of performance.

There is ambiguity-problem from an intrinsic limitation of linguistic competence-grammars: such grammars define the sentences of a language and the corresponding structural analyses, but they do not specify a probability ordering or any other ranking between the different sentences or between the different analyses of one sentence. This limitation is even more serious when a grammar is used for processing input which frequently contains mistakes. Such a situation occurs in processing spoken language. The output of a speech recognition system is always very imperfect, because such a system often only makes guesses about the identity of its input-words. In this situation the parsing mechanism has an additional task, which it doesn't have in dealing with correctly typed alpha-numeric input. The speech recognition module may discern several alternative word sequences in the input signal; only one of these is correct, and the parsing-module must employ its syntactic information to arrive at an optimal decision about the nature of the

input. A simple yes/no judgment about the grammaticality of a word sequence is insufficient for this purpose: many word sequences are strictly speaking grammatical but very implausible; and the number of word sequences of this kind gets larger when a grammar accounts for a larger number of phenomena.

To construct effective language processing systems, we must therefore implement performance-grammars rather than competence-grammars. These performance-grammars must not only contain information about the structural possibilities of the general language system, but also about "accidental" details of the actual language use in a language community, which determine the language experiences of an individual, and thereby influence what kind of utterances this individual expects to encounter, and what structures and meanings these utterances are expected to have.

The linguistic perspective on performance involves the implicit assumption that language behaviour can be accounted for by a system that comprises a competence-grammar as an identifiable sub-component. But because of the ambiguity problem this assumption is computationally unattractive: if we would find criteria to prefer certain syntactic analyses above others, the efficiency of the whole process might benefit if these criteria were applied in an early stage, integrated with the strictly syntactic rules. This would amount to an integrated implementation of competence- and performance-notions.

But we can also go one step further, and fundamentally question the customary concept of a competence-grammar. We can try to account for language-performance without invoking an explicit competence-grammar. (This would mean that grammaticality-judgments are to be accounted for as performance phenomena which do not have a different cognitive status than other performance phenomena.)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Defend the statement that competence-grammar forms the basis for performance-grammar.

3.3   Points of Convergence & Divergence

There is a similarity between Chomsky's *competence* and *performance* and Saussure's terms *langue* and *parole*. Chomsky explains *competence* as a factor that refers to a speaker's knowledge of his language that enables him to understand an infinite number of sentences often never heard or produced before. Similar, in Saussure's point of view, the term *langue* represents the general system of language. *Performance* refers to

the actual use and realization of language, which is alike to *parole*, that relates to the appliance of language, the actual process of speaking.

To exemplify how Chomsky and Saussure thought and why they used the terms they did, one can use the phrase 'structure rules'. A sentence can be fragmented into single units that describe the structure of a sentence. S can be analyzed into NP and VP, NP into DET and N or into PN for example. A (native) speaker knows all these rules, even though he might not be completely aware of it. The general concept of the internalization of the rules is similar to competence while usage of them can be referred to *performance* and *parole*. *Langue* and *competence* are not too similar here, because *langue* does not contain any dynamic rules, but is only a system of signs.

Apart from this affinity there is an important difference that has to be mentioned. Chomsky sees *competence* as an attribute of the individual person, whereas Saussure stated that "language exists perfectly only within a collectivity". Another important difference is that *langue* only refers to the sign system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Outline clearly the similarity between Saussure and Chomsky's theories.

4.0   CONCLUSION

In linguistics, the innateness hypotheses assume that every human being has a mental language faculty. It states that human beings are genetically equipped with a Universal Grammar. This contains basic principles and properties that are common to all human languages and therefore it represents the basis for language acquisition by supporting and facilitating it. The main reason for proposing this theory is called the "poverty of the stimulus". It describes the gap between the information about the grammar of a language that we are exposed to during our childhood and the knowledge that we ultimately attain. The stimulus, the linguistic experience, of a child is not sufficient in order to construct the grammar of his/her language. In fact, there are several inadequacies in the stimulus: First, not every sentence a child is exposed to is grammatical. Second, the received information is limited, and third, children gain knowledge without further evidence. Nevertheless, the child succeeds in obtaining linguistic competence, so there must be an additional element for support. Thus, language acceptability and use is determined by the stated rules of communication from which the individuals operate. The child in the social milieu performs from the existing linguistic phenomena around him and this makes him belong to that society properly.

5.0   SUMMARY

The essence of language use is communication. Correlation establishes a close connection between language and the social, but does so by leaving each as quite separate entities and leaving language as autonomous; language itself is not changed by the actions of individuals. The distinction between langue and parole by Saussure is to create an enabling understanding between language use and language acquisition. He believes that language is a sign and that people in a given society use these signs to communicate ideas. He thus postulates that these signs form the core from which other people draw from in order to transmit ideas and information. While langue can be acquired, Chomsky believes that competence is an idealized phenomenon which may not be acquired. In this vein, competence is not an achievable phenomenon but performance can be achieved since it is judged based on individual performance. In sociolinguistics, individuals perform language in order to belong to the society while a society may use a language form that is acceptable by the entirety of the people in order to foster harmony in communication.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   Discuss the contributions of Saussure in modern linguistics.
2.   Discuss Chomsky's opposition to 'langue' and 'parole'.
3.   Compare langue with competence.
4.   Explain the relationship between performance and parole.
5.   Relate these theories to sociolinguistic studies.

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MODULE 2   ENGLISH LANGUAGE VARIETIES AND USAGE

Unit 1   Varieties in Contemporary English
Unit 2   British English Varieties
Unit 3   American English Structure
Unit 4   Differences between British English (BrE) & American English (AmE)
Unit 5   Australian/New Zealand English Varieties

UNIT 1   VARIETIES IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

CONTENTS

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall examine the varieties of English usage which occur in a given country. The use of English is determined by certain factors such as the situation of usage, the medium of usage, the place of usage, the attitude in the usage and the person using the language. Since English language is a language acquired in a second language situation outside Britain, there are factors that determine the proper usage some of which affects the realization of a standard format of language usage. The varieties of English in use are the determining factors for preparing the method of teaching that will effectively transmit the required value for understanding the language and the effective method for transmitting the standard language form. The way English is used in the kindergarten is different from that of the tertiary. So, to properly transmit the language there must be patterned approaches that are determined by the variety in question and at what time. This should also be used in assessing language use since these factors determine the English in use.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- appreciate the varieties of English in use
- understand the reason behind the varieties
- distinguish the occurrence of variety
- identify the variety suitable for every situation
- use the variety required in each situation.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

The important point to stress is that English acquired by speakers of other languages, whether as a foreign or as a second language, varies not merely with the degree of proficiency attained (elementary, intermediate, advanced) but with the specific native language background. The Frenchman who says, '*I am here since Thursday*' is imposing a French grammatical usage on English; the Russian who says '*There are four assistants in our chair of mathematics*' is imposing a Russian lexico-semantic usage on the English word '*chair'*. Most obviously, we always tend to impose our native phonological pattern on any foreign language we learn.At the opposite extreme are interference varieties that are so wide-spread in a community and of such a long standing that they may be thought stable and adequate enough to be institutionalized and regarded as varieties of English in their own right rather than stages on the way to a more native-like English. There is active debate on these issues in India, Pakistan and several African countries, where efficient and fairly stable varieties of English are prominent in educated use at the highest political and professional level.

Two points need to be made clear. First, the various conditioning factors (region, medium, attitude, for example) have no absolute effect: one should not expect a consistent all-or-nothing response to the demands of informality or whatever the factor may be. The conditioning is real but relative and variable. Secondly, when we have done all we can to account for the choice of one rather than another linguistic form, we are still left with a margin of variation that cannot be explainedwith certainty. For example, we can say (or write): *He stayed a week* or*He stayed for a week*; *Two fishes*or*Two fish*; *Had I known*or *If I had known*without either member of such pairs being necessarily linked to any of the varieties that we have specified. We may sometimes have a clear impression that one member seems rarer than another, or relatively old-fashioned, but although a rare or archaic form is likelier in relatively formal rather than in relatively informal English, we cannot always

make such identification. It might be true for the plural *cacti* as opposed to *cactuses*, but it would hardly be true for *beer enough* as opposed to *enough beer*, where the former is rarer but probably more used in informal (or dialectal) speech.

Perhaps, English may give rise to such fluctuation more than some other languages because of its patently mixed nature: a basic Germanic *wordstock*, stress pattern, word-formation, inflection and syntax overlaid with a classical and Romance *wordstock*, stress pattern, word-formation -and even inflection and syntax. The extent to which even highly educated people will treat the Latin and Greek plurals in *data* and *criteria* as singulars or will use *different to* and *averse to* rather than *different from* and *averse from* - and face objections from other native speakers of English - testifies to the variable acknowledgement that classical patterns of inflection and syntax apply within English grammar. It is another sense in which English is to be regarded as according to Quirk *et al.* (1979) as 'the most international of languages' and certainly adds noticeably to the variation in English usage with which a grammar must come to terms.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the factors affecting the standardization of varieties in English usage.

3.2   Variety According to Subject Matter

Varieties according to the subject matter are sometimes referred to as 'registers', though this term is applied to different types of linguistic variety by different linguists. The theoretical bases for considering subject-matter varieties are highly debatable, but certain broad truths are clear enough. While one does not exclude the possibility that a given speaker may choose to speak in a national standard at one moment and in a regional dialect the next - and possibly even switch from one national standard to another - the presumption has been that an individual adopts one of the varieties so far discussed as his permanent form of English. With varieties according to subject matter, on the other hand, the presumption is rather that the same speaker has a repertoire of varieties and habitually switches to the appropriate one as occasion arises. Naturally, however, no speaker has a very large repertoire, and the number of varieties he commands depends crucially upon his specific profession, training, range of hobbies, etc.

Most typically, perhaps, the switch involves nothing more than turning to the particular set of lexical items habitually used for handling the topic in question. Thus, in connection with repairing a machine: *nut,*

bolt, wrench, thread, lever, finger-tight, balance, adjust, bearing, axle, pinion, split-pin, and the like. '*I am of course using thread in the engineer-ing sense, not as it is used in needlework*', one says. But there are grammatical correlates to subject-matter variety as well. To take a simple example, the imperatives in cooking recipes: 'Pour the yokes into a bowl', not 'You should' or 'You must' or 'You might care to', still less 'The cook should ...' More complex grammatical correlates are to be found in the language of technical and scientific description: the passive is common and clauses are often nominalized.

It need hardly be emphasized that the type of language required by choice of subject matter would be roughly constant against the variables (like dialect, national standard). Some obvious contingent constraints are however emerging: the use of a specific variety of one class frequently presupposes the use of a specific variety of another. The use of a well-formed legal sentence, for example, presupposes an educated variety of English. There are contingent constraints of another kind. Some subject-matter varieties of English (legal statutes especially) are difficult to compose except in writing, and difficult to understand, except by reading.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

English usage is sometimes determined by situations, professions and vocations. Explain varieties according to subject matter in this regard

3.3   Variety According to Medium

The only varieties according to medium that we need to consider are those conditioned by speaking and writing respectively. Since speech is the primary or natural medium for linguistic communication, it is reasonable to see the present issue as a statement of the differences imposed on language when it has to be couched in a graphic (and normally visual) medium instead. Most of these differences arise from two sources. One is situational: the use of a written medium normally presumes the absence of the person(s) to whom the piece of language is addressed. This imposes the necessity of a far greater explicitness: the careful and precise completion of a sentence, rather than the odd word, supported by gesture, and terminating when the speaker is assured by word or look that his hearer has understood. As a corollary, since the written sentence can be read and re-read, slowly and critically, the writer tends to anticipate criticism by writing more concisely as well as more carefully and elegantly than he may choose to speak.

The second source of difference is that many of the devices we use to transmit language by speech (stress, rhythm, intonation, tempo, for

example) are impossible to represent with the crudely simple repertoire of conventional orthography. This means that the writer has often to reformulate his sentences if he is to convey fully and successfully what he wants to express within the orthographic system. Thus, instead of the spoken sentence with a particular intonation nucleus: *Jŏhn didn't do it; one might have to write; It was not in fact John that did it.*

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

We write differently from the way we speak. Discuss English usage in formal and informal situations.

3.4   Variety According to Attitude

Varieties according to attitude constitute, like subject-matter and medium varieties, a range of English any section of which is in principle available at will to any individual speaker of English, irrespective of the regional variant or national standard he may habitually use. This present class of varieties is often called 'stylistic', but 'style' like 'register' is a term which is used with several different meanings. We are here concerned with the choice of linguistic form that proceeds from our attitude to the hearer (or reader), to the subject matter, or to the purpose of our communication. And we postulate that the essential aspect of the non-linguistic component (that is, the attitude) is the gradient between *stiff, formal, cold, impersonal* on the one hand and *relaxed, informal, warm,* and *friendly,* on the other. The corresponding linguistic contrasts involve both grammar and vocabulary. For example:

i.   *Overtime emoluments are not available for employees who are non-resident...*

ii.   *Staff members who don't live in can't get paid overtime...* While many sentences like the foregoing can be rated 'more formal' or 'more informal' ('colloquial') in relation to each other, it is useful to pursue the notion of the 'common core' here, so that we can acknowledge a median or unmarked variety of English, bearing no obvious colouring that has been induced by attitude. As in:

iii.   *This student's work is now much better and seems likely to go on improving* and thousands of sentences like it. On each side of this normal and neutral English, we may usefully distinguish sentences containing features that are markedly formal or informal. In the present work, we shall for the most part confine ourselves to this three-term distinction, leaving the middle one

unlabelled and specifying only usages that are relatively formal or informal.

Mastery of such a range of attitudinal varieties seems a normal achievement for educated adults, but it is an acquisition that is not inevitable or even easy for either the native or the foreign learner of a language. It appears to require maturity, tact, sensitivity and adaptability - personality features which enable the individual to observe and imitate what others do, and to search the language's resources to find expression to suit his attitude. The young native speaker at the age of five or six has, broadly speaking, one form of English that is made to serve all purposes, whether he is talking to his mother, his pets, his friends or the aged president of his father's firm. And although even this can cause parents twinges of embarrassment, it is understood that the invariant language is a limitation that the child will grow out of.

The foreign learner is in a somewhat similar position. Until his skill in the language is really very advanced, it is attitudinally invariant, though the particular variety on which he is 'fixed' is much less predictable than that of the native child. If much of his practice in English has been obtained through textbooks specializing in commercial training, his habitual variety will be very different from that of the learner who has done vacation work helping on a farm. These are extreme examples, but it is a commonplace to notice an invariant literary, archaic flavour in the speech of foreign students, and even a Biblical strain in the students from some parts of the world. Better this no doubt than an excessively informal usage, but in any case just as the native child's youth protects him from criticism so does the overseas student's accent inform his listeners that there are respectable reasons for any inappropriateness in the language variety he uses.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

English usage is determined by individual knowledge and style in the language. Discuss

3.5   Variety According to Interference

English language varieties are full of interferences from the L_2 users of the language. Therefore, English as second language and English as foreign language users are prone to interferences from the L_1 and the existing corrupt versions of the language.Thus, most of these varieties strive towards a national standard where inferences are absorbed as part of the national English identity. Varieties according to interference should be seen as being on a very different basis from the other types of variety discussed. It is true that, theoretically, they need not be sosharply

distinguished as this implies. We might think of the 'common core' in native speakers being 'distorted' in one direction where a person is born in Lagos and in another direction if he is born in Warri. The differences in their English might then be ascribed to the interference of Lagos speech and Warri speech respectively on this common core.

But in more practical terms, we apply 'interference' to the trace left by someone's native language upon the foreign language he has acquired. Indeed, to be still more severely practical, we apply it only to those traces of the first language that it is pedagogically desirable to identify and eradicate. Otherwise, we should be applying an identical classification to linguistic situations that are sharply different: on the one hand, the recognizable features of Indian English or West African English which teachers may be trying to eradicate and replace with speech habits more resembling BrE or AmE; and on the other hand, the recognizable features of Irish English (many of which are the reflexes of Irish Celtic), which are also passed on from one generation to another but which are approved by teachers as fully acceptable in educated Irish use.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

The variety of English in use is sometimes affected by interferences with other varieties. Explain this from you reading of this section

4.0   CONCLUSION

In presenting varieties, reference was made to each stratum of varieties being equally related to all others. In principle, this is so. A man may retain recognizable features of any regional English in habitually using a national standard; in his national standard, he will be able to discourse in English appropriate to his profession, his hobbies; he could handle these topics in English appropriate either to speech or writing; in either medium, he could adjust his discourse on any of these subjects according to the respect, friendliness or intimacy he felt for hearer or reader. And all of this would be true if he was proficient in English as a foreign or second language and his usage bore the marks of his native tongue. Clearly, as we review this example, we must see that the independence of the varieties is not solely a matter of principle but also, to a large extent, a matter of actual practice.

5.0   SUMMARY

As with the English dictated by subject matter and medium, there are contingency constraints in the normal selection of attitudinal variety. Just as statute drafting (subject matter) normally presupposes writing

(medium), so also it presupposes a particular attitude variety: in this case 'rigid'. Similarly it would be hard to imagine an appropriate football commentary on the radio being other than informal, or a radio commentary on the funeral of a head of state being other than formal, though both are in the same medium (speech).There are, after all, thousands of different languages in the world, and it is in the nature of language that each one seems uniquely important to those who speak it as their native language - that is, their first (normally sole) tongue: the language they acquired at their mother's knee. But there are more objective standards of relative importance.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   Most English varieties are products of education. Discuss thoroughly?
2.   The style of one's writing is a variety on its own. Assess this statement?
3.   Interference results in pidgins and creoles. Defend this statement?
4.   Variety according to subject matter is related to vocations. Which linguistic form results from this variety?
5.   Varieties make standardization impossible. How true is this statement?

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UNIT 2   BRITISH ENGLISH VARIETIES

CONTENTS

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3.0   Main Content
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the characteristic content of a variety of English Language which has been recognized as the internationally acceptable variety from where the other varieties developed. British English (BE) is the mother-tongue English since it is the English spoken by people living in the United Kingdom and from our studies in the historical development of the language in Module one, it is the Britons that had the colonial experience that led to the emergence of English language in all facets. In this unit, we shall study the nature of BE, the phonological and morphological characteristics, and the other forms of the English variety which have emerged in the sociolinguistic usage of the English language variety.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

•   appreciate the major linguistic thrust of British English
•   realize that British English is the mother-tongue English
•   understand the characteristics of Received Pronunciation (RP)
•   acknowledge the existence of King's/Queen's English as a part of BE
•   recognize the other varieties of British English as used in the United Kingdom.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

British English (BrE, BE, en-GB) is the broad term used to distinguish the forms of the English language used in the United Kingdom from the other forms used elsewhere in the Anglophone world. British English encompasses usages of English within Great Britain and Ireland,though in the case of Ireland, there are further distinctions peculiar to Hiberno-English.There are slight regional variations in formal written English in the United Kingdom (for example, although the words *wee* and *little* are interchangeable in some contexts, one is more likely to see *wee* written by a Scottish or Northern Irish person than by someone from Southern England or Wales). Nevertheless, there is a meaningful degree of uniformity in written English within the United Kingdom, and this could be described as "British English". The forms of spoken English, however, vary considerably more than in most other areas of the world where English is spoken and a uniform concept of "British English" is therefore more difficult to apply to the spoken language.

Regarding the Standardisation of British English as with English around the world, the English language as used in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland is governed by convention rather than formal code since the authoritative dictionaries (like *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, *Chambers Dictionary*, *Collins Dictionary* etc.) record usage rather than prescribe it. In addition, vocabulary and usage change with time; words are freely borrowed from other languages and other strains of English, and neologisms are frequent.For historical reasons dating back to the rise of London in the 9th century, the form of language spoken in London and the East Midlands became Standard English within the Court, and ultimately became the basis for generally accepted use in the law, government, literature and education within Britain. Largely, modern British spelling was standardised in Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), although previous writers had also played a significant role in this and much has changed since 1755. Scotland, which underwent parliamentary union with England only in 1707, still has a few independent aspects of standardisation, especially within its autonomous legal system.The form of English taught across Europe is mainly that used in England and the subject is simply called "English"; the European Commission does not specify any specific English in its list of official languages but the English used in the member statesof the United Kingdom is what is assumed and used.

RP English is often believed to be based on Southern accents, but in fact it has most in common with the dialects of the south-east Midlands:

Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire. Migration to London in the 14th and 15th centuries was mostly from the counties directly north of London rather than those directly south. According to Fowler's *Modern English Usage* (1965), the term is "the Received Pronunciation". The word 'received' conveys its original meaning of accepted or approved- as in "received wisdom". There are differences both within and among the three counties mentioned, but a conglomeration emerged in London, and also mixed with some elements of Essex and Middlesex speech. By the end of the 15th century, Standard English was established in the City of London.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the relationship between Standard English and British English in the United Kingdom.

3.2   Received Pronunciation

a.   Background of RP

There seems to be some disagreement as to the origins of the term "received" in the phrase, "Received Pronunciation", but both A.J. Ellis' *On Early English Pronunciation*, 1869-1889 and John Walker's *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* and *Expositor of the English Language* of 1791 are among the possibilities for its early appearance. However, Daniel Jones has been described as the "great describer and codifier of the Received Pronunciation of English". Regardless of its exact origins, theterm "received" originally meant "that which is generally accepted" or "that accepted by the best society."

RP has for many years epitomized the "top end of the scale" of British English and it is what English people have traditionally meant when they've said that someone "hasn't got an accent." It remains that RP is often regarded as a "neutral" and often "correct" accent. It is also referred to under the terms "BBC English," "Public School English" or even "Standard English. RP is also the accent that Americans and possibly other foreigners would likely refer to as the typical British accent. It should also be noted that there is no single accent whose role and status in the United States correspond to that of RP in England.

A number of distinctions even within RP have, over the years, been proposed by various linguists. These include "Mainstream" RP, "Upper crust" RP, "Adoptive" RP, "Near" RP, "Conservative" RP, and "General" RP." Wales (1994) differentiates between them in saying that "conservative" RP is often spoken by the older generation, and "advanced" RP by the younger generation. Her discussion of the accents

of the royal family is tagged "Queen's English".Regardless of the differences within RP, it is an accent commonly recognized and one that has been taught as the Standard English in schools for years.To an objective observer, the *intrusive r* is very prevalent in RP. It involves the *insertion of an r-sound* at the end of a word ending in a non-high vowel where the next word begins with a vowel. Examples:

i.   R pronounced*put a comma[r]*
        the idea[r] of
        I saw[r] it happen

ii.   R not pronounced: a comma may be added
        idea for
        I saw them

The development of *intrusive r* is one of the consequences of *r-lessness*that developed in more modern British dialects.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Critically explain the major characteristics of Received Pronunciation (RP) English.

3.3   King's/Queen's English

a.   Background of "Queen's" English

The notion of the "Queen's" English or "King's" English, depending on who is the ruler of the time, can be traced back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries where the idea that the monarch's usage of the language should be a model in speech and writing (Wales, 1991). During these times there was a development of a prestigious speech associated with the court and aristocracy. Wales (1991) also points out that the phrase "The King's English" was first used during the reign of James I.The British Royal Family would generally be considered to be speakers of the Standard English, RP. However, Wales (1991) differentiates between the way the older "royals" speak and the changes that can be seen in the speech of younger members of the royal family.

The accents of the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret (the Queen's sister) reflect the conservative RP as epitomized by the old British films and newsreels of the first part of the century. The younger members of the royal family such as Prince Edward, Prince Andrew and the in-laws of the family, the Duchess of York (Fergie) as well as the late Princess of Wales (Diana), all speak an RP closer to "advanced" RP than to the conservative, more traditional accent. The distance between the Royal

Family and the "subjects" of the country was seen to be enhanced by the traditional speech of the royals. As the younger members of the Royal Family attempt to close the gap between the two, their speech reflects the changes. There are also linguistic features traditionally associated with Cockney being found in the speech of the younger generation. Word-final glottal stops (there's a lo' of I' about') have been heard in the speech of Diana, Princess of Wales and Prince Edward, the Queen's youngest son.

b.   General Pronunciation

The Queen and Older Royals might pronounce the following words as noted.Examples:
         house = hice
         off   = orf
         tower = tar
         refined   = refained

Younger royals might exhibit the following types of pronunciations:
         really = rairly
         milk   = miuk
         yes   = yah
         St. Paul's = St. Pauw's

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Assess and discuss the factors that gave rise to Kings/Queens English varieties in the United Kingdom

3.4   Other BrE Varieties

The size of the British Isles often leads people to assume that the language spoken in its countries of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland is somewhat homogeneous and first time visitors are often surprised to find that they have difficulty in understanding the accents and dialects of certain regions. Even within the country of England alone there is great diversity of dialect both regionally and socially. Accents are clues to where people were born and where they grew up. Although some people may change the way they speak during their lifetimes, most people "carry at least some trace" of their accent and dialect origins throughout their lives. In addition to the regional accents of England, there can also be class differences reflected in the different accents.

In Britain, "people are often able to make instant and unconscious judgements about a stranger's class affiliation on the basis of his or her

accent." Both the words and pronunciation of many individuals reflect that person's social position. It is agreed that in England, the "phonetic factors assume a predominating role which they do not generally have in North America".By definition, any regional accent would not be considered upper-class and the more localizable the accent, the more it can be describe as a "broad" accent. In Britain the middle class is associated with having not only a standard accent, but with also speaking in a more "formal and abstract style than working class."

Accents are often characterized by British speakers themselves as either "posh" or "common" accents. Most speakers of British English would recognize these labels and create a fairly accurate image of the sound of these far ends of the spectrum, Conservative or U-"Received Pronunciation" representing the "posh" end and a less broad version of Cockney representing the "common" accent.The significance of accents and their cultural and social associations is well represented in films and on television in Britain. The critically acclaimed 1964 file *My Fair Lady* based on George Bernard Shaw's 1912 play, *Pygmalion,* is often referenced in linguistic discussions as a wonderful example of how social class and accent were, and are still, inextricably linked in Britain. Over the past years, numerous television series have also provided viewers with a glimpse of the lives and accents of the Cockney population of London.

As language change continues to take place within Britain and within England, there are some who claim that a relatively newly established accent, "Estuary English" (EE) is due to replace the traditional educated accent of England Received Pronunciation" (RP). Estuary English is reported to be used by speakers who constitute the social "middle ground".

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

"Most British English Varieties are accent based". How true is this statement?

4.0   CONCLUSION

British English today is assessed with RP standard.The overall RP as indicated earlier has three different forms: Conservative RP, Mainstream RP and Contemporary (or Advanced) RP.Conservative RP refers to a traditional accent which is associated with older speakers and the aristocracy. This is sometimes known as "High British". RP is not the accent of any particular locality, yet it is closer to the native accent of some counties than others. A strong RP accent usually indicates someone who went to a public school.Mainstream RP is an accent that is

often considered neutral regarding age, occupation or lifestyle of the speaker, whilst Contemporary RP refers to speakers using features typical of younger-generation speakers. However, these days, there is almost no difference between those two.The modern style of RP is the usual accent taught to non-native speakers learning British English. Non-RP Britons abroad may modify their pronunciation to something closer to Received Pronunciation, in order to be understood better by people who themselves learned RP in school. They may also modify their vocabulary and grammar to be closer to Standard English, for the same reason. RP is used as the standard for English in most books on general phonology and phonetics and is represented in the pronunciation schemes of most dictionaries.

5.0   SUMMARY

For many years, the use of Received Pronunciation was considered to be a trait of education. It was a standard practice until around the 1950s for university students with regional accents to modify their speech to be closer to RP. As a result, at a time when only around five percent of the population attended universities, elitist notions sprang up around it and those who used it may have considered those who did not to be less educated than them. Received Pronunciation may be referred to as the Queen's (or King's) English, on the grounds that it is spoken by the monarch. It is also sometimes referred to as BBC English, because it was traditionally used by the BBC, yet nowadays this is slightly misleading. Queen Elizabeth II uses a specific form of English, and the BBC is no longer restricted to one type of accent, nor is "Oxbridge" (the universities of Oxford and Cambridge).The RP is a form of pronunciation, not a dialect (a form of vocabulary and grammar). It may show a great deal about the social and educational background of a person who uses English. A person using the RP will typically speak Standard English although the reverse is not necessarily true.In recent decades, many people have asserted the value of other regional and class accents, and many members (particularly young ones) of the groups that traditionally used Received Pronunciation have used it less, to varying degrees. Many regional accents are now heard on the BBC.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions:

1.   Explain in details the nature of British English?
2.   "Received Pronunciation is more of educated accent than a standard variety" Explain this proposition?

3.   "The British English varieties are reflections of the social setting in the United Kingdom" How true is this statement?

4.   "Accents determine most British varieties in terms of class and region". Assess this truism

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

McArthur, Tom. (1975).*TheOxford Guide to World English*. Oxford: OUP.

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UNIT 3   AMERICAN ENGLISH STRUCTURE

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall study American English variety, its characteristics, emergence and usage. It is pertinent to state that the English in use in America is an offshoot of standard British English since the mainstream politicians and early immigrants to America were from Europe and their basic language was English. However, the English language in America is conditioned to carry the American way of communication, attitude and culture. British and American English shared similar linguistic forms except certain differences which we will enumerate and discuss in further modules in this course. We shall discus the historical development of this variety and the contemporary position of this variety amongst the vast emerging varieties of English worldwide.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- trace the origin of American English variety
- understand the emergence of General America (GA) as a variety
- discuss the major characteristics of the language
- distinguish between American English and other varieties
- assess the linguistic differences in the variety

3.0　MAIN CONTENT

3.1　General Overview

The English language as used in the United States is American English (AmE, AE, AmEng, USEng, en-US), also known as United States English or U.S. English.It is a set of dialects of the English language used mostly in the United States. It is estimated that approximately two thirds of native speakers of English live in the United States. The use of English in the United States was inherited from British colonization. The first wave of English-speaking settlers arrived in North America in the 17th century. During that time, there were also speakers in North America of Dutch, French, German, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish, Scots, Welsh, Irish, Scottish Gaelic, Finnish, as well as numerous Native American languages.While written AmE is standardized across the country, there are several recognizable variations in the spoken language, both in pronunciation and in vernacular vocabulary.

Historical Background

The English language was first introduced to the Americas by British colonization, beginning in the early 17th century. Similarly, the language spread to numerous other parts of the world as a result of British colonization elsewhere and the spread of the former British Empire, which, by 1921, held sway over a population of about 470–570 million people: approximately a quarter of the world's population at that time.Over the past 400 years, the form of the language used in the Americas – especially in the United States – and that used in the United Kingdom and the British Islands have diverged in many ways, leading to the dialects now commonly referred to as American English and British English. Differences between the two include pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary (lexis), spelling, punctuation, idioms, formatting of dates and numbers, and so on. A small number of words have completely different meanings between the two dialects or are even unknown or not used in one of the dialects. One particular contribution towards formalizing these differences came from Noah Webster, who wrote the first American dictionary (published in 1828) with the intention of showing that people in the United States spoke a different dialect from Britain.

This divergence between American English and British English once caused George Bernard Shaw to say that the United States and United Kingdom are "two countries divided by a common language"; a similar comment is ascribed to Winston Churchill. Likewise, Oscar Wilde wrote, "We have really everything in common with America nowadays, except, of course, the language." (*The Canterville Ghost*, 1888) Henry Sweet predicted in 1877 that within a century, American English,

Australian English and British English would be mutually unintelligible. It may be the case that increased worldwide communication through radio, television, the Internet, and globalization has reduced the tendency to regional variation. This can result either in some variations becoming extinct (for instance, the wireless, superseded by the radio) or in the acceptance of wide variations as "perfectly good English" everywhere. Often at the core of the dialect, though, the idiosyncrasies remain.

After the Civil War, the settlement of the western territories by migrants from the Eastern U.S. led to dialect mixing and leveling, so that regional dialects are most strongly differentiated along the Eastern seaboard. The Connecticut River and Long Island Sound is usually regarded as the southern/western extent of New England speech, which has its roots in the speech of the Puritans from East Anglia who settled in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The Potomac River generally divides a group of Northern coastal dialects from the beginning of the Coastal Southern dialect area; in between these two rivers several local variations exist, chief among them the one that prevails in and around New York City and northern New Jersey, which developed on a Dutch substratum after the British conquered New Amsterdam. The main features of Coastal Southern speech can be traced to the speech of the English from the West Country who settled in Virginia after leaving England at the time of the English Civil War, and to the African influences from the African Americans who were enslaved in the South.

Although no longer region-specific, African American Vernacular English, which remains prevalent among African Americans, has a close relationship to Southern varieties of AmE and has greatly influenced everyday speech of many Americans.A distinctive speech pattern was also generated by the separation of Canada from the United States, centered on the Great Lakes region. This is the Inland North Dialect— the "standard Midwestern" speech that was the basis for General American in the mid-20th Century (although it has been recently modified by the northern cities vowel shift).In the interior, the situation is very different. West of the Appalachian Mountains begins the broad zone of what is generally called "Midland" speech. This is divided into two discrete subdivisions, the North Midland that begins north of the Ohio River valley area, and the South Midland speech; sometimes the former is designated simply "Midland" and the latter is reckoned as "Highland Southern." The North Midland speech continues to expand westward until it becomes the closely related Western dialect which contains Pacific Northwest English as well as the well-known California English, although in the immediate San Francisco area some older speakers do not possess the cot-*caught* merger and thus retain the distinction between words such as *cot* and *caught* which reflects a

historical Mid-Atlantic heritage. Mormon and Mexican settlers in the West influenced the development of Utah English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

"Written AmE is standardized across the country but there are several recognizable variations in the spoken language both in pronunciation and in vernacular vocabulary." Explain this statement with regards to the nature of American English varieties.

3.2   General American (GA)

General American (GA) is the name given to any American accent that is relatively free of noticeable regional influences. Written forms of American English are fairly well standardized across the United States. An unofficial standard for spoken American English has developed because of mass media and of geographic and social mobility. This standard is generally called a 'General American' or Standard Midwestern accent and dialect, and it can typically be heard from network newscasters, although local newscasters tend toward more parochial forms of speech. Despite this unofficial standard, regional variations of American English have not only persisted, but have actually intensified.Regional dialects in the United States typically reflect the elements of the language of the main immigrant groups in any particular region of the country, especially in terms of pronunciation and vernacular vocabulary. Scholars have mapped at least four major regional variations of spoken American English: Northern (really north-eastern), Southern, Midland, and Western. After the American Civil War, the settlement of the western territories by migrants from the east led to dialect mixing and levelling, so that regional dialects are most strongly differentiated in the eastern parts of the country that were settled earlier. Localized dialects also exist with quite distinct variations, such as in Southern Appalachia and New York City.

The South Midland or Highland Southern dialect follows the Ohio River in a generally southwesterly direction, moves across Arkansas and Oklahoma west of the Mississippi, and peters out in West Texas. It is a version of the Midland speech that has assimilated some coastal Southern forms (outsiders often mistakenly believe South Midland speech and coastal South speech to be the same).The island state of Hawaii has a distinctive Hawaiian Pidgin.Dialect development in the United States has been notably influenced by the distinctive speech of such important cultural centers as Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, Charleston, New Orleans, and Detroit, which imposed their marks on the surrounding areas. American English, unlike British English, seems loose in phonology, morphology and syntax. There is the intended

simplicity in the language use in order to bridge the archaic and old model English lexis, vocabulary and syntactic models. General America is not easily recognizable among the general populace because American has a hybrid of races that live within it but those who are involved in official things like the parliament, politics, administration, marketing and business employ GA in the writing of memos, letters and official documents, while the broadcast media employ the same in the broadcast except when the need arises for a shift in language use. Generally, GA is to America what RP is to Britain but America is not class conscious in this usage like the British.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Critically assess the statement that "General American is beyond accent and region."

3.3   American English Structure

North America has given the English lexicon many thousands of words, meanings, and phrases. Several thousand are now used in English as spoken internationally; others, however, died within a few years of their creation.The process of coining new lexical items started as soon as the colonists began borrowing names for unfamiliar flora, fauna, and topography from the Native American languages. Examples of such names are *opossum, raccoon, squash, and moose* (from Algonquian). Other Native American loanwords, such as *wigwam* or *moccasin*, describe artificial objects in common use among Native Americans. The languages of the other colonizing nations also added to the American vocabulary, for instance, *cookie*, *cruller*, and *pit* (of a fruit) from Dutch; *levee*, *portage* "carrying of boats or goods," and (probably) *gopher* from French; *barbecue*, from Spanish.

Among the earliest and most notable regular "English" additions to the American vocabulary, dating from the early days of colonization through the early 19th century, are terms describing the features of the North American landscape; for instance, *run*, *branch*, *fork*, *snag*, *bluff*, *gulch*, *neck* (of the woods), *barrens*, *bottomland*, *notch*, *knob*, *riffle*, *rapids*, *watergap*, *cutoff*, *trail*, *timberline*, and *divide*. Already existing words such as *creek*, *slough*, *sleet*, and (in later use) *watershed*, received new meanings that were unknown in England. Other noteworthy American toponyms are found among loanwords; for example, *prairie*, *butte* (French); *bayou* (Louisiana French); *coulee* (Canadian French, but used also in Louisiana with a different meaning); *canyon*, mesa, arroyo (Spanish); *vlei*, *kill* (Dutch, HudsonValley).

The word *corn*, used in England to refer to wheat (or any cereal), came to denote the plant *Zea mays*, the most important crop in the U.S., originally named Indian corn by the earliest settlers:*wheat, rye, barley, oats*, etc. came to be collectively referred to as grain (or breadstuffs). Other notable farm related vocabulary additions were the new meanings assumed by *barn* (not only a building for hay and grain storage, but also for housing livestock) and *team* (not just the horses, but also the vehicle along with them), as well as, in various periods, the terms *range*, (corn) *crib, truck, elevator, sharecropping,* and *feedlot*.

Ranch, later applied to a house style, derives from Mexican Spanish; most Spanish contributions came indeed after the War of 1812, with the opening of the West. Among these are, other than toponyms, *chaps* (from chaparreras), *plaza, lasso, bronco, buckaroo*; examples of "English" additions from the cowboy era are *bad man, maverick, chuck* "food," and *Boot Hill*; from the California Gold Rush came such idioms as *hit pay dirt* or *strike it rich*. A couple of notable late 18th century additions are the verb *belittle* and the noun *bid*, both first used in writing by Thomas Jefferson.

With the new continent, developed new forms of dwelling, and hence a large inventory of words designating real estate concepts (*land office, lot, outlands, waterfront,* the verbs locate and relocate, betterment, addition, subdivision), types of property (log cabin, adobe in the 18th century; *frame house, apartment, tenement house, shack, shanty* in the 19th century; *project, condominium, townhouse, split-level, mobile home, multi-family* in the 20th century), and parts thereof (*driveway, breezeway, backyard, dooryard; clapboard, siding, trim, baseboard; stoop* (from Dutch), *family room, den; and, in recent years, HVAC, central air, walkout basement.*Ever since the American Revolution, a great number of terms connected with the U.S. political institutions have entered the language; examples are *run, gubernatorial, primary election, carpetbagger* (after the Civil War), *repeater, lame duck, and pork barrel*. Some of these are internationally used (e.g. *caucus, gerrymander, filibuster, exit poll*).

The rise of capitalism, the development of industry, and material innovations throughout the 19th and 20th centuries were the source of a massive stock of distinctive new words, phrases, and idioms. Typical examples are the vocabulary of railroading and transportation terminology, ranging from names of roads (from *dirt roads* and *back roads* to *freeways* and *parkways*) to road infrastructure (*parking lot, overpass, rest area*), and from automotive terminology to public transit (e.g. in the sentence "riding the subway downtown"); such American introductions as *commuter* (from *commutation* ticket), *concourse*, to board (a vehicle), *to park, double-park, and parallel park* (a car), *double*

decker, or the noun *terminal* have long been used in all dialects of English.Trades of various kinds have endowed (American) English with household words describing jobs and occupations (*bartender, longshoreman, patrolman, hobo, bouncer, bellhop, roustabout, white collar, blue collar, employee, boss* (from Dutch), *intern, busboy, mortician, senior citizen*), businesses and workplaces (*department store, supermarket, thrift store, gift shop, drugstore, motel, main street, gas station, hardware store, savings and loan, hock* (also from Dutch), as well as general concepts and innovations (*automated teller machine, smart card, cash register, dishwasher, reservation* (as at hotels), *pay envelope, movie, mileage, shortage, outage, blood bank*). Already existing English words—such as store, shop, dry goods, haberdashery, lumber—underwent shifts in meaning; some—such as mason, student, clerk, the verbs *can* (as in "canned goods"), *ship, fix, carry, enroll* (as in school), run (as in "run a business"), *release*, and *haul*—were given new significations, while others (such as tradesman) have retained meanings that disappeared in England.

From the world of business and finance came *breakeven, merger, delisting, downsize, disintermediation, bottom line*; from sports terminology came, *jargon aside, Monday-morning quarterback, cheap shot, game plan* (football); *in the ballpark, out of left field, off base, hit and run,* and many other idioms from baseball; gamblers coined *bluff, blue chip, ante, bottom dollar, raw deal, pass the buck, ace in the hole, freeze-out, showdown; miners coined bedrock, bonanza, peter out, pan out*, and the verb *prospect* from the noun; and *railroadmen* are to be credited with *make the grade*, *sidetrack*, *head-on*, and the verb *railroad*. A number of Americanisms describing material innovations remained largely confined to North America: *elevator, ground, gasoline*; many automotive terms fall in this category, although many do not (*hatchback, SUV, station wagon, tailgate, motorhome, truck, pickup truck, to exhaust*).

In addition to the above-mentioned loans from French, Spanish, Mexican Spanish, Dutch, and Native American languages, other accretions from foreign languages came with 19th and early 20th century immigration; notably, from Yiddish (*chutzpah, schmooze*, and such idioms as 'need something like a hole in the head') and German—*hamburger* and culinary terms like *frankfurter/franks, liverwurst, sauerkraut, wiener, deli*(*catessen*); *scram, kindergarten, gesundheit*;musical terminology (*whole note, half note,* etc.); and apparently 'cookbook', fresh "impudent," and 'what gives?'. Such constructions as 'Are you coming with?' and 'I like to dance' (for "I like dancing") may also be the result of German or Yiddish influence.

Finally, a large number of English colloquialisms from various periods are American in origin; some have lost their American flavour (from *OK* and *cool* to *nerd* and *24/7*), while others have not ('have a nice day', 'sure'); many are now distinctly old-fashioned (*swell, groovy*). Some English words now in general use, such as *hijacking, disc jockey, boost, bulldoze,* and *jazz*, originated as American slang. Among the many English idioms of U.S. origin are 'get the hang of', 'take for a ride', 'bark up the wrong tree', 'keep tabs', 'run scared', 'take a backseat', 'have an edge over', 'stake a claim', 'take a shine to', 'in /on the ground floor', 'bite off more than one can chew', 'off/on the wagon', 'stay put', 'inside track', 'stiff upper lip', 'bad hair day', 'throw a monkey wrench', 'under the weather', 'jump bail', 'come clean', 'come again?', and 'will the real x please stand up?'.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

From your understanding of the nature of American English, explain the major morphological influences in the development of the American lexicon.

4.0   CONCLUSION

American English is an offshoot of British English but with modifications resulting from the vast interactions between Americans and the native Americans (also known as Red Indians), and the surrounding nations like the Mexicans from Mexico, French from Canada, English from Canada and the Spaniards. Other languages like the language of the blacks which culminated in the existence of African-American English and accent also had its toll in the emergence of American English. Most regions in America have geographical accents that are identifiable. The Alaskans, the Californians, the Utahs, the Bostonians all have unique accents for communication. America has largely an accent based English and it is a nation that is not as class conscious as Britain where accents denote class, education or region.

General American (GA) resulted from the conscious need of every American towards creating a standard means of communicating in English without prejudice to regional accents and for ease of communication and interaction within official and administrative terrains. The emergence is akin to the British Received Pronunciation (RP) which is based mainly on class, education and region. The lexical and syntactic properties of both seem identical, except some slight differences in the morphological development of each. The nature of American English reveals much borrowing, coinage and other forms of syntactic innovations. This means that AmE is always trying to become what BrE is not and in some cases the influence of AmE over BrE is

prominent. A complete study of the differences between BrE and AmE will be treated in the preceding unit because BrE and AmE form the core of contemporary English usage.

5.0   SUMMARY

American English is a unique variety. It developed from BrE but its usage is assuming a wider dimension because of its acceptability and phonological patterns. American English has much influence in contemporary English Usage since much of the linguistic innovations result from science, technology, societal change, political experiences and other universal factors which America has been in the pivot. The rise of the Internet and the increasing demand for technological values truly affected American English and contemporary English usage worldwide. The steady use of General American in America reveals that conscious attempt by Americans to standardize their variety of English thereby avoiding the complex phonological and lexical traumas associated with Received Pronunciation (RP). It is also clearly explained here that American English is influencing British English in several ways thereby giving the other English varieties the choice of choosing the version of English suitable for international intelligibility.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions

1.   Explain the factors that gave rise to American English?
2.   Discuss the rise of accents in American English?
3.   Assess the basic factors that gave rise to the emergence of General American?
4.   "American English is a mixture of borrowings and coinages". Explain this statement
5.   "American GA is accent conscious while British RP is class conscious". Discuss this properly?

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4   DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BRITISH ENGLISH (BrE) AND AMERICAN ENGLISH (AmE)

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall study the major differences between British English (BrE) and American English (AmE). British English is regarded as the world standard for teaching and learning but the vast influence of American English over the British model is enormous to the extent that the American model has been taught as British model in some cases. The reasons for this misplacement are not far-fetched. Most of the reasons will be treated in this unit so that the users of contemporary English would be able to identify such usage and accept them in the light of global acceptability. We shall study the differences from the lexical, syntactic, semantic, phonological and sociolinguistic perspectives. Each study is laden with adequate examples in order to reveal the vast differences between them and, to some extent, the similarities in the usage.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- identify each variety when used in texts
- distinguish between BrE and AmE in contemporary usage
- apply each variety consistently in speech and writing
- recognize the similarities between the varieties
- use each variety according to situations and requirements

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

American English (AmE) and British English (BrE) differ at the levels of phonology, phonetics, vocabulary and, to a lesser extent, grammar and orthography. The first large American dictionary, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, was written by Noah Webster in 1828; Webster intended to show that the United States, which was a relatively new country at the time, spoke a different dialect from Britain.Differences in grammar are relatively minor, and normally do not affect mutual intelligibility; these include, but are not limited to: different use of some verbal auxiliaries; formal (rather than notional) agreement with collective nouns; different preferences for the past forms of a few verbs (e.g. *learn, burn, sneak, dive, get*); different prepositions and adverbs in certain contexts (e.g. AmE*in school*, BrE*at school*; and whether or not a definite article is used in a few cases (AmE*to the hospital*, BrE*to hospital*). Often, these differences are a matter of relative preferences rather than absolute rules; and most are not stable, since the two varieties are constantly influencing each other.

Differences in orthography are also fairly trivial. Some of the forms that now serve to distinguish American from British spelling (*color* for *colour*, *center* for *centre*, *traveler* for *traveller*, etc.) were introduced by Noah Webster himself; others are due to spelling tendencies in Britain from the 17th century until the present day (e.g. -ise for -ize, *programme* for *program*, *skilful* for *skillful*, *chequered* for *checkered*, etc.), in some cases favored by the *francophile* tastes of 19th century Victorian England, which had little effect on AmE. The most noticeable differences between AmE and BrE are at the levels of pronunciation and vocabulary.

A number of words and meanings that originated in Middle English or Early Modern English and that always have been in everyday use in the United States dropped out in most varieties of British English; some of these have cognates in Lowland Scots. Terms such as *fall* ("*autumn*"), *pavement* (to mean "road surface", where in Britain, as in Philadelphia, it is the equivalent of "sidewalk"), *faucet, diaper, candy, skillet, eyeglasses, crib* (for a baby), *obligate*, and *raise a child* are often regarded as Americanisms. *Gotten* (past participle of get) is often considered to be an Americanism, although there are some areas of Britain, such as Lancashire and Yorkshire, that still continue to use it and sometimes also use *putten* as the past partiple for *put*. Other words and meanings, to various extents, were brought back to Britain, especially in the second half of the 20th century; these include hire ("to employ"), quit ("to stop," which spawned quitter in the U.S.), baggage,

hit (a place), and the adverbs overly and presently ("currently"). Some of these, for example monkey wrench and wastebasket, originated in 19th-century Britain.The mandative subjunctive (as in "the City Attorney suggested that the case not be closed") is livelier in AmE than it is in British English; it appears in some areas as a spoken usage, and is considered obligatory in more formal contexts.The adjectives *mad* meaning "angry", *smart* meaning "intelligent" and *sick* meaning "ill" are also more frequent in American than British English.

British and American English are the reference norms for English as spoken, written, and taught in the rest of the world. For instance, the English-speaking members of the Commonwealth often closely follow British English forms while many new American English forms quickly become familiar outside of the United States. Although the dialects of English used in the former British Empire are often, to various extents, based on standard British English, most of the countries concerned have developed their own unique dialects, particularly with respect to pronunciation, idioms, and vocabulary; chief among them are Canadian English and Australian English, which rank third and fourth respectively in number of native speakers.

Formal and Notional Agreement

In BrE, collective nouns can take either singular (formal agreement) or plural (notional agreement) verb forms, according to whether the emphasis is, respectively, on the body as a whole or on the individual members; in AmE, collective nouns are usually singular in construction: *the committee was unable to agree...*AmE however may use plural pronouns in agreement with collective nouns: *the team takes their seats*, rather than *the team takes its seats*. The rule of thumb is that a group acting as a unit is considered singular and a group of "individuals acting separately" is considered plural.However, such a sentence would most likely be recast as *the team members take their seats*. Despite exceptions such as usage in the *New York Times*, the names of sports teams are usually treated as plurals even if the form of the name is singular.The difference occurs for all nouns of multitude, both general terms such as team and company and proper nouns (for example, where a place name is used to refer to a sports team). For instance:

BrE: The Clash are a well-known band;
AmE: The Clash is a well-known band.
BrE: New Yorkare the champions;
AmE: New York is the champion.

More so, proper nouns that are plural in form take a plural verb in both AmE and BrE; for example, *The Beatles are a well-known band*; *The Giants are the champions*.

The past tense and past participle of the verbs *learn,spoil*, *spell* (only in the word-related sense), burn, dream, smell, spill, leap, and others, can be either irregular (*learnt, spoilt*, etc.) or regular (*learned, spoiled*, etc.). In BrE, the irregular and regular forms are current; in some cases (*smelt, leapt*) there is a strong tendency towards the irregular forms (especially by speakers using Received Pronunciation); in other cases (*dreamed, leaned, learned*) the regular forms are somewhat more common. In AmE, the irregular forms are never or rarely used (except for *burnt* and *leapt*).

Nonetheless, as with other usages considered nowadays to be typically British, the 't' endings are often found in older American texts. However, usage may vary when the past participles are actually adjectives, as in 'burnt toast'. (Note that the two-syllable form learnèd /ˈlɜːnɪd/, usually written simply as *learned*, is still used as an adjective to mean "educated", or to refer to academic institutions, in both BrE and AmE). Finally, the past tense and past participle of *dwell* and *kneel* are more commonly *dwelt* and *knelt* on both sides of the Atlantic, although *dwelled* and *kneeled* are widely used in the US (but not in the UK). *Lit* as the past tense of 'light' is much more common than *lighted* in the UK; the regular form enjoys more use in the US, although it is somewhat less common than lit. By contrast, fit as the past tense of fit is much more used in AmE than BrE, which generally favours*fitted*.The past tense of spit "expectorate" is *spat* in BrE, *spit* or spat in AmE. The past participle *gotten* is rarely used in modern BrE (although it is used in some dialects), which generally uses got, except in old expressions such as 'ill-gotten gains'. According to the *Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, "The form *gotten* is not used in British English but is very common in North American English, though even there it is often regarded as non-standard." In AmE, *gotten* emphasizes the action of acquiring and *got* tends to indicate simple possession (for example, *Have you gotten it*? versus *Have you got it*?). Gotten is also typically used in AmE as the past participle for phrasal verbs using get, such as 'get off', 'get on', 'get into', 'get up', and 'get around': *If you hadn't gotten up so late, you might not have gotten into this mess*. Interestingly, AmE, but not BrE, has forgot as a less common alternative to *forgotten* for the past participle of *forget*.

In BrE, the past participle *proved* is strongly preferred to *proven*; in AmE, *proven* is now about as common as proved.(Both dialects use proven as an adjective and in formulas such as 'not proven').AmE further allows other irregular verbs, such as *dive* (dove) or *sneak*(snuck),

and often mixes the preterite and past participle forms (spring–sprang, US also sprung)–sprung, sometimes forcing verbs such as *shrink* (shrank–shrunk) to have a further form, thus *shrunk–shrunken*. These uses are often considered nonstandard; some stylebooks in AmE treat some irregular verbs as colloquialisms, insisting on the regular forms for the past tense of *dive, plead* and *sneak*. *Dove* and *snuck* are usually considered nonstandard in Britain, although *dove* exists in some British dialects and *snuck* is occasionally found in British speech.

By extension of the irregular verb pattern, verbs with irregular preterits in some variants of colloquial AmE also have a separate past participle, for example, "to buy": past tense *bought spawns boughten*. Such formations are highly irregular from speaker to speaker, or even within idiolects. This phenomenon is found chiefly in the northern US and other areas where immigrants of German descent are predominant, and may have developed as a result of German influence (though in German, both are regular past participle forms, cf. *kaufen, kaufte, gekauft* (bought) and *lesen, las, gelesen* (read)). Even in areas where the feature predominates, however, it has not gained widespread acceptance as "standard" usage.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Discuss the various notional differences in grammar and lexicon existing in AmE and BrE

3.2   Phonological Differences

Compared to British English, North American English is in many ways quite conservative in its phonology. Some distinctive accents can be found on the East Coast (for example, in Eastern New England and New York City), partly because these areas were in contact with England, and imitated prestigious varieties of British English at a time when those varieties were undergoing changes. Also, many speech communities on the East Coast have existed in their present locations longer than others. The interior of the United States, however, was settled by people from all regions of the existing U.S. and, as such, developed a far more generic linguistic pattern.

The red areas are those where non-rhotic pronunciations are found among some white people in the United States. Most North American speech is rhotic, as English was in most places in the 17th century.*To be rhotic means pronouncing the letter "r" when it occurs after a vowel or at the end of a syllable*. Rhoticity was further supported by Hiberno-English, Scottish English, and West Country English. In most varieties of North American English, the sound corresponding to the letter *r* is a

retroflex or alveolar approximant rather than a trill or a tap. The loss of syllable-final *r* in North America is confined mostly to the accents of eastern New England, New York City and surrounding areas, South Philadelphia, and the coastal portions of the South. Dropping of syllable-final *r* sometimes happens in natively rhotic dialects if r is located in unaccented syllables or words and the next syllable or word begins in a consonant. In England, the lost r was often changed into [ə] (schwa), giving rise to a new class of falling diphthongs.

On the other hand, North American English has undergone some sound changes not found in Britain, especially not in its standard varieties. Many of these are instances of phonemic differentiation and include:

a)   The merger of [ɑ] and [ɒ], making *father* and *bother* rhyme. This change is nearlyuniversal in North American English, occurring almost everywhere, except for parts of eastern New England, hence the Boston accent.

b)   The merger of [ɒ] and [ɔ]. This is the so-called cot-caught merger, where cot and caught are homophones. This change has occurred in eastern New England, in Pittsburgh and surrounding areas, and from the Great Plains westward.For speakers who do not merge caught and cot: The replacement of the *cot* vowel with the *caught* vowel before voiceless fricatives (as in *cloth*, *off*) (which is found in some old-fashioned varieties of RP), as well as before /ŋ/ (as in *strong, long*), usually in *gone, often in on*, and irregularly before /g/ (*log, hog, dog, fog*) (which is not found in British English at all).

c)   The replacement of the lot vowel with the strut vowel in most utterances of the words *was, of, from, what,* and *in* many utterances of the words *everybody, nobody, somebody, anybody*;

       the word *because* has either /ʌ/ or /ɔ/; want has normally /ɔ/, sometimes /ʌ/ or /ɑ/.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the rhotic phonological differences and how they identify the speakers of each variety

3.3   Morphological/ Lexical Differences

a.   Morphological: Word derivation and compounds

Directional suffix -ward(s): British *forwards, towards, rightwards*, etc.; American *forward, toward, rightward*. In both dialects, distribution varies somewhat: *afterwards, towards,* and *backwards* are not unusual

in America; while in Britain *forward* is common, and standard in phrasal verbs like *look forward to*. The forms with -s may be used as adverbs (or preposition *towards*), but rarely as adjectives: in Britain as in America, one says "an upward motion". *The Oxford English Dictionary* in 1897 suggested a semantic distinction for adverbs, with *-wards* having a more definite directional sense than *-ward*; subsequent authorities such as Fowler have disputed this view.

AmE freely adds the suffix -s to *day, night, evening, weekend, Monday*, etc. to form adverbs denoting repeated or customary action: *I used to stay out evenings*; *the library is closed Saturdays*. This usage has its roots in Old English, but many of these constructions are now regarded as American.

In BrE, the agentive -er suffix is commonly attached to football (also cricket; often netball; occasionally basketball). AmE usually uses football player. Where the sport's name is usable as a verb, the suffixation is standard in both dialects: for example, golfer, and bowler (in *Ten-pin bowling* and in *Lawn Bowls*), and *shooter*. AmE appears to sometimes use the BrE form in *baller* as slang for a basketball player. However, this is derived from slang use of *to ball* as a verb meaning *to play a basketball*.

English writers everywhere occasionally (and from time immemorial) make new compound words from common phrases; for example, *health care* is now being replaced by *healthcare* on both sides of the Atlantic. However, AmE has made certain words in this fashion that are still treated as phrases in BrE. Regarding compound nouns of the form <verb><noun>, AmE sometimes favours the bare infinitive where BrEfavours the gerund. Examples include (AmE first): *jump rope/skipping rope*; *racecar/racing car*; *rowboat/rowing boat*; *sailboat/sailing boat*; *file cabinet/filing cabinet*; *dial tone/dialling tone*. More generally, AmE has a tendency to drop inflectional suffixes, thus favouring clipped forms: compare *cookbook vs. cookery book*; *Smith, age 40 vs. Smith, aged 40*; *skim milk vs. skimmed milk*; *dollhouse vs. doll's house*; *barbershop vs. barber's shop*.

Singular attributives in one country may be plural in the other, and vice versa. For example, the UK has a *drugs problem* while the United States has a *drug problem* (although the singular usage is also commonly heard in the UK); Americans read the *sports section* of a newspaper, while the British are more likely to read the *sport section*. However, in BrE*maths* is singular, just as AmE*math* is: both are abbreviations of *mathematics*.

Morphologically, AmE has always shown a marked tendency to use substantives as verbs. Examples of verbed nouns are *interview,*

advocate, vacuum, lobby, expense, room, pressure, rear-end, transition, feature, profile, buffalo, weasel, express (mail), *belly-ache, spearhead, skyrocket, showcase, merchandise, service* (as a car), *corner, torch, exit* (as in "exit the lobby"), factor (in mathematics), gun "shoot," author (which disappeared in English around 1630 and was revived in the U.S. three centuries later) and, out of American material, proposition, *graft* (bribery), *bad-mouth, vacation, major, backpack, backtrack, intern, ticket* (traffic violations), *hassle, blacktop, peer-review, dope, and OD.*

Compounds coined in the U.S. are for instance *foothill, flatlands, badlands, landslide* (in all senses), *overview* (the noun), *backdrop, teenager, brainstorm, bandwagon, hitchhike, smalltime, deadbeat, frontman, lowbrow and highbrow, hell-bent, foolproof, nitpick, about-face* (later verbed), *upfront* (in all senses), *fixer-upper, no-show*; many of these are phrases used as adverbs or (often) hyphenated attributive adjectives: *non-profit, for-profit, free-for-all, ready-to-wear, catchall, low-down, down-and-out, down and dirty, in-your-face, nip and tuck*; many compound nouns and adjectives are open: *happy hour, fall guy, capital gain, road trip, wheat pit, head start, plea bargain*; some of these are colorful (*empty nester, loan shark, ambulance chaser, buzz saw, ghetto blaster, dust bunny*), others are euphemistic (differently *abled, human resources, physically challenged, affirmative action, correctional facility*).

Many compound nouns have the form verb plus preposition: *add-on, stopover, lineup, shakedown, tryout, spinoff, rundown "summary," shootout, holdup, hideout, comeback, cookout, kickback, makeover, takeover, rollback "decrease," rip-off, come-on, shoo-in, fix-up, tie-in, tie-up "stoppage," stand-in.* These essentially are nonced phrasal verbs; some prepositional and phrasal verbs are in fact of American origin (*spell out, figure out, hold up, brace up, size up, rope in, back up/off/down/out, step down, miss out on, kick around, cash in, rain out, check in and check out* (in all senses), fill in "inform," kick in "contribute," *square off, sock in, sock away, factor in/out, come down with, give up on, lay off* (from employment), *run into and across "meet," stop by, pass up, put up* (money), *set up "frame," trade in, pick up on, pick up after, lose out*.

Noun endings such as -ee (*retiree*), -ery (*bakery*), -ster (*gangster*), and -cian (*beautician*) are also particularly productive in AmE.Some verbs ending in -ize are of U.S. origin; for example, *fetishize, prioritize, burglarize, accessorize, itemize, editorialize, customize, notarize, weatherize, winterize, Mirandize*; and so are some back-formations (*locate, fine-tune, evolute, curate, donate, emote, upholster, and enthuse*).Americanisms formed by alteration of existing words include *notably pesky, phony, rambunctious, pry* (as in "pry open," from prize),

putter (verb), *buddy, sundae, skeeter, sashay, and kitty-corner*. Adjectives that arose in the U.S. are for example *lengthy, bossy, cute and cutesy, grounded* (of a child), *puink* (in all senses), *sticky* (of the weather), *through* (as in "through train," or meaning "finished"), and many colloquial forms such as *peppy* or *wacky*. American blends include *motel, guesstimate, infomercial, and televangelist*.

b.   Lexical

Verbal auxiliaries

Shall (as opposed to *will*) is more commonly used by the British than by Americans. *Shan't* is seldom used in AmE (almost invariably replaced by 'won't' or 'am not going to'), and very much less so amongst Britons. American grammar also tends to ignore some traditional distinctions between *should* and *would* however, expressions like *I should be happy* are rather formal even in BrE.

Transitivity

The following verbs show differences in transitivity between BrE and AmE:

Agree: Transitive or intransitive in BrE, usually intransitive in AmE (agree a contract/agree to or on a contract). However, in formal AmE legal writing one often sees constructions like *as may be agreed between the parties* (rather than *as may be agreed upon between the parties*).

Appeal (as a decision): Usually intransitive in BrE (used with against) and transitive in AmE (appeal against the decision to the Court/appeal the decision to the Court).

Catch up ("to reach and overtake"): Transitive or intransitive in BrE, strictly intransitive in AmE (to catch sb up/to catch up with sb). A transitive form does exist in AmE, but has a different meaning: *to catch somebdy up* means that the subject will help the object catch up, rather the opposite of the BrE transitive meaning.

Cater ("to provide food and service"): Intransitive in BrE, transitive in AmE (to cater for a banquet/to cater a banquet).

Claim: Sometimes intransitive in BrE (used with for), strictly transitive in AmE.

Meet: AmE uses intransitively *meet* followed by *with* to mean "to have a meeting with", as for business purposes (*Yesterday we met with the*

CEO), and reserves transitive *meet* for the meanings "to be introduced to" (*I want you to meet the CEO; she is such a fine lady*), "to come together with (someone, somewhere)" (*Meet the CEO at the train station*), and "to have a casual encounter with". BrE uses transitive meet also to mean "to have a meeting with"; the construction *meet with*, which actually dates back to Middle English, appears to be coming back into use in Britain, despite some commentators who preferred to avoid confusion with *meet with* meaning "receive, undergo" (the proposal was met with disapproval). The construction *meet up with* (as in *to meet up with someone*), which originated in the US, has long been standard in both dialects.

Provide: Strictly mono-transitive in BrE, monotransitive or ditransitive in AmE (provide sb with sth/provide sbsth).

Protest: In a sense it means "oppose", intransitive in BrE, transitive in AmE (*The workers protested the decision/The workers protested against the decision*). The intransitive protest against in AmE means, *to hold or participate in a demonstration against*. The older sense "proclaim" is always transitive (protest one's innocence).

Write: In BrE, the indirect object of this verb usually requires the preposition to, for example, *I'll write to my MP* or *I'll write to her* (although it is not required in some situations, for example when an indirect object pronoun comes before a direct object noun, for example, *I'll write her a letter*). In AmE, write can be used mono-transitively (*I'll write my congressman; I'll write him*).

Prepositions and Adverbs

In the United States, the word,*through* can mean "up to and including" as in *Monday through Friday*. In the UK*Monday to Friday*, or *Monday to Friday inclusive* is used instead; *Monday through to Friday* is also sometimes used. (In some parts of Northern England the term *while* can be used in the same way, as in *Monday while Friday*, whereas in Northern Ireland*Monday till Friday* would be more natural.)

British athletes *play in* a team; American athletes *play on* a team. (Both may play for a particular team.)

In AmE, the use of the function word *out* as a preposition in *out the door* and *out the window* is standard. In BrE, *out of* is preferred in writing, but *out* is more common in speech. Several other uses of *outof* are peculiarly British (*out of all recognition, out of the team;* cf. above); all of this notwithstanding, *out of* is overall more frequent in AmE than in BrE.

The word *heat* meaning "mating season" is used with *on* in the UK and with *in* in the US.

The intransitive verb *affiliate* can take either *with* or *to* in BrE, but only *with* in AmE.

The verb *enrol* usually takes *on* in BrE and *in* in AmE (as in "to enrol on/in a course") and the on/in difference is used when enrolled is dropped (as in "I am (enrolled) on the course that studies....").

In AmE, one always speaks of the street *on* which an address is located, whereas in BrE in can also be used *in* some contexts. *In* suggests an address on a city street, so a service station (or a tourist attraction or indeed a village) would always be on a major road, but a department store might be in Oxford Street. Moreover, if a particular place *on* the street is specified, then the preposition used is whichever is idiomatic to the place, thus "at the end of Churchill Road".

BrEfavours the preposition *at* with weekend ("at (the) weekend(s)"); the constructions on, over, and during (the) weekend(s) are found in both varieties but are all more common in AmE than BrE.

Adding *at* to the end of a question requesting a location is common in AmE (especially *in the Midwest*), for example, "where are you at?", but would be considered superfluous in BrE.

After *talk* Americans can use the preposition *with* but British always use*to* (that is, *I'll talk with Dave / I'll talk to Dave*. The American form is sometimes seen as more politically correct in British organisations, inducing the ideal of discussing (with), as opposed to lecturing (to). This is, of course, unless *talk* is being used as a noun, for example: "I'll have a talk with him" in which case this is acceptable in both BrE and AmE.

In both dialects, *from* is the preposition prescribed for use after the word *different*: *American English is different from British English in several respects*. However, *different than* is also commonly heard in the US, and is often considered standard when followed by a clause (*American English is different than it used to be*), whereas *different to* is the alternative common in BrE.

It is common in BrE to say *opposite to* as an alternative to *opposite of*, the only form normally found in AmE. The use of *opposite* as a preposition (opposite the post office) has long been established in both dialects, but appears to be more common in British usage.

The noun *opportunity* can be followed by a verb in two different ways: *opportunity plus to-infinitive* ("the opportunity to do something") or *opportunity plus of plus gerund* ("the opportunity of doing something"). The first construction is the most common in both dialects, but the second has almost disappeared in AmE and is often regarded as a Briticism.

Both Britons and Americans may say (for example) that a river is *named after* a state, but "named for a state" would rightly be regarded as an Americanism.

BrE sometimes uses *to* with *near* (*we live near to the university*), while AmE avoids the preposition in most usages dealing with literal, physical proximity (*we live near the university*), although the *to* reappears in AmE when *near* takes the comparative or superlative form, as in *she lives nearer/nearest to the deranged axe murderer's house*.

In BrE, one *calls* (or *rings*) someone *on* his or her telephone number; in AmE, one calls someone *at* his or her telephone number.

When referring to the constituency of a US Senator the preposition "from" is usually used: "Senator from New York," whereas a British MPs are "for" their constituency: "MP for East Cleveland."

In AmE, the phrases *aside from* and *apart from* are used about equally; in BrE, *apart from* is far more common.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Identify some morphological and lexical differences in AmE and BrE.

3.4   Syntactic Differences

a.   Use of tenses

BrE uses the present perfect tense to talk about an event in the recent past and with the words *already, just,* and *yet*. In American usage, these meanings can be expressed with the present perfect (to express a fact) or the simple past (to imply an expectation). This American style has become widespread only in the past 20 to 30 years; the British style is still in common use as well:

> "I've just arrived home." / "I just arrived home."
> "I've already eaten." / "I already ate."

(Recently the American use of *just* with simple past has made inroads into BrE, most visibly in advertising slogans and headlines such as "Cable broadband just got faster".)

Similarly, AmE occasionally replaces the pluperfect with the preterit. Also, US spoken usage sometimes substitutes the conditional for the pluperfect (*If I would have cooked the pie we could have had it for lunch*), but this tends to be avoided in writing.

In BrE, *have got* or *have* can be used for possession and *have got to* and have to can be used for the modal of necessity. The forms that include *got* are usually used in informal contexts and the forms without *got* in contexts that are more formal. In American speech the form without *got* is used more than in the UK. AmE also informally uses *got* as a verb for these meanings – for example, *I got two cars*, *I got to go*; but these are nonstandard and will be considered sloppy usage by most American speakers.

The subjunctive mood (morphologically identical with the bare infinitive) is regularly used in AmE in mandative clauses (as in *They suggested that he apply for the job*). In BrE, this usage declined in the 20th century, in favor of constructions such as *They suggested that he should apply for the job* (or even, more ambiguously, *They suggested that he applied for the job*). Apparently, however, the mandative subjunctive has recently started to come back into use in BrE.

b.   Presence or Absence of Syntactic Elements

Where a statement of intention involves two separate activities, it is acceptable for speakers of AmE to use *to go plus bare infinitive*. Speakers of BrE would instead use *to go and plus bare infinitive*. Thus, where a speaker of AmE might say *I'll go take a bath*, BrE speakers would say *I'll go and have a bath*. (Both can also use the form to go to instead to suggest that the action may fail, as in *He went to take/have a bath, but the bath was full of children*.) Similarly, *to come plus bare infinitive* is acceptable to speakers of AmE, where speakers of BrE would instead *use to come and plus bare infinitive*. Thus, where a speaker of AmE might say *come see what I bought*, BrE speakers would say *come and see what I've bought* (notice the present perfect tense: a common British preference).

c.   Use of Prepositions before Days Denoted by a Single Word

Where British people would say *She resigned on Thursday*, Americans often say *She resigned Thursday*, but both forms are common in American usage. Occasionally, the preposition is also absent when

referring to months: *I'll be here December* (although this usage is generally limited to colloquial speech).

In the UK, *from* is used with single dates and times more often than in the United States. Where British speakers and writers may say *the new museum will be open from Tuesday*, Americans most likely say *the new museum will be open starting Tuesday*. A variation or alternative of this is the mostly American *the play opens Tuesday* and the mostly British *the play opens on Tuesday*.

A few 'institutional' nouns take no definite article when a certain role is implied: for example, *at sea* (as a sailor), *in prison* (as a convict), and *at/in college* (for students). Among this group, BrE has *in hospital* (as a patient) and *at university* (as a student), where AmE requires *in the hospital and at the university*. (When the implied roles of patient or student do not apply, the definite article is used in both dialects.) Likewise, BrE distinguishes *in future* ("from now on") from *in the future* ("at some future time"); AmE uses *in the future* for both senses.

In BrE, numbered highways usually take the definite article (for example "the M25", "the A14") while in America they usually do not ("I-495", "Route 66"). Southern California is an exception, where "the 5" or "the 405" are the standard. A similar pattern is followed for named roads, but in America, there are local variations and older American highways tend to follow the British pattern ("the Boston Post Road").

AmE distinguishes *in back of* [behind] from *in the back of*; the former is unknown in the UK and liable to misinterpretation as the latter. Both, however, distinguish *in front of* from *in the front of*.

American legislators and lawyers always use the preposition *of* between the name of a legislative act and the year it was passed, while their British equivalents do not. Compare *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* to *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*.

Dates usually include a definite article in UK spoken English, such as "the 11th of July", or "July the 11th", while American speakers say "July 11th".

AmE omits, and BrE requires, the definite article in a few standard expressions such as *tell (the) time*.

d.   Miscellaneous Grammatical Differences

In AmE, some prescriptionists feel that *which* should not be used as an antecedent in restrictive relative clauses. According to *The Elements of*

Style, "that is the defining, or restrictive pronoun, which the nondefining, or nonrestrictive." This distinction was endorsed by *Fowler's Modern English Usage*, but the use of *which* as a restrictive pronoun is common in great literature produced on both sides of the Atlantic.

In names of American rivers, the word *river* usually comes after the name (for example, *Colorado River*), whereas for British rivers it comes before (as in *River Thames*). One exception present in BrE is the *FleetRiver*, which is rarely called *the River Fleet* by Londoners outside of official documentation. Exceptions in the US are the *River Rouge* and the *River Raisin*, both in Michigan and named by the French. This convention is mixed, however, in some Commonwealth nations, where both arrangements are often seen.

In BrE the word *sat* is often colloquially used to cover *sat*, *sitting* and *seated*: *I've been sat here waiting for half an hour*. *The bride's family will be sat on the right-hand side of the church*. This construction is not often heard outside the UK. In the 1960s, its use would mark a speaker as coming from the north of England but by the turn of the 21st century this form had spread to the south. Its use often conveys lighthearted informality, as many speakers intentionally use an ungrammatical construction they would probably not use in formal written English. This colloquial usage is widely understood by British speakers. Similarly *stood* can be used instead of *standing*. To an American, these usages are passive, and may imply that the subject had been involuntarily forced to *sit* or *stand*, or directed to hold that location.

In most areas of the United States, the word *with* is also used as an adverb: *I'll come with* instead of *I'll come along*. However, in some British Dialects, *come with* is used as an abbreviation of *come with me*, as in *I'm going to the office – come with*. This particular variant is also used by speakers in Minnesota and parts of the adjoining states: *Want to come with?* This is another expression possibly arising from German (kommst du mit?) in parts of the United States with high concentrations of German American populations. It is similar to South African English, where the expression comes from Dutch, and is used by Afrikaans speakers when speaking English.

The word *also* is used at the end of a sentence in AmE, but not so commonly in BrE, although it is encountered in Northern Ireland. Additionally, sentence ending as well is more formal in AmE than in BrE.

In AmE, the last letter of the alphabet Z is pronounced /zee/; in BrE, it is pronounced /zed/.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Identify the different syntactic peculiarities in AmE and BrE and discuss the applications with ample example

3.5   Differences in Writing

a.   Punctuation

i.   Full stops/Periods in abbreviations: Americans tend to write *Mr., Mrs., St., Dr.* etc., while British will most often write *Mr, Mrs, St, Dr*, etc., following the rule that a full stop is used only when the last letter of the abbreviation is not the last letter of the complete word; this kind of abbreviation is known as a contraction in the UK. Many British writers would tend to write other abbreviations without a full stop, such as *Prof*, *etc, eg*, and *so on* (so recommended by some Oxford dictionaries). However, the "American" usage of periods after most abbreviations is also widely used in the UK. In either case, it is incorrect to put a stop / period after unit symbols such as *kg* or *Hz*; however, in non-scientific contexts, the unit for "inch" is often written *in.*, as it would be ambiguous without the period. It is sometimes believedthat BrE does not hyphenate multiple-word adjectives (e.g. "a first class ticket"). The most common form is as in AmE ("a first-class ticket"), but some British writers omit the hyphen when no ambiguity would arise.

ii.   Quoting: Americans start with double quotation marks (") and use single quotation marks (') for quotations within quotations. In general, this is also true of BrE, but can be the opposite when used in book publishing, for example. In journals and newspapers, quotation mark double/single use depends on the individual publication's house style. Americans are taught to put commas and periods inside quotation marks (except for question marks and exclamation points that apply to a sentence as a whole); whereas British people will put the punctuation inside if it belongs to the quotation and outside otherwise. With direct speech, both styles retain punctuation inside the quotation marks, with a full stop changing into a comma if followed by explanatory text. Examples:

Carefree means "free from care or anxiety." (American style)
Carefree means "free from care or anxiety". (British style)
"Hello, world," I said. (Both styles)

The American style was established for typographical reasons, a historical holdover from the days of the handset printing press. It also eliminates the need to decide whether a period or comma belongs to the quotation.However, many people find the usage counterintuitive. In fact, the British style is often the *de facto* standard among Americans for whom formal or professional writing is not a part of their daily life; many are in fact unaware that the normative American usage is to place commas and periods within the quotation marks.

"I am going to the store. (I hope it is still open.)"
But:
"I am going to the store (if it is still open)."

iii.   **Letter-writing**: American students in some areas have been taught to write a colon after the greeting in business letters ("Dear Sir:") while British people usually write a comma ("Dear Sir,") or make use of the so-called open punctuation ("Dear Sir"). However, this practice is not consistent throughout the United States, and it would be regarded as a highly formal usage by most Americans.

b.   **Use of Capitalization**

Sometimes, the words in titles of publications, newspaper headlines, as well as chapter and section headings are capitalised in the same manner as in normal sentences (sentence case). That is, only the first letter of the first word is capitalised, along with proper nouns, etc.However, publishers sometimes require additional words in titles and headlines to have the initial capital, for added emphasis, as it is often perceived as appearing more professional. In AmE, this is common in titles, but less so in newspaper headlines. The exact rules differ between publishers and are often ambiguous; *a typical approach is to capitalise all words other than short articles, prepositions, and conjunctions*. This should probably be regarded as a common stylistic difference, rather than a linguistic difference, as neither form would be considered incorrect or unusual in either the UK or the US. Many British tabloid newspapers (such as The Sun, The Daily Sport, News of the World) *use fully capitalised headlines for impact*, as opposed to readability (for example, BERLINWALLFALLS or BIRD FLU PANIC). On the other hand, the broadsheets (such as *The Guardian, The Times,* and *The Independent*) *usually follow the sentence style of having only the first letter of the first word capitalised*. However, it must be emphasized here that it is your audience or the in-house publishing rules that determine the documentation style in in any journal.

c.   Dates

Dates are usually written differently in the short (numerical) form. Christmas Day 2000, for example, is 25/12/00 or 25.12.00 (dashes are occasionally used) in the UK and 12/25/00 in the US, although the formats 25/12/2000, 25.12.2000, and 12/25/2000 now have more currency than they had before the Year 2000 problem. Occasionally other formats are encountered, such as the ISO 8601 2000-12-25, popular among programmers, scientists, and others seeking to avoid ambiguity. The difference in short-form date order can lead to misunderstanding. For example, 06/04/05 could mean either June 4, 2005 (if read as US format), 6 April 2005 (if seen as in UK format), or even 5 April 2006 if taken to be an older ISO 8601-style format where 2-digit years were allowed.

A consequence of the different short-form of dates is that in the UK many people would be reluctant to refer to "9/11", although its meaning would be instantly understood. On the BBC, "September the 11th" is generally used in preference to 9/11. However, 9/11 is commonplace in the British press to refer specifically to the events of September 11, 2001. For the sake of clarity, 11/9 is occasionally, yet deliberately, used to emphasize the distinction between September 11, 2001, and September 11 of any other year.

Phrases such as the following are common in Britain and Ireland but are generally unknown in the U.S: "A week today", "a week tomorrow", "a week on Tuesday", "a week Tuesday", "Tuesday week" (this is found in central Texas), "Friday fortnight", "a fortnight on Friday" and "a fortnight Friday" (these latter referring to two weeks after "next Friday"). In the US, the standard construction is "a week from today", "a week from tomorrow" etc. BrE speakers may also say "Thursday last" or "Thursday gone" instead of "last Thursday".

Times

Americans always write digital times with a colon, thus 6:00, whereas Britons often use a point, 6.00, although it is becoming increasingly popular to use a colon. Also, the 24-hour clock (18:00 or 1800), which, in the UK, would be considered normal in many applications (for example, air/rail/bus timetables), is largely unused in the US outside of military or medical applications. Often, in the UK, 18:00 will be written as 1800h, or 06:00 as 0600h - representing the military speak "oh-six-hundred-hours", even if people would usually read it aloud as "six o'clock". This has become popular in text messaging since it is easier to type an "h" than a colon.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Assess the differences in writing in AmE and BrE with regards to the points of convergence.

3.6   Other Differences

a.   Numbers

i.   When saying or writing out numbers, the British will typically insert an 'and' before the tens and units, as in *one hundred and sixty-two* and *two thousand and three*. In America, it is considered correct to drop the 'and', as in *two thousand three*; however, this is rarely heard in everyday speech, *two thousand and three* being much more common.Some American schools teach students to pronounce decimally written fractions (e.g. .5) as though they were longhand fractions (five tenths), such as *five hundred thirteen and seven tenths* for 513.7. This formality is often dropped in common speech. It is steadily disappearing in instruction in mathematics that is more advanced and science work as well as in international American schools. In the UK, 513.7 would generally be read five hundred and thirteen point seven, although if it were written 513 7⁄10, it would be pronounced five hundred and thirteen and seven tenths.

ii.   In counting, it is common in both varieties of English to count in hundreds up to 1,900 – so 1,200 may be twelve hundred. However, Americans use this pattern for much higher numbers than is the norm in British English, referring to *twenty-four hundred* where British English would most often use *two thousand four hundred*. Even below 2,000, Americans are more likely than the British are to read numbers like 1,234 as *twelve hundred thirty-four*, instead of *one thousand two hundred and thirty-four*. In BrE, it is also common to use phrases such as *three and a half thousand* for 3,500, whereas in AmE this construction is almost never used for numbers under a million.

iii.   In the case of years, however, *twelve thirty-four* would be the norm on both sides of the Atlantic for the year 1234. The year 2000 and years beyond it are read as *two thousand*, *two thousand (and) one* and the like by both British and American speakers. For years after 2009, they are frequently said *twenty ten*, *twenty twelve* etc. by the BBC.

iv.   For the house number (or bus number, etc.) 272, British people tend to say *two seven two* while Americans tend to say *two seventy-two*.

v.   There is also a historical difference between billions, trillions, and so forth. Americans use billion to mean *one thousand million* (1,000,000,000), whereas in the UK, until the latter part of the 20th century, it was used to mean *one million million* (1,000,000,000,000). It is believed that Margaret Thatcher started the change on advice from the Bank of England. The British prime minister, Harold Wilson, in 1974, told the House of Commons that UK government statistics would now use the short scale; followed by the Chancellor, Denis Healey, in 1975, that the treasury would now adopt the US billion version although, historically such numbers were not often required outside of mathematical and scientific contexts. *One thousand million* was sometimes described as a milliard, the definition adopted by most other European languages. However, the "American" version has since been adopted for all published writing, and the word *milliard* is obsolete in English, as are billiard (but not billiards, the game), *trilliard* and so on. However, the term *yard*, derived from *milliard*, is still used in the financial markets on both sides of the Atlantic to mean "one thousand million". All major British publications and broadcasters, including the BBC, which long used *thousand million* to avoid ambiguity, now use *billion* to mean *thousand million*.

vi.   Many people have no direct experience with manipulating numbers this large, and many non-American readers may interpret billion as 1012 (even if they are young enough to have been taught otherwise at school); also, usage of the "long" billion is standard in some non-English speaking countries. For these reasons, defining the word may be advisable when writing for the public. See long and short scales for a more detailed discussion of the evolution of these terms in English and other languages.

vii.   When referring to the numeral 0, British people would normally use *nought*, *oh*, *zero* or *nil* in instances such as sports scores and voting results. Americans use the term zero most frequently; oh is also often used (though never when the quantity in question is nothing), and occasionally slang terms such as *zilch* or *zip*. Phrases such as the team won *two–zip or the team leads the series, two–nothing* are heard when reporting sports scores. The digit 0, for example, when reading a phone or account number aloud, is nearly always pronounced *oh* in both language varieties for the sake of convenience.

viii.   When reading numbers in a sequence, such as a telephone or serial number, British people will usually use the terms double or triple/treble followed by the repeated number. Hence, 007 is *double oh seven*. Exceptions are the emergency telephone number 999, which is always *nine ninenine*, and the apocalyptic "Number of the Beast", which is always *six sixsix*. The directory enquiries prefix 118 is also *one one eight* in Britain. In the US, 911 (the US emergency telephone number) is usually read *nine one one*, while 9/11 (in reference to the September 11, 2001 attacks) is usually read *nine eleven*.

b.   Monetary Amounts

i.   Monetary amounts in the range of one to two major currency units are often spoken differently. In AmE one may say *a dollar fifty or a pound eighty*, whereas in BrE these amounts would be expressed *one dollar fifty and one pound eighty*. For amounts over a dollar, an American will generally either drop denominations or give both dollars and cents, as in *two-twenty or two dollars and twenty cents for $2.20*. An American would not say *two dollars twenty*. On the other hand, in BrE, *two pounds twenty* would be the most common form. It is more common to hear a British-English speaker say one *thousand two hundred dollars than a thousand and two hundred dollars*, although the latter construct is common in AmE. The term *twelve hundred dollars*, popular in AmE, is frequently used in BrE but only for exact multiples of 100 up to 1900. Speakers of BrE very rarely hear amounts over 1900 expressed in hundreds, for example *twenty-three hundred*.

ii.   The BrE slang term *quid* is roughly equivalent to the AmE*buck* and both are often used in the two respective dialects for round amounts, as in *fifty quid for £50 and twenty bucks for $20. A hundred and fifty grand* in either dialect could refer to *£150,000 or $150,000* depending on context.

iii.   A user of AmEmay hand-write the mixed monetary amount $3.24 as $324 or $324 (often seen for extra clarity on a check); BrE users will always write this as £3.24, £3·24 or, for extra clarity on a cheque, as £3—24. In all cases there may or may not be a space after the currency symbol, or the currency symbols may be omitted depending on context.

iv.   The term pound sign in BrE always refers to the currency symbol £, whereas in AmE pound sign means the number sign, which the

British call the hash symbol, #. (The British telephone company BT, in the 1960s–1990s, called this gate on telephone keypads.)

In BrE, the plural of the word *pound* is often considered *pound* as opposed to *pounds*. For example, three pound forty and twenty pound a week are both legitimate British English. This does not apply to other currencies, however, so that the same speaker would most likely say three dollars forty, twenty dollars a week in similar contexts.

In BrE, the use of p instead of pence is common in spoken usage. Each of the following has equal legitimacy: three pounds, twelve p, three pounds and twelve p, three pounds, twelve pence, three pounds and twelve pence, as well as just eight p or eight pence.

AmE uses words like *nickel, dime, and quarter for small coins*. In BrE, the usual usage is *10-pence piece or 10p piece for any coin below £1*, with piece sometimes omitted, but pound coin and two-pound coin. BrE did have specific words for a number of coins before decimalisation.

c.   Time-telling

Fifteen minutes after the hour is called *quarter past* in British usage and a *quarter after or, less commonly, a quarter past* in American usage. Fifteen minutes before the hour is usually called *quarter to* in British usage and *a quarter of, a quarter to or a quarter till* in American usage; the form *a quarter to* is associated with parts of the Northern United States, while a quarter till is found chiefly in the Appalachian region. Thirty minutes after the hour is commonly called *half past in both BrE and AmE*. In informal British speech, the preposition is sometimes omitted, so that 5:30 may be referred to as *half five* (by contrast, in the German halbfünf is half-an-hour before five, i.e. 4:30). *Half after* used to be more common in the US. The AmE formations top of the hour and bottom of the hour are not commonly used in BrE. Forms like *eleven forty are common in both dialects*.

d.   Levels of buildings

There are also variations in floor numbering between the US and UK. In most countries, including the UK, the "first floor" is one above the entrance level while the entrance level is the "ground floor". On lift (elevator) buttons in the UK the Ground Floor is often denoted by the letter G, or the number 0. Normal American usage labels the entrance level as the "first floor" or the "ground floor", the floor immediately above that is the "second floor".

e.   Figures of speech

Both BrE and AmE use the expression "I couldn't care less" to mean *the speaker does not care at all*. In AmE, the phrase "I could care less" (without the n't) is sometimes used to mean the same thing, despite technically meaning the opposite. Intonation no longer reflects the originally sarcastic nature of this variant, which is not idiomatic in BrEand might be interpreted as anything from nonsense (or sloppiness) to an indication that the speaker does care.

In both areas, saying, "I don't mind" often means, "I'm not annoyed" (for example, by someone's smoking), while "I don't care" often means, "The matter is trivial or boring". However, in answering a question like "Tea or coffee?", if either alternative is equally acceptable, an American may answer, "I don't care", while a British person may answer, "I don't mind". Either sounds odd to the other.

In BrE, the phrase *I can't be arsed (to do something)* is a vulgar equivalent to the British or American *I can't be bothered (to do something)*. This can be extremely confusing to Americans, as the Southern British pronunciation of the former sounds similar to *I can't be asked...*, which sounds either defiantly rude or nonsensical.Older BrE often uses the exclamation "No fear!" where current AmE has "No way!" This usage may confuse users of AmE, who are likely to interpret and even use "No fear!" as enthusiastic willingness to move forward.

f.   Idioms

A number of English idioms that have essentially the same meaning show lexical differences between the British and the American version; for instance:

	British English	**American English**
1.	not touch something with a bargepole	not touch something with a ten-foot pole
2.	sweep under the carpet	sweep under the rug
3.	touch wood	knock on wood
4.	see the wood for the trees	see the forest for the trees
5.	throw a spanner (in the works)	throw a (monkey) wrench (in the works)
6.	two pennies' worth, two pence worth	two cents' worth
7.	skeleton in the cupboard	skeleton in the closet
8.	a home from home	a home away from home
9.	blow one's trumpet	blow (or toot) one's horn

10. a drop in the ocean   a drop in the bucket
11. storm in a teacup   tempest in a teapot
12. flogging a dead horse   beating a dead horse
13. haven't (got) a clue   don't have a clue or
                                                 have no clue
14. a new lease of life   a new lease on life

In some cases, the "American" variant is also used in BrE, or *vice versa*.

g.   Education

In the UK, a student is said to *study*, or, at Oxford and Cambridge, to *read* a subject (read is now more commonly being used in reference to other universities). In the US, a student *studies* or *majors* in a subject (although concentration or emphasis is also used in some US colleges or universities to refer to the major subject of study). To major in something refers to the student's principal course of study, while to study may refer to any class being taken. Students may also major in a subject in the UK as a part of degrees with two subjects, one major and the other minor; this usage is rarely required since examples of such a situation are uncommon in the UK (the majority of degree courses either do not incorporate study outside of a single subject area, or include two subjects on an equal basis).

At the tertiary or university level in BrE, a *module* is taught by a lecturer (whose job title may nonetheless be professor), while in AmE, a *class* is generally taught by a professor (at some institutions, professor is reserved for tenure-track faculty with other members of the faculty referred to as lecturers or instructors, more closely corresponding to the BrE usage). At the primary and secondary levels, the term *teacher* is used instead in both BrE and AmE. The term *lecturer*, in an educational context, would be perceived in AmE as denoting *anyone, professor or special guest, giving an actual lecture before a class*.

    BrE:
    "She studied history at Bristol."
    "She read history at Oxford."

    AmE:
    "She majored in history at Yale."
    "He majored in history at Princeton."

The word *course* in American use typically refers to the study of a restricted topic (for example, *a course in Early Medieval England, a course in Integral Calculus*) over a limited period of time (such as a semester or term) and is equivalent to a module at a British university. In the UK, *a course of study* is likely to refer to a whole programme of

study, which may extend over several years, and made up of any number of modules.

In the UK, a student is said *to sit or take an exam,* while in the US, *a student takes an exam.* The expression *he sits for an exam* also arises in BrE, but only rarely in AmE; American lawyers-to-be *sit* for their bar exams, and American master's and doctoral students may *sit* for their comprehensive exams, but in nearly all other instances, Americans *take* their exams. When preparing for an exam, students *revise* (BrE)/*review* (AmE) what they have studied; the BrE idiom *to revise for* has the equivalent *to review for* in AmE.

Examinations are supervised by *invigilators* in the UK and *proctors* (or (exam) supervisors) in the US. In the UK, *a teacher sets an exam*, while in the US, *a teacher writes or gives an exam*.

> BrE:
> "I sat my Spanish exam yesterday."
> "I plan to set a difficult exam for my students, but I don't have it ready yet."

> AmE:
> "I took my exams at Yale."
> "I spent the entire day yesterday writing the exam. I'm almost ready to give it to my students."

Another source of confusion is the different usage of the word *college*. In the US, this refers to *a post-high school institution that grants bachelor's degrees*, while in the UK it refers primarily to *an institution between secondary school and university* (normally referred to *as a Sixth Form College after the old name in secondary education for Years 12 and 13, the 6th form*) where intermediary courses such as A Levels or NVQs can be taken and GCSE courses can be retaken. *College may sometimes be used in the UK or in Commonwealth countries as part of the name of a secondary or high school* (for example, Dubai College). It should be noted, however, that in the case of Oxford, Cambridge, London and Durham universities, all members are also members of a college, for example, one is a member of St. Peter's College, Oxford and hence the University.

In both the US and UK, *college* can refer to some division within a university such as the "college of business and economics". Institutions in the US that offer two to four years of post-high school education often have the word *college* as part of their name, while those offering more advanced degrees are called a *university*. (There are exceptions, of course: BostonCollege, DartmouthCollege and The College of William

and Mary are examples of colleges that offer advanced degrees.) American students who pursue a bachelor's degree (four years of higher education) or an associate degree (two years of higher education) are *college students regardless of whether they attend a college or a university* and refer to their educational institutions informally as *colleges. A student who pursues a master's degree or a doctorate degree in the arts and sciences is in AmE a graduate student*; in BrE*a post-graduate student although graduate student also sometimes used.* Students of advanced professional programmes are known by their field (business student, law student, medical student, the last of which is frequently shortened to med student). Some universities also have a residential college system, the details of which may vary from school to school but generally involve common living and dining spaces as well as college-organized activities.

"Professor" has different meanings in BrE and AmE. In BrE, it is the highest academic rank, followed by Reader, Senior Lecturer and Lecturer. In AmE "Professor" refers to academic staff of all ranks, with (Full) Professor (largely equivalent to the UK meaning) followed by Associate Professor and Assistant Professor.

There is additionally a difference between American and British usage in the word *school*. In British usage "school" by itself refers only to primary (elementary) and secondary (high) schools, and to sixth forms attached to secondary schools — if one "goes to school", this type of institution is implied. By contrast, an American student at a university may talk of "going to school" or "being in school". US law students and med students almost universally speak in terms of going to "law school" and "med school", respectively. However, the word is used in BrE in the context of higher education; to describe a division grouping together several related subjects in a university, for example a "School of European Languages" containing departments for each language, and also in the term "art school".

Among high school and college students in the United States, the words *freshman* (or the gender-neutral term *frosh* or first year), *sophomore*, *junior* and *senior* refer to the first, second, third, and fourth years, respectively. It is important that the context of either high school or college first be established, or else it must be stated directly (that is, *She is a high school freshman. He is a college junior*.). Many institutions in both countries also use the term *first-year* as a gender-neutral replacement for freshman, although in the US this is recent usage, formerly referring only to those in the first year as a graduate student. One exception is the University of Virginia; since its founding in 1819, the terms "first-year", "second-year", "third-year", and "fourth-year" have been used to describe undergraduate university students. At the

United States military academies, at least those operated directly by the federal government, a different terminology is used, namely "fourth class", "third class", "second class", and "first class" (note that the order of numbering is the reverse of the number of years in attendance). In the UK, first year university students are often called *freshers*, especially early in the academic year; however, there are no specific names for those in other years, or for school pupils. Graduate and professional students in the United States are known by their year of study (a "second-year medical student" or a "fifth-year doctoral candidate." Law students are often referred to as "1L", "2L", or "3L" rather than "nth-year law students"; similarly medical students are frequently referred to as "M1", "M2", "M3", or "M4").

While anyone in the US who finishes studying at any educational institution by passing relevant examinations is said to graduate and to be a graduate; in the UK only degree and above level students can graduate. Student itself has a wider meaning in AmE, meaning any person of any age studying at any educational institution, whereas in BrE it tends to be used for people studying at a post-secondary educational institution.

In the UK, the US equivalent of a high school is often referred to as a secondary school regardless of whether it is state funded or private. Secondary education in the United States also includes middle school or junior high school, a two or three year transitional school between elementary school and high school.A public school has opposite meanings in the two countries. In the US this is *a government-owned institution supported by taxpayers*. In England and Wales, the term strictly refers to *a select group of prestigious private independent schools funded by students' fees*, although it is often more loosely used to refer to any independent school. Independent schools are also known as private schools, and the latter is the correct term in Scotland and Northern Ireland for all such fee-funded schools.

h.   Transport/Transportation

Americans refer to *transportation*, while British people refer to *transport*. As transportation in Britain was a penalty for a crime, that is, deportation, the British use the word communication to include goods and persons, whereas in America the word primarily refers to messages sent by post or electronics. The British devised the term telecoms for this last use; it is not quite standard in America.

Differences in terminology are especially obvious in the context of roads. The British term dual carriageway, in American parlance, would be a divided highway. Central reservation on a motorway in the UK

would be *a median on a freeway, expressway, highway, or parkway* in the US. The one-way lanes that make it possible to enter and leave such roads at an intermediate point without disrupting the *flow of traffic* are generally known as *slip roads* in the UK, but US civil engineers call them *ramps*, and further distinguish between *on-ramps* (for entering) and *off-ramps* (for leaving). When American engineers speak of *slip roads*, they are referring to a street that runs alongside the main road (separated by a berm) to allow off-the-highway access to the premises that are there, sometimes also known as a *frontage road* – in the UK this is known as a *service road*.

In the UK, the term *outside lane* refers to the higher-speed overtaking lane (*passing lane* in the US) closest to the centre of the road, while *inside lane* refers to the lane closer to the edge of the road. In the US, *outside lane* is only used in the context of a turn, in which case it depends on which direction the road is turning (i.e., if the road bends right the left lane is the outside lane, but if the road bends left the right lane is the outside lane). Both also refer to *slow* and *fast lanes* (even though all actual traffic speeds may be at or even above the legal speed limit). UK traffic officials, firefighters and police officers refer to Lanes 1, 2 and 3 as *slow*, *middle* and *fast lanes* respectively. In the US the meanings are exactly reversed, with Lane 1 referring to the fast lane and so on.

In the UK, *drink driving* is against the law, while in the US the term is *drunk driving*. The legal term in the US is *driving while intoxicated* (DWI) or *Driving under the Influence of Alcohol* (DUI). The equivalent legal phrase in the UK is *Drunk in Charge of a Motor Vehicle* (DIC), or more commonly *driving with excess alcohol*.

i.   Greetings

When Christmas is explicitly mentioned in a greeting, the universal phrasing in North America is *Merry Christmas*. In the UK, *Happy Christmas* is also heard. It is increasingly common for Americans to say *Happy Holidays*, referring to all *winter holidays* (*Christmas, Yule, New Year's Day, Hanukkah, Divali, St. Lucia Day and Kwanzaa*) while avoiding any specific religious reference. *Season's Greetings* is a less common phrase in both America and Britain.

j.   Entertainment

On English television, each year of a show is referred to as a *series*, while on American television each year is referred to as a *season*. Additionally, *the entire run of a show is called a series in American English and several series can take place in the same fictional universe*.

For example, in American English 'Star Trek: The Next Generation' and 'Star Trek: Deep Space Nine' are two separate series that ran for seven seasons each, in British English each show consisted of seven series. It should be noted that DVD boxed sets of a year's worth of episodes are rarely renamed when sold outside of their country of origin. In other words, you would still buy *Series 3 ofRed Dwarf* in American stores and *Season 3 of Babylon5* in British stores.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

Discuss the prominent stylistic differences between AmE and BrE

4.0   CONCLUSION

American English and British English have been used intermittently to the extent that it has become, to some extent, difficult in separating them in most cases. For instance words such as *bill* (AmE*paper money*, BrE and AmE*invoice*) and *biscuit* (AmE: BrE's*scone*, BrE: AmE's*cookie*) are used regularly in both AmE and BrE, but mean different things in each form. As chronicled by Winston Churchill, the opposite meanings of the verb 'to table' created a misunderstanding during a meeting of the Allied forces; in BrE'to table an item on an agenda' means to open it up for discussion, whereas in AmE, it means to remove it from discussion.

In the UK, the word *whilst* may be used as a conjunction (as an alternative to while, especially prevalent in some dialects), but while is used as a noun. In AmE only *while* is used in both contexts. For example, *I will be a while* versus *whilst/while you were out, your friend called*. To Americans the word *whilst*, in any context, seems very archaic or pretentious or both. In some regions of England, the word *while* is used to mean "until", so *whilst* may be used in spoken English to avoid confusion. In the UK, generally the term *fall* meaning "autumn" is obsolete. Although found often from Elizabethan to Victorian literature, continued understanding of the word is usually ascribed to its continued use in America.

In the UK, the term *period* for *a full stop* is now obsolete. For example, Tony Blair said, "Terrorism is wrong, full stop", whereas in AmE, "Terrorism is wrong, period."*Fitted* is used in both conventions as an adjective (*fitted sheets* are the same size as the mattress) and as the past tense of *fit* ("to suffer epilepsy"); however *fit* and *fitting* do not denote epileptic seizure in ordinary British use (though that usage is common within medical circles), as the same effect is achieved by *to have a fit or to throw a fit*.

5.0   SUMMARY

Most scholars believe that the major difference between AmE and BrE lies in spelling but as we have exhaustively shown here it goes beyond it. In the early 18th century, English spelling was not standardised. Different standards became noticeable after the publishing of influential dictionaries. Current BrE spellings follow, for the most part, those of Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755). Many of the now characteristic AmE spellings were introduced, although often not created, by Noah Webster in his *An American Dictionary of the English Language* of 1828.Webster was a strong proponent of spelling reform for reasons that are both philological and nationalistic. Subsequent spelling adjustments in the UK had little effect on present-day US spelling, and vice versa. While, in many cases, AmE deviated in the 19th century from mainstream British spelling; on the other hand, it has also often retained older forms. From the vast exploration of the usage in both dialects of English, there are clear-cut differences in both usages. Both dialects are identical and constitute the rich contemporary English usage

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions very clearly:

1. Distinguish AmE treatment of time, date, transportation and entertainment from that of BrE.
2. AmE and BrE share similar lexical and morphological properties. Identify the similar lexical and morphological items.
3. Even in writing of correspondences, there are marked differences between AmE and BrE. What are the differences?
4. In education, seasons, proper noun identification, there are differences between AmE and BrE. Distinguish them with examples.
5. Contemporary English usage is the intermingling of AmE and BrE. Discuss with ample examples.

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5   AUSTRALIAN/NEW ZEALAND ENGLISH VARIETIES

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall study another unique dialect of English which has also affected the international intelligibility of the language. Australia is a pure English nation colonized by Britain. The English language dialect in use has developed to a very significant level to the extent that Australian English is quite identifiable. Close to AustraliaisNew Zealand and both countries share same colonial experiences. New Zealand English, like Australian English, also has significant markers which identifies it. Australian English is affected by the aborigines existing in the country. The aborigine languages affected the phonological, lexical and the syntactic properties of the dialect of English. We shall study the nature and significant markers of Australian English (AusEng) and New Zealand English (NzEng) and through this process, show the contributions of both dialects in the mainstream contemporary English usage.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- recognize Australian and New Zealand English dialects
- understand the unique markers of the dialects
- distinguish the two dialects from the other dialects of English
- use BrE and other varieties as part of contemporary English usage
- apply the basic rules inherent in the usage.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Australian English began diverging from British English shortly after the foundation of the Australian penal colony of New South Wales (NSW) in 1788. British convicts sent there, including the Cockneys of London, came mostly from large English cities; and they were joined by free settlers, military personnel, and administrators, who often brought their families.In 1827, Peter Cunningham, in his book *Two Years in New South Wales*, reported that native-born white Australians of the time-known as "currency lads and lasses"- spoke with a distinctive accent and vocabulary, with a strong Cockney influence. The transportation of convicts to Australia ended in 1868, but immigration of free settlers from Britain, Ireland and elsewhere continued.

Some American and British English variants exist side-by-side, as TV and *telly* (an abbreviation of *television*). British words predominate, however: as *mobile* or *mobilephone* instead of *cell phone*, and *lift* instead of *elevator*. In many cases -*telly* versus TV and SMS versus *text*, *freeway* and *motorway*, for instance - regional, social and ethnic variation within Australia typically defines word usage.Australian English is most similar to New Zealand English, each having a shared history and geographical proximity. Both use the expression *different to* (also encountered in British English, but not American) as well as *different from.*

New Zealand English (NZEng) is the form of the English language used in New Zealand.New Zealand English is close to Australian English in pronunciation, but has several subtle differences often overlooked by people from outside these countries. Some of these differences show New Zealand English to have more affinity with the English of southern England than Australian English does. Several of the differences also show the influence of Māori speech. The most striking difference from Australian and other forms of English (although shared partly with South African English) is the flattened /i/ of New Zealand English. The New Zealand accent also has some Scottish influences, particularly in the southern regions of the South Island - a result of the large number of early Scottish settlers who arrived in the 19th century.

A distinct New Zealand variant of the English language has been in existence since at least 1912, though it probably goes back further than that. From the beginning of British settlement on the islands, a new dialect began to form by adapting Māori words to describe the *flora* and *fauna* of New Zealand, for which English did not have any words of its own.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the major linguistic influences in the development of Australian and New Zealand English dialects.

3.2   Australian English Variety (AusEng)

Australian English is also a very popular English dialect. It also has unique markers which help in identifying it among the vast speakers of English. Australian English is a non-rhotic dialect. It is most similar to New Zealand English and bears some resemblance to dialects from the Southeast of England, particularly those of 'Cockney' and 'Received Pronunciation'. Like most dialects of English, it is distinguished primarily by its *vowel phonology*. Let us examine the nature of the dialect beginning with the phonological properties.

Australian English has many words that some consider unique to the language. One of the best known is *outback*, meaning 'a remote, sparsely populated area'. Another is *bush*, meaning 'either a native forest or a country area in general'. However, both terms have been widely used in many English-speaking countries. *The convicts* brought other similar words, phrases and usages to Australia. Many words used frequently by country Australians are, or were, also used in all or part of England, with variations in meaning. For example, *creek* in Australia, as in North America, means 'a stream or small river', whereas in the UK it means 'a small watercourse flowing into the sea'; *paddock* in Australia means 'field', whereas in the UK it means 'a small enclosure for livestock'; *bush* or *scrub* in Australia, as in North America, means 'a wooded area', whereas in England they are commonly used only in proper names (such as *Shepherd's Bush* and *Wormwood Scrubs*). Australian English and several British English dialects (for example, Cockney, Scouse, Glaswegian and Geordie) both use the word *mate* for a close friend of the same sex and increasingly for a platonic friend of the opposite sex (rather than the conventional meaning of "a spouse"), but this usage has also become common in some other varieties of English.

The origins of other words are not as clear, or are disputed. *Dinkum* (or "fair dinkum") can mean "true", "is that true?" or "this is the truth!" among other things, depending on context and inflection. It is often claimed that *dinkum* dates back to the Australian goldrushes of the 1850s, and that it is derived from the Cantonese (or Hokkien) *ding kam*, meaning, "top gold". But scholars give greater credence to the conjecture that it originated from the extinct East Midlands dialect in England, where *dinkum* (or *dincum*) meant "hard work" or "fair work", which was also the original meaning in Australian English.The

derivative *dinky*-di means 'true' or devoted: a '*dinky-di Aussie*' is a 'true Australian'. However, this expression is limited to describing objects or actions that are characteristically Australian. The words *dinkum* or *dinky-di* and phrases like *true blue* are widely purported to be typical Australian sayings, even though they are more commonly used in jest or parody than as authentic slang.Similarly, *g'day*, a stereotypical Australian greeting, is no longer synonymous with "good day" in other varieties of English (it can be used at night time) and is never used as an expression for "farewell", as "good day" is in other countries.

Australian spelling is usually the same as British spelling, with only a few exceptions. *The Macquarie Dictionary* is generally used by publishers, schools, universities and governments as the standard spelling reference in Australia. Well-known differences to British spelling include:*program* is more common than 'programme'; *jail* is prevalent, *gaol*is generally still used in official contexts. There is a widely-held belief in Australia that controversies over spelling result from the "Americanization" of Australian English; the influence of American English in the late 20th century, but the debate over spelling is much older. For example, a pamphlet entitled *The So-Called "American Spelling"*, published in Sydney some time before 1901, explained that there is no valid etymological reason for the preservation of the *u* in such words as *honor, labor*, alluding to older British spellings which also used the *-or* ending. The pamphlet also claimed that "the tendency of people in Australasia is to excise the *u*, and one of the Sydney morning papers habitually does this, while the other generally follows the older form". The Australian Labor Party retains the *-or* ending it officially adopted in 1912. However, while many Australian newspapers did formerly "excise the u", in words like *colour*, this is no longer the case. The town of Victor Harbor has the Victor Harbour Railway Station and the municipality's official website speculates that excising the *u* from the town's name was originally a "spelling error". This continues to cause confusion in how the town is named in official and unofficial documents.

Australian English makes frequent use of diminutives. They are formed in various ways and are often used to indicate familiarity. Some examples are *arvo* (afternoon), *barbie* (barbecue), *footy* (Australian rules *football* or *rugby* league football). They also use litotes such as "you're not wrong" (= you're right).Many phrases once common to Australian English have become stereotypes and caricaturized exaggerations, and have largely disappeared from everyday use. Among the words less used are *cobber, strewth, you beaut* and*crikey*; and stereotypical phrases like *flat out like a lizard drinking* are rarely used without being jocular.The phrase *put a shrimp on the barbie* is a misquotation from a phrase made famous by Paul Hogan in tourism advertisements that are aired in

America. Australians use the word *prawn* rather than *shrimp*. Many Australians actually dislike the phrase *for this reason*, thus choose to ignore the person who says it, or point it out bluntly.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Discuss the influence of aboriginal dialects in the development of Australian English.

3.3   New Zealand English

There are marked similarities between New Zealand English and Australian English also with the BrE and AmE. Where there is a distinct difference between British and US spelling (such as *colour/color* and *travelled/traveled*), the British spelling is universally found in New Zealand - New Zealand English sticks very closely to British English in spelling. Some Americanisms have begun to creep in through their exposure in mass media (such as "thru" for "through" in very informal contexts like texting and on take-away signs), though these spellings are non-standard. Similarly, the British standard name for the last letter of the alphabet, *zed*, is standard within New Zealand.New Zealand is perhaps unique among English-speaking countries in its spelling of the word *fjord*, favouring the spelling *fiord*. This is particularly apparent in the name of *Fiordland*, a rugged region in the country's southwest.

Māori influence. Many local everyday words have been borrowed from the Māori language, including words for local flora, fauna, and the natural environment. The dominant influence of Māori on New Zealand English is lexical. A 1999 estimate based on the Wellington corpora of written and spoken New Zealand English put the proportion of words of Māori origin at approximately 0.6%, mostly place and personal names.Māori is also ever-present and has a significant conceptual influence in the legislature, government, and community agencies (e.g. health and education), where legislation requires that proceedings and documents are translated into Māori (under certain circumstances, and when requested). Political discussion and analysis of issues of sovereignty, environmental management, health, and social well being thus rely on Māori at least in part. Māori as a spoken language is particularly important wherever community consultation occurs.

In New Zealand, the word "milk bar" refers only to the milk bar of the 1950s and 1960s, a place that served non-alcoholic drinks, primarily milkshakes, tea and sometimes coffee. Ice creams were also served.A traditional difference, between the New Zealand "varsity" and the Australian "uni" (for "university"), is rapidly disappearing with the adoption of "uni" into New Zealand vocabulary.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Identify and assess the relationship between New Zealand English and Australian English/British English/American English

4.0 CONCLUSION

Australian and New Zealand English Dialects are important dialects because they have contributed enormously in the development of English language generally. Both dialects have influence from the aborigines giving rise to special pronunciations and lexical properties that mark them out as unique varieties of English. From the deep studies undertaken in the course of exploring these two varieties it is clear that both varieties have similarities with British English and American English and in some situations certain items have become absorbed as a result of communication. Some Australian actors use their natural accents in international films and television programs. Australian actors in non-Australian productions sometimes use exaggerated Broad Australian accents. The internet also helped increasing this dialectal mingling among the varieties.

More so, these varieties, AusEng and NzEng, have encouraged linguistic creativities in English language because of the influence of the aboriginal intrusions into the mainstream English language. Australian Aboriginal English (AAE) is a term referring to the various varieties of the English language used by Indigenous Australians. These varieties, which developed differently in different parts of Australia, vary along a continuum, from forms close to Standard English to more nonstandard forms. The furthest extent of this is *Kriol*, which is regarded by linguists as a distinct language from English. Speakers change between different forms according to social context.Several features of AAE are shared with creole languages spoken in nearby countries, such as *TokPisin* in Papua New Guinea, *Pijin* in the Solomon Islands, and *Bislama* in Vanuatu.AAE terms, or derivative terms, are sometimes used by the broader Australian community. This is particularly true in outback areas, where the indigenous population is generally more significant than in urban and suburban areas. This is also the same thing with the influence of Maori language on New Zealand English.

5.0 SUMMARY

Australian and New Zealand English are dialects of English with standard forms identifying the written and spoken aspects. Australian English has marked phonological and lexical properties that identify the users. Comparatively there are relationships between the form of the dialect and the function with that of British English. Because of the

influence of the entertainment industry and the internet, the influence of Americanisms is also observed in AusEng. In New Zealand variety, we observe a close relationship with Australian English. One of the reasons may be the proximity of both countries to each other. The influence of the aboriginal languages in both dialects is also very prominent. There are marked lexical, phonological and syntactic aberrations that are prominent in both dialects and which have been unconsciously or consciously absorbed in the mainstream English. Both varieties constitute part of the contemporary English usage as these dialects have been absorbed partially in Standard English which constitutes the language of instruction and interaction.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   Trace the historical development of Australian and New Zealand English.
2.   "Australian English and New Zealand English are same yet different" Discuss appropriately.
3.   Assess carefully the influence of aboriginal English on Australian English and Maori language on New Zealand English?
4.   Identify the marked phonological differences between AusEng/NzEng and Standard English.
5.   Select the lexical and syntactic elements in both dialects and compare their usage in Standard English.

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MODULE 3   CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN ENGLISH

Unit 1   Form and Function in Contemporary English
Unit 2   Contemporary Nigerian English (NE)
Unit 3   Popular Nigerian English (PNE)
Unit 4   Other Varieties of Contemporary Nigerian English
Unit 5   Select English Language Varieties in Africa

UNIT 1   FORM AND FUNCTION IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

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5.0   Summary
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall be able to study the concepts of 'form' and 'function' in contemporary English grammar. The form of a language is the basic grammatical patterns or the parts of speech used in generating sentences while the function explains the proper uses of each form in sentences. For the second language learner, complying with the rules of form and function application in English may not be very easy. This is because the intrusion of the learners' L_1 coupled with other interferences might lead certain linguistic creativities which may violate the rules of form and function. Considering the various roles words play in sentences, the possibility of generating unique grammatical forms abounds but the question of correctness is the bane of second language learners. We shall restrict this study to the form and function of words in sentences and the morphology (or the internal structure of words) of generating new words because these are the basic areas where violations of form and function are common in Contemporary English (CE).

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand the concept of form and function in Contemporary English
- distinguish between form and function in Contemporary English
- recognize the proper use of forms and function in Contemporary English
- avoid wrong use of form and function in Contemporary English
- identify the misapplication of form and function in Contemporary English.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

Knowing 'form' and 'function' is beneficial for us to realize the different parts of speech within a sentence because it will enable us to correctly position these in a sentence. "Form" can be broadly defined as "what it is" and "function" as "what it does" within a sentence.For example, knowing a word is an adjective allows us to place it before a noun or after a "verb to be", example:1) *A diligent man*. And 2) *Akin is diligent*.

Other than the different parts of speech, another aspect of grammar that is of great importance is the difference between "form" and "function".Examples of "form" are verb (or verb phrase), noun (or noun phrase), adjective (or adjective phrase) and adverb (or adverb phrase). Examples of "function" are subject, predicate, object, adjectival, adverbial and complement.It is critical to know the differences because (1) we can grammatically position or arrange all the parts within a sentence and (2) some "forms" can have many "functions" within a sentence, as in the following examples: (1) *The students are studying* And (2) *The students are completing the assignments.* In these sentences, "the students" and "the assignments" are both noun phrases. However, "the students" is the subject while the "the assignments" is the object.More examples can be seen in the following:

1)   *The man is gone.*
2)   *Uche is standing under the tree.*
3)   *Ahmed has placed the vase on the dinner table.*
4)   *Roy is a belly dancer.*
5)   *We have voted Peter the president of the video Club.*

In (1), "the man" – form: noun phrase; function: subject / "gone" – form: verb (past participle form); function: adjectival / "is gone" – form: verb phrase; function: predicate.

In (2), "Uche" – form: noun phrase (proper noun); function: subject / "under the tree" – form: prepositional phrase; function: adverbial / "is standing under the tree" – form: verb phrase; function: predicate.

In (3), "the vase" – form: noun phrase; function: object / "on the dinner table" – form: prepositional phrase; function: complement / "the dinner table" - form: noun phrase; function: object of preposition / "dinner" – form: noun; function: adjectival.

In (4), "a belly dancer" – form: noun phrase; function: complement / "belly" – form: noun; function: adjectival

In (5), "we" – form: noun phrase (pronoun); function: subject / "Peter" – form: noun phrase (proper noun); function: object / "the president of the Video club" – form: noun phrase; function: object complement.Good grammar books should have all the forms and functions explained thoroughly.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Carefully distinguish *form* from *function* in English grammar. Use adequate examples in your answer.

3.2 Form and Function in Contemporary Grammar

Form and function in contemporary English seemed to have different perspectives. It is possible in Contemporary English to have forms which are used in different functions because of the high linguistic creativity of the users of Contemporary English. Grammatical forms are meant to function stated ways in order to convey the linguistic meanings and at the same time following the rules of English language learning and communication. Every form is supposed to restricted function but considering the varieties of usage as we observed in module one. The varieties of usage implant new forms and new functions to grammatical categories. We have seen special uses where the nouns are meant to function as verbs and even the modifiers occupy the nominal range. Examples:

(1)   *She is the beautiful*
(2)   *Man the boat for me*
(3)   *She is the kill*

In (1), "the beautiful" – form: noun phrase; function: complement / "is" – form: verb (present form); function: predicate/ "she"- form: pronominal; function: noun phrase.

Note that the NP –"The beautiful" is a combination of two forms: "the" (determiner/ article) and "beautiful" (modifier/adjective). The group functions as noun phrase but the form "beautiful" has been applied to function as nominal in a creative sense. This type of variety is common in social settings and where certain linguistic idiosyncrasies are required. It is more of variety according to attitude.

In (2), "Man" – form: verb phrase (noun); function: predicate/ "the boat" – form: noun phrase; function: object / "for me" – form: prepositional phrase; function: adverbial.

Note that the VP – "Man" is a nominal but has been conditioned to perform a verbal function. Even the pronominal "me" has been brought to function inside a prepositional phrase. Thus "man" and "me" are forms applied to function for a special purpose beyond the real functions they do in grammar.

In (3), "she" – form: noun phrase; function: subject / "is" – form: verb phrase; function: predicate / "the kill" - form: noun phrase; function: subject complement

Note that the NP –"The Kill" is a combination of two forms:"the" (determiner/ article) and "kill" (verb). The group functions as noun phrase but the form "kill" has been applied to function as nominal in a creative sense. This type of expression or usage is common in the same variety that we explained in example (1) above.

As stated in Module 1, many reasons such as interference, especially the transliteration of the mother tongue (L_1) in the second language (L_2) could result in such 'form and function' aberrations. In Nigeria, for example, we have such expressions as:

(4)   *He has no shadow*
(5)   *His eyes speak volume*
(6)   *He is loving me now*

Inasmuch as these expressions have the forms in their proper functional places, the problem of semantics occurs. Most of the expressions in (4), (5) and (6) above are examples of Nigerian English which results from the users attempts at transmitting his L_1 into the L_2 situation. In this case the issue of form and function is sacrificed on the altar of meaning. This is one of the problems of realizing a true Standard English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

In the generation of sentences, form and function may affect meaning. Explain with adequate examples.

3.3 Form and Function in Contemporary Morphology

English words have structures but the second language users often misapply the structure. The field of English that studies the structure of words is called Morphology. Morphology identifies morphemes as distinct part of word structure. There are two types of morphemes: *Free* and *Bound Morphemes*. The free morphemes are those parts of a word that could stand on its own and make meaning while the bound morphemes are the parts of a word that depend on the free morpheme for its meaning. Bound Morphemes are mainly affixes like prefix, suffix and other forms of affixation. Examples are:

Kindness   *kind-*(free morpheme)   *-ness* (bound morpheme)
Faithful   *faith-* (free morpheme)   *-ful* (bound morpheme)
Members   *member-* (free morpheme) *-s* (bound morpheme)
Revisitre- (bound morpheme)   *-visit* (free morpheme)

The other 'free morphemes' are function words which carry mainly the grammatical information or logical relation in a sentence. Typical function words in English include articles [a, an, the], demonstratives [this, these, that, those], pronouns [I, me, you] and conjunctions [but, and, however].

Roots, Stems and Bases

The root of a word is the part that is always present sometimes with some modifications. In the set of words 'go, going, goes, gone', the root which is 'go' is always present. Thus, the root is the permanent member in the structure of words from where other members are hinged. The stem of the word is the part to which the last morpheme is added. It is thus the part in existence before any inflectional affixes (those additions required by the grammar such as indicators of number in nouns, tense in verbs). In the words 'cats' and 'learners' the {s} morpheme is added to the root 'cat' while the agentive morpheme {-er} is added to the root 'learner' to mean 'one who learns'. In 'learners' the root is 'learn' while 'learner' is the stem to which inflectional morpheme {-s} is added to give the additional meaning of 'more-than-one'. A Baseon the other hand is a unit to which any affix can be added. The affix may be inflectional (selected for grammatical reasons). Or derivational in which case it alters the meaning or grammatical category of the base. A root to which no affix has been added like 'girl' can be a base since it can take

an inflectional affix like {-s} to form the plural 'girls' or a derivational affix like {-ish} to turn the noun to an adjective 'girlish'. *In effect, all roots are bases but all roots are stems when they take inflectional suffixes. Thus, all roots are bases not all roots are stems*. In the word 'faithfulness', 'faith' is the root, stem of the whole word; it is also the stem of 'faiths' and the base of 'faithful' while 'faithful' becomes the base for 'faithfulness'.

In this regard the forms are most times misapplied because of the second language learners' attempts at using the language to serve their deserved purposes undermining the correctness. Affixations are wrongly applied to form words that will serve the desired purposes undermining the fact that it is against English morphological rules. Hence we hear such morphological aberrations as: *Faithfulnessly, unconsciousness, revisitedly, assistedly, impotented, illustrationed, kindnessly*etc.However, there are several other ways by which words are formed in Englishall these you will study in your course: *English Morphology.*

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Explain the various morphological problems caused by the form and function of English words to second language learners.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Form and function of words have been of concern to linguists because from old English times to the present, new words have continuously been added to the English language. English has borrowed a lot of words from many languages and each of these words represents forms with different functions. The continuous changes in morphology have occurred in the shape of words as affixes are borrowed from many languages to make new words, the tendency to misapply the rules abounds. As we have observed, morphological forms could be misapplied to generate wrong meanings. Form and function are useless where meaning is sacrificed on the altar of structure. The second language learners of English have the tendency of violating the application of these concepts because of the possibility of errors occurring in the learning process.

5.0   SUMMARY

Linguistic change occurs over time but some concepts are permanent. Recognizing forms is identifying the part of speech while recognizing function is applying the parts of speech correctly. Even in English morphology, there are forms that help in the generation of words and

these words have different functions. The recognition of the morphological forms and the generation of correct words to function properly in expressions are necessary for the second language learners. There are bound to be the problem of differences in spelling,pronunciation, morphology and semantics. When one word changes from limited to expanding use it is called *semantics broadness* and this occurs regularly. The second language learner of English, being conscious of these forms and their functions, will understand the nature of the language and the proper means of applying the rules.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   What are the differences between form and function in English?
2.   Identifying the forms is not a guarantee for proper function. Discuss?
3.   Generate ten sentences and explicate the forms and functions of the syntactic components
4.   Explain the possible morphological forms often misapplied by second language learners
5.   Explain other possible areas of violation of form and function in Contemporary English

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UNIT 2   CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN ENGLISH (NE)

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will study the English usage in Nigeria. English language is a second and national language to Nigeria. Hence, it is an important tool of cohesion among the vast multilingual structure of Nigeria. We will study the nature, structure and applications of Nigerian English in the contemporary time. The issues concerning the existence, acceptability and adoption of the type as a form of pedagogy will be examined. More so, we will assess the relevance in contemporary usage of English

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand Nigerian English as a form of contemporary English usage
- describe the nature of usage in Nigerian English
- distinguish Nigerian English from other English usage
- identify the pattern of Nigerian English in Nigeria
- assess the relevance of Nigerian English in Contemporary times.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Nigerian English is the English language variety as used in Nigeria. Nigerian English is the variety of English that has been used in the

region of the Niger, West Africa, for purposes of trade since at least the 18th century, at missions since the 19th century, and increasingly in education, administration, the media, and the 20th-century workplace, especially since the formation by the British of a unified Nigeria in 1914. The existence of a single Nigerian English continues to be debated and disputed within the country, in which there is a spectrum of usage from West African Pidgin English through varieties influenced by local languages, such as Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba, to a general usage similar to other English-speaking West African countries.

All varieties do not pronounce *r* in words such as *art, door,* and *worker.* There is a tendency toward full vowels in all syllables (e.g., seven pronounced "seh-ven," not "sev'n"). There is often no distinction between words like *chip* and *cheap* and ones like *caught, cot,* and *court.* In grammar, there is a tendency toward pluralizing nouns that are singular in Standard English (as in *I gave them some advices*) and the pronoun *themselves* is often used instead of *one another* (as in *That couple really love themselves*). Distinctive vocabulary includes borrowings and loan translations from local languages, e.g.*danshiki* from Hausa and *Agbada* from Yoruba ("a gown worn by men").

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the major influences in Nigerian English usage

3.2   Evidence for Nigerian English

Kachru (1992b) has described English Language in terms of three concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle. According to this classification, Nigerian English belongs to the Outer Circle, defined by Kachru as regions of the world that were formerly colonized by Britain and the US, where English Language was the language of empire building. In this circle, societal penetration has resulted in the development of different sub-varieties, depending on the geographical, cultural and linguistic contexts. The identifying features of these varieties given by Kachru include elements from phonology, grammar, lexis, collocations, idioms, discourse and style, code-mixing and code-switching, and a lack of homogeneity.

Phillipson (1992) recognizes the existence of a variety of English Language known as "Nigerian English" (NE). He described the dialect as "The varieties of English spoken by educated Nigerians, no matter what their language, have enough features in common to mark off a general type, which may be called Nigerian English" (88). Some linguists of the new Englishessay: there exists at the moment a single super ordinate variety of Standard English in Nigeria which can be

regarded as 'Nigerian English.' Several other linguists have either written about, or made passing references to this variety of English Language. Finally, Ayo Bamgbose, in his article, "Standard Nigerian English: Issues of Identification", not only identifies Nigerian English, but also analyzes some of its identifying features. However, not everyone believes in the existence of a Nigerian English. Some contend that what has been identified as Nigerian English is in reality "errors of usage." They find it quite derogatory and rather insulting to refer to such a variety of English Language. They would rather see any departure from the British variety (which was imported into Nigeria) as either deviant or incorrect. This same kind of situation prevails in the United States with regards to Ebonics, or African American Vernacular

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

There are still scholarly debates on the existence of Nigerian English. If you accept the existence of this variety, state your proof with basic examples

3.3   Variations in the Spoken Form

The regional variations in English in Nigeria are embedded mainly in the spoken form ofthe language. The greatest influence on the pronunciation of English by Nigerians is from thesound systems of the regional languages. According to Bamgbose (1971), most of the phoneticcharacteristics in the English of Nigerian can be traced to the transfer of features from their locallanguages. An example of such a typical feature is that Igbo speakers of English, even well-educated ones, tend to transfer the vowel system of their language into English. They usuallypronounce /folo/ for the word 'follow' instead of /foleu/because the sequence of/o/ and /eu/ in twosuccessive syllables is not permissible in Igbo. The Igbo speakers of English are also found ofpronouncing /proler/ for the word 'problem' instead of /problem/ thus replacing /o/ with /o/. Hausaspeakers of English tend to replace /p/ with /f/ in words like 'people', 'problem' 'pyramid' and soon. They tend to pronounce /fi:fl/, froblem/ , /firomid/ instead of /pi:pl/ , /problem/ and /piramid/.

They also tend to insert a vowel between a syllable-final consonant and the initial consonant of animmediately following syllabic, for instance, /rezigineisn/ instead of /rezignesn/ for the word'resignation'. In the same way, Hausa speakers of English also realize the dental fricatives /t/ and /d/as /s/ and /z/ which are alveolar fricatives. They tend to pronounce /sin/ instead of /өin/ for theword 'thin' and /zo/ instead of /do/ for the word 'the'. An interesting example according toBamgbose (1971) is the case of the phonemic distinction between /i:/ and /1/ as in 'seat' and 'sit','bead' and 'bid'.

Most Yoruba speakers of English do not make this distinction because it does not exist intheir first language. Also, they generally nasalize English vowels, which are preceded by nasalconsonants, for example, they pronounce /morin/ instead of/mɔ:niŋ/ for the word 'morning'. Someother variations in English are due to Yoruba dialectal interference. For example, an Ekitispeaker of English usually pronounces /saild/ instead of /tʃaild/ for the word 'child', while anIbadan or Ijesa speaker of English usually pronounces /sua/ instead of /suə/ for the word 'sure'.

Generally, most Yoruba speakers of English pronounce the following words faultily: /feri/ insteadof /veri/ for the word 'very', /tɔ:t/ instead of/θɔ:t/ for the word 'thought' /deiæ/ instead of /δeə/ for theword 'there' etc. All these are due to the fact that the phonemes /m/, /v/, /0/ and /δ/ are not presentin Yoruba phonology; so, they tend to replace these sounds with others that are near to them inYoruba phonology.On this, Ubahakwe (1979) contended that it has been observed that there is a great dealof similarity not only in the English accents of all the Southern Nigerian ethnic groups like: Edo,Efik, Tiv, Igbo and Yoruba, but also all along the West Coast of Africa. Similarly, as one moves upNorth, one notices a great deal of similarity in the English spoken by members of the numerousethnic groups who inhabit the area, like: Kanuris, Fulani, Hausa etc.

In a language contact situation such as it exists in Nigeria, it is to be expected that therewill be an interaction between the local languages and English which leads to regional variationsof the second language (English). The influence of the local languages on English is morerelevant here - in that the patterns of the languages phonological, lexical and grammatical tend tobe transferred into English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Discuss the effect of Nigerian languages on the spoken forms of Nigerian English

3.4   Variations in the Lexical and the Grammatical Forms

There are some variations in the use of English Language in Nigeria, which could benoticed in the lexical and the grammatical aspects. According to Bamgbose (1971), some of themore common lexical forms include borrowings like 'kiakia bus" (a Volkswagen bus; kiakia' is aYoruba word for 'quickly', and this is so named because it goes very fast). This is an example ofthe mixture of English with vernacular expressions which linguists call 'language interlarding'. Wealso have it in idiom translations like the common greetings exchanged by two

people on meetingeach other: 'How?' 'Not bad'; which is a near translation of the Igbo; 'kedu?' 'odimma' ('How areyou?' 'It is fine').There is another example like: 'I hear the smell'. The word 'hear' is a literal translation ofHausa word 'ji' which means 'hear'. Sometimes, the translation is indirect.This varies from region to region.

On the level of syntax and semantics, the variations could be noticed in the translation ofdifferent local proverbs and expressions into English. Examples could be found in novels ofNigerian writers like Achebe, Soyinka, Aluko, Okara, Ekwensietc who are from different regionsin Nigeria. Let us consider the following: (i) 'the lizard that jumped from the high iroko tree to theground said he would praise himself if no one else did', (ii) 'you can tell a ripe corn by its look'(Achebe, 1958:18).Also, in Okara's novel*The Voice*, we have this proverb: 'If you roast a bird of the air before afowl, the fowl's head aches' (p.89). We also have the following sentence extracted from a letterwritten by a son to his father in Aluko's*One Man One Machet*: *It is with much gladness in my heart that I write this letter to you*', (p.51).In Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest*, we have the following: *The pot that will eat fat, its bottom must be scorched*. These examples show that though they are all writing in English, there is the glaringinfluence of their local languages on the structures of their sentences and in the type of imagesthey used.The regional languages have different influences on English language because of bothpositive and negative transfer of their accents into English, though the varieties still manifest thesame 'langue' of the English language.

Grieve (1965) opined that the problem posed by the co-existence of these varieties is probably most keenly felt by examiners of English who are found todecide between 'right' and 'wrong" English. However, on the whole, the attitude of the WestAfrican Examinations Council (WAEC) has been that, while Standard English should form thebasis of examinations and tests, varieties (which experiences have shown are acceptable toeducated members of the appropriate community) may be accepted for examination purposes.

The problem of choosing a national language has been so complex since the firstRepublic that the governments have so far been avoiding taking any decision on the issuebecause of the multi-lingual nature of the country. The prospect for the foreseeable future is thata decision on the question will continue to be avoided. This means that English will still remainthe Nigerian national and official language, and this buttresses the suggestion that the regionalvarieties of English in Nigeria should be brought together and standardized so that a StandardNigerian English (SNE) will evolve in contemporary usage eventually.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Comment on the possibility of a Standard Nigerian English.

4.0   CONCLUSION

From the brief account of the regional variation in English in Nigeria, certainrecommendations and conclusions may be made and drawn.But the questions one will ask are: How much local or regional variation should beaccepted? What is genuinely a regional variant and what is morely an error? How much regionalvariation can be allowed without reducing the ability of the Nigerian speaker or user of English tocommunicate effectively with users of English from other countries? What pronunciation modelshould teachers aim at?On these, Bamgbose (1971) explained that it is generally agreed that the aim is not toproduce speakers of British Received Pronunciation (RP) (even if this were possible), but toevolve a local variety of English pronunciation such as will satisfy the minimum requirements ofnational and international intelligibility. In view of the existence of Nigerian languages alongsideEnglish, which causes regional variations according to Bamgbose (1971), the suggestion hasoften been made in the legislatures and also in the newspapers that the country should decide ona national language, it is generally agreed that the choice should be between one of the regionallanguages and English.

5.0   SUMMARY

The first goes to the teachers ofEnglish in our schools and colleges. The paper recommends that the teachers should focusmainly on the areas of dissimilarity between the regional languages and English for contrastivestudies. This focus should be on the areas of phonology, lexis, syntax and semantics. Moreassistance should be given to learners in the areas of dissimilarity between English and the locallanguages in order to facilitate learning and mastering the usedof the language.Secondly, since it is apparent that English has been firmly established as a secondlanguage in Nigeria bearing in mind that it is the official language, and it is likely to remain so for along time, the regional varieties whichare inevitable, should be brought together and standardized for use as contemporary Nigeria English. According to Salami (1968), with time many of thefeatures of the regional varieties are likely to become 'stable and eventually standardized and whichwill result in the emergence of a distinct Nigerian variety of English, probably associated with acertain level of education' as it is now.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions with adequate examples:

1.   What are the differences between NE form and SE form?
2.   Nigerian English is a conglomeration of languages. Comment on this.
3.   Discuss the phonological problems in Nigerian English.
4.   Explain the possible morphological forms often found in Nigerian English.
5.   Comment on the possibility of a Standard Contemporary Nigerian English.

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UNIT 3   POPULAR NIGERIAN ENGLISH (PNE)

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the emergence of Popular Nigerian English which was made popular by David Jowitt in 1991. According to him, there are regular linguistic features which are conversant in every expression of Nigerians. The use of this form of English cuts across ethnic and educational divide. Nigerian English (NE) is the English Spoken in Nigeria but Popular Nigerian English (PNE) is common among Nigerians within Nigeria even though it is not a standard form. We will study the emergence and forms of this variety in order to see the regularity of the form in contemporary Nigerian English usage.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand what Popular Nigerian English means
- recognize that Nigerian use PNE commonly everyday
- know the various forms and structures of PNE
- see PNE as constituting contemporary Nigerian English Usage
- distinguish between PNE and other varieties of English.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Each of the new Englishesin the world has distinct characteristics, as well as distinct linguistic and cultural identities, largely due to the different historical, geographical, political and socio-cultural factors that gave birth to them. Thus, Nigerian English will differ from either

Ghanaian or Indian English. Each variety, however, will also have various sub-varieties or dialects, reflecting its multilingual environment. The depth of impact at various linguistic levels in each variety will be determined by the degree of localization of English.The unique nature of new Englishes poses several problems, among which are those of definition, identification, classification, norm and intelligibility. The designation "Nigerian English" for instance, is somehow deceptive: does an Hausa speaker of NE use English exactly the same way as a Yoruba, or an Igbo speaker? If the answer is in the negative – which happens to be the case in this instance – then the next question is: what then constitutes NE? The arguments advanced by both language specialists and teachers of language indicate that there is really no consensus yet as to what constitutes NE. The opinions ranges from an outright rejection of its existence, to those who take its existence for granted and use the term without defining or questioning it. In between these two extremes is a continuum of various definitions, descriptions and analyses.

Another issue touched upon is that of language attitudes. The opinion of most analysts seems to be that NE does not yet have full acceptance among Nigerians, although the reasons advanced have been mostly non-linguistic in nature. This unfavorable attitude might be attributed to the activities of purists who feel the recognition of an NE will spell doom for EL in Nigeria. Numerous linguistic data abound, with sound theoretical arguments, to prove the existence of a localized and acculturized form of EL that can be safely referred to as Nigerian English. Not minding the arguments of purists, however, more and more people are beginning to recognize and to have a positive attitude towards NE, although it may still take a while before it receives wide acceptance among the general populace. The following quote from Adekunle (1985:36-38) is quite revealing and appropriate at this point:

> The English language has, as a result of many years of active use in the Nigerian speech community … becomes part of Nigeria's contemporary environment and behavior. […] It is an artifact whose foreign derived components have in the process of its evolution combined with native Nigerian elements to make it local.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Comment on the characteristics of Nigerian English.

3.2   The Emergence of PNE

David Jowitt in his book *Nigerian English Usage* (1991) identified certain consistent linguistic forms associated with the way Nigerians use English language in their daily communication. He identified the popular forms which have remained acceptable among the vast ethnic, academic and social divide. He called these acceptable forms of Nigerian English Usage 'Popular Nigerian English' (PNE). The issue of intelligibility of these forms is also dealt with in the work. The most representative opinion on this, however, is that PNE is indigenous to Nigeria and its most basic usage is intra-national, which it does well. On the question of international intelligibility, according to Jowitt, the opinion is that PNE is to a large extent intelligible and that whatever difficulties encountered along those lines are not peculiar to PNE alone, but also to the users of all the other varieties of English Language worldwide. The difficulties encountered by the PNE speakers communicating with an American English speaker will be similar in many respects to that encountered by an Australian English speaker communicating with a New Zealander.

The features that have been proposed as identifying characteristics of PNE are mostly similar in nature at the levels of phonetics and phonology, syntax, lexis and semantics; discourse, speech acts and stylistics to the other varieties of English worldwide. These features share a lot of common ground with those of the new Englishes and several others. Using the theory of language change and linguistic variation, Jowittputs forth cultural needs, geographical and linguistic factors as responsible for changes in English Language usage in Nigeria. These changes, according to him, are rapid and most far-reaching in the semantic component of the language and are the result of inexorable pressure in the social environment of the language. Therefore, PNE is an aggregate of heterogeneous grammatical structures common to Nigerian usage, having varying pronunciation peculiarities as well as socially constrained usage of some lexical items.

Jibril (1982) is quick to warn that there is no unanimity in the assessment of Nigerian linguists as to what he calls the "citizen status" of NE. He nevertheless proceeds to argue that PNE does not have to possess a common linguistic feature to qualify it as Nigerian, since even British English (BE) itself has local variations and dialectal features. Thus, English Language does not have to be homogeneous to qualify as being indigenous to Nigeria.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Differentiate Nigerian English (NE) from Popular Nigerian English (PNE).

3.3   Forms of PNE

The following are some clearly marked out but consistent expressions that are common in the form of Nigerian English which Jowitt (1991) christened 'Popular Nigerian English'. The identifying features of this variety include elements from phonology, grammar, lexis, collocations, idioms, discourse and style, code-mixing and code-switching, and a lack of homogeneity:

i.   Category Shift: Reclassification of noun/adjective/adverb as verb
Horn before overtaking!
Off the light!
It tantamounts to fraud
I was not chanced/opportuned to come.

ii.   Reclassification of countable nouns as uncountable
give chance
take bribe
make mistake

iii.   Progressive in State Verbs
I am seeing/hearing/smelling.
I am not having much money.
Let me be going.

iv.   Object Patterns
He allowed them go.
She made him to work hard.
The child refused going to bed.
She avoided to meet him.
She didn't arrive on time – she always likes to disappoint.
It was a wonderful party - we enjoyed!

v.   Prepositional and Non-Prepositional Verbs
You should dispose your car.
Why did you not reply my letter?
The library comprises of many sections.
They are demanding for money.
He emphasized on the importance of rest.
I regret of not arriving earlier.

Let us request for more lectures.

Misapplied Prepositions:
in --> at: *at my old age*,
of --> at: *as at now*,
on --> at: *at my arrival*,
at --> on: *on the table*,
in --> on: *to deal on*,
in --> with: *with the belief*,
for --> to: *I left Lagos to Ibadan*,
except --> unless: *Nobody knows the answer, unless myself*,
unless --> except: *You cannot receive the money except you show your I.D. card*

vi.   Double marking
He did not went.
Did she wanted him?
Did you forgot the issue?

vii   Spelling Odds
Wrong Formation of Parts of Irregular Verbs: *hitted, splitted, grinded, beated*
Inflexion of Relevant Words of Idioms: *They ran for their dear lives*.
Spelling Errors (faulty inflexions due to wrong analogy): *dinning, strenght, maintainance*

viii   Tense
Past Perfect Instead of Present Perfect:
In 1986 the nation was selling her crude oil at 28 Naira per barrel. Today, the price of oil had tumbled to an all-time low of 10 Naira per barrel.

Might Have: *After the referee might have arrived the match will begin*

Reported Speech: *Yusuf said he is entering the house when his brother drove off.*

ix   Copying (syntactically redundant use of words):
Subject Copying: *My father he works under NEPA*
Object Copying in Relative Clauses: *The car which he bought it last year is already giving trouble.*
Relative and Possessive Sequence: *I know the man who his father died.*
Of Before which: *It was a very horrible experience of which I hope it will not happen again.*

Other Cases:
in case -->*should in case*,
better -->*more better*,
can -->*can be able*,
repeat -->*repeat again*

x.   Loan Words

Food:
akara (Yoruba: small deep-fried bean balls),
buka (Haussa: cheap eating-place),
ogbono (Igbo: soup based on the seed of the Williamson tree),
ogogoro, *kai-kai* etc. (various languages: local gin)

Dress:
agbada (Yoruba: large gown worn by men, often embroidered at the neck and cuffs and with flowing sleeves that can be hitched over the shoulders),
danshiki (Hausa: gown with wide armpits reaching to the knees)

Forms of Address and Titles:
alkali (Hausa: Muslim who has been to Mecca),
oba (Yoruba: primarily a specific title, often used loosely to refer to any traditional ruler), *obi*, *eze* (Igbo: specific titles),
oga (Yoruba: big man, master, fairly general in the South),
baba (Hausa, Yoruba: father, old man, fairly general in the West and North)

Traditional Religion:
babalawo (Yoruba: diviner),
Ifa (Yoruba: oracle),
chi (Igbo: personal god),
ogbanje (Igbo: changeling)

Interjections, Discourse Particles:
a-a! (Yoruba: strong surprise, disbelief),
... *abi*? (Yoruba: isn't it?),
kai, chei (Hausa, Igbo: strong surprise),
ooo! (various languages: yes),
... *o(h)*! (Yoruba: appendable to almost any word, indicates speaker's personal involvement, implications according to context, e.g.: *sorry-oh*!)

xi.   Mixture of Styles

Formal style in informal context:
How are you? I hope you are in good health.
For your information, I arrived home on the 28th of March.

Informal style in formal context:
I was sorry to hear that your mother kicked the bucket.

Clichés:
Clichés of formal style:
in the final analysis,
in no small measure,
to mention but a few,
the order of the day

Clichés of informal style:
men of the underworld,
the national cake,
spread like a bushfire in the harmattan,
we have a long way to go

Proverbs:
SE proverbs:
(What is) sauce for the goose is (also) sauce for the gander.
(There is) no smoke without fire.

NE proverbs:
Nobody is above mistake.
God never sleeps.
What a man can do a woman can also do.

Direct translation from MT:
When two elephants fight, the grass suffers.

Pidgin proverbs:
Monkey dey work, baboon dey chop.
Do me I do u, God no go vex

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

"PNE is a compilation of grammatical errors not a standard". Discuss this proposition.

4.0   CONCLUSION

The question of whether there is PNE should not arise, since it is a known fact that in language contact situations a second language (L_2) is bound to be influenced by its linguistic environment. The existence of different Englishes has a wide acceptance among linguists internationally. The three different approaches to usages in Nigerian English, according to Bamgbose (1982)are the interference, the

deviation and creativity approaches. Thus,PNE usages are influences from local languages (from "interferences" from the mother tongue – L_1). PNE ignores the normal processes of language development such as semantic extension and the creation of new idioms, which cut across all L_1 backgrounds. Although, PNE in comparison with "native English" could be labeled as "deviantmodel" but certain typical PNE usages are the results of creativity. PNE is popular because it utilizes the resources of local languages as well as English Language to create new expressions and idioms or give newer lives to old clichés. It must also be remarked here that not all PNE usages can be said to have arisen out of linguistic creativity.

5.0   SUMMARY

In all the examples of the forms of PNE given here, none of them is solely an adequate criterion to characterize the entire spectrum of PNE. There are often recurrent issue of how and where to draw the line between usages that are genuinely Nigerian in nature and those that are outright errors of usage. PNE is not really the usage to be used as the model or standard. All usages not in conformity with the British model is a deviation and a corruption and places PNE at the backdrop of linguistic inferiority since it has no defined form. In PNE we see what Bamgbose(1982:105) calls the "natural and spontaneous usage of the local educated Nigerian user of English". PNE cuts across educational levels. It the language of the public for the public by the public. It even has influence in formal settings in Nigeria.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   Discuss the syntactic aberrations in PNE.
2.   Explain the effects of code switching in PNE.
3.   What factors are responsible for the popularity of PNE.
4.   "NE is a higher version of PNE". Explain this proposition.
5.   Assess the type of recurring errors common in PNE.

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UNIT 4   OTHER VARIETIES OF CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN ENGLISH

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will examine two other most important aspects of Nigerian English: Pidgin and Creole. This complements units 2 and 3 of this module. Most Nigerians, whether educated or not, prefer to communicate effectively within their environment. This effective communication format involves the use of the commonly used forms of English in order to function effectively as members of their communities. Pidgin English has grown to the status of urban English while Creole is almost emerging from it. Here, we will study Nigerian Pidgin and Creole forms in the light of their contemporary relevance in Nigerian use of English.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- trace the beginning of pidgin and creole in Nigeria
- see Pidgin and Creole as varieties of Nigerian English
- distinguish pidgin from Creole in Nigerian English
- assess the importance of Pidgin and creole in Nigeria
- discuss Pidgin and Creole as part of Nigeria's linguistic development.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

A pidgin is a simple language that arises from contacts between people with different mother tongues, in situations where relatively uncomplicated ideas are being exchanged. It is the *corrupt* form of any language. The speech is generally slow and supported by mime and gesture; the vocabulary is basic and taken mostly from the language of the most important group of speakers; and the grammar has much in common with that typically used by native speakers talking to non-native speakers, or by mothers talking to young children. A simplified pidgin can develop rapidly: if it proves useful, it becomes more complex, and hence flexible. If it becomes a mother tongue, it is expanded to fulfill all its speakers' needs. Such mother tongues are known as *creoles*. Developed pidgins are most likely to be found in multilingual communities, where they are invaluable as lingua francas. They can be found in Papua New Guinea, for example, where there are over 700 languages for an estimated population of five million, and in West Africa, where as many as one-fifth of the world's languages occur.

Pidgins have probably existed for millennia. Evidence suggests that pidginized versions of Latin evolved into the Romance languages, and there was certainly a medieval lingua franca in use during the Crusades. Pidgins with vocabularies from European languages developed extensively in the wake of European expansionism from the 15th century onward. Each pidgin, like each language, is unique but they share some characteristics: word order is fixed; there is little or no inflection; negation usually involves a "no" word in front of the verb; nouns and verbs are regular; the small vocabulary is used creatively; and speakers use local idioms, metaphors, and proverbs.

There is a closed relationship between pidgin and creole. A pidgin becomes a creole when it has grown to the status of becoming a mother tongue in a given linguistic setting where many languages are in use. Pidgins and creoles are products of multilingual settings. Creoles are products of a multilingual settings but purposely used for social interaction within the vast complex linguistic make up of a given geographical setting. A creole in some sense can become a standard pattern for social interaction but it contains elements of pidgin varieties and elements of the standard language forms in the community.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Pidgin and Creole are unconscious linguistic forms in Nigerian English usage. Assess this proposition properly.

3.2   Nigerian Pidgin English

Nigerian Pidgin is related in a way to the other "Pidgin" of West Africa and the Caribbean's. People from various linguistic backgrounds migrate into urban towns or cities for one reason or the other. Because they are from different linguistic backgrounds this brings about a search for a common language for communication. The language that evolved in the case of Nigeria is called *Nigerian Pidgin English* (NPE) and its origin can be traced back to the arrival of the Portuguese and English speaking missionaries including colonialists in large numbers in the Southern part of Nigeria in 1842. Although, these missionaries were resisted by the natives at the initial stage, some of them wanted to establish closed relationship with the Whiteman. These groups of Nigerians were employed in the mission houses, the European firms, centres and hospitals. Some were employed either as cooks, stewards, gardeners, interpreters or teachers. These groups of Nigerians needed to communicate with the Europeans.

With independence and mass urban migration coupled with the growth of many towns, many tribes and races which constitute Nigeria began interacting linguistically. In fact, much of what is observed and called *Nigerian Pidgin English* in Nigeria by the uninitiated is either 'bad' (incompetently constructed English); English passed off as 'Pidgin' by the well-educated elite proficient in the use of Standard English, or 'broken' (manifestly incompetent) English connected by the uneducated and minimally educated, in other words, spontaneous *ad hoc*Englishlike language constructed to meet certain imperative communicative needs in a given urban or social setting.

Agheyisi (1984) has identified two varieties of Nigerian Pidgin English: varieties A and B.Variety A is what she calls the *Nigerian dialect of the original English based on West Africa Pidgin*. This variety is spoken by people who have a high fluency in the language and who need to use it regularly like traders, mechanics, small business entrepreneurs, taxi-drivers and messengers in offices.Variety B is the one used by people who lack linguistic competence in the language and covers all the degrees of fluency that fall into the range of the state called *inter-language stage in second language learning*. She says that Variety A approximates to the purest form of the English based Pidgin.

The status of Nigerian Pidgin as a language is a point that is still in contention. Some linguists believe that Nigerian Pidgin English has reached a stage in its development where it can be accorded the status of a language. Others are of the opposite view that the pidgin has not attained the status of a language. There is no doubt that when Nigerian Pidgin English emerged, it was meant to serve as a means of

communication between Nigerians and Europeans first for trade purposes and then later between Nigerians of different ethno-linguistic groups. English language is the superstratum while the indigenous languages – Nigerian languages – serve as substrata, depending on the area where the pidgin is spoken. Even though the colonialists have left, the Nigerian Pidgin still remains and has even developed. It is now used mainly in culturally heterogeneous areas like urban areas especially in Port-Harcourt (Rivers state), Warri, Sapele (DeltaState), Benin City (EdoState) and Lagos (LagosState). It is also used in culturally homogenous areas in rural areas like Abraka, Ughelli, Sapele (DeltaState), Aba, Umuahia (AbiaState) etc.

Nigerian Pidgin English has also been very seriously proposed as Nigeria's national language. The basis for this proposal is that Nigerian Pidgin English is the most, widely used language of communication in Nigeria and the easily acquired second language in Nigeria – according to the proponents of this option. Both claims just mentioned are actually erroneous. The coastal regions of Nigeria which had the earliest sustained contacts with the British and their English language, especially the Warri Delta Zone, is the main geographical base for Nigerian Pidgin English; the language is also well used in parts of Edo State in the former Midwestern Nigeria; less used in Northern Nigeria.

Nigerian Pidgin English itself, like any other natural language, is a complex communication tool. As such, it is not the language of most Nigerians, and definitely needs a considerable period or dedicated learning as a second language before most Nigerians can become proficient in its use. Much more seriously, Nigerian Pidgin English is not yet really indigenous to Nigeria: although its semantic base is largely indigenous; and its form (sound and writing) is evolving according to the formal rules of indigenous Nigerian languages, English language is still the perceived source for the words, concepts, and even sentence structure of Nigerian Pidgin English.

The principal users of Nigerian Pidgin English, in Nigeria, do indeed identify with the language so closely that they consider it indigenous to Nigeria and assume erroneously thereby that the rest of Nigerians relate psychologically towards the language as they do.But, in actual fact, Nigerian Pidgin English is foreign to most Nigerians, foreign to the well – educated elite, very proficient in English, who do not want any other 'English' to 'corrupt' their English, and foreign to the uneducated or semi–educated who are forced to learn it as their 'English'.As a language created originally to serve the local and mostly unsophisticated needs of people from many different linguistic backgrounds, the communication potential of Nigerian Pidgin English is low – as regards its importance in contemporary realities of science and technology.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Assess the status of Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) in Nigerian linguistic Environment.

3.3 Nigerian Creole English

The name *creole* comes from Spanish *criollo* meaning "native." In the 16th century, a "creole" was a person of European ancestry born in the New World. Over the next two centuries, it was applied to children of mixed race and then to Africans born in the Americas. By the early 1800s, "creole" could be applied to a language. There are clear historical, geographic, and linguistic factors linking all the Creole Englishes in West Africa, the Caribbean, Central America, and the United States. There are four main creoles in the United States: (1) *Gullah*, or *Geechee*, is spoken mainly in the Sea Islands, Florida, Carolina (especially the Carline Low Country), and Georgia. It is the language used at home by perhaps a quarter of a million people in this region and several thousand more who have migrated to New York. Its names probably come from either the Gola people of Liberia or from the OgeecheeRiver plantations of Georgia. (2) *Afro-Seminole* is a Creole English spoken mainly in parts of Texas and Mexico. It is almost certainly derived from Gullah when 18th-century slaves escaped from Florida and Georgia and settled with Seminoles. (3) *African American Vernacular English*, or *U.S. Black English*, covers the entire spectrum from standard U.S. English to varieties similar to Gullah, which probably developed on plantations in the southern states from Texas to Virginia (at the time of the Civil War, over 90 percent of African Americans lived in the South). (4) *Native American Pidginized English* is a form of pidgin English that was probably used between some Native Americans and English speakers and there may be relics of it in the words of Native American languages that were common currency both in U.S. English and Native American languages, for example *papoose* and *chuck* (food).

Creole languages are found in communities where a pidgin language earlier served as a useful lingua franca. Creoles are often the sole language of a community and so are capable of fulfilling all their speakers' linguistic needs. In being transformed into a creole, a pidgin's vocabulary is expanded and its structures made increasingly subtle, flexible, and precise. Creoles, which involve a language shift, are often caused by the disruption of normal speech communities. The best-known examples are found in the Caribbean. Caribbean creoles evolved as a result of the slave trade, when as many as ten million Africans, speaking perhaps 500 different mother tongues, were sold into slavery.

Africans working on plantations were obliged to relinquish their ancestral languages and communicate in pidgin forms of a European tongue. According to *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia* (2008) "Children born into slave communities used the pidgin for all their communication needs and thus transformed it into a Creole. More recently, creoles related to English have developed in many other places including Cameroon, Nigeria, Hawaii, and Papua New Guinea. In such areas, speakers found that the pidgin lingua franca helped communication between different groups so much that it was increasingly spoken at home and children acquired it as a mother tongue." Thus, a creole emerges for interaction within a social milieu where many languages are in use. It is a product of necessity because it emerges when there is the need for a generally accepted pattern of communication that cuts across the various languages, social classes and educational status.

Warri English as Creole

Warri is a popular commercial town in the Niger-delta region of Nigeria. It was one of the towns that had early interaction with the European merchants on the shores of West Africa. The area is known for palm produce and wood. More so, with its closeness to the Atlantic, Warri was also one of the important routes for Slave trade. With the discovery of oil, Warri became one of the popular oil cities with the settlement of the major oil companies in the area and the siting of one of Nigeria's refineries. The early European traders that came to Warri included the Portuguese, the Dutch, The British and the Italians.

Warri has a complex linguistic make up. There are over 10 languages struggling for prominence in the city. They include Urhobo, Itsekiri, Isoko, Ijaw, Okpe etc. Itsekiri is a language with residues of the Yoruba language inherent. The traditional ruler of Warri is known as the Olu of Warri and is the traditional ruler of the Itsekiri people. Many people see his position as a political imposition by the then Midwestern region government because of the Itsekiri and Yoruba linguistic and cultural affinity. The Itsekiris are not the most populated tribe in Warri. The Urhobos and the Ijaws are more in population but with intermarriages the Itsekiris seem to have anchor in almost all the major tribal groups within the area.

The English language form in Warri began first as pidgin because of the need to interact with the European traders and slave merchants. Then the rise of Standard English form as a result of western education and the rising educational level of the inhabitants of Warri coupled with the settlement of Europeans who came in as oil explorers in the area. Then there is the emergence of Creole forms which resulted from the need to

interact across tribes, status and education in the region. We have this developmental pattern of English in Warri:

Pidgin

Standard ——————— + {local dialects}
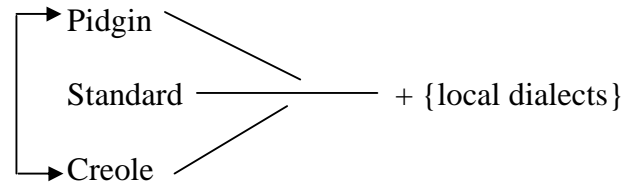
Creole

Creole in Warri is not for official interaction but used as a generally acceptable form for interaction in social and other settings. It is also possible for staff of companies to interact in creole while maintaining Officialese in the written interaction within the office. Creole is mainly an oral thing. It is not written down as an official language form but is generally and consciously accepted by the people for daily interaction. Considering the popularity of this form of English in use in Warri, it was nicknamed *WafarianLangwa* meaning *the language of Warri inhabitants* even though this form of social language is already in use in the outskirts of Warri and nearby towns like Sapele, Ughelli, Asaba and even Benin City. The use of this form is also commonly experienced in even far away towns like Lagos and Abuja due to urban migration.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

What are the possible reasons for the emergence of Creole in Warri?

4.0   CONCLUSION

English language is mainly used by the elites, Hausa by the Hausa speaking people of North, Yoruba in the West, Igbo in the East and other minor languages scattered here and there. But Pidgin English is understood and used by people from all the groups named above especially for interaction and business transactions. Apart from its use in advertisement, it is also used in political campaigns, News in Pidgin, church sermons and even in the print media where in newspaper columns we have Pidgin English extensively used. Pidgin English is also equally used in the transmission of some programmes both at the National and state levels by different television houses. At the National level, "Soap Opera" programmes like "The New Masquerade", "Second Chance" and various messages especially on ExpandedProgrammes on Immunization (EPI), anti-drug war, all uses Pidgin English in getting their messages across to people. In Warri, the creole is used in the media, interaction and business. Pidgin and Creole English have been able to provide some concrete evidence for a Nigerian variety of English. There is a preponderance of evidence for the existence of a Nigerian variety of English. The general users of the English language

in Nigeria, has been influenced by the local languages, customs, belief systems and cultures, enough to give it a flavor and characteristics that could be distinctly identified as Nigerian.

5.0   SUMMARY

All social classes in Nigeria now understand and use Pidgin English. On the individual level, it is fast becoming a favourite especially amongst students and youths. The main argument against Pidgin English being a language is that it is a hybrid of two languages and it is not an autonomous linguistic system. But looking at Nigerian Pidgin today, we see that it has undergone a lot of changes and development and it is taking on a shape different from that of the languages of its derivation. Another thing is that, it is fast becoming an integral part of everyone's repertoire, thus, even in the midst of people who speak or who are from the same ethnic group, preference is usually given to Pidgin English rather than to the common language. Also, for the inhabitants of Warri, creole and/or Pidgin English hasbecome the first language of the inhabitants and serves as the "mother tongue" for the growing children because it is the first language they encounter and learn. It is obvious from the above that when two or more languages come into contact, there is, of necessity, going to be mutual influences. It is clear to note that English influenced the languages with which it has come into contact around the world, but English itself has been – and continues to be – influenced by other languages, and this influence is responsible for the new forms of English mushrooming all over the globe. The implication of this is quite significant, not only for contact linguistics, but also for the teaching and the learning of English to, and by the speakers of other languages.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   Explain the factors that gave rise to Nigerian Pidgin.
2.   Discuss the reasons for the emergence of creole in Warri.
3.   Carefully analyze the roles of Pidgin English in Nigeria.
4.   Assess the extent of acceptance of Pidgin English in Nigeria.
5.   Is it possible to have more creoles in Nigeria?

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UNIT 5   SELECT ENGLISH LANGUAGE VARIETIES IN AFRICA

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1.0   Introduction
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall study select dialects of English in Africa. We shall study the dialects of English in South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia. There are other English speaking countries in Africa like Kenya, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, Zambia, Namibia etc. Cameron is the only officially bilingual country in Africa with English and French spoken widely. The countries are selected randomly because of their significance in Africa. Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa and out of every six blacks in the world a Nigerian is one. Ghana had earlier independence and has had established English dialect because of its multilingual setting. South Africa, has had years of apartheid as a result of the emigration and occupation of the country by many white races. The English in South Africa is unique because of the standard form of the dialect. Liberian English is also unique because of the influence of America after the abolition of slave trade.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- recognize African English dialects
- prove the existence of such varieties
- use the varieties within the limits of their acceptance
- assess the level of acceptability of the dialects
- compare African English dialects with those of Britain and America
- distinguish the marked linguistic form in each African dialect of English.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

It is now a commonplace to say that languages change over time and space and that this change is, indeed, an essential characteristic of human language. The view that language should be fixed and unchanging for all time is now thoroughly discredited, at least among applied linguists and language teachers. How entirely natural, therefore that English used in environments different from those in which it grew up so to speak, should mutate to suit its new environments. There is, however, a difference between acknowledging language development and change in a developing society in which the main force for change comes from first language speakers and accepting the same kind of changes and developments occurring in an environment where English is seldom used in the home and where another language or languages may directly or indirectly influence those processes.

The situation is common in many former British colonial territories, among them, for example, Anglophone Africa, the Indian Sub-Continent, Malta and Singapore. In these environments, English may be used for any or all of a variety of official purposes, such as policing, military activities, the Civil Service, etc. English may also be the medium of education for any or all levels of state and/or private education. (Indeed, this situation is also found in some countries where Britain had no colonial interests; for example, Ethiopia.)A fairly typical example is seen in Ghana, where roughly 9 million inhabitants share some fifty-plus languages (Sey 1973). English is officially the medium of secondary and tertiary education and virtually all the public services. Major newspapers are published in English and there is considerable exposure to English on the public broadcasting service. This exposure has been in place since well before World War II; it is therefore the case that, particularly in ethnically mixed urban environments, many Ghanaians have grown up in situations encouraging the acquisition both outside and inside the classroom (though not necessarily in the home) of a local variety of English. It is not theoretically adequate to explain, therefore, the development of these Local Varieties (LV's) in individual speakers solely by reference to "interference" or "transfer" from the various other languages spoken in the environment; the evolved forms of English in common currency must also be taken into account here.

This is not to say that there is now no influence at all from these other languages rather, the acquisition processes relating to LV's of English are qualitatively different from those experienced by a German or a Japanese learner of English, since the opportunities to acquire the language outside the classroom in Germany or Japan are fewer. There is,

however, often a greater availability of the native speaker model (on language learning tapes, etc.). The influence of the L1 is that much more direct given the more restricted access to any forms of the target language; the target variety is almost certainly a metropolitan version. Kachru (1992) calls the latter "Performance Varieties" (where the learners' output is influenced hardly at all by English in use locally), as opposed to "Institutionalized Varieties" (where locally used English has a profound effect) in Second Language environments. The four criteria he advances for the existence of Institutionalized Varieties are:

• an extended range of uses, as described above
• an extended range of registers or styles (for example, the English used in a market between fellow nationals not having a common language as compared to that of an undergraduate lecture)
• nativisation of registers and styles, formal and contextual
• a body of nativised English literature, marked linguistically as localised (for example the writings of Amos Tutuola or Gabriel Okara in Nigeria)

A further point is the localised forms of English, together with the local language(s), which form a 'register range' for bi-lingual speakers such that certain contexts call forth different languages and different varieties of each. This register range will include mixing both the two codes (code switching) and/or, for effect, two or more varieties. This in essence is the case with the local varieties of English in Africa. Most countries in Africa are purely multilingual, for example Nigeria is a country of over 140 million people with over 1000 languages and thousands of dialects. English, therefore, became the unifying language for communication amongst the heterogeneous society. It will not be surprising having a unique Nigerian dialect of English with influences and effect from the vast Nigerian society and culture. This is the peculiar case of English in Anglophone African states

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the reasons for the likelihood of non-existence of Standard English Variety in Anglophone Africa

3.2   South African English (SAEng)

South African English is a dialect of English spoken in South Africa and in neighbouring countries with a large number of Anglo-Africans living in them, such as Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe.South African English is not unified in its pronunciation: this can be attributed to the fact that English is the mother tongue for only 40% of the white inhabitants (the remainder mostly having Afrikaans as their mother

tongue) and only a tiny minority of black African inhabitants of the region. (In addition some 94% of the 1.1 million inhabitants of Asian descent, and 19% of the 4 million Coloured, or mixed race, inhabitants are English mother tongue speakers.) The dialect can be identified, however, by the multiple loanwords drawn largely from Afrikaans, but increasingly also from Zulu and other indigenous languages as well as Greek, Portuguese and various Indian languages. Some of these words, like "trek", have seeped into general English usage throughout the globe.

The dialect was exposed to a humorous treatment by Robin Malan in his book 'Ah Big Yaws', first published in 1972. The book is concise, and conforms more or less to the spoken dialect of Cape Town in 1974–76, in the Northern Cape Town suburbs of Bellville and Durbanville, where Malan resided, and in the University town of Stellenbosch, where he was at the time a lecturer of spoken English. This book is often considered a high point of South African written wit, although it is now considered an important cultural time-capsule, as it also gives a pocket outline of white South Africa immediately before the social and political chaos of the 1980s. The fourth edition of the *Dictionary of South African English* was released in 1991, and the *Oxford Dictionary* released its South African English dictionary in 2002.

The first codification and characterisation of the dialect was done in 1971 by Robin Malan, then a lecturer in English at Stellenbosch University. His monograph, called "Ah Big Yaws", was intended to be a humorous look at the Afrikaans-influenced English of white, urban Afrikaans-English speaking South Africans (WUESA's in acronym, humorously renamed 'Woozers' by Malan).In his foreword, Malan noted that there are a lot more permutations on English Dialects in South Africa, e.g. English modified by Bantu languages such as Xhosa, Sepedi, Zulu and so forth, and noted there are many permutations where English would be a secondary, tertiary or even more remarkably a quaternary language for many speakers. He therefore confined his monograph to the dialect he had most contact with.Malan also noted that his work is the same vein as 'Let Stalk Strine' and 'Fraffly Well Spoken' by Afferbeck Lauder, humorous digs at Australian English and the accent of the British upper class.

Pronunciation

With respect to phonology, South African English is closely related to Australian and New Zealand English and to the English of southeastern England, in which the Southern Hemisphere dialects have their roots. Afrikaans and Xhosa have heavily influenced only those living in largely Afrikaans or Xhosa areas.The most noticeable difference in South African pronunciation is probably the flat "i". This is a part of the

vowel shift that has occurred in South Africa as well as New Zealand. One difference between British South African English and New Zealand English is in the pronunciation of 'ar' and 'ow', as in the pronunciation of the sentence 'park the car downtown'.

While there are similarities with Australian English, there are also a number of key differences. For instance, South African English does not have the rising intonation found in Australian English.English spoken by mother-tongue speakers of Bantu languages is often influenced by intonation and pronunciation of their languages.

Vocabulary

There are words that do not exist in British or American English, usually derived from Afrikaans or African languages, although, particularly in Durban, there is also an influence from Indian languages. Terms in common with North American English include 'freeway' or 'highway' (British English 'motorway'), 'cellphone' (British and Australian English: mobile) and 'buck' meaning money (rand, in this case, and not a dollar). South Africans generally refer to the different codes of football, such as soccer and rugby union, by those names. There is a great difference between South African English dialects: in Johannesburg the local form is very strongly English-based, while its Eastern Cape counterpart has a strong Afrikaans influence. Although differences between the two are sizeable, there are many similarities.Some words peculiar to South African English include 'takkies', 'tackie' or 'tekkie' for sneakers (American) or trainers (British), 'combi' or 'kombi' for a small van, 'bakkie' for a pick-up truck, 'kiff' for pleasurable, 'lekker' for nice, 'donga' for ditch and 'jol' for party.

Several South African words, usually from Afrikaans or native languages of the region, have entered world English: *aardvark; apartheid; commando; veld; impala; mamba* and *trek*.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Identify and explain the areas of convergence between South African English (SAEng) and Australian English (AusE).

3.4   Ghanaian English

English is the official national language of Ghana, a country which has up to 50 indigenous languages and a population of nearly 19 million. The pronunciation of English by speakers of three of the indigenous languages, Akan (Fante and Twi), Ewe and Ga., including not only segmental phonetics and phonology, but also the supra-segmentals of

accentuation or stress, and intonation have influence of the variety. Ghanaian English (GhE) is assumed to be spoken by those who have, at least until recently, taken British English Received Pronunciation (RP) as a target model. By beginning with the basic phonetic and phonological descriptions of some Ghanaian languages and those of the English Language, one will be able to establish the existence of a Ghanaian English accent that possesses its own historical and linguistic peculiarities.

Like other Englishes, Ghanaian English has several regional and social dialects. Ghanaian English is shaped not only by L_1 characteristics but also by spelling, analogy and other native Englishes. The relationship between Ghanaian English and other Outer and Inner Circle Englishes is very prominent. Ghanaian English incorporated speech patterns from different Englishes, especially, British English and, quite recently, American English (due to the rise of the United States as a political and economic power). Furthermore, Ghanaians' English speech patterns is influenced by their level and type of education, social and economic backgrounds, regional or geographical locations, personal motivation, and their attitude to the English language is in line with current trends in Second Language Acquisition and general Sociolinguistics.

Sey (1973) examined GhE from multi-dimensional linguistic viewpoints. Working from the basic assumption that Ghanaian English remains largely British norm-dependent, the speech patterns of educated young adults of different sexes who had lived for long in Ghana largely exhibit this. Essentially, the outer circle users of English are from three major linguistic groups (Akan, Ewe and Ga) in Ghana and have varying degrees of proficiency in English. The speech repertoire of respondents reflects a wide variety of choices along a unilinear continuum of style: word list, reading and connected speech

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Many linguists studying English in Africa believe that Ghanaian English is the closest to BrE in Africa. If you support this position state your reasons

3.5   Liberian English

Liberian English is a term used to refer to the varieties of English spoken in the African country of Liberia. There are four such varieties:Standard Liberian English or Liberian Settler English; Kru Pidgin English; and Vernacular Liberian English. Normally, Liberians do not use these terms and instead refer to all such varieties simply as 'English.' Additionally, the term 'Liberian English' is sometimes used for

all varieties except the standard.Standard Liberian English is the language of those people whose African American ancestors immigrated to Liberia in the nineteenth century. This variety is a transplanted variety of African American Vernacular English. It is most distinctive in isolated settlements such as Louisiana, Lexington, and Bluntsville, small communities upriver from Greenville in SinoeCounty. According to 1993 statistics, approximately 69,000 people, or 2.5% of the population, spoke Standard Liberian English as a first language.

Vernacular Liberian English, the most common variety, is the Liberian version of West African Pidgin English though it has been significantly influenced by *Liberian Settler English*. Its phonology owes much to Liberia's Niger-Congo languages. *Vernacular Liberian English* has been analyzed having a post-creole speech continuum. As such, rather than being a pidgin wholly distinct from English, it is a range of varieties that extend from the highly pidginized to one that shows many similarities to English as spoken elsewhere in West Africa.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

English language use in Liberia is a special variety because of the influence of America. Explain properly.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Data from other areas of the world tend to support this suspicion of local forms; for example, children in Sierra Leone are deeply concerned about the pronunciation and forms of English spoken by teachers. Sey (1973) in Ghana indicates how public speakers are judged at least as much by the grammatical correctness of their speeches and that a politician who seemingly errs in using English will forfeit much of the impression that s/he may have made, whatever the correctness of the political content. A very fine line must be trodden by public figures using English in such environments between sounding too local on the one hand and too expatriate on the other. An illustrative case is that of a Ghana Broadcasting Service continuity announcer, educated in the UK, who proved unpopular with listeners, not for producing sounds that were too localised, but rather for sounding too "English", this leading to his R.P. induced redundancy.The devaluation of home-grown language forms is strengthened by the effects of both local and international examining boards. These set up models of English phonology and syntax that not many teachers who use the language as a medium to teach curriculum subjects, or even local teachers of English would adhere to, except in very careful speech. Assiduous teachers will vainly attempt to teach out locally recurring forms thus using time that could appropriately be devoted to more productive activities, exposing learners to more of the

target language, and developing their communicative ability. The issue of "localisms" is a one issue with teachers in many countries. It is not uncommon for teachers to feel that the worst errors are those which either infringe a rule taught early in the learner's career (the classic example being the third person present indicative -s) or which shows interference from the pupil's main language.

5.0   SUMMARY

English language varieties in Africa have undergone several changes resulting from the environment. However, many educated Africans still see the language as relics of imperialism. A case against the view that English *necessarily* carries with it a tide of cultural imperialism is well put by Bisong (1995), who regards the view as patronizing to users of English in the Third World; and states, "it is possible for some analysts to label the English Language 'imperialistic' because some behaviours exhibited somewhere by some English speakers appear to result in the subjugation of other languages (or their speakers)". A clear distinction needs to be made between the users of the language and the code *tout court*. In Kachru's terminology, 'nativised' varieties would seem to move towards this end, where English loses much of the metropolitan cultural load and takes on local attributes.However, it is clear that history shows us that *mixing* and *switching* are not unusual; the major East African language, Swahili, arose through just such a process of merging Arabic and the local coastal languages. It would seem that, linguistically at least, there is little difference between these two phenomena. Why, one wonders, should the ability to switch between languages not be equally highly valued? This is the case of English in Africa where the local dialects romance with English in order to create special varieties of English using African experiences and linguistic medium as yardstick.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   South African English seemed more standardised than any other English dialect in Africa. Explain this statement.
2.   Assess the effect of local dialects on Ghanaian English (GhE).
3.   State clearly the marked linguistic effects that indicated the existence of a Nigerian English (NE).
4.   Explain the effect of the local dialects on the variety of English in Liberia.
5.   Explain the possible causes of ineffective English usage among Anglophone English countries in Africa.

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**MODULE 4   CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH
                         SPEECH/WRITING**

Unit 1   Forms of Contemporary English Writing
Unit 2   Contemporary Speech Forms in English
Unit 3   Formal and Informal Language Style
Unit 4   Linguistic Meaning and Speaker Meaning
Unit 5   Business English/Business Writing

UNIT 1   FORMS OF CONTEMPORARY WRITING

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the concept of writing, the beginning of writing, what writing is all about, the types of writing and the types of writers. The intention is to enable the students understand what it entails to write or communicate in English. Arming oneself with the grammar of a language also means that one can write in English using the appropriate methods, styles or the acceptable writing patterns for each situation. A writer is a person who writes according to specific ideals or required information. Thus, there are different writings for the medical fields, academic fields, scientific fields, legal fields etc. and each of these fields of writing requires the writer to adopt the appropriate English language expressive form that is adequate for each.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

•   understand the concept of writing
•   learn the methods of writing

- distinguish the different types of writing
- know the importance of ghostwriting
- apply the appropriate writing style for each writing pattern/field

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Writing is the representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set of signs or symbols (known as a writing system). It is distinguished from illustration, such as cave drawing and painting, and the recording of language via a non-textual medium such as magnetic tape audio. Writing began as a consequence of the burgeoning needs of accounting. Around the 4th millennium BC, the complexity of trade and administration outgrew the power of memory, and writing became a more dependable method of recording and presenting transactions in a permanent form. *Writing*, more particularly, refers to two things: *writing* as a noun, the thing that is written; and *writing* as a verb, which designates the activity of writing. It refers to the inscription of characters on a medium, thereby forming words, and larger units of language, known as texts. It also refers to the creation of meaning and the information thereby generated. In that regard, linguistics (and related sciences) distinguish between the written language and the spoken language. The significance of the medium by which meaning and information are conveyed is indicated by the distinction made in the arts and sciences. For example, while public speaking and poetry reading are both types of speech, the former is governed by the rules of rhetoric and the latter by those of poetics.

A person who composes a message or story in the form of text is generally known as a writer or an author. However, more specific designations exist which are dictated by the particular nature of the text such as that of poet, essayist, novelist, playwright and journalist. A person who transcribes, translates or produces text to deliver a message authored by another person is known as a scribe, typist or typesetter. A person who produces text with emphasis on the aesthetics of glyphs is known as a calligrapher or graphic designer.Writing is also a distinctly human activity. It has been said that a monkey, randomly typing away on a typewriter (in the days when typewriters replaced the pen or plume as the preferred instrument of writing) could re-create Shakespeare but only if it lived long enough (this is known as the infinite monkey theorem). Such writing has been speculatively designated as coincidental. It is also speculated that extra-terrestrial beings exist who may possess knowledge of writing. The fact is that the only known writing is human writing.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What is writing? Explain the reasons why writing is a pure human activity?

3.2 Writing and Style

One particular question that arises in any attempt to study or describe style is, To what extent is it the writer's style, and what extent the form's? The statements, *the journalist has a very journalistic style, or the scholar's style is too scholarly*, reveal the redundant and misleading nature of talking about style. At the same time, it does not sound strange to say, This journalist has a very descriptive and narrative style. Even in this case, however, the question may persist of whether this can truly be called a 'personal' style, or merely an ironic substitution of styles.

While style can typically be identified as the writer's choices among identical propositions - between, for example, the propositions 'That play was lousy as hell,' and 'That play struck me as quite dull' - several kinds of constraints affect, pre-determine, or reduce the choices that can be made. One kind of constraint is audience, which affects the writer's diction, the degree of complexity in the syntax, and the use of figures of thought such as metaphor. For example, a letter of complaint by one writer will be different from a letter of condolence by the same writer, which will be different from a letter of business. Another kind of constraint involves issues of legality or discretion: for example, avoiding libel, defamation, obscenity, sedition, and other social taboos. The presence of such constraints will eliminate options such as 'That play was ####!' A third kind of constraint requires a minimal grammatical coherence, eliminating options like 'That play hell as lousy was.' However, the constraint which commonly has the most impact is purpose, as it determines the major rhetorical mode of a given piece of writing.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the relationship between writing and style.

3.3 Types of Writers

A *writer* is anyone who creates written work, although the word more usually designates those who write creatively or professionally, or those who have written in many different forms. The word is almost synonymous with *author*, although somebody who writes, say, a laundry list, could technically be called the writer or author of the list, but not an author. Skilled writers are able to use language to portray ideas and

images, whether [fiction](#) or [non-fiction](#).A writer may compose in many different forms including (but certainly not limited to) [poetry](#), [prose](#), or [music](#). Accordingly, a writer in a specialist mode may rank as a [poet](#), [novelist](#), [composer](#), [lyricist](#), [playwright](#), [mythographer](#), [journalist](#), [filmscriptwriter](#), etc. Writers' output frequently contributes to the [cultural](#) content of a [society](#), and that society may value its writerly[corpus](#) -- or [literature](#) -- as an [art](#) much like the visual arts, [music](#), [craft](#) and [performance art](#) (like[drama](#), [theatre](#), [opera](#), [musical](#)). In the [BritishRoyal Navy](#), *Writer* is the trade designation for an administrative [clerk](#).

One important writer to be discussed is the *ghostwriter*. A *ghostwriter* is a professional writer who is paid to write books, articles, stories, reports, or other content which are officially credited to another person. Celebrities, executives, and political leaders often hire ghostwriters to draft or edit autobiographies, magazine articles, or other written material. In music, ghostwriters are used in classical music, film composition, and popular music such as Top 40, country, and hip-hop. The ghostwriter is, sometimes, acknowledged by the author or publisher for their assistance.

The division of work between the ghostwriter and the credited author varies a great deal. In some cases, the ghostwriter is hired to polish and edit a rough draft or a mostly-completed manuscript. In this case, the outline, ideas and much of the language in the finished book or article are those of the credited author. In other cases, a ghostwriter does most of the writing, using concepts and stories provided by the credited author. In this case, a ghostwriter will do extensive research on the credited author or their subject area of expertise. It is rare for a ghostwriter to prepare a book or article with no input from the credited author; at a minimum, the credited author usually jots down a basic framework of ideas at the outset or provides comments on the ghostwriter's final draft.

For an autobiography, a ghostwriter will interview the credited author, their colleagues, and family members, and find interviews, articles, and video footage about the credited author or their work. For other types of non-fiction books or articles, a ghostwriter will interview the credited author and review previous speeches, articles, and interviews with the credited author, to assimilate his or her arguments and points of view.

Ghostwriters are hired for numerous reasons. In many cases, celebrities or public figures do not have the time, discipline, or writing skills to write and research a several-hundred page autobiography. Even if a celebrity or public figure has the writing skills to pen a short article, they may not know how to structure and edit a several-hundred page book so

that it is captivating and well-paced. In other cases, publishers use ghostwriters to increase the number of books that can be published each year under the name of well-known, highly marketable authors.

Ghostwriters will often spend from several months to a full year researching, writing, and editing non-fiction works for a client, and they are paid either per page, with a flat fee, or a percentage of the royalties of the sales, or some combination thereof. In 2001, the New York Times stated that the fee that the ghostwriter for Hillary Clinton's memoirs will receive is probably about $500,000 of her book's $8 million advance.Credit for the ghostwriter may also be provided as a "thanks" in a foreword or introduction. For non-fiction books, the ghostwriter may be credited as a "contributor" or a "research assistant". In other cases, the ghostwriter receives no official credit for writing a book or article; in cases where the credited author or the publisher or both wish to conceal the ghostwriter's role, the ghostwriter may be asked to sign a nondisclosure contract that forbids him or her from revealing his or her ghostwriting role.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Discuss the relationship between a ghostwriter and a biographer.

3.4   Types of Writing

The followng types of writing are common in contemporary English writing:

A: Nonfiction Writing

Ghostwriters are widely used by celebrities and public figures who wish to publish their autobiographies or memoirs. The degree of involvement of the ghostwriter in non-fiction writing projects ranges from minor to substantial. In some cases, a ghostwriter may be called just to clean up, edit, and polish a rough draft of an autobiography or a "how-to" book. In other cases, the ghostwriter will write an entire book or article based on information, stories, notes, and an outline, provided by the celebrity or public figure. The credited author also indicates to the ghostwriter what type of style, tone, or "voice" they want in the book.

In some cases, such as with some "how-to" books, diet guides, or cookbooks, a book will be entirely written by a ghostwriter, and the celebrity (e.g., a well-known musician or sports star) will be credited as author. Publishing companies use this strategy to increase the marketability of a book by associating it with a celebrity or well-known figure. In several countries before elections, candidates commission

ghostwriters to produce autobiographies for them so as to gain visibility and exposure. Most recently, American Presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and John McCain used the aid of ghost writers to produce both of their best-selling books. The candidate Barack Obama is a rarity in this arena in that he penned both of his books by himself without the aid of ghost writers.

A consultant or career-switcher may pay to have a book ghostwritten on a topic in their professional area, to establish or enhance their credibility as an 'expert' in their field. For example, a successful salesperson hoping to become a motivational speaker on selling may pay a ghostwriter to write a book on sales techniques. Often this type of book is published in the vanity press, which means that the author is paying to have the book published. This type of book is typically given away to prospective clients as a promotional tool, rather than being sold in bookstores.

B: Fiction Writing

Ghostwriters are employed by fiction publishers for several reasons. In some cases, publishers use ghostwriters to increase the number of books that can be published each year by a well-known, highly marketable author. Ghostwriters are mostly used to pen fiction works for well-known, "name" authors in genres such as detective fiction, mysteries, and teen fiction.

Additionally, publishers use ghostwriters to write new books for established series where the 'author' is a pseudonym. For example, the purported author of the Nancy Drew mystery series, "Carolyn Keene", is actually a pseudonym for a series of ghostwriters who write books in the same style using a template of basic information about the book's characters and their fictional universe (names, dates, speech patterns), and about the tone and style that are expected in the book (For more information, see the articles on pseudonyms or pen names). As well, ghostwriters are often given copies of several of the previous books in the series, to help them match the style.

C: Political Writing

Public officials and politicians employ 'correspondence officers' to respond to the large volume of correspondence that they receive. The degree of involvement of the public official in the drafting of response letters varies, depending on the nature of the letter, its contents, and the importance of the official and the sender. At the highest level, public officials such as the head of state or a regional governor typically have their officials approve the content of routine correspondence and autopen their signature with a signature machine.However, if the

response is being sent to a high-ranking official or member of society, a draft of the letter may be given to the head of state or their top advisers for approval—particularly if the letter deals with a politically sensitive issue. Public officials at lower levels, such as middle managers and department heads will often review, request changes in, and hand sign all outgoing correspondence, even though the initial drafts are composed by a correspondence officer or policy analyst.

Since members of the public are widely aware that politicians are not themselves writing routine response letters, it can be argued that these correspondence officers are not ghostwriters in the strictest sense of the term. Public officials may also have a speechwriter, who writes public remarks and speeches, or both jobs may be done by a single person.

D: Medical Writing

With medical ghostwriting, pharmaceutical companies pay physicians or scientists to produce papers in medical or scientific journals on the outcomes of new medications. Medical ghostwriting has been criticized by a variety of professional organizations representing the drug industry, publishers, and medical societies, and it may violate American laws prohibiting off-label promotion by drug manufacturers as well as anti-kickback provisions within the statutes governing Medicare. Recently, it has attracted scrutiny from the lay press and from lawmakers, as well.

Professional medical writers can write papers without being listed as authors of the paper and without being considered ghostwriters, provided their role is acknowledged. The European Medical Writers Association have published guidelines which aim to ensure professional medical writers carry out this role in an ethical and responsible manner.The use of properly acknowledged medical writers is accepted as legitimate by organisations such as the World Association of Medical Editors and the British Medical Journal. Moreover, professional medical writers' expertise in presenting scientific data may be of benefit in producing better quality papers.

Most pharmaceutical companies have in-house publication managers who may either manage the writing of publications on the company's drugs by a team of in-house medical writers or contract them out to medical communication companies or freelance medical writers. Reprints of the articles can be distributed to doctors in their offices or at medical meetings by drug company representatives in lieu of product brochures, which might be illegal, if they were to otherwise advocate use of the drug for non-approved indications or dosages. Payments to medical ghostwriters may be augmented with consulting contracts, paid trips to teach continuing medical education courses, and sometimes

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"research" or "educational" grants that afford additional avenues for pocketing kickbacks. The colluding academics or doctors are known as "KOLs" ("Key Opinion Leaders") or "TLs" "Thought Leaders").

E: Blog Writing

One of the newer types of ghostwriters is the web log, or 'blog' ghostwriter. Blogs are websites where a person keeps a journal of thoughts and holds online discussions with other web users, typically on political, social, or cultural issues, and current events. As well, many blogs cater to special interests ranging from handgun collecting to knitting. Blogs are rated according to how many web 'hits' they get from users viewing the page, and this rating is used by advertisers considering paying for advert space on a blog website.New blog operators hoping to generate interest in their blog site sometimes hire ghostwriters to post comments to their blog, while posing as different people and using pseudonyms. With more posts and more comments, it is more likely that a blog will have more key words which will bring up the blog during a search engine's search. Once a blog gets more traffic, eventually the number of 'real' posts may increase, and the blog ghostwriters may no longer be needed.

F: Academic Writing

Some university and college students hire ghostwriters from essay mills to write entrance essays, term papers, and theses and dissertations. In the 2000s, many essay mills began offering online services. The most basic 'essay mill' service is the sale of a previously-written essay. However, since submitting a previously-written essay is risky, a 'customized' essay-writing service is available for a higher price. Essay mill services do not violate the law by providing ghostwritten papers; the act of academic fraud and misrepresentation only occurs when the student submits the ghostwritten paper as their own work.Universities have developed several strategies to combat this type of academic fraud. Some professors require students to submit electronic versions of their term papers, so that the text of the essay can be compared against databases of essays that are known to be plagiarized, 'essay mill' term papers. Other universities allow professors to give students oral examinations on papers which a professor believes to be 'ghostwritten'; if the student is unfamiliar with the content of an essay that they have submitted, then the student can be charged with academic fraud.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Assess the importance of each type of writing studied in this unit.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Writing requires special attention. Every piece of writing has a message to communicate to a specific audience. We have the writer's voice in a piece of writing. *Writer's voice* is a literary term used to describe the individual writing style of an author. Voice is a combination of a writer's use of syntax, diction, punctuation, character development, dialogue, etc., within a given body of text (or across several works). Voice can also be referred to as the specific fingerprint of an author, as every author has a different writing style. In creative writing, students are often encouraged to experiment with different literary styles and techniques in order to help them better develop their "voice." Voice varies with the individual author, having a strong voice is considered positive and beneficial to both the writer and his or her audience. When we write, there is the tendency to consider the audience otherwise our works will lack focus and without the audience a piece of writing is meaningless.

5.0   SUMMARY

It is clear that writing is the only mark of literacy. Most people could speak but not all could write half of what they speak. More so, the majority of those who write are often not in the mastery of the writing mode or pattern they are practising. Writing is a serious business which requires the users of any language to be properly armed with the necessary language tools that will enhance their writing abilities. A creative writer and an academic writer are writing for different audience hence their diction, tone, and choice of words vary. In contemporary English writing, the writer must be mindful of the basic requirements of language that are appropriate for each writing pattern and for each audience.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions with adequate examples:

1.   Explain the different types of writing and their audience.
2.   What are the basic duties of a ghostwriter?
3.   Distinguish between fiction and non-fiction writing.
4.   Elaborate on the essence of style in writing.
5.   Discuss the importance of language use to contemporary speech and writing.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2   CONTEMPORARY SPEECH FORMS IN ENGLISH

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the forms of speech, the art of rhetoric/ public speaking and figures of speech. Speech is the practical demonstration of our written discourse. A good writer may not be a good speaker due to the effects of natural inhibitions, accidents or other factors like sociolinguistic factors. Speech writing and speech making are related; although in the use of written speech there are other appendages that are used in buttressing the points in the written speech. Thus, speech is primordial to writing. It is not surprising; therefore, that most people write the way they speak.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand the concept of correct speech in Contemporary English
- discuss rhetoric and public speaking as forms of contemporary speech
- apply acceptable forms of speech in their use of Contemporary English
- identify the various figures of speech as acceptable forms in contemporary English
- differentiate written speech from speech in Contemporary English.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Writing effective speeches requires a constant awareness of the distinction between the written and the spoken word: the speechwriter must learn to "write aloud." While the best speeches read as well as they sound, the novice speechwriter should give priority to the ear and not the eye. His or her speech must be written to be heard, not read.This means that easy intelligibility should be a paramount concern, so that the listening span is not strained. One of the first rules of the speechwriting profession is that a sentence written to be heard should be simple, direct, and short. When the speechwriter "writes aloud," George Orwell's advice to cut out any word that can possibly be cut is helpful, so long as the resulting effect is clarity, and not verbal shorthand.The speechwriter thus faces the challenge of crafting words that convey the speaker's meaning clearly, but that also draw on the rich nuance and texture of spoken English.The average spoken sentence runs from 8 to 16 words; anything longer is considered more difficult for listeners to follow by ear, and according to one expert, may be too long for the average listener to absorb and analyze quickly.By comparison, written sentences of up to 30 words are easily understood by average readers.

Given these generally accepted limitations, what devices are available to the writer to make more complex sentences and speech wording accessible to the listener? Complex sentences can be clarified by repeating key words and using simple connections. By numerous rhetorical techniques, the speaker states, restates, and states again in different ways, the central themes of the speech.

Above all, in the spoken word there must be an element of identity and rapport with the listener, whether the speaker uses a "natural" conversational tone or a more oratorical style. Effective speechwriting has rules. Its "rules" are meant to foster clarity of expression, whatever the occasion and purpose of any given speech. Mere clarity is not enough for persuasive rhetoric, however. Indeed, there are times when clarity, brevity, and the like are not appropriate. The issues, because of their import and complexity, may preclude such treatment; similarly, the gravity or the occasion may call for some measure of deliberate ambiguity. The best speechwriter will take into account the context of the speech and the speaker's personality, the image that is projected — that is, the speaker whom the audience sees and hears.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Comment on the importance of good sentence forms in contemporary speech writing.

3.2   Speech Forms

Speech is a learned system of communication requiring the coordinated use of voice, articulation, and language skills. Only humans are able to produce true speech. In a broad sense, speech is synonymous with language.Language is an arbitrary system of abstract symbols agreed upon by any group of people to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Symbols may be verbal or nonverbal, that is, either spoken or written; additionally, nonverbal symbols may be gestures and body movements. In spoken language the skills of articulation are used; in written language, spelling is substituted for articulation. Both auditory and visual skills are essential to the comprehension and expression of language.Rate and rhythm also should be considered in the evaluation of speech. Connected speech should not be so rapid or so slow that it interferes with comprehension. Rhythm is judged mostly in terms of fluency. Good or so-called normal speech cannot be exactly measured or described, however; it can be judged essentially only as it seems to be suitable to the sex, size, age, personality, and needs of the speaker.Because speech is a learned function, any interference with learning ability may be expected to cause speech impairment.

a.   Speech Preparation

When selecting material, the responsible speechwriter will take great care to quote accurately and give full credit for whatever is borrowed outright. Plagiarism is often illegal and always unethical. On the other hand, it is entirely proper to adapt existing materials to one's own purpose in preparing a new speech for any occasion. As Thomas Jefferson wrote in response to accusations that he had plagiarized parts of the 'Declaration of Independence' from other works, his logical response was "I did not consider it as any part of my charge to invent new ideas altogether and to offer no sentiment which had ever been expressed before." Straining after originality, which has been defined by an anonymous wit as "imitation not yet detected," can ruin the best of speeches. Thus, the following should be considered in writing a speech:

a.   Quotations and humorous anecdotes or remarks are like spices, and should be used with discrimination, mindful of good taste and effectiveness. Speeches overloaded with quotations and anecdotes can sink from their own weight.

b.   Pseudo-quotations should be avoided. Never use a quotation that cannot be verified in an authoritative source.

c.   Unless a writer is gifted with lightness of touch, self-deprecating or gentle humor is usually more effective than satire or ridicule.

d.   Jokes aimed at people's personal lives or at religious and ethnic groups are invariably offensive, regardless of the speaker's motives. Avoid them.

e.   Statistics should be used with care and moderation. Like the points in an outline, they are better alluded to in context than cited in tedious detail. A speech filled with statistics becomes a statistical abstract, not a speech.

b.   The Speech Outline/Structure

The task of actually writing the speech, once the preliminaries are completed, will be greatly facilitated in most cases by the use of an outline. The novice speechwriter maybe tempted to dispense with this device, on the grounds that it adds a time consuming extra step to a process that is often constrained by tight deadlines. On the other hand, it forces the writer to plan and organize his thoughts, to determine in advance what he intends to say, and to begin at the beginning.

A speech outline generally is not nearly as detailed as an outline for an academic work, such as a journal article, or even a research paper. The outline serves as a skeleton, a framework to carry the flesh and blood of the fully developed speech. At the same time, this skeleton should eventually be invisible, clothed in delivery with ideas and emotions, and as simple as possible; beware of explicitly enumerating too many points or topics. Outlines may be written in topics, or key sentences, or in complete thoughts, so long as there is an orderly sequence. The frugal writer will retain speech outlines, since they can easily be reworked for future efforts.

Nearly every speech will have a basic three-part structure of introduction, body, and conclusion. An arresting introduction should lead into an emphatic statement of the main theme or themes. The argument that follows seeks to elaborate and develop the theme convincingly and effectively— that is, without too much detail. The central theme is restated in the closing.One helpful approach for overcoming the feeling of word fright is to write the speech in reverse: begin with the conclusion, which should summarize the central message, while abridging and restating whatever goes before. If the introduction sets the tone and establishes initial appeal or rapport, the closing

communicates the final effect and is more likely to be remembered. Working backward is one way of imparting unity, coherence, and emphasis to the speech as a whole.

c.   Language in Speech

i.   Punctuation

Punctuation is crucial to an effective speech; it helps to clarify the delivery of the spoken word. Good punctuation in English, apart from a few basic elements, is less a matter of inflexible rules than of purpose and style, particularly where speeches are concerned. Historically there have been two broad traditions of punctuation:

Syntactical — that is, guided by syntax or grammatical construction; and elocutionary— deriving from the rhythm and pace of actual speech. One writer has further distinguished three methods of punctuating:by structure or logic to indicate the sense of what is being said;by the rhythm of word order and intended meaning — a subtle use best avoided by novice speech writers;and by respiration — that is, by the physical ease of natural speech, which assumes that what is read is really spoken.

This last method, essentially the same as the elocutionary style, is the most widely used and certainly the most appropriate for speeches. In short, punctuate according to the ear and not the eye. This also means punctuating for the lungs: give the Member time to breathe! A long and convoluted sentence (something to be avoided in general) can leave the Member literally gasping for breath as he or she concludes it. A useful practice for speechwriters, is to declaim aloud (speaks aloud, not in a conversational tone, but as if one were speaking to an audience).

Commas and dashes are useful to the speaker and listeners alike as guideposts to what lies ahead in a speech. They also provide pauses where the speaker can let the import of the previous sentence sink in, or simply catch his or her breath. Opinion is divided on colons and semicolons; some consider them as serving the same functions as commas and dashes, while others suggest that they are more emphatic, demanding a full stop in the flow of remarks, rather than a short pause. They are also sometimes criticized as leading to long compound sentences that are difficult for audiences to process, and that are better replaced by shorter declarative ones. In the final analysis, the Member's personal preferences and style should be the congressional speechwriter's guide.

ii.   Grammar and Syntax

Correct grammar and syntax in the context of speechwriting and delivery mean using a level of English usage that is appropriate to the occasion. While it is highly desirable, the formal grammar of the written language is not an end in itself; it exists to further the clarity of expression. Far more important than the grammarian's rules is the communication of personality by which a speech, as opposed to a lecture, is clothed with emotion and enthusiasm, so that the speaker is perceived to be sincere and trustworthy, neither "talking over people's heads" nor "talking down" to them. While this may belong more to the presentation or delivery, the writer should strive for it in speech preparation as well.

d.   Speech Delivery

Effective delivery can transform a weak speech and make it sound very good. Poor delivery can ruin the best-prepared speeches, and sometimes does. Although delivery is not the concern of the speechwriter as such, it must be always in mind as a speech is actually written. The speaker's pace, his or her style, mannerisms, tendencies (such as departing from a text), peculiarities, or special difficulties (words to avoid) — these are elements with which the writer should be well acquainted before preparing any speech.

Ideally, a speech draft ought to be reviewed three times — by the writer, by the prospective speaker, and by a disinterested third party. Of these three, priority should ordinarily be given to the speaker. The revised product is likely to be more effective. With speeches, as with food, however, too many cooks are undesirable. Moreover, time seldom permits this much critical evaluation and rewriting. It may even be easier to provide for some appraisal of the speech's impact and audience reaction after delivery. The speaker, then, is always concerned to measure that response and to elicit "positive feedback."

Good writing is nurtured by wide reading, which in turn fosters a sense of style, enriched vocabulary, accuracy in grammar, and a feeling for English syntax. The best speechwriters will, through regular daily reading, bring an ever more abundant background to their work. Everything is grist for the speechwriter's mill.Moreover, nothing is surer in speechwriting than that "practice makes perfect". The more one writes, the easier the task becomes, and the smoother and more conversational the flow of the remarks. As with so many aspects of speechwriting and delivery, the physical form of a speech is a matter of personal preference. Some speakers prefer to work from a completely polished text, one that may include carefully tailored "spontaneous"

anecdotes and jokes at appropriate places, and may even incorporate hints on speech delivery or effective body language in the text. Others prefer to speak from notes derived from such a text, proceed from a series of "talking points", or simply extemporize. Whichever method is used, preparatory notes or an outline are recommended, with the cautionary warning that dependence on a manuscript can deaden the delivery, just as the excessive use of notes or cards can stimulate verbosity.

e.   Style

For most speakers it is also better not to memorize a speech (unless one has a gift for it), since memory is fallible and elusive at best.The speechwriter should not shrink from commonly accepted contemporary usage. The development of public address systems, radio, and, finally, the "cool" medium of television, and the perhaps even more intimate medium of the *webcast* have combined with other social changes to turn down the volume, both in decibels and emotions, of public speaking in the world, for better or worse eliminating its more histrionic qualities.The accepted style of contemporary oratory is generally low key, casual without being offensively familiar, and delivered directly to the audience in a conversational tone and volume. It puts the audience at ease and helps promote psychological bonding between listeners and speaker. The speaker is perceived as a neighbor or friend, as well as an official.

i.   Use natural words and phrases in a speech; let the sentences flow conversationally. It is helpful for some writers, time permitting, to prepare a first draft in longhand, shaping the sentences slowly, speaking aloud the phrases they intend to use.

ii.   The first person is perfectly acceptable in modern public discourse, and when combined with other personal pronouns — remember to avoid "I" strain — it can help connect listener to speaker and create a sense of community within the audience. While the first person singular is sometimes deprecated, it is its excessive use that should be avoided. Conversely, speakers should avoid referring to themselves in the first person plural (we) or the third person singular (he or she). The former has been reserved to monarchs, and is considered archaic in modern speech. The latter too often conveys a sense of excessive self-importance to listeners.

iii.   Writers should generally use simple, declarative sentences, preferably in active voice, when making important statements of fact, assertion, or opinion. Use of the passive voice should not be

dismissed out of hand, however; it is sometimes the more desirable form, and can lend grace and variety to the speaker's flow of words that stimulates the listener. It is excessive use that should be avoided. Similarly, exclusive use of the active voice can impart a choppy, juvenile cadence to even a content-rich speech.

iv.   Justas there are points to emphasize in every speech, serving as clear transitions or aural signposts for paragraphs ("secondly," "nevertheless," "finally," "accordingly," "as a result," "in spite of," "as I have said," etc.), so there are things to avoid, and they are more numerous. While they are discussed in full in many reference works, they include:

   a.   jargon and trendy neologisms: "impact" used as a verb, "stakeholders," "incentivize," "outside the box"et al.;
   b.   redundancy resulting from excess verbiage, not deliberate restatement;
   c.   mannerisms that may distract the listener, and trite phrases or clichés, monotony of style or pace and, in general, language inappropriate to the audience and occasion.

3.3   Rhetoric/ Public Speaking

Rhetoric is the art of harnessing reason, emotions and authority, through language, with a view to persuade an audience and, by persuading, to convince this audience to act, to pass judgement or to identify with given values. The word derives from Greek (rhetorike), "oratorical, skilled in speaking" and that from ρήτωρ (rhetōr), "orator". Rhetoric, in its broadest sense, is the theory and practice of eloquence, whether spoken or written. Spoken rhetoric is oratory. Rhetoric defines the rules that should govern all prose composition or speech designed to influence the judgment or the feelings of people. It therefore treats of all matters relating to beauty or forcefulness of style (see Figure of Speech). In a narrower sense, rhetoric is concerned with a consideration of the fundamental principles according to which oratorical discourses are composed: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery.

The Greek philosopher Plato satirized the more technical approach to rhetoric, with its emphasis on persuasion rather than truth, in his work *Gorgias,* and in the *Phaedrus* he discussed the principles constituting the essence of the rhetorical art. The Greek philosopher Aristotle, in his work *Rhetoric,* defined the function of rhetoric as being, not that of persuasion, but rather that of "discovering all the available means of persuasion", thereby emphasizing the winning of an argument by persuasive marshaling of truth, rather than the swaying of an audience

by an appeal to their emotions. He regarded rhetoric as the counterpart, or sister art, of logic. Rhetoric constituted one of the subjects of the *trivium,* or three preliminary subjects of the seven liberal arts taught at the universities, the other two being *grammar* and *logic*. Then, rhetoric found practical application in three "arts": letter writing, preaching, and the composition of poetry.

"Rhetoric," wrote Aristotle "is the power of determining in a particular case what the available means of persuasion are". A speech should nevertheless reflect the intention and even the style of the speaker. The best ghostwriters are properly invisible; they subordinate themselves to the speaker in such a way that the final product is effectively personalized in the process of actual communication. The only ways to achieve or even approach this ideal are practice and experience.

Tools of Rhetoric

Repetition and Variation

Repetition with variation is a basic speechwriting tool used by many of the greatest speakers to emphasize key elements while avoiding monotony. Some examples follow.Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech was a striking example of this technique, using that phrase to introduce a series of his visions for a better future.

Cadence and Balance

Another venerable rhetorical device is the use of cadence and balance in the spoken word. This is a part of speechwriting where the speaker and the writer need cooperation to ensure success. The tradition of public speaking in the English language owes much to the poetic tradition, which was originally an oral tradition. As difficult to define as to achieve, cadence and balance impart movement and harmonious effect to any speech. Essentially a matter of ordering groups of words (and ideas) into rhythmic patterns, cadence and balance can be attained by such classical rhetorical devices as the ones described below.

Rhythmic Triads

The grouping of words into patterns of three can lead to a memorable effect, provided the device is not overused. Some notable examples from classic oratory include "Veni, vidi, vici"; "Never ... was so much owed by so many to so few"; "The kingdom, the power, and the glory ..."; "I have not sought, I do not seek, I repudiate the support of ..."; "one third of a nation ill-clad, ill-nourished, ill-housed...."

Parallelism

The linkage of similar words or ideas in a balanced construction that repeatedly uses the same grammatical form to convey parallel or coordinated ideas: "Bigotry has no head and cannot think; no heart and cannot feel"; "Charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Inverted Order

This classic rhetorical practice, once more widely used, seeks to embellish the general flow of words, much like an ornament or a musical flourish. It also helps give a particular sentence special emphasis by causing it to stand out from others by its unusual form. For instance, "With what dignity and courage they perished in that day."

Suspension for Climax

With this device, the speaker comes to a complete stop in his remarks, using the ensuing moment of silence to concentrate the listeners' attention on his next phrase. "My obligation as President is historic; it is clear; yes, it is inescapable." Even periodic sentences, if used with care, repeating the "suspended" subject or verb before modifying phrases or clauses can contribute to the effect: "Thus did he prove to be a leader who — victorious in battle, magnanimous in victory, skilled in the arts of peace — was able, in the face of his most determined foes ..."

Imagery

No speech will sound fresh and vivid if it is not animated by imaginative imagery, by metaphor in its many forms: "the hatred of entrenched greed"; "Nigeria will always stand for liberty"; "Democracy is the healthful lifeblood which circulates through the veins and arteries of society..."; "Whether in chains or in laurels, liberty knows nothing but victories". Extended metaphors or analogies, comparing similarities in different things, should be used with care so that the principal subject will not be lost in the image.Two or more metaphors in a single sentence or thought can be safely ventured only by the most experienced writers. In the next subheading, we will examine different types of figures of speech used in speech writing and/or public speaking.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Rhetoric is public speaking but speech making absorbs all forms. Discuss this proposition properly.

3.4   Figures of Speech

Figure of Speech isa word or a group of words used to give particular emphasis to an idea or sentiment. The special emphasis is typically accomplished by the user's conscious deviation from the strict literal sense of a word, or from the more commonly used form of word order or sentence construction. From ancient times to the present, such figurative locutions have been extensively employed by orators and writers to strengthen and embellish their styles of speech and composition. A number of the more widely used figures of speech, some of which are also called *tropes,* are as follows:

Alliteration

This is the repetition of initial consonant sounds in a series of words to give emphasis. For instance, "We need to return to that old-fashioned notion of competition — where substance, not subsidies, determines the winner" or, "...the nattering nabobs of negativism....

Anaphora

This is the repetition of the same word or words at the beginning of successive clauses or sentences. Churchill's famous defianceof Hitler, "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds ...," is one of the most famous examples.

Anticlimax

This is a sequence of ideas that abruptly diminish in dignity or importance at the end of a sentence or passage used generally for satirical effect. The following sentence contains an illustration of anticlimax: "Among the great achievements of Benito Mussolini's regime were the revival of a strong national consciousness, the expansion of the Italian Empire, and the running of the trains on time."

Antithesis

This is the juxtaposition of two words, phrases, clauses, or sentences contrasted or opposed in meaning in such a way as to give emphasis to contrasting ideas. An example of antithesis is the following line by the English poet Alexander Pope: "To err is human, to forgive divine", "... give me liberty, or give me death."; "Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country"; "To some generations much is given; from others, much is demanded ..."; "A great empire and little minds go ill together"; "It was the best of times, it was the worst of

times. It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of folly."; "If Puritanism was not the godfather to Capitalism, then it was godson."

Apostrophe

This is a device by which an actor turns from the audience, or a writer from readers, to address a person who usually is either absent or deceased, an inanimate object, or an abstract idea. The English poet John Milton, in his poem *Il Penseroso,* invokes the spirit of melancholy in the following words: "Hail divinest Melancholy, whose saintly visage is too bright to hit the sense of human sight."

Climax

This is the arrangement of words, clauses, or sentences in the order of their importance, the least forcible coming first and the others rising in power until the last, as in the following sentence: "It is an outrage to bind a Roman citizen; it is a crime to scourge him; it is almost parricide to kill him; but to crucify him—what shall I say of this?"

Conceit

This is an elaborate, often extravagant metaphor or simile (see below) making an analogy between totally dissimilar things. The term originally meant "concept" or "idea." The use of conceits is especially characteristic of 17th-century English metaphysical poetry. An example occurs in the poem "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," by the English poet John Donne, in which two lovers' souls are compared to the legs of drawing compasses.

Euphemism

This is the substitution of a delicate or inoffensive term or phrase for one that has coarse, sordid, or otherwise unpleasant associations, as in the use of "lavatory" or "rest room" for "toilet" and "pass away" for "die"

Hyperbole

This is a form of inordinate exaggeration according to which a person or thing is depicted as being better or worse, or larger or smaller, than is actually the case, as in the sentence from an essay by the English writer Thomas Babington Macaulay: "Dr. Johnson drank his tea in oceans."

Irony

This is a dryly humorous or lightly sarcastic mode of speech, in which words are used to convey a meaning contrary to their literal sense. An instance of irony is the suggestion, put forward with apparent seriousness by the English satirist Jonathan Swift in his "A Modest Proposal", that the poor people of Ireland should rid themselves of poverty by selling their children to the rich to eat.

Litotes

This is an understatement employed for the purpose of enhancing the effect of the ideas expressed, as in the sentence "The English poet Thomas Gray showed no inconsiderable powers as a prose writer," meaning that Gray was in fact a very good prose writer.

Metaphor

This is the use of a word or phrase denoting one kind of idea or object in place of another word or phrase for the purpose of suggesting a likeness between the two. Thus, in the biblical Book of Psalms, the writer speaks of God's law as "a light to his feet and a lamp to his path." Other instances of metaphor are contained in the sentences "He uttered a volley of oaths" and "The man tore through the building."

Metonymy

This is the use of a word or phrase for another to which it bears an important relation, as the effect for the cause, the abstract for the concrete and similar constructions. Examples of metonymy are "He was an avid reader of Chaucer," when the poems of the English writer Geoffrey Chaucer are meant, and "The hostess kept a good table," when good food is implied.

Onomatopoeia

This is imitation of natural sounds by words. Examples in English are the italicized words in the phrases "the *humming* bee", "the *cackling* hen", "the *whizzing* arrow" and "the *buzzing* saw".

Oxymoron

This is a combination of two seemingly contradictory or incongruous words, as in the line by the English poet Sir Philip Sidney in which lovers are said to speak "of living deaths, dear wounds, fair storms, and freezing fires".

Paradox

This is a statement or sentiment that appears contradictory to common sense yet is true in fact. Examples of paradox are "mobilization for peace" and "a well-known secret agent."

Personification

This is a representation of inanimate objects or abstract ideas as living beings, as in the sentences "Necessity is the mother of invention," "Lean famine stalked the land" and "Night enfolded the town in its ebon wings".

Rhetorical question

This is asking of questions not to gain information but to assert more emphatically the obvious answer to what is asked. No answer, in fact, is expected by the speaker. The device is illustrated in the following series of sentences: "Did you help me when I needed help? Did you once offer to intercede in my behalf? Did you do anything to lessen my load?" "Is peace a rash system?" "Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?" The speaker leads the audience to the conclusion he hopes they will draw by asking a question that makes his point, and that he intends to answer himself, either immediately, with a flourish, or at greater length during his remarks, through patient exposition.

Simile

This is specific comparison by means of the words "like" or "as" between two kinds of ideas or objects. Examples of the simile are contained in the sentence "Christianity shone like a beacon in the black night of paganism" and in the line by the English poet William Wordsworth: "But, like a thirsty wind, to roam about."

Synecdoche

This is a figurative locution whereby the part is made to stand for the whole, the whole for a part, the species for the genus, and vice versa. Thus, in the phrase "50 head of cattle", "head" is used to mean whole animals, and in the sentence "The president's administration contained the best brains in the country," "brains" is used for intellectually brilliant persons.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Identify and explain any other figure of speech not mentioned here.

4.0   CONCLUSION

It is one thing to use language and it is another thing to use it correctly. Every language is a system from which the speakers perform their communicative art. The issue of convention, rules and principles of use apply in every usage. In most cases, the emphasis on the standard forms serves as the parameter for measuring correctness in language use generally. Even though every language allows room for creativity, there are limitations to this license. The "laws" of English usage are based on how people actually use the language; people do not actually use the language based on mythical laws. Grammar is supposed to provide a description and an explanation of why the language is spoken and written the way it is and not as a code of how the language must be spoken and written. Rather than making some wrongheaded judgments about the lack of grammaticality of what are apparently supposed to be examples of outstanding constructions in English, it would be much better to explain and arrive at what is acceptable in English speech.Since speech can be oral or written, most errors are often in the spoken than in the written since the written might go through a second reader. Grammatical errors in speech are often overshadowed with speech ornaments because every speech aims at making a given audience have a problem understanding of a given situation. In history, most great men are known for their great speeches. Some speeches are known to have changed the world. It's on record now that Martin Luther King Jnr's famous speech "I have a Dream" has become actualized with the election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States of America.

5.0   SUMMARY

Speeches are better cast in simple, direct, and often short sentences that can be easily understood by listeners. Rhetorical devices such as repetition, variation, cadence, and balance are available to, and should be used by, the speechwriter. It is important for speechwriters to analyze audiences according to factors such as age; gender; culture; profession; size of audience; political affiliation, if any; and the occasion for, and purpose of, the speech. Most effective speeches do not exceed 20 minutes in length. After researching a topic, speechwriters should prepare an outline from which the speech will be developed. They should strive to maintain a clear theme throughout the speech. Most speeches will have a three-part structure consisting of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The accepted style of contemporary public

address is natural, direct, low key, casual, and conversational. This puts listeners at ease and promotes a sense of community between audience and speaker. Punctuation should reflect the sound structure of the speech, reinforcing the rhythm and pace of actual speech. Clarity of expression is as important a consideration in speech grammar as rigid adherence to rules for written language. Effective delivery can greatly improve a speech.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1. Explain the main purpose of speech making.
2. Discuss the essential features of a good speech.
3. Assess the importance of language use in speech writing.
4. "Rhetoric is an art but speech writing is a science". How true is this statement?
5. Outline and explain some rhetorical devices not explained in this unit.

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UNIT 3   FORMAL   AND   INFORMAL   LANGUAGE STYLE

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        3.2   Differences between formal and informal style
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will study formal and informal language style in contemporary English. Interestingly, many students find it difficult differentiating the two uses. The reason for this difficulty at time stems from the varieties of English language forms and their inability to separate spoken expressions from the written ones. Each style is important but they are used in different situations. The adoption of a consistent type of style for a given discourse situation is good but the student should be acquainted with the rules of each style to enable them identify each style and use them appropriately.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand the rules guiding the spelling of English words
- identify the correct spelling forms of Standard English
- distinguish Standard English spellings from the other varieties
- adopt the spelling rules in arriving at correct English words
- avoid spelling errors in their writings.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

To be informal means:

1.   *Free of ceremony*:relaxed and casual rather than ceremonious and stiff

2.   *Unofficial*:not officially prepared, organized, or sanctioned
      The two sides in the conflict held informal talks.
3.   *Casual   and   everyday*:suitable   for   casual   or   everyday
      situations.*informal dress*
4.   *Colloquial Language*:more appropriate in spoken than written
      form

Words and phrases are considered informal if they are used often in
speech but are less common in written documents. Informal words are
more well-established than slang, but they have yet to stand the test of
time. One may eventually prove so useful that it becomes an accepted
part of the language. But, just as likely, an informal word may fall out of
use in only a few years. Because their usefulness may be short-lived,
informal words are inappropriate in documents likely to be read for
years to come. They are equally out of place in writing that requires a
formal tone, no matter how disposable it may be. Even if you expect that
a business letter you write is destined to be read, filed, and forgotten,
you should still avoid informal language if you want your words to be
taken seriously.If you are in doubt about whether a word is informal,
some dictionaries label words that have been judged informal by editors
and experts.

A word or phrase is classified as nonstandard if it is recognized as
incorrect by nearly all educated readers. Nonstandard English should not
be used in writing, no matter how informal.The list below includes some
of the most frequently used nonstandard words and phrases and accepted
alternatives to them:

ain't: I *ain't* listening to you.
use instead: *am not, are not,* or *is not*

already (as an intensive): I'm coming *already.*
use instead: an exclamation point or a word or phrase that suggests
intense emotion or exasperation (e.g., I'm coming *right now*.)

alright: Are you feeling *alright?*
use instead: *all right*

anyways: I don't want your money *anyways.*
use instead: *in any case*

broke (as a past participle): Kevin has finally *broke* the record.
use instead: *broken*

could of, should of, and *would of:* If he *could of,* he *would of* done it.
use instead: *could have, should have,* or *would have*

don't (with the third person singular)

However, to be formal may mean any of the following:

1. *Official*:done or carried out in accordance with established or prescribed rules
    We made a formal protest.
2. *Conventionally correct*:characterized by or organized in accordance with conventions governing ceremony, behavior, or dress
    He's terribly formal and always calls me Mr. Day.
3. *Methodical*:done in an organized and precise manner
    formal research in artificial intelligence
4. *Not familiar in style*:used in serious, official, or public communication but not appropriate in everyday contexts
    a formal word
5. *Ordered*:arranged or laid out in a regular, ordered, or symmetrical way *a formal garden*
6. *of form or structure*: relating to the form or structure of something
7. *Officially constituted*:officially constituted or organized as opposed to spontaneously developed
    a formal organization

Thus, being formal means to be organized or to be properly arranged according to stated formats which exhibit restricted, acceptable and official patterns of structure. A formal situation exhibits less familiarity. It is a situation of serious interaction for the purposes of achieving organizational goals. This means that official language use is devoid of familiar discourse. It is not language use among peers, family members, school mates, church clergy, union members or social interaction. It is a stream of language selected to achieve official goals among the professionals.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Categorically explain the core defining concepts in the identification of formal and informal parameters.

3.2   Differences between Formal and Informal Style

When it comes to writing in English, there are two main styles of writing – formal and informal. Consider these two examples:

Example 1

This is to inform you that your book has been rejected by our publishing company as it was not up to the required standard. In case you would like us to reconsider it, we would suggest that you go over it and make some necessary changes.

Example 2

You know that book I wrote? Well, the publishing company rejected it. They thought it was awful. But hey, I did the best I could, and I think it was great. I'm not gonna redo it the way they said I should.

The difference between the two is obvious. The first one is formal, and the second is informal. But what is it that makes them formal and informal?It is the style of writing, or the way we use words to say what we want to say. Different situations call for different ways of putting words together. The way we write in academic and scientific settings differs greatly from the way we write to a friend or close one. The tone, vocabulary, and syntax, all change as the occasion changes. This difference in the styles of writing is the difference between formality and informality, or the difference between formal and informal writing.
Here is a list of some of the main differences between informal and formal style:

Informal: May use colloquial words/expressions (*kids*, *guy*, *awesome*, *a lot*, etc.).

Formal: Avoid using colloquial words/expressions (substitute with *children*, *man/boy*, *wonderful*, *many*, etc.)

Informal: May use contractions (*can't*, *won't*, *shouldn't*, etc.).
Formal: Avoid contractions (write out full words – *cannot*, *will not*, *should not*, etc)

Informal: May use first, second, or third person.
Formal: Write in third person (except in business letters where first person may be used).

Informal: May use clichés (*loads of*, *conspicuous by absence*, etc.)
Formal: Avoid clichés (use *many*, *was absent*, etc.)

Informal: May address readers using second person pronouns (*you*, *your*, etc)

Formal: Avoid addressing readers using second person pronouns (use *one*, *one's*, *the reader*, *the reader's*, etc.)

Informal: May use abbreviated words (*photo*, *TV*, etc)
Formal: Avoid using abbreviated words (use full versions – like *photograph*, *television*, etc.)

Informal: May use imperative voice (e.g. *Remember….*)
Formal: Avoid imperative voice (use *Please refer to…..*)

Informal: May use active voice (e.g. *We have noticed that…..*)
Formal: Use passive voice (e.g. *It has been noticed that….*)

Informal: May use short and simple sentences.
Formal: Longer and more complex sentences are preferred (short simple sentences reflects poorly on the writer)

Informal: Difficulty of subject may be acknowledged and empathy shown to the reader.

Formal: State your points confidently and offer your argument in firm support.

These are just some of the differences between formal and informal writing. The main thing to remember is that both are correct, it is just a matter of tone and setting. Formal English is used mainly in academic writing and business communications, whereas Informal English is casual and is appropriate when communicating with friends and other close ones. Choose the style of writing keeping in mind what you are writing and to whom. But whichever style you write in – formal or informal – be sure to keep it consistent, do not mix the two. While informal writing, such as instant messaging,creates new venues forcommunicating in real time,writers have to be careful about how theywrite what they mean so that they avoid miscommunication.A pitfall of notpaying attention to the tone of a message is that a writer could sendsomething that is interpreted very differently from his or her intent.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain why formal style is more difficult than informal style in speech and writing.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Every language has formal and informal applications. Each of these applications are necessary in filling the basic interactional modes in the various linguistic requirements of the people. It is a bad style, using formal style in informal situations. Both forms are restricted to given audience. You would naturally use a different vocabulary in a note to your best friend than in a memo to your company's president. The reason has to do with levels of formality. Your friend would expect you to use informal language and slang. The same words, however, might make the company president question whether you take your job seriously enough. Determining the proper level of formality is sometimes difficult. If in doubt, err on the side of formality: Standard words and proper grammar and punctuation are unlikely to offend any reader.

5.0 SUMMARY

Throughout life, people write all the time and in many forms, from business letters to text messages. For any piece of writing, purpose and audience determine the tone, or attitude, that a writer takes. In formal writing, a writer carefully adheres to the conventions of Standard English for spelling andgrammar and avoids the use of contractions, abbreviations and casual or colloquial language. Business writing, from cover letters and resumes to memos and minutes, tends to follow traditional forms and conventions. By contrast, in informal writing, a writer takes on a conversational tone, with amore relaxed approach to writing conventions.Technology has revolutionizedthe way people use the written word, and electronic writing, such as emails,instant messages and online discussion groups, provides dynamic, creative places to explore writing. Sometimes electronic writing, while informal in tone, mirrors formal writing in structure; for example, both informal emailsand formal letters include addresses, greetings and signature lines.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions correctly:

1. Identify the purpose of formal and informal style.
2. At what time is informal writing appropriate?
3. For what purposes and audiences is formal writing necessary?
4. Discuss the pros and cons of electronic writing versus traditional writing.
5. Explain the basic function of informal and informal style.

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UNIT 3   GRAMMATICALITY AND UNGRAMMATICALITY

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will begin with the explanation of what is grammatical and ungrammatical. Since grammar operates in rules, there are conscious violations by the second learners of the language because of proficiency problems. In contemporary English usage, there are incidences of violations which have become acceptable because of the consistent usage in discourse.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- appreciate the need for obeying grammar rules
- understand that English grammar is rule governed
- apply proper grammar in their speech and writing
- distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical expressions
- use English grammar rules in generating expressions.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

At every level of language learning, there are abiding rules. Second language learners show considerable grammatical awareness in how they put words together into sentences. Sometimes this causes them to overextend the meanings of words beyond their appropriate use or to over-regularize grammatical rules by applying them to irregular forms. In Shakespeare's time English was a more flexible language than it is

today. Grammar and spelling were not yet completely formalized, although scholars were beginning to urge rules to regulate them. English had begun to emerge as a significant literary language, having recently replaced Latin as the language of serious intellectual and artistic activity in England. Freed of many of the conventions and rules of modern English, Shakespeare could shape vocabulary and syntax to the demands of style. For example, he could interchange the various parts of speech, using nouns as adjectives or verbs, adjectives as adverbs, and pronouns as nouns. Such freedom gave his language an extraordinary plasticity, which enabled him to create the large number of unique and memorable characters he has left us. Shakespeare made each character singular by a distinctive and characteristic set of speech habits.

By the mid-20th century, Chomsky, who had studied structural linguistics, was seeking a way to analyze the syntax of English in a structural grammar. This effort led him to see grammar as a theory of language structure rather than a description of actual sentences. His idea of grammar is that it is a device for producing the structure, not of *langue* (that is, not of a particular language), but of competence—the ability to produce and understand sentences in any and all languages. His Universalist theories are related to the ideas of those 18th and early 19th century grammarians who urged that grammar be considered a part of logic—the key to analyzing thought. Universal grammarians such as the British philosopher John Stuart Mill, writing as late as 1867, believed rules of grammar to be language forms that correspond to universal thought forms. The works of J.R. Firth, Bloomfield, and C.C. Fries among other prominent linguists have revealed the rule procedures that are prevalent in English and other languages. They have also revealed the need for obeying the rules of grammar in order to create room for acceptability of forms.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the limitations of linguistic rules in grammar.

3.2   Grammaticality and Meaning

English grammar is a body of rules specifying how meanings are created in English. So-called Standard English is often what is meant when the term "English grammar" is used, but it is actually much broader than that. Accounts of English grammar tend to fall into two groups: the descriptivist, which describe the patterns through which meanings are typically created in functional speech and writing; and the Prescriptivists, which set out pre-existing rules as to how meanings are created. However, beyond these simple examples, word order is a complicated matter in English. In particular, the speaker or writer's point

of departure in each clause is a key factor in the organization of the message. Thus, the elements in a message can be ordered in a way that signals to the reader or listener what the message concerns.

Syntax is the study of how words combine to make sentences. The order of words in sentences varies from language to language. English-language syntax, for instance, generally follows a subject-verb-object order, as in the sentence *The dog* (subject) *bit* (verb) *the man* (object)." The sentence *The dog the man bit* is not a correct construction in English, and the sentence *The man bit the dog* has a very different meaning. A general characteristic of language is that words are not directly combined into sentences, but rather into intermediate units, called *phrases*, which then are combined into sentences. The sentence *The shepherd found the lost sheep* contains at least three phrases: "the shepherd", "found" and "the lost sheep." This hierarchical structure that groups words into phrases, and phrases into sentences, serves an important role in establishing relations within sentences. For instance, the phrases "the shepherd" and "the lost sheep" behave as units, so that when the sentence is rearranged to be in the passive voice, these units stay intact: *The lost sheep was found by the shepherd*.

Change can also affect syntax. In modern English, the basic word order is subject-verb-object, as in the sentence *I know John*. The only other possible word order is object-subject-verb, as in *John I know* (*but Mary I don't*). Old English, by contrast, allowed all possible word order permutations, including subject-object-verb, as in *If they wished to seek any field*, or literally *If they any field to seek wished*. The loss of word-order freedom is one of the main syntactic changes that separate the modern English language from Old English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Discuss the reasons for inconsistent grammar structure in contemporary English.

3.3   Grammaticality and Structure

Although non-native speakers ofEnglish have knowledge of grammatical rules, the knowledge does not necessarily get realized intheir production, spoken or written. To native speakers of the language, many grammatical errorsmade by non-native speakers may seem to be merely the result of grammatical rules randomlydropped or incorrectly applied. Recent studies show that this is not entirely true. Many researchershave reported that some varieties of errors occur often among non-native speakers. This findingimplies that non-native speakers' language is not consistent, and yet it still shares

somecharacteristics and tendencies in terms of the types of errors. There are common varieties of errors into which non-native speakers tend to fall. When a sentenceconsists of one subject and two (or more) verbs, even an advanced learner may omit 3rd personsingular 's' with the adverb and after. For example,*He likes books and buy a lot of books each month*.The learner may omit 3rdperson singular 's' when two different syntacticstructures fuse into one new sentence, such as:*The man who live next door married yesterday*. Thusthe 3rdperson singular's' tends to be dropped when an adverb or aninserted phrase is placed between the subject and the verb. For example:

Mark sometimes get sick.
My mother, as a professional writer, travel a lot.

Looking at the above examples, it seems to be the distance (that is, separation) between the subjectand the verb that makes it harder to apply Subject-Verb (SV) agreement rule.Another type of the variety of errors is of the incorrect syntactic structure.

Negation
Negative particle "no" may be used for "not". Negative particle "no/not" islocated outside the verb phrase.If the auxiliary verb is present, it occurs before theauxiliary verb, and if no auxiliary verb is present, the form of "do" is not used. Example, *I not work(ing) today*.

Interrogation
In the beginners' production, a wh-interrogative is simply added to ademonstrative sentence. In this stage, the form of "do" appears, but the form of "do" isoften seen followed by the main verb like in the second example below. The main verbstill carries the tense marker or 3rdperson singular's'. Embedded interrogative clauseshave the structure as the independent interrogative sentence.

Where you went?
Who did steal his money?
Where did you went yesterday?
I don't know what did she mean.

The following are other types of errors that have been presented as often observed errors amongnon-native speakers in different linguistic or second language acquisition situations.

Articles
A definite or indefinite article is deleted, when it is necessary, without a conscious realization of the error. Examples:

I have daughter
Mike is in second grade
I want book

Noun-related errors
If a countable noun is modified by a word that indicates more than one item ("many", "some", "those" or "these") the noun has to take the plural form. The following examples show the violation on noun number agreement.

I have five sister.
Many child came to the concert.
One of my sister is tall

Auxiliary verbs
The form of *be* is used for the form of *have* in the present perfecttense

What was (is) happened?
He was arrived early.
She may found the dog.
She gone there before

In relation to the auxiliary verb for negation, it has been observed that somebeginners occasionally produce a sentence like *She is not have money* meaning *She does not have money*. The speaker chooses an incorrect auxiliary verb for a negative sentence.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

List and explain some consistent grammatical errors among the second language learners of English.

4.0   CONCLUSION

The plain fact of the matter is that English has been saddled with a number of rules which does nothing more than reflects the prejudices or lack of knowledge of people not trained in the scientific study of language. What is most amazing, however, is that the public still consider these rules to be inviolate. Other grammarians soon began to follow the same schema, but they also began including examples of "false syntax." Thus, grammar as a subject of advanced study and research seems inconceivable; the facts, that is, the "rules" of the language, are well known. Any fool can learn these rules; failure to do so simply indicates faulty education if not inferior intelligence. All these are considered as ungrammaticality within the environment of its usage.

5.0   SUMMARY

In sharp contrast to this common notion of language and grammar is the "structural grammar" which developed in the early twentieth century. Believing that each language should be studied as an entity in and of itself without reference to any other language, the structural grammarians have tried to describe English as objectively as possible, making no judgments about what is "correct" or "incorrect." Rather, the structuralists note the forms of language that appear and try to characterize the environments in which they appear. It may indeed be a fact that a particular form, such as the subjunctive, occurs only among a particular social class, but that occurrence does not make the form "better" or "more nearly correct" than a different form used by a different social class. English, indeed, is vibrant and growing, the closest thing to a "world" or "universal" language now in existence. If its speakers can better understand the basic principles of English and remove from the language the burden placed by eighteenth century prescriptive grammarians, English will continue to grow and to serve the communicative needs of its society.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions with adequate examples:

1.   Explain why Shakespeare's use of English was without rules.
2.   English is considered a language of rules. Discuss this fact.
3.   Discuss the violations of grammar that affect meaning in English.
4.   What are the effects of grammatical structure on English language learning?
5.   Account for the factors responsible for ungrammaticality in English.

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UNIT 4   LINGUISTIC   MEANING   AND   SPEAKER MEANING

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         3.3   Linguistic Creativity in Speaker Meaning
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6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the differences between speaker meaning and linguistic meaning. Just like the concepts of competence and performance, linguistic meaning carries the general ideology of language use but the speaker or user of the language is bound to apply his knowledge to suit his intent at every point in time. We will examine these differences and align these towards understanding English language use in contemporary situations.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand the importance linguistic meaning in contemporary English
- recognize the differences between linguistic and speaker meaning in English
- apply the acceptable structures of English in individual usage
- use the correct linguistic forms in their speech and writing
- imbibe the correct linguistic forms in generating individual usage.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Semantics is the field of study that deals with the meaning of these elements. A prominent part of semantics deals with the meaning of

individual morphemes. Semantics also involves studying the meaning of the constructions that link morphemes to form phrases and sentences. For instance, the sentences "The dog bit the man" and "The man bit the dog" contain exactly the same morphemes, but they have different meanings. This is because the morphemes enter into different constructions in each sentence, reflected in the different word orders of the two sentences. There are various ways by which people express themselves. From the general linguistic rules, people construct sentences for communication purposes and these expressions carry their intended meaning with regards to the fact being discussed. The ways people use language vary. Many people device certain linguistic idiosyncrasies that suit their pattern of discourse. They communicate meaningfully using the general linguistic structure of English but they may not be expressing the general ideals of everybody or using the same linguistic structure that others may have used but they are understood in their usage. Sometimes when this pattern of usage becomes habitual, it becomes a style that reveals the man. Therefore, meaning means differently to many people. Some expressions are interpreted as offensive even though they may not be intended to offend anybody by the speaker. However everybody is judged using the general parameter but this is not restricting the user of the language from general structures that convey his individual meaning and ideals. Thus, linguistic meaning is realizable in speaker meaning as language use differs among people.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Discuss the influence of linguistic meaning over speaker meaning

3.2   Linguistic Meaning

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. It encompasses the description of languages, the study of their origin, and the analysis of how children acquire language and how people learn languages other than their own. Linguistics is also concerned with relationships between languages and with the ways languages change over time. Linguists may study language as a thought process and seek a theory that accounts for the universal human capacity to produce and understand language. Some linguists examine language within a cultural context. By observing talk, they try to determine what a person needs to know in order to speak appropriately in different settings, such as the workplace, among friends, or among family. Other linguists focus on what happens when speakers from different language and cultural backgrounds interact. Linguists may also concentrate on how to help people learn another language, using what they know about the learner's first language and about the language being acquired.

In the early 20th century, linguistics expanded to include the study of unwritten languages. Because many languages were unwritten, attention was also given to them. They developed the techniques of descriptive linguistics and theorized on the ways in which language shapes our perceptions of the world.An important outgrowth of descriptive linguistics is a theory known as structuralism, which assumes that language is a system with a highly organized structure. Structuralism began with publication of the work of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure in *Cours de linguistiquegénérale* (1916; *Course in General Linguistics,* 1959). This work, compiled by Saussure's students after his death, is considered the foundation of the modern field of linguistics. Saussure made a distinction between actual speech, or spoken language, and the knowledge underlying speech that speakers share about what is grammatical. Speech, he said, represents instances of grammar, and the linguist's task is to find the underlying rules of a particular language from examples found in speech. To the structuralist, grammar is a set of relationships that account for speech, rather than a set of instances of speech, as it is to the descriptivist.

Once linguists began to study language as a set of abstract rules that somehow account for speech, other scholars began to take an interest in the field. They drew analogies between language and other forms of human behavior, based on the belief that a shared structure underlies many aspects of a culture. Anthropologists, for example, became interested in a structuralist approach to the interpretation of kinship systems and analysis of myth and religion. American linguist Leonard Bloomfield promoted structuralism in the United States.

Saussure's ideas also influenced European linguistics. In 1926 Czech linguist VilemMathesius founded the Linguistic Circle of Prague, a group that expanded the focus of the field to include the context of language use. The Prague Circle developed the field of phonology, or the study of sounds, and demonstrated that universal features of sounds in the languages of the world interrelate in a systematic way. Linguistic analysis, they said, should focus on the distinctiveness of sounds rather than on the ways they combine. Where descriptivists tried to locate and describe individual phonemes, such as /b/ and /p/, the Prague linguists stressed the features of these phonemes and their interrelationships in different languages. In English, for example, the voice distinguishes between the similar sounds of /b/ and /p/, but these are not distinct phonemes in a number of other languages. An Arabic speaker might pronounce the cities *Pompei* and *Bombay* the same way.

As linguistics developed in the 20th century, the notion became prevalent that language is more than speech—specifically, that it is an abstract system of interrelationships shared by members of a speech

community. Structural linguistics led linguists to look at the rules and the patterns of behavior shared by such communities. Whereas structural linguists saw the basis of language in the social structure, other linguists looked at language as a mental process.The 1957 publication of *Syntactic Structures* by American linguist Noam Chomsky initiated what many view as a scientific revolution in linguistics. Chomsky sought a theory that would account for both linguistic structure and for the creativity of language- the fact that we can create entirely original sentences and understand sentences never before uttered. He proposed that all people have an innate ability to acquire language. The task of the linguist, he claimed, is to describe this universal human ability, known as language competence, with a grammar from which the grammars of all languages could be derived. The linguist would develop this grammar by looking at the rules children use in hearing and speaking their first language. He termed the resulting model, or grammar, a transformational-generative grammar, referring to the transformations (or rules) that generate (or account for) language. Certain rules, Chomsky asserted, are shared by all languages and form part of a universal grammar, while others are language specific and associated with particular speech communities. Since the 1960s much of the development in the field of linguistics has been a reaction to or against Chomsky's theories.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Distinguish linguistic meaning from *competence* and *performance.*

3.3   Linguistic Creativity in Speaker Meaning

Linguists used the term *grammar* primarily to refer to a subconscious linguistic system that enables people to produce and comprehend an unlimited number of utterances. Grammar thus accounts for our linguistic competence. Observations about the actual language we use, or language performance, are used to theorize about this invisible mechanism known as grammar.The orientation toward the scientific study of language led by Chomsky has had an impact on non-generative linguists as well. Comparative and historically oriented linguists are looking for the various ways linguistic universals show up in individual languages. Psycholinguists, interested in language acquisition, are investigating the notion that an ideal speaker-hearer is the origin of the acquisition process. Sociolinguists are examining the rules that underlie the choice of language variants, or codes, and allow for switching from one code to another. Some linguists are studying language performance—the way people use language—to see how it reveals a cognitive ability shared by all human beings.

Creativity is not just putting words together to create new sentences such as *Theunpurged images of day recede*. Every speaker has the talent of creating new sentences, even if less effectively. Creativity is a basic fact of human language, not an added extra. The secret of creativity seems to be the grammatical system through which new sentences can be produced. One of the most crucial things that children have to acquire is the creativity of language. There is prevarication in each speaker's use of language. Speakers can intentionally make utterances that are false or meaningless. Human language is creative and flexible and each speaker uses the language in his best creative way. Human language is interpersonal. The use of language involves social interaction. When we use language in conversation, we make assumptions about what our listeners know and believe, and we bring to the conversation attitudes toward our listeners. One's use of language varies depending on a variety of circumstances.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Discuss further the influence of Linguistic creativity in contemporary English.

4.0   CONCLUSION

Words are only minor elements in the total linguistic discourse. When someone uses a language, the style of the language may have more impact on the audience than the actual words. Indeed, style and tone are of great, almost fundamental, importance when we translate discuss a speaker's use of language. If the aim of the speaker is only to convey a piece of information or some instructions to the audience, the referential meaning of words becomes quite significant, and the effect of style and/or tone diminishes. At the other extreme, when we deal with a speaker whosenot only aim at conveying a message, but aspires to produce a certain impact on his listeners through the use of a particular style, the translation of such a stylistic effect is then an essential part of the individual's linguistic style not just as an ornament that would bestow beauty on his usage, but as an indispensable aspect of his use of language, without which his language may not be identified as a consistent pattern. Linguistic meaning is guide towards speaker meaning. The speaker creates out of the vast linguistic ocean his pattern of usage from the general use.

5.0   SUMMARY

Since Chomsky's work of the 1950s, one of the main distinctive features of human language is seen to be its creativity in being able to communicate new messages. For example someone wants to say *Twenty*

five sheep are gazing in the field, the English language rises to the occasion by supplying a grammatical form and vocabulary, despite the fact that nobody has ever wanted to say this sentence before or ever will again. Most of the sentences people produce or hear in the course of a day are new in so far as they have never been said or heard in that precise form before. Each speaker of English is distinct in his application of the language depending on the audience, environment, time, place and circumstance. In Nigeria, there are marked linguistic behaviours of the people resulting from each individual's application of the language to suit his purpose. Thus, the English use by individual's in Warri is not same as that of individuals in Lagos.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions:

1. Discuss the components of linguistic meaning.
2. Explain what linguistic creativity means.
3. What factors influence each speaker's use of language?
4. Assess the influence of linguistic meaning on speaker meaning.
5. Comment on linguistic meaning and speaker meaning in Contemporary English.

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UNIT 5   CONTEMPORARY BUSINESS WRITING

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7.0   References/Further Reading

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the use of English in contemporary business situations. Business English is the type of English language register and other forms of use that are used in business situations. In business English, we study the use of English in business transactions like job applications, curriculum vitae, writing business proposal and other forms of communication in business. In business writing, the use of English is strictly formal as the parties, the sender and the receiver are not in the mood for extraneous relationship beyond the business issue. The English language in use here has subtle but strict form that does not allow room for informality. We will examine some forms of business writing, the language use and the types.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand that business English is a unique register in English
- distinguish business writing from the other types of writing
- use the forms of language acceptable in business writings
- write business correspondences using normal business register and structure
- realize that curriculum vitae has an acceptable pattern
- apply business English in writing contemporary English mails.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Business essays are closely connected to discussing principles and methodologies that business activity is based on. Any human activity may become a subject for a business essay. The main thing required from the writer of a business essay is his/her profound understanding of the problem of the business under consideration. If necessary, take up adequate reading in order to understand better the subject.Then you should refer to the very topic of your Business essay and study what you are asked to do. If you are not given a special topic for business essays, then, decide on it by yourself. Do not choose some trite topic, be original and capturing the reader's attention. When the topic is settled, consider the structure of your essay. If your Business essay is expected to be short, write a five paragraph paper which undergoes the structure common for all essay types: essay introduction, Main Content and conclusion. While planning the structure of your business essay think beforehand about the headings your paper will have. The latter should be clear and concise, rendering the main idea of the section they refer to.When writing your business essays, mind the competence of the reader your paper is destined to. Do not neglect to give explanations of difficult terms and notions; it will contribute to the reader's understanding of your message.

The writing style is probably the most individual aspect of a business correspondence, but again there are useful guidelines which aid the readability, professionalism, objectiveness and impact. All business correspondence should be written in the third person. Note that the best written essay is not necessarily the same as the best verbal description. Decide, in advance of writing,who the likely reader of the document is. The document must be pitched at an appropriate level with sufficient background to allow understanding by the target reader.

Check your spellings. There are spelling checkers in virtually every word processor now, so use them! However, don't assume that a spelling checker will get all your mistakes, so long as the word is in its dictionary, it won't flag an error. These checkers are good, but they cannot read your mind (yet!). If the report language is not your first language, get a natural speaker to check your document. Again, many word processors now have grammar checkers, but the usefulness of these is debatable, so don't rely on them. If in doubt, keep your sentences short and don't be afraid to ask somebody how to use punctuation correctly.

Avoid excessive use of capital letters. One recommendation is to only use capitals for proper nouns (such as place names, company names, etc) and in places where acronyms are being defined, e.g., Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM). Acronyms should be defined at the first point of usage. Try to avoid the use of capitals for emphasis, use boldfacing or italics instead. Capitals can be used effectively to differentiate between different section heading levels.

Business Communication

Business Communication is communication used to promote a product, service, or organization; relay information within the business; or deal with legal and similar issues. Business Communication encompasses a variety of topics, including Marketing, Branding, Customer relations, Consumer behaviour, Advertising, Public relations, Corporate communication, Community engagement, Research&Measurement, Reputation management, Interpersonal communication, Employee engagement, Online communication, and Event Management. It is closely related to the fields of professional communication and technical communication.

Business is conducted through various channels of communication, including the Internet, Print (Publications), Radio, Television, Ambient, Outdoor, and Word of mouth. Business Communication can also refer to internal communication. A communications director will typically manage internal communication and craft messages sent to employees. It is vital that internal communications are managed properly because a poorly crafted or managed message could foster distrust or hostility from employees. There are several methods of business communication, including:

a)   Web-based communication - for better and improved communication, anytime anywhere
b)   e-mails, which provide an instantaneous medium of written communication worldwide;
c)   Reports - important in documenting the activities of any department;
d)   Presentations - very popular method of communication in all types of organizations, usually involving audiovisual material, like copies of reports, or material prepared;
e)   telephoned meetings, which allow for long distance speech;
f)   forum boards, which allow people to instantly post information at a centralized location; and face to face meetings, which are personal and should be succeeded by a written followup.

All these activities take place in English language. Business English is the strict language form for this type of communication. Business communication language is highly official with the jargon of the business being used in all the corespondence. Business communication involves serious linguistic adherence to the basic requirements that are necessary for easy business flow. It is therefore necessary not to make the English language in use in business communication less formal in diction.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the major characteristics of business communication.

3.2 Language use in Business Essays

The language of business writing is Business English. It is English especially related to international trade. It is a specialism within English language learning and teaching. Many non-native English speakers study the subject with the goal of doing business with English-speaking countries, or with companies located outside the Anglosphere but which, nonetheless, use English as a shared language or lingua franca. Much of the English communication that takes place within business circles the world over occurs between non-native speakers. In cases such as these, the object of the exercise is efficient and effective communication. The strict rules of grammar are in such cases sometimes ignored, when, for example, a stressed negotiator's only goal is to reach an agreement as quickly as possible.

Business English means different things to different people. For some, it focuses on vocabulary and topics used in the worlds of business, trade, finance, and international relations. For others it refers to the communication skills used in the workplace, and focuses on the language and skills needed for typical business communication such as presentations, negotiations, meetings, small talk, socializing, correspondence, reportwriting, and so on. In both of these cases it can be taught to native speakers of English, for example, high school students preparing to enter the job market. It can also be a form of international English.

One of the fundamental aspects of doing business is communicating to clients. The major medium of communication among business experts is English language. The details of business format differ depending on the context in which a particular business correspondence is going. The requirements of business writing may seem rigid. They are certainly different from rules you have used in non-business writing, and this may cause you difficulties. The objectives of the business style are to be

clear, accurate, and unambiguous. Other qualities of writing, such as creative use of words, are not out of place in a business paper, but they are subordinate to achieving clarity.Your business correspondence should form a self-explanatory unit which can be understood independently of other sources.

In general, use the past tense when writing or telling your business tales but use the present tense to describe relationships and to discuss their implications. Avoid the use of tautologies like *when joblessness increases, unemployment results*. While it may initially sound as though one had explained something, it should be apparent that the conclusion was only a rewording of the premise. This is an example of reasoning by tautology. In more subtle cases, it can be hard to detect, but it pervades both political speeches and student papers.

Wordiness

Good business writing is usually straightforward in style. The best way to avoid ambiguity is to be concise. Some examples of wordy writing from past reports are given below with a concise alternative for each.

Wordy: "Explanations of the operation and structure of this business are found in greater detail in the business manual used for this proposal, as well as a detailed description of general procedure."

Concise: Details may be found in the business manual.

Wordy: "We will determine the decrease or increase of the stock rate"

Concise: We will determine the stock rate.

Wordy: "This indicates if the business is being helped, hindered, or totally destroyed"

Concise: This indicates whether the business is being affected.

Wordy: "I wish to apply for the job of a Personnel Manager in your company, which was advertised in The Guardian Newspapers of April 14, 2008"

Concise: I wish to apply for the post of Personnel Manager [if the position was not advertised, you won't know about the vacancy]

Wordy: "This proposal will ensure that our business deal will operate without any hitch or obstruction"

Concise: This proposal will ensure a smooth business deal

In all, the language of business correspondence is formal, concise, less artificial and creative. It must adhere to the business language format; otherwise the writer might be regarded as unserious. Because of the strict language forms in business correspondence, it does not allow room for linguistic creativity which makes room for extraneous details

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Discuss the negative effects of wrong tense and wordiness in writing correspondences. Use good examples.

3.3   Structure/Sample of Business Essay

There are strict structures for business writing. Any violation of this format results in unofficial style which might result in bad handling or rejection of the correspondence. There are hard and fast rules about this type of letters. Below is the standard structure of all types of business correspondence and some samples:

Structure of Business Correspondence

i.   Applicant's Address: City, State, Date of Letter [Use complete title]

ii.   Employer's Name, Title and address: City, State, Zip (If possible), address

iii.   Salutation: it is to a particular person

iv.   Opening Paragraph: State why you are writing, name the position or type of work for which you are applying and mention how you heard of the opening or organization.

v.   Middle Paragraph(s): Explain why you are interested in working for this employer and specify your reasons for desiring this type of work. Mention your experience or related education, be sure to point it out, be enthusiastic. But do not reiterate your entire resume. Emphasize skills, be brief but specific; mention the abilities you have that relate to the job for which you are applying. Be sure to do this in a confident manner. Remember that the reader will view your letter of application as an example of your writing skills.

vi.   Closing Paragraph: You may refer the reader to your enclosed resumé (Which gives a summary of your qualifications) or whatever media you are using to illustrate your training, interests

and experience. Have an appropriate closing to pave the way for the interview.

vii.   Closing: Sincerely, always sign letters, your name

3.4   Curriculum Vitae/Resumé

A curriculum vitae (singular), meaning "course of one's life", is a document that gives much more detail than does a resume about your academic and professional accomplishments. Curricula vitae (plural) are most often used for academic or research positions, whereas resumés are the preferred documents in business and industry. Note about plural / singular forms:"Curricula vitae" (vee-tie) is the plural form; "curriculum vitae" is singular.The informal shortened form, "vita" standing alone, meaning a brief autobiographical sketch (Webster's), is singular, while "vitae," is plural.The abbreviation is often used: CV or CVs. Curricula vitae are commonly used in applying for the following: Jobs, Contracts, Admission to graduate school or as part of an application packet for a graduate assistantship or scholarship.

Curriculum vitae includes information about professional publications, presentations, committee work, grants received, and other details based on each person's experience. Although curricula vitae are often similar to resumes, the preferred style, format, and content varies from discipline to discipline. Before writing a CV, you should become familiar with the requirements of your academic field by asking faculty members in your department and consulting professional associations for additional guidelines and examples. Career Services advisors can review your curriculum vitae and make suggestions.

A resumé is a brief, concise document that presents, and effectively sells, your most relevant and positive credentials for employment, admission to graduate school, consideration for a scholarship or fellowship, or other professional purpose. A vita, or curriculum vita, is a more extensive document typically used by those with graduate education who are pursuing positions in academia or research. An effective resume gets you an interview, not a job. An employer will usually spend 15 to 20 seconds reviewing your resume, so the content of your resume must be clear, concise, and targeted to the type of job for which you are applying.If your resumé has a grammatical error, it will probably jump off the page to an employer, and this is a way to weed you out of a candidate pool. Your resumé may be the only chance you get to make an impression, so make it a good one.

B: Sequence of Resumé Information

The order and content of everyone's resume does not have to be the same. However, formats are somewhat standardized so that employers can easily find the information they seek. After your heading, sequence the information on your resumé from the most important to the least important with regard to supporting your career objective.

1.   Heading

Head your resume with this information:

- Your full name. Use the form of your name as it appears on academic records and other documents an employer may require you to provide, so there will be no confusion that documents belong to the same person. If you go by a middle name or nickname, you can emphasize or insert this, as in Anthony (Onyema) Uche.

- Current/school address and phone number and your permanent address and phone number. Employers may wish to contact you during school breaks or even months after you submit your resume. Make it possible, and easy for them to find you. Email address(es).

- Do not place the word "resume" at the top of your resume. It is simply not done.

2.   Objective

Your objective tells a prospective employer the type of work you are currently pursuing. The rest of your resume should be designed to most effectively support your objective. If you are using your resume to support an application for a scholarship, admission to Graduate school, or the like, you can state this in your objective. Always state your objective simply and concisely; it is never necessary to have a long-winded statement. For a job search, don't make an employer guess what you want to do. Therefore:

- Make sure the employer knows either the industry you want to work in, or the type of work you want to do, or the skills you want to apply, or some combination. Example: Marketing position in sports or sports promotion, interest in using writing and public speaking skills.

3. Education

Your education section should almost always immediately follow the objective statement. This is because your education is your most recent significant accomplishment and is usually related to your objective. Even if your major is not specifically tied to your objective, you want the employer to know that you are completing (or working on) a college degree. Include:

- Degree(s) - first list the most recent degree you are pursuing or have earned, then list previous college degrees, as in Master's degree first, followed by Bachelor's degree.

- On one line include the degree level, major and date of completion or anticipated completion by month and year.

- On another line include institution and location by city and state. You can use the university's full name, or the official nickname on an official document, or both. Think about the types of employers to whom you will be providing your resume and whether or not they will be familiar with the university names.

4. Experience

- If at all possible, use relevant experience to support your objective. This experience can be paid or unpaid, an internship or a substantial class project, volunteer positions, or positions held in clubs, etc.

- Your experience does not have to be paid to be relevant. This allows you to include any experience in which you learned or demonstrated skills, knowledge or abilities that are related to the type of job you are seeking.

- If your experience seems to break into two distinct categories of "related" and "other," you can use these two headings and divide your experience this way. Related experience might include a mixture of paid employment, volunteer work, student organization work, etc. You can give more detail in your related experience section, and leave out details in the other experience section.

- If you have not had related experience, you should still list your employment background. For each entry, give the job title, name and location (city and state) of organization, dates of employment

(month / year), and a concise description of your accomplishments.

5.   Activities and Honors

- Your accomplishments and extra-curricular activities tell an employer about your interests, motivations, and skills (e.g. organizational, leadership, interpersonal, etc.).

- You may include scholarships, awards, recognition of academic achievement, etc.

- If you have one significant academic honor and/or a particularly outstanding academic honor, you may wish to list it in your education section. This can be helpful if your GPA is not truly reflective of your achievements.

6.   When listing organizations

- Use a complete name instead of just the abbreviation. Example: Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN).

- Do indicate positions held and/or activities in which you have participated (and about which you can articulate your accomplishments in an interview).

- If you held offices or leadership positions, you may wish to briefly list or describe your accomplishments (as you do with work experience). Emphasize the activities or skills that support your career objective.

- You may indicate dates of membership and leadership roles held.

Example:
Comedy Club, President, 2007-present

7.   Skills

- Almost every resume should include a skills section. The heading might simply read "Skills," and include a list of various skills, including computer skills, laboratory skills, foreign language skills, etc.

- If you have skills in several categories, head the section "Skills," and include subheadings to organize your categories, such as

"computer skills," "laboratory skills," "foreign language skills," "organizational skills," etc.

8.   Certifications / Licensure

- If you have a certification or licensure (i.e., teaching certification, Engineer in Training, etc.) which is relevant to your career objective, include a "Certifications" or "Licensure" heading and give this information.

- In ordering your resume, place this section higher on your resume than other less related information.

9.   References

On a resume:
- On a resume, it is completely unnecessary to state "references available upon request." Most employers assume this. Do, however, prepare a reference list, on a separate page from your resume.

On curriculum vitae:
- References are typically listed.

10.   Hobbies

- If you have interests, activities or hobbies that are very important to you and that make a statement about who you are, do list them. For example, if you are an avid rock climber, or you've rebuilt a car, list it as an activity, even if you don't belong to a formal organization and even if it is unrelated to your objective. (It certainly reflects discipline and hard work and skills, which are valuable characteristics.)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Prepare a detailed resume for the job of fresh English graduate (note that English graduates work in the media industry, communication outfits, banks, insurance, marketing agencies etc.)

4.0   CONCLUSION

Business English is concerned with the language of business: trading, freighting, insurance, banking, transportation etc. The language is strict, direct and formal. This is because language hardly allows room for aesthetic digressions and informality. Most business correspondence is

based on the intent of the mail. The receiver and the sender know that the only reason for the mail is business. Opinions are formed and conclusions are drawn from the appearance and content of any correspondence you send. Oftentimes, the first impression an employer has of a prospective employee is in writing, in the form of a cover letter or letter of application and resumé.It is important to make the best possible impression so that an interview will follow.When sending a resume, never send it without a cover letter or application letter. Usually, when the reader gets your letter and resumé, he/she will immediately flip the letter over and glance at the resume first. This is so that a few facts about you are easily obtained (that is name, objective, education, extent of experience and skills). If the resume interests the reader, he/she will then flip back to the application letter and read it in detail. In fact, the letter may get more attention than the resumé because, although the resume is about you, it is assumed that you had help putting it together. But the cover letter or application letter is generally written by the individual and the reader can assess your writing style, communication style, and how well you put your thoughts and ideas together.

5.0   SUMMARY

The myth about business correspondence is that it must be formal, standardized and often terse. The writer seems to transform him/herself from the personal to the institutional. Letters appear to be written from one "institution" to another rather than from person to person. This does nothing more than create ineffective communication. It is important to develop a good writing style that not only reflects good grammar and sentence structure, but also gives the reader some insight into the personality of the writer. It is just as important, however, to be able to express yourself in clear, concise language so the reader knows exactly why you are writing. An employer could receive hundreds of letters and resumes every day. It would be like receiving hundreds of pieces of junk mail. How much of it can you read and which ones do you even care to read? An employer may compare your correspondence with that of other candidates and determine which appears better. To increase your chances of being selected, your letter must spark the interest of the reader, create a favorable impression and look inviting to read.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   You saw an advertisement for the position of 'Editor' in a Magazine industry. Apply for the job.

2. You were just promoted to the rank of Senior Manager in your office. Write a letter of appreciation to the Managing Director, expressing your gratitude.
3. You just graduated with a Second Class Honours (Upper Division) in your discipline. Prepare a resume for the job of a management trainee in West African Milk Company Plc.
4. You were working as a banker for many years. Prepare curriculum vitae for employment into another bank with better remuneration.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Beer, D.F. (Ed.) (1992).*Writing and Speaking in the Technology Professions - A PracticalGuide*. London: IEEE Press.

Shaw, Harry (1965). *A Complete Course in Freshman English*.New York: Harper &Row.

Strunk, William and E. B. White.(1979). *The Elements of Style*. New York: MacMillan Pub.

MODULE 5   CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF USAGE

Unit 1   Use and Usage in Contemporary English
Unit 2   Tools of Usage 1: English Vocabulary
Unit 3   Tools of Usage 2: Idioms, Phrasal Verbs and Catch
                Phrases
Unit 4   Tools of Usage 3: Diction
Unit 5   Internet English/Web Writing

UNIT 1   USE AND USAGE IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

CONTENTS

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2.0   Objectives
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall study the differences between use and usage as it relates to language forms and language application in contemporary English. We shall examine use and usage in linguistic style. Here the emphasis is the distinction between individual usages of language in use. Style being a hybrid in definition is examined with emphasis on the individual use in the communication process. Use and usage in linguistic grammar is also studied with emphasis on correct application language and the avoidance of extraneous factors in good grammar making. The emphasis in the study of use and usage here is the application of proper use of language forms beyond personal idiosyncrasies.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- differentiate between usage and use in contemporary English
- know that individual language style must be in the confines of general use
- realize that wrong usage affects proper communication
- appreciate the need for proper language use
- apply the rules of use in individual English usage.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

The noun 'use' comes from the verb 'use', meaning to employ for a given purpose or put into action and larger dictionaries will list many variations and adaptations of that basic meaning. Examples are: '*I use a keyboard to type in these words*' '*I use a knife and fork to eat my dinner*', '*I use short words in speaking with small children, because they probably won't understand long words*'. So the noun 'use' (with the 's' as in 'goose', not, as for the verb, as in 'cruise') means a given purpose or application. Examples would be: '*The English language is in common use around the world*'; '*I put my keyboard to good use*'. For the noun 'usage' the basic dictionary definition can look pretty much the same as that for 'use', but with 'usage' there is a sense of '*continued'* or '*common'* use. And with language, the distinction is that '*usage'* is the way the language is actually used, as distinct from what might look correct if you try to construct a sentence or phrase from a dictionary and grammar book. Examples would be: '*Although old-fashioned grammarians say you should never split an infinitive, that is done every day in common usage.*' and '*I was taught at school that every sentence must have a verb, but actual usage shows that many excellent writers include in their work 'sentences' without verbs, such as 'His arrival at any gathering was always a dramatic event. Bold. Arresting.*'

How useful is this distinction? Well, in everyday life it probably does not have a lot of application; it is an interesting distinction, partly because of the origin of the words. As indicated above, both *use* and *usage* come to us from the Latin *usus*, but *usage* has arrived via Old French, from the 14th century AD. But there is a very practical consideration here. Anyone who wants to be a highly confident, fluent speaker of English would do well to develop an insatiable curiosity to know the appropriate usage, which is *a way of employing language at a higher level than technically correct use*.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Differentiate between use and usage in Contemporary English by means of ample examples.

3.2   *Use*, *Usage* **and Linguistic Style**

Many definitions abound on style by different linguists and other members of the writing community at large who have made several attempts to attach a precise meaning to style. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines style as: "A manner of writing that is characteristic of a particular writer, historical period or type of literature" (23) Style, according to M. H Abrams, is: "The manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse. It is how a speaker or writer says whatever it is that he says" (*A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 190). From the above definitions, it is clear that the style of a writer may be analyzed in terms of its diction or choice of words; its sentence structure and syntax; the types of figurative language and other formal features. The reason for this is not far-fetched since different people see the same thing from different perspectives. In literature, style is idiosyncratic as a writer's particular way of expressing his ideas that is different from that of others, since everyone possesses a style all his own.

Language is penned down in words, the writer or speaker uses words to suit his purpose. Style is the shaping of the structure of language to suit a writer's creative and/or communicative desire. The concept of style can also be said to develop both in terms of imminent necessity and external influence. This means that, no two persons writing on the same topic or subject can address the issues from the same angle, since the issues of complexity and meaning which have roles to play would abound. Complexity in this conception is related to meaning and view point. Style is a constituent of choice made from language. In explaining the relationship between style and language, style is a "relative concept" which is identified in the traditional way by the distinction between what is said or between the content and the form of a text. The content is usually denoted by terms such as *information* or *message*. Style in communication can be analyzed in order to understand the meaning of certain information. For most communicators, meaning is derived not directly by statements but by the forms in the statements. Style in most texts involves thoughts and feelings which can be conveyed only through the use of linguistic analysis of the language forms and their functions.

From the above explanations, we can deduce that the term 'style' is different to understand and therefore, difficult to explain. This is because of the various perspectives and approaches that different

linguists have about it. 'Style' is used, non-technically, in a variety of sense. It may be used to refer to the kind of systematic variation in text that is covered by such terms as 'formal', 'colloquial', 'pedantic', etc, and this sense of style gives rise to one very broad definition of stylistics which is "the description of the linguistic characteristics of all situationally restricted use of language" (Crystal and Davy, 30) This view which sees 'style' as a way language is used, is one which Leech and Short (1981) agree with. The term 'style' is also used to refer to those features of a text, which identifies it as being the product of a particular writer. For example, we talk of the style of Jane Austen as being characteristically different from that of Charlotte Bronte, or of the Odes of Horace as being recognizably different in style from those of Tibullus. Style is the kind of language use which is a result of a combination of a context, medium of utterance and the human beings who participate in the language activity of any situation.

This simply implies that language use has some characteristics of style in it. The effect of this is that a text, whether it is a single word text or a dual, manifests a style. The concept of style varies such that it is difficult to nail it down to a specific definition and a technical sharpness. However, we can explain 'style' as any distinctive way of using language peculiar to a writer, genre or period. Stylistics is frequently restricted to the analysis of literary texts from this point of view. Since the identification of a text is not generally regarded as an end itself, the determination of those features of the text which produce a particular effect upon the reader or listener, style and grammar, under the interpretation of the term 'stylistics', merges with what was traditionally called rhetoric.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Usage is individual style but *use* is a product of linguistic rules. Explain this statement from your understanding of *style*, *use* and *usage*.

3.3   *Use* and *Usage* in Contemporary Grammar

In grammar, certain aspects of *use* and *usage* deal with some common writing problems that do not involve rules of grammar. These problems, of parallelism, redundancy, and the like, are more rhetorical than grammatical; that is, they involve choices you must make as a writer trying to create a certain style of expression. You must determine what stylistic choices will afford greater *clarity* and *cogency* to each of your efforts to communicate. We all make different choices when faced with different communicative tasks, depending on what we feel will be most effective. An expression that is appropriate for a formal letter may be utterly off-putting in an informal message. Of course, we also have to

make these choices when we speak, but we are more likely to be aware of them in formal speech that we have conceived and outlined, if not scripted, in advance of its delivery than in off-the-cuff remarks or a routine conversation. And no doubt the audience in these more formal situations will have more exacting expectations of how we express ourselves than it would on more relaxed occasions.

A successful and distinctive writing style is an elusive bird of paradise. It is unmistakable once you see it but difficult to find. It involves many things: creating an appropriate voice for your purpose, choosing the right words for the subject and audience, constructing elegant sentences whose rhythm reinforces their meaning, presenting an argument in a logical fashion that is both engaging and easy to follow, finding vivid images to make thoughts accessible to your readers. You can probably add to this list. You may, for example, want to shock or jolt your audience rather than court it, and this strategy requires stylistic features that are quite different from those you would use for gentle persuasion.

The trouble with writing is that despite what many handbooks suggest, there are no hard and fast rules, no magic formulas that make it an easy step-by-step process. You have to re-conceive the rules every time you sit down to write because every occasion has its own specific requirements. Writing for university students is different from writing for business associates. Writing for older people is different from writing for teenagers. Writing about medicine is different from writing about sports. Writing to explain is different from writing to persuade. At the same time, it is this challenge that makes writing so interesting and rewarding. It is a process of discovery, an exploration of uncharted territory. And there are tools you can bring with you that will make the journey easier: a familiarity with your audience and your material, sensitivity to words and their connotations, and a map of some of the pitfalls that have befallen others. In this regard, we shall examine Parallelism, Passives, Redundancy, and Wordiness

i)   Parallelism

Most memorable writing has as one of its recognizable features the ample use of parallel grammatical structures. A basic guideline about parallel constructions is to make sure that all the elements in a balanced pair or in a series have the same grammatical form. That is, if you start with a that-clause, stick with that-clauses; if you start with an infinitive, stick with infinitives; if you start with a participle, stick with participles; and so on. A second point is to make sure that once you have chosen the kind of grammatical forms you want to make parallel, you structure them symmetrically. Remember that an initial article, preposition, auxiliary verb, or modifier will tend to govern all elements in the series

unless it is repeated for each element. For example, if you set up a series of nouns with the first modified by an adjective, the reader will expect the adjective to modify the rest of the series as well. Thus you should say:

The building has new lighting, plumbing, and carpeting but not *The building has new lighting, plumbing, and different carpeting*.

The same is true for articles:
He brought the rod, reel, and bait.

If you want to restrict a modifier to only one noun, repeat the article for each noun:
He brought the light rod, the reel, and the bait.

Similarly, if you introduce a series of nouns with a single preposition, readers will expect that preposition to govern all the nouns:
He sent the letter to the provost, the dean, and the student who won the scholarship.

With contrastive conjunctions, it's best to repeat the preposition:
He sent the letter to the provost and the dean, but not to the student or his parents.

An auxiliary verb will govern all the verbs in the series unless you construct each verb phrase separately:
We will always value her contributions, admire her fortitude, and wish her the best.

When you spot a *faulty parallel*, recast the structure to give all the elements equivalent treatment. If your new parallel construction does not seem much of an improvement, rewrite the sentence completely to avoid the parallel construction. Better to have no parallel structures than to have parallel structures that sound overblown or stilted.
Faulty parallelism is all around us. We see and hear it every day—often without taking notice. How many times have you heard *Please leave your name, number, and a brief message?* After waiting for the tone, have you ever objected to the imperfect symmetry of this sentence?

Sometimes making sure that all the elements in a parallel construction are equivalent is not as clear-cut as it sounds, and parallelism itself can be a matter of debate: *The committee has the power of investigation, negotiation, arranging contracts, and hiring new employees.*

The panel is similarly divided when the first part of a compound verb has a series of objects, so that the second verb and its objects seem tacked on as the last element in the series. Example:
These services will use satellite, copper cable, fiber optics, cellular communications, and be accessible via suitably equipped computers.

We have constructions in which three nouns in the series are governed by the possessive his, while the fourth and final noun is modified by *the*:
In the hotel room the suspect had left his keys, briefcase, spare clothes, and the receipts for the cars he had rented.

This construction in fact has the virtue of adding emphasis to the final element. *The receipts* seem to be the most important piece of evidence that the suspect left behind.

When the situation is more clear-cut, however, and something in the construction is clearly out of balance. This is the case with the coordinate conjunction *not only … but also*, where it is easy to spot when one element is out of place:
The film makers not only concentrate on Edward VIII's abdication over his love for divorcee Wallis Simpson but also his leaning toward Nazi Germany.

Crafting sentences with flawless parallelism takes effort and practice. Even if your readers do not notice or object when you make mistakes, balance and symmetry are worth striving for in your writing. There are certain constructions that are notorious for throwing things out of whack. Some of them are: 'both … and …'; comparisons with 'as' and 'than'; compound verbs; 'either … or / neither … nor'; 'not only … but also'; 'rather than'

ii)   Redundancy

A certain amount of redundancy is built in to the English language, and we would never consider getting rid of it. Take grammatical number, for instance. Sentences such as *He drives to work* and *We are happy* contain redundant verb forms. The *-s* of *drives* indicates singularity of the subject, but we already know the subject is singular from the singular pronoun *he*. Similarly, *are* indicates a plural subject, which is already evident from the plural pronoun *we*. Number is also indicated redundantly in phrases like *this book* and *those boxes*, where the demonstrative adjective shows number and the noun does as well. But there are redundant ways of saying things that can make the rest of your writing seem foolish. Many of these are common expressions that go unnoticed in casual conversation but that stick out like red flags in writing. Why say *at this point in time* instead of *now*, or *because of the*

fact when *because* will do? Something that is large in size is really just large. The trouble lies less in the expressions themselves than in their accumulated effect. Anyone can be forgiven for an occasional redundancy, but writing that is larded with redundancies is likely to draw unwanted laughs rather than admiration.

The usages that critics have condemned as redundancies fall into several classes. Some expressions, such as *old adage*, have become fixed expressions and seem harmless enough. Others, such as *consensus of opinion, close proximity, hollow tube,* and *refer back,* can be pointlessly redundant in some contexts yet defensible in others. In these cases the use of what is regarded as an unnecessary modifier or qualifier can sometimes be justified on the grounds that it makes a real distinction in meaning. Thus, a *hollow tube* can be distinguished from one that has been blocked up with deposits, and a *consensus of opinion* can be distinguished from a *consensus of judgments* or *a consensus of practice*. In other cases the use of the qualifier is harder to defend. There is no way *to revert* without *reverting back* and no *consensus* that is not *general*. Listed below are some of the more problematic redundancies: *both, but … however, close proximity, general consensus, consider as / deem as, cross section, else, empty rhetoric, equally as, free gift, from whence, inside of, mental telepathy, old adage, rarely ever / seldom ever, reason is because, reason why, refer back, revert back, VAT tax etc.*

iii)   Wordiness

In a world in which efficiency has become a prime value, most people view economy in wording as a sign of intelligence. Its opposite, therefore, is often considered a sign of stupidity. Most of us are busy and impatient people. We hate to wait. It is irritating, which hardly helps when you are trying to win someone's goodwill or show that you know what you are talking about. What is worse, using too many words often makes it difficult to understand what is being said. It forces a reader to work hard to figure out what is going on, and in many cases the reader may simply decide it is not worth the effort. Another side effect of verbosity is the tendency to sound overblown, pompous, and evasive. What better way to turn off a reader? It is easy to recommend concision in expression but much harder to figure out how to achieve it. In general, wordy writing has three distinguishing characteristics: *weak verbs, ponderous nouns, and lots of prepositional phrases*. The three are interconnected. The key to writing clearly and concisely is to use *strong active verbs*. This means that you should only use the passive voice when you have a solid reason for doing so. If you look down a page you have written and see that you are relying on forms of the verb *be* and

other weak verbs like *seem* and *appear*, you can often boil down what you have written to a fraction of its size by revising with active verbs. Relying on weak verbs forces you to shunt much of your meaning into nouns. These nouns tend to be abstract and Latinate, ending in *-ment*, *-tion*, and *-ence*. The nouns themselves need a proper grammatical home, and the only way to show how they relate to other parts of the sentence is to put the nouns in prepositional phrases. Just as you can count weak verbs to test for wordiness, you can also count nouns in relation to active verbs. If there is a preponderance of nouns, consider revising the passage with strong verbs. It should be considerably shorter. But in your efforts to write clearly, you must not lose sight of the fact that good writing has other virtues beside *compactness*. Just because a statement is concise does not make it moving. Consider the following passage from a speech by Winston Churchill voicing defiance during one of the most difficult times of World War II. It could certainly be made shorter with fewer repetitions, but it would hardly be more inspiring:

> *We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.*

A certain amount of repetition and redundancy has its uses. It never hurts to thank someone and add that you appreciate what was done. The recapitulation of the major points in a complicated essay can be a generous service to the reader, not a needless repetition. If you keep focused on what you are trying to accomplish and on what will help your readers or your listeners, you will have less need to remember formal rules of good writing. You will be able to trust your instincts and your ear.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Redundancy, wordiness and parallel repetition are good styles in usage but the use could impair meaning. Discuss

4.0   CONCLUSION

Native speakers of English apply proper use in their usage. Dialects emerge but it is far from the style of usage. For instance, in the statement "This is the key to the {lock/door}" or "This is the key for the {lock/door}" It is a matter of dialect and, perhaps, think it is far, far

better to go in the opposite direction when attempting to understand what is and is not acceptable English. Native speakers are not bound by the Procrustean grammatical rules your English teachers hand down to you as some sort of immutable and inviolable laws about English usage. The "laws" of English usage are based on how people actually use the language; people do not actually use the language based on these mythical laws. Grammar is supposed to provide a description and an explanation of why the language is spoken and written the way it is, and not as a code of how the language must be spoken and written. Those codes we call "style manuals"; they are almost 100% prescriptive and are predicated on the belief that uniformity of expression is desirable because it leads to easier comprehension. Perhaps this is true in most cases, and it certainly is true when people are writing and speaking formal English on formal occasions, but there is nothing sacred about style manuals.

5.0   SUMMARY

Rather than making some wrongheaded judgments about the lack of grammaticality of what are apparently supposed to be examples of outstanding essays in English, it would be much better to use these essays to inductively arrive at what is acceptable in English. This is how native speakers do it, just as native speakers of other languages do the same thing with their native languages. You must always ask the fundamental question when confronted with use and usage in any language. One question here is: "Is this constructed according to the grammatical rules of English?" Remember that good grammar does not always make good English. Language usage is not a function of grammar; it is, in fact, a function of individual applications within the confines of acceptability in language and discourse.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions correctly:

1.   Define *use* and *usage* within the confines on contemporary English usage.
2.   Explain the point of convergence among *style*, *use* and *usage*.
3.   "Wordiness could lead to boring write ups." Explain with reasons the truism in this postulation.
4.   Correct usage may not be correct grammar. Discuss the relationship between grammaticality and style.
5.   The second language learner is more concerned with correctness than style. How would you defend this fact?

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Fowler, Roger (1996). *Modern English Usage*. Oxford: OUP.

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UNIT 2   TOOLS   OF   USAGE   1:   ENGLISH VOCABULARY

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study an aspect of contemporary English usage which is English vocabulary. English language has a rich vocabulary form. The vast vocabulary in English results from the rich word forms which could be traced to the hybrids of linguistic experiences that the language underwent and still undergoes because of the emerging dialects and varieties of the language in the whole world. Many words are introduced into English language and this is heightened by the openness of the language as a dynamic phenomenon. In this unit, we will examine collocations, which provide the basic rule for words to co-occur and make proper meaning; synonyms and antonyms, which provide the options for choosing words of similar or opposite meanings and then confusing pairs which place side by side the occurrence of different words with almost same identical structures which results in confusion for the second language learners of English. There are many rules for recognizing English vocabulary and we will study them for quick mastery of the vocabulary usage.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

•   recognize that English language has a vast vocabulary structure
•   understand the rules for using English vocabulary
•   use collocations appropriately in speech and writing
•   distinguish between synonyms and antonyms
•   apply the rules for using synonyms and antonyms properly
•   know that similarity in structure of words does not give the same meaning in usage.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

The vast English vocabulary emanated mostly from borrowing, the majority being the Germanic forms (words with German origin), the Latinate words (words with Latin origin) and French words; although there are evidence of words from other languages including African languages. The English vocabulary has changed considerably over the centuries. Germanic words (generally words of German or to a lesser extent Scandinavian origin) which include all the basics such as pronouns (*I, my, you, it*) and conjunctions (*and, or, but*) tend to be shorter than the Latinate words of English, and more common in ordinary speech. The longer Latinate words are often regarded as more elegant or educated. However, the excessive or superfluous use of Latinate words is, at times, considered by some to be either pretentious (as in the stereotypical policeman's talk of "apprehending the suspect") or an attempt to obfuscate an issue. George Orwell's essay "Politics and the English Language" criticises this style of writing, among other perceived misuse of the language.

An English speaker is in many cases able to choose between Germanic and Latinate synonyms: *come* or *arrive*; *sight* or *vision*; *freedom* or *liberty*. In some cases there is a choice between a Germanic word (*oversee*), a Latin word (*supervise*), and a French word derived from the same Latin word (*survey*). The richness of the language arises from the variety of different meanings and nuances such synonyms harbour, enabling the speaker to express fine variations or shades of thought. Familiarity with the etymology of groups of synonyms can give English speakers greater control over their linguistic register. An exception to this and a peculiarity perhaps unique to English is that the nouns for *meats* are commonly different from, and unrelated to, those for the animals from which they are produced, the animal commonly having a Germanic name and the meat having a French-derived one. Examples include: *deer* and *venison*; *cow* and *beef*; or *swine*/*pig* and *pork*. This is assumed to be a result of the aftermath of the Norman invasion, where a French-speaking elite were the consumers of the meat, produced by English-speaking lower classes.

In everyday speech, the majority of words will normally be Germanic. If a speaker wishes to make a forceful point in an argument in a very blunt way, Germanic words will usually be chosen. A majority of Latinate words (or at least a majority of content words) will normally be used in more formal speech and writing, such as a courtroom or an encyclopedia article. However, there are other Latinate words that are used normally in everyday speech and do not sound formal; these are mainly words for

concepts that no longer have Germanic words, and are generally assimilated better and in many cases do not appear Latinate. For instance, the words *mountain*, *valley*, *river*, *aunt*, *uncle*, *move*, *use*, *push* and *stay* are all Latinate.

English is noted for the vast size of its active vocabulary and its fluidity. English easily accepts technical terms into common usage and imports new words and phrases that often come into common usage. Examples of this phenomenon include: *cookie*, *Internet* and *URL* (technical terms), as well as *genre*, *über*, *lingua franca* and *amigo* (imported words/phrases from French, German, modern Latin, and Spanish, respectively). In addition, slang often provides new meanings for old words and phrases. In fact, this fluidity is so pronounced that a distinction often needs to be made between formal forms of English and contemporary usage.

Number of Words in English

English has an extraordinarily rich vocabulary and willingness to absorb new words. As the 'General Explanations' at the beginning of the *Oxford English Dictionary* states: The Vocabulary of a widely diffused and highly cultivated living language is not a fixed quantity circumscribed by definite limits... there is absolutely no defining line in any direction: the circle of the English language has a well-defined centre but no discernible circumference. The vocabulary of English is undoubtedly vast, but assigning a specific number to its size is more a matter of definition than of calculation. Unlike other languages, there is no academy to define officially accepted words. Neologisms are coined regularly in medicine, science and technology and other fields, and new slang is constantly developed. Some of these new words enter wide usage; others remain restricted to small circles. Foreign words used in immigrant communities often make their way into wider English usage. Archaic, dialectal, and regional words might or might not be widely considered as "English".

The *Oxford English Dictionary,* 2nd edition *(OED2)* includes over 600,000 definitions, following a rather inclusive policy: It embraces not only the standard language of literature and conversation, whether current at the moment, or obsolete, or archaic, but also the main technical vocabulary, and a large measure of dialectal usage and slang (*Supplement to the OED,* 1933). The editors of *Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged* (475,000 main headwords) in their Preface, estimate the number to be much higher. It is estimated that about 25,000 words are added to the language each year.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Discuss the influence of Germanic, Latinate and French usage in the development of English language vocabulary.

3.2 Collocation

Some words are married to each other to the extent that the mere mention of one requires the intrusion of the other. For instance, some adjectives are attached to some prepositions to form a complete wholistic meaning. The meaning is sometimes direct and sometimes difficult. Some verbs also occur frequently in collocations. The main reason is that the combination of the adjective or the verb with the preposition is so regular that it has become a normal trend in daily speeches and dialogues.

These words are called collocations because apart from the married nature of the words, in terms of co-occurrence, they constitute wholistic meaning in terms emphasizing realities. The occurrence of the prepositions with the adjectives or verbs helps to situate the meaning intended since prepositions occur to direct or localize the meanings in most expressions. Again, when these words co-occur, they exhibit habitual occurrences and a second language learner of English absorbs it quickly because of the fastness at grasping them for usage. T is also possible to have wrong co-occurrence of words because of the second language learner's ability at creating expressions from the existing stock of forms. These creative attempts are usually violated because most times the rules of syntactic and lexical development of words tend to be violated. The beauty of collocations is that it cuts across formal and informal usage in contemporary English.

The examples of collocations in English are enormous because almost all adjectives and verbs have words they are married to. The following examples and their meanings are commonly used in every day speech in English:

Accustomed to	--	to get used to something
Addicted to	--	to be involved in something
Afraid of	--	to be scared of someone or something
Angry with	--	not happy with someone
Compromise with	--	agree against the rules
Distinct from	--	not in line with someone or something
Envious of	--	to be jealous
Exempt from	--	to be freed from work/punishment
Grateful for/to	--	being happy with something or someone
Identical with	--	same as someone's

Innocent of	--	not guilty of an accusation
Intimate with	--	very close to someone
Peculiar to	--	especially for someone
Proficient in	--	very good at something
Tired of/with	--	fed up with something or an action

Agreed with		
Agreed upon	--	something/ someone, a plan, a proposal
Agreed to		

| Differ with | | |
| Differ from | -- | someone/ an opinion |

Object to	--	not to agree
Originate in	--	to start from
Confide in/to	--	to discuss or tell secretly

Collocations, well applied, result in good grammar. There are various types of collocations in English language and only with mastery that they can be used without violating the simple collocational rules. Practice and wide reading are the keys to absorbing and applying the rules of collocations.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

It is possible for words to co-occur but it is not possible for all co-occurred words to have meanings. Discuss collocational violations in English. Cite ample examples

3.3   Synonyms/Antonyms

Synonyms and antonyms are two important ways of developing our vocabularies. When a student recognizes that words do not operate *in vacuo* in a discourse and that most words have identical forms or forms that are nearly same in meaning or opposite in meaning, then the student would have had a vast vocabulary to be able to appreciate these grammatical situations. These are the supposedly important functions of antonyms and synonyms. We shall examine them individually.

A: Synonyms

It means words meaning same as another, that is, a word that means the same, or almost the same, as another word in the same language, either in all of its uses or in a specific context. Examples of synonyms in this sense are "environment" and "surroundings" and the verbs "tear" and "rip." It also means alternative name, that is, a word or expression that is

used as another name for something in some styles of speaking or writing or to emphasize a specific aspect or association. Generally, in English vocabulary development synonyms are words which are nearly the same meaning as some other words. Examples:

Tall
High
Hefty
Massive   -- belong to the semantic idea of +shape/size
Giant
Huge
Gigantic

The usage of these words varies since each of them cannot replace the other and still give the exact meaning. They may have related meaning but they are used in different situations for different meanings. A 'tall' person is very significant in outlook but a 'giant' looks bigger than a tall person. The former is related to normalcy while the latter is related to extraordinariness of being. Each of these words, no matter the relationship in semantic ideas with the other words, actually functions in different linguistic environment from the others. Examine critically the usage of the following words below:

Solution
Antidote   -- belong to the semantic idea of + process to normalcy
Cure
Remedy

These words can be rightly applied thus:
Solution to problems
Antidote to poison
Cure for disease
Remedy for trouble

Below are examples of common synonyms in English language. This may not be comprehensive but it is listed as guide for further research and enquiries. Examples:

Impeccable	--	blameless
Vaunt	--	boast
Credence	--	belief
Fortuitous	--	accidental
Vociferate	--	bawl
Exterior	--	outside
Duplicate	--	copy
Connect	--	join

Admit	--	acknowledge
Symptom	--	indication
Cease	--	discontinue
Frigid	--	cold
Motive	--	inducement
Repulsive	--	loathsome
Concession	--	reward
Endorsed	--	approved
Banned	--	prohibit
Prolific	--	productive
Waned	--	declined
Derelict	--	desert
Eschew	--	avoid
Delinquent	--	culprit
Vouchsafe	--	condescend
Demise	--	death
Negation	--	denial
Lethal	--	deadly
Assiduity	--	diligence
Obese	--	fat
Aliment	--	food
Enigma	--	puzzle
Culpable	--	blameless
Innocuous	--	harmless
Garrulous	--	loquacious

These words and their synonyms are varied. It is important to note that one word can have twenty four synonyms as in the case of the word 'insane' as shown below:

'Insane' – *mad, lunatic, cracked, unwinged, psychopath, touched, moonstruck, crazy, scatterbrained, maniacal, delirious, irrational, light-headed, incoherent, rambling, doting, wandering, amuck, frantic, raving, fixated, eccentric, demented, deranged, schizophrenic* etc

B: Antonyms

These are words that are nearly opposite in meaning to each other. Sometimes, using different word forms or using the prefix added or changed or suffix changed can result in antonyms. Examples:

1.   *Antonyms of Different Words*

temporary	--	permanent
wealth	--	poverty
seldom	--	often
captivity	--	freedom

transparent	--	opaque
pedestrian	--	motorist
unite	--	separate
consolidate	--	descent
lukewarm	--	enthusiastic
dangerous	--	safe
lovely	--	odious
clarity	--	confusion

2. *Antonyms Formed with Prefix Added*

regular	--	irregular
loyal	--	disloyal
sense	--	nonsense
visible	--	invisible
mortal	--	immortal
necessary	--	unnecessary
plausible	--	implausible
comfort	--	discomfort
conscious	--	unconscious

3. *Antonyms Formed with Prefix Changed*

inside	--	outside
internal	--	external
ascend	--	descend
increase	--	decrease
export	--	import
construction	--	destruction
encourage	--	discourage
inhibit	--	exhibit

4. *Antonyms Formed by Changing the Suffix*

pitiful	-	pitiless
useful	-	useless
harmful	-	harmless
cheerful	-	cheerless
careful	-	careless
fruitful	-	fruitless
bountiful	-	bountiless
joyful	-	joyless

C: Rules Guiding Choice of Synonyms & Antonyms

To use synonyms and antonyms properly requires following certain syntactic rules. These rules help in correct grammatical usage in the communication of ideas. These rules are like concord because they

allow the usage of synonyms and antonyms in agreement with content, tense and number in the grammar of English. Examples:

1. **Content**: any word that should serve as synonym or antonym of a word must belong to the same part of speech with that word. Example:

    kill [verb]   -   destroy [verb]   -   synonyms
    man [noun]   -   woman [noun]   -   antonyms
    fine [adjective]   -   beautiful [adjective] -   synonyms
    harmful [adverb]   -   harmless [adverb]   -   antonyms

2. **Tense**: The words must belong to the same tense. Examples:

    seldom [present tense]   -often [present tense]   -antonyms

    killed [past tense]   -destroyed [past tense]   -
    synonyms

3. **Number**: The words must belong to the same number. Examples:

    boy [singular]   -   girl[singular]   - antonym
    men [plural]   -   women [plural]   - antonym

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Synonyms and antonyms are used in creating alternative choices to words in different linguistic environments. State the rules for these choices with ample example

3.4   Confusing Pairs

Some words in English look alike in structure. Sometimes, the difference in word structures will be so insignificant that students disregard it and classify the words as belonging to the same family or the same meaning. Sometimes, they interchange them in usage and most times they result as spelling errors because a particular word is used to represent another because they look alike. Most times students spell one in place of the other and may also become mindless of the error that might cause. This is a serious case because English language has over 5,000 of such words. We shall identify a few here because of space and advise the students, especially the serious ones, to search for more of these words in thesaurus, other book of grammar or most importantly in good dictionaries. We shall examine some of them below:

Satisfy	canon	born	check	cue	desert
Certify	cannon	borne	cheque	queue	dessert
Stationary	vain	quiet	moral	fate	accept
Stationery	vein	quite	morale	faith	except

Tract	berth	affect		alter		assay		adapt	
Track	birth		effect		altar		essay		adopt
Vacation		lose		feature		sight		coma	defer
Vocation		loose	future		site		comma		differ cite
Whether		key		goal		hoard		later	pain
Weather		quay		gaol		horde		latter	pen
Prey	canvass		human		patent		right		ring
Pray	canvas	humane		patient		rite		wring	
Haul	cool		would		could		suit		poke
Hall	cull		wood		cold		shoot		pork

The list is numerous. The spelling differences are so insignificant. Most of them are pronounced alike and when students are in a dictation class, they are likely to write one for another. The advice is that the students should find out the meaning of such similar words from good dictionaries and learn the appropriate placements for each of them. Only this practice can save the intelligent ones from this clash of vocabulary similarities.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Find out the meaning of the words listed below and use them correctly in sentences:

(i)   canvas/canvass   (ii)   defer/differ   (iii)
             human/humane
(iv)   lost/lust   (v)   horde/hoard   (vi)
             heaven/haven

4.0   CONCLUSION

English language vocabulary has vast choices for the language scholars. Contemporary writing at its worst does not consist in picking out words for the sake of their meaning and inventing images in order to make the meaning clearer. It consists in gumming together long strips of words to make meaning. Collocations entail proper selections of words that co-occur to make meaning in grammatical situations. The words are so used to each other that they occur together in order to generate an idea. Synonyms aim at explaining that every word has alternative. The alternatives could occur in the same environment or similar environment in order to generate meaning. Although no two words could have the same meaning but there are closeness in meaning among words in conveying particular meanings in different situations. Antonyms reveal that some words could be nearly opposite in meaning and could be used as alternative words in opposite situations. All these pertain to word choice. The confusing pairs are lexical pairs that result in confused

usage because of similarities in word structure. They lead to spelling, pronunciation and syntactic errors because of misapplication of usage. To master the differences is to apply correct vocabulary usage. In contemporary English usage, it is apparent to study collocations, antonyms, synonyms and confusing pairs in order to avoid avoidable lexical and syntactic aberrations. All these are acceptable in almost all the dialects of English.

5.0   SUMMARY

In order to be a better user of English language vocabularies, there are at least four questions to ask as guide: What am I trying to say? What words will express it? What meaning I'm I trying to make? Is this word enough to have the intended effect in my expression? The other questions are: Could I have used a better word? Have I said anything that is avoidably ugly? In contemporary English usage, collocations, antonyms, synonyms and confusing pairs could impair correct usage and meaning. The use of good dictionaries like *Oxford* dictionaries of current or contemporary usage, *Chambers*, *Random House*, *Longman* among others and a good thesaurus like *Roget's Thesaurus* will help in solving this dilemma.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions with adequate examples:

1.   What are the effects of borrowing in the development of English Language Vocabularies?
2.   Using proper examples, discuss the proper application of collocations in conveying meanings
3.   Use the following synonyms in proper grammatical situations: (i) like (ii) admire (iii) appreciate (iv) love
4.   Generate the antonyms of the following words: (i) hope (ii) house (iii) current (iv) conscious
5.   Explain the meaning of the following pairs of words and use them correctly in sentences: (i) gamble/gambol (ii) rush/rash (iii) moan/mourn (iv) crash/crush

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3   TOOLS OF USAGE 2: IDIOMS, PHRASAL VERBS ANDCATCH PHRASES AS CLICHÉS

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will study the proper application of idiomatic expressions, phrasal verbs and catch phrases in contemporary English, even though, they have been tagged clichés. Idioms and proverbs are regarded as archaic usage because they are colloquial expressions of realities. Many contemporary English users tend to avoid the use of these available grammatical sequences because they feel that the expressions lack formality and are restricted in usage. Even phrasal verbs seem to be relegated to the spoken medium and treated as clichés also. We shall examine the proper use of these expressions in semantic occurrences in contemporary usage by stating the adequacy of their usage in communication. Contemporary English adopts and adapts clichés because they add meaning, beauty and logic to expressions.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

*   understand the meaning and uses of clichés
*   differentiate between idiomatic and normal meaning of clichés
*   use idiomatic expressions correctly in speech and writing
*   know that phrasal verbs function like idioms
*   realize their importance in Contemporary English usage
*   see clichés as open for new linguistic forms to occur
*   avoid the use of catch phrases in their speech and writing.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

In English most words of idiomatic meaning are regarded as clichés. They are also seen as archaic and informal in usage. A cliché (from French, /klɪˈʃe/) is a phrase, expression, or idea that has been overused to the point of losing its intended force or novelty, especially when at some time it was considered distinctively forceful or novel. The term is most likely to be used in a negative context. "Cliché" applies also to almost any situation, plot device, subject, characterization, figure of speech, or object—in short, any sign—that has become overly familiar or commonplace. Because the novelty or frequency of an expression's use varies across different times and places, whether or not it is a cliché depends largely on who uses it, the context in which it is used, and who is making the judgment. The meaning of a particular cliché may shift over time, often leading to confusion or misuse.

When a type of media can be identified as using a cliché, this is often interpreted as the writer running out of original ideas and resorting to less imaginative concepts. For this reason, it is nearly always a negative point in creative media. Exceptions include in comedy, where the situation gains humour for being cliché. Examples of concepts that can be clichés (note - it is very possible to use one of these devices in a creative way, without it being cliché). Consider the continuous use of Clichés in this passage:

> *I make no bones about it. I'm not going to beat around the bush. I need to clear the air, settle an old score and kill a sacred cow. I had an English teacher whose last name was English. She was hard as nails and long in the tooth. Ms. English, as every schoolboy in her class learned, had an axe to grind when it came to clichés. Ms. English would get on her highest high horse and in her best pedantic style would drill a hard and fast rule: "mind your Ps and Qs you young men and avoid clichés like the plague." Pointing her thin bony index finger at the ceiling, she would with wispy lips and piercing eyes, cackle, "If you don't, heads will roll." Then, pushing her face toward us she would, in her mad as a wet hen voice, say, "Do you read me-loud and clear?" Man, did she have an attitude. The classroom would get so quiet you could hear a pin drop.*
>
> *Most of what Ms. English told me went in one ear and out the other. I could get away with an occasional split*

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infinitive or dangling participle, but clichés were Ms. English's last straw. When it came to clichés, we had to be letter perfect. She had a motto of live and learns, but Ms. English's intense dislike of clichés made her motto seem more like learn or die.

She said that what separates the men from the boys is that real men don't use clichés. Just like that, it was an open-and-shut case. I was young; I couldn't have cared less. You know, boys will be boys, free and easy, sort of a captain of your own soul type thing. Silently, I'd say to myself: "heavens to Betsy Ms. English, you don't have to get your nose out of joint every time I use a cliche." But, if I didn't get all my clichés out of my essays there was hell to pay. Ms. English and I always seemed to be at loggerheads. Imagine, she accused me of having a chip on my shoulder.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

List all the expressions used as clichés in the first two paragraphs of the passage above and explain their meanings.

3.2   Idiomatic Expressions

An idiom is a word or phrase which means something different from what it says - it is usually a metaphor. Because idioms can mean something different from what the words mean, it is difficult for someone not very good at speaking the language to use them properly. Some idioms are only used by some groups of people or at certain times. The idiom *break a leg*, means good luck to an actor about to start acting, but not to other people. Idioms are not the same thing as slang. Idioms are made of normal words that have a special meaning known by almost everyone. Slang has to do with special words that are known only by a particular group.

To learn a language, a person needs to learn the words in that language, and how and when to use them. But people also need to learn idioms separately because certain words together or at certain times can have different meanings. In order to understand an idiom, one sometimes needs to know the culture the idiom comes from. To know the history of an idiom can be useful and interesting, but is not necessary to be able to use the idiom properly. For example, most native British English speakers know that "No room to swing a cat" means "there was not a lot of space" and can use the idiom properly, but few know it is because 200 years ago sailors were punished by being whipped with a whip

called a "cat o'nine tails". A big space was cleared on the ship so that the person doing the whipping had a lot of room to swing the cat.

Some Common Idioms in Contemporary English

To break a leg	--	A way to wish someone good luck
To live it up	--	Live wild, Enjoy life; go to a lot of parties
Kick the bucket	--	To die
Shed crocodile tears	--	To cry about something but without actually caring
Wild goose chase	--	Useless journey or pursuit
No room to swing a cat	--	There was not a lot of space
Pay through the nose	--	Pay a lot of money

Some other examples are:

Make no bones about something
To beat around the bush
To clear the air
To settle an old score
To kill a sacred cow
Long in the tooth
To have an axe to grind
Highest high horse
A hard and fast rule
Heads will roll
Mad as a wet hen
To have an attitude
To hear a pin drop
In one ear and out the other
The last straw
To learn or die
To separate the men from the boys
An open-and-shut case
To be captain of your own soul
To get your nose out of joint
To have hell to pay
A chip on my shoulder

Many other idioms are used in the passage in section 3.1, the general overview section of this unit. Study them to know the various meanings in the application. English has a rich stock of idioms that are used in embellishing speech and writing.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the meaning of the unexplained idioms in this section.

3.3   Phrasal Verbs

A phrasal verb is a combination of a verb and preposition, a verb and adverb, or a verb with both an adverb and preposition, any of which are part of the syntax (of the sentence), and so are a complete semantic unit. Its sentences may, however, contain direct and indirect objects in addition to the phrasal verb. Phrasal verbs are particularly frequent in the English language. A phrasal verb often has a meaning which is different from the original verb. According to Tom McArthur: "...the term 'phrasal verb' was first used by Logan Pearsall Smith, in *Words and Idioms* (1925), in which he states that the *Oxford English Dictionary* Editor Henry Bradley suggested the term to him. Alternative terms for phrasal verb are 'compound verb', 'verb-adverb combination', 'verb-particle construction' (VPC), AmE "two-part word/verb' and 'three-part word/verb' (depending on the number of particles), and multi-word verb. 'Preposition' and 'adverb' as used in a phrasal verb are also called 'particle' in that they do not alter their form through inflections (are therefore uninflected, they do not accept affixes, etc.).

Phrasal verbs are usually used informally in everyday speech as opposed to the more formal Latinate verbs, such as "to get together" rather than "to congregate", "to put off" rather than "to postpone", or "to get out" rather than "to exit". Many verbs in English can be combined with an adverb or a preposition, and readers or listeners will easily understand a phrasal verb used in a literal sense with a preposition: "He walked across the square." Verb and adverb constructions can also easily be understood when used literally: "She opened the shutters and looked outside."; "When he heard the crash, he looked up." An adverb in a literal phrasal verb modifies the verb it is attached to, and a preposition links the subject to the verb. A phrasal verb contains either a preposition or an adverb (or both), and may also combine with one or more nouns or pronouns. Phrasal verbs that contain adverbs are sometimes called "particle verbs", and are related to separable verbs in other Germanic languages. There are two main patterns: intransitive and transitive.

An intransitive particle verb does not have an object:
When I entered the room he looked up.

A transitive particle verb has a nominal object in addition to the adverb. If the object is an ordinary noun, it can usually appear on either side of the adverb, although very long noun phrases tend to come after the adverb:

Switch off the light.
Switch the light off.
Switch off the lights in the hallway next to the bedroom the president is sleeping in.

Idiomatic usage of Phrasal Verbs

It is, however, the figurative or idiomatic application in everyday speech which makes phrasal verbs so important: "I hope you will get over your operation quickly."; "Work hard, and get your examination over." The literal meaning of "to get over", in the sense of "to climb over something to get to the other side", no longer applies to explain the subject's enduring an operation or the stress of an examination which they have to overcome. It is when the combined meaning of verb plus adverb, or verb plus preposition is totally different from each of its component parts, that the semantic content of the phrasal verb cannot be predicted by its constituent parts and so becomes much more difficult for a student learning English to recognize. Other idiomatic usages of phrasal verbs show a verb + direct object + preposition/adverb + indirect object construction. Some idioms are formed from phrasal verbs, such as *to let the cat out of the bag*. Idioms have a meaning which is different from the meaning of the single words that make them up, and usually have a fixed word order. Other such idioms include among many other examples in the dictionary such phrases as *to add insult to injury*, *to add fuel to the flames*, *to leave someone in the lurch*, *to scare someone out of their wits*, etc.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Phrasal verbs have grammatical and idiomatic functions in English. Differentiate between the two with examples.

3.4   Catch Phrases

Under pressure to create (usually against a deadline), a writer will naturally use familiar verbal patterns rather than thinking up new ones. Inexperienced writers, however, will sometimes go further, and string together over-used phrases or even *sentences*. Consider the following example: *When all is said and done, even a little aid can go a long way in a country suffering from famine*. The argument is commendable, but its written expression is poor and unoriginal. First, consider the phrase "when all is said and done." Once, this phrase was clever and original, but so many millions of writers and speakers have used it so many times over so many years that the phrase has become automatic and nearly meaningless. This type of worn-out phrase is called a *catch phrase*, and

you should *always* avoid it in your writing, unless you are quoting someone else: your own, original words are always more interesting.

A particularly stale catch phrase- especially one which was once particularly clever- is a *cliché*. In the example given above, the phrase "a little aid can go a long way" fits into the formula "a little *** can go a long way," seriously lowers the quality of the writing. Essentially, a cliché is a catch phrase which can make people groan out loud, but the difference between the two is not that important -- just remember that neither usually belongs in your writing. There is no simple formula that you can apply to decide what is a cliché or a catch phrase, but the more you read, the better your sense of judgement will become. Remember, though -- if you think that a phrase in your writing is clever, *and* you know that someone has used the phrase before, then you are best rewriting it into your own words.

While clichés and catch phrases have no place in academic essays, there are some times of writing where you should use pre-existing formulas. Such documents include scientific papers, legal briefs, maintenance logs, and police reports (to name a few) -- these are highly repetitive and largely predictable in their language, but they are meant to convey highly technical information in a standard, well-defined format, not to persuade or entertain a reader -- creativity in an auditor's report, for example, would not be highly prized. On the other hand, catch phrases are not appropriate in less technical areas. Journalists, especially, are under a pressure to produce a large amount of writing quickly, and those who are less talented or unable to meet the pressure will often end up writing entire articles made up of over-used catch phrases like "war-torn Bosnia," "grieving parents," or "besieged capital."

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Write a brief essay and identify the catch phrases you have made a consistent part of your speaking and writing behavior.

4.0   CONCLUSION

In contemporary English usage, idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs tend to be rarely used. In most cases the phrasal verbs are misused because of the lack of knowledge that they function idiomatically in expressions. Idioms are like proverbs because they capture a people's worldview and the interpretation of their social realities. Idioms have layers of meanings and each meaning is relevant in given situations of reference. Idioms well applied in speech and writing helps to make one's expressions carry some interesting colours. When we speak and write without certain linguistic colourings like idioms and phrasal verbs,

the audience tends to describe such speeches as boring. Idioms add excitement, interest and logic to our expressions. However, the misuse of idioms results in clichés because too much of every thing is bad. One should also avoid using phrasal verbs if the meaning is not related to what is being described or discussed. Again, catch phrases should be avoided. That you hear people speak them does not mean that they are necessary. Certain linguistic habits of people may be as a result of lack of knowledge or less education.

5.0   SUMMARY

Idioms and phrasal verbs are important when used correctly in speech and writing. English language has vast idiomatic expressions which are traceable from the Germanic, French and the Anglo-Saxon era. These idioms carry a people's experiences make their speech and writing carry deeper meanings. These idioms have survived till today and many new ones have also emerged from the different dialects of English existing worldwide. It will not be surprising getting different Australian English idioms, South African English idioms, Canadian English idioms or getting different versions of the same idioms in different locations of English users. This is also the same with phrasal verbs. Even catch phrases with their archaic roots in English have refused to vanish in current English usage but it is hoped that the contemporary English users should avoid or minimize the usage in speech and writing.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions:

1.   Explain the importance of idiomatic expressions in contemporary English.
2.   Discuss the structure and function of phrasal verbs as idioms.
3.   Assess correctly when idioms and catch phrases become clichés.
4.   Catch phrases are correct expressions but have outlived their usage. How true is this assertion?
5.   What are the basic effects of clichés in contemporary English usage?

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UNIT 4   TOOLS OF USAGE 3: DICTION

CONTENTS

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
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        3.2   Diction and Usage
        3.3   Register and Diction
        3.4   Connotation and Denotation
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6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study one aspect of our writing and speaking which is *diction*. Diction refers to our choice of words in speech and writing. A good writer must know his diction. A good speaker must know his diction. When our essays are full of bad diction we might offend our listeners. In some cases we might even be shocked to see that our audience reacted the way we never expected. We will study the meaning and application of diction, relationship between diction and register and then the concepts of connotation and denotation. Sometimes, our choice of words may connote something different from what the audience expected.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- understand the meaning of diction
- know the relationship between diction and register
- appreciate the importance diction in contemporary usage
- realize when they use bad diction
- distinguish between connotation and denotation in choice of diction
- select correct diction for their writing and speeches.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

Diction is the use, choice and arrangement of words and modes of expression, the manner of speaking or any vocal expression. Some linguists categorize diction as expression language, phrase, phraseology, style, verbiage, vocabulary, wording, words. Diction is general, wording is limited. We speak of the diction of an author or of a work, the wording of a proposition or of a resolution etc. Abrams says that diction signifies the choice of words, phrases and figures in a work of literature. He states that a writer's diction can be analyzed under such categories as the degree to which his vocabulary and phrasing are abstract or concrete, Latinate or Anglo–Saxon in origin, colloquial or formal, technical or common, literal or figurative. This view seems outmoded, as the word diction has been broadened beyond Abrams' analysis. Shaw seems to capture the idea of diction better when he states that diction has been broadened in meaning to refer to one's whole style of speaking and writing. Thus, a speaker can be distinguished for his forceful and precise diction. By forceful diction, Shaw means choice of words that are powerful, assertive and strong willed. In this respect, some outspoken writers delight in using words and phrases that appear deliberately offensive.

Diction can determine the difficulty of a text and thus help to make a distinction between the children's and adult's literature. This shows that the use of diction in a work of art can help in comprehending the writer's message. It further strengthens the claim that its readers can use diction to access the readability and accessibility of a work. Hence diction is often analyzed in works as *simple, elevated, technical* and *esoteric*. Of these categorizations, simple diction is aptly commensurate with the choice of words used in the play being studied where the great chunk of words is short, powerful sentences that are compact in form of action verbs and repetitions used to drive home the message. It also shows the degree to which readers comprehend the literary work for what it is.

Let us corroborate the use of diction in assessing the readability of a work in Wole Soyinka's *The Road*. In this play, the "word" used by the writer is the elusive word. He is trying to experience the essence of death without really dying. A reader has to read between and beyond the line to understand its meaning. This shows the obscurity of Soyinka's diction. Soyinka's *The Interpreters* has obscurity of diction – one of the traits typical of his (Soyinka's) diction. Soyinka's *The Interpreters* has been described as unreadable. A good example comes from the opening paragraph of the second part of the novel:

The rains of May become in July slit arteries of the sacrificial bull, a million bleeding punctures of the sky-blue hidden in convulsive cloud humps, black overfed for this one event. The blood of earth-dwellers mingles with balanced streams of the mocking bull, and flows into currents eternally below the earth. The dome cracked above Sekoni's short-sighted head one messy night …. (155).

The passage is saying that Sekoni died in a motor accident. But Soyinka says this in the most cryptic manner. Soyinka's diction, which has compactness and ruggedness, adds to the difficulty in understanding his message. Your *diction* is simply your choice of words. There is *no* single, correct diction in the English language; instead, you choose different words or phrases for different contexts.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain why Wole Soyinka's diction is often described as difficult.

3.2   Diction and Deviation

Deviation is another aspect of use of diction. Deviation arises as soon as we set particular linguistic acts against the apparent norm and it happens in two ways. First, there is statistical deviation which would make a feature a minority usage. Deviation in this instance is, Soyinka's "meral terptitude" a good example where the words 'moral' is used as 'meral' and 'fond' is used as 'fend' by Prof. Oguazor in *The Interpreters*. Also, Armah's 'countrey' in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* connotes the disorderliness and corruption in Ghana while Osofisan's corruption of the lexical item: "subordination sah", "Shorrop!" "concubility", "Jagbajantis", "nineteen *gbongbonrongbon*" (62- 63) shows the departure from conventional spellings and word order. The excerpts containing these derivations are taken from Osofisan's play *Morountodun.* However, these lexical items as used here add to the liveliness of the scene and create laughter among the audience. The point is that characters are made to use language in ways that characterize them. The two lexical items 'jagbajantis' and 'gbongborongbon' cannot be pinned down to any specific meaning. They are however, words meant to show the speaker's attitude to the object and time under discussion respectively. They are also used for ideophonic effect. They are deliberate mimicking words and their ideophonic values point to uselessness, worthlessness etc.

The second is different from the first because of the choice of words. In the second 'kind' is replaced by 'here' and these result in a very

different meaning. In terms of choice of words, the second and the third are exactly the same, but the organization, the sequence, is different and this again results in different meaning. A good diction allows the writer to communicate meaning to the readers in terms of appropriateness, specificity, imagery and figures of speech. The use of good diction implies skilful choice of words used to express clearly the speaker or writer's ideas. The language we speak or write varies according to the type of situation in which we use language. It is important to add that in diction, words are often chosen by the writer to express the situation of the conversation, as well as the mood of the speaker to hearer or object of criticisms. This clearly shows diction as part of register.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Differentiate between a good and a bad diction in relation to deviation and meaning.

3.3   Diction and Register

Halliday defines Register as a variety of language distinguished according to use. Register also refers to a list of words, not only words but whole expressions i.e. combination of words in higher units, expressions or terms that are regularly used in relation to a particular area of human endeavour and development. This definition elucidates the fact that diction and register are synonymous and interwoven. (i.e. choice or list of words, expressions or terms that are regularly used in relation to a particular subject or associated with a particular area.

Diction is defined as choice of words and expressions. In diction, writers choose words or utterances so as to convey information about subject matter (referential meaning). However beyond reference, words are chosen to express something about the situation of the conversation itself that is, the mood of the speaker (otherwise known as tone in register) the relative social position of the interlocutors and the degree of formality of the occasion. It is pertinent to state that differences in register arise as a result of the various or diverse uses to which words are put by different categories of people. In an attempt to express needs and experiences unique to the activities of a particular group, each group has to be associated with a specific register. The result is that each group has its own distinctive way of saying things that are peculiar to the profession. The same obtains in diction. The main thrust here is that (lexis) or choices of words are important elements in register.

The three important concepts that are to be considered when discussing register are also important in discussing diction i.e. field of discourse, mode of discourse and tenor. Field in register is the subject matter of

discourse e.g. the choice of words when discussing political issues will differ from the choice of word when discussing medical or religious issues. From this analysis, it is obvious that the choice of words (diction) used determines the field of a register. This is the link between diction and register. So we discover that lexical items referring to the Bible and the church characterize the play. The mode of discourse i.e. the medium of communication is significant in register and diction.

Tenor, is also used for register analysis and deals with interpersonal relationships of the participants i.e. the speech of characters in its role of indicating social standing of speaker to a hearer i.e. politeness, familiarity and rudeness of tone. Tenor in diction also has to do with the mood of the speaker or the situation of the conversation and the relative social position of the interlocutors. Tenor also deals with the solidarity between a speaker/writer and his/her audience. Our choices of words reflect relationships. Let us look at the expression below as an example:

(a)   Please reduce the volume of that radio.
(b)   Switch off that radio
(c)   Turn that rack down.

The mood of the speaker and the relationship will determine the occasion of use or tone. For example:

(a)   shows that the speaker is speaking to a colleague
(b)   shows that the speaker is speaking to a junior person and over whom he has authority
(c)   indicates that the speaker has considerable degree of authority and can also be used over peer-group in a very informal situation.

The occasion of use here determines the choice of these words. The uses of technical words like *switch, reduce, turn* and *rack* e.t.c. define the register. This is the link between register and diction.

Furthermore, the terms *formal* and *informal* are words that are common to both register and diction. Formal diction, for instance, consists of a dignified, impersonal and elevated use of language. It is often characterized by complex words and lofty tone whereas in register formality could also be described as standard used in polite circles, educated equivalents e.t.c. Informal diction represents the plain language of everyday use and often includes idiomatic expressions and many simple common words while informal register has to do with casual, colloquial expressions used familiarly such as slang and vulgarisms. This is another area where register and diction are synonymous. It is crucial to state that in register and diction formality and informality depend on occasion of use. This is why register is important in the

consideration of diction.

However, when the individual comes to his trade area or profession, there is a kind of 'transformation' or 'switching'. Usually, there will be some set of lexical items habitually used for handling subjects in a particular field. For instance, in the play being studied phrases like *Paternoster, Nun, padre* etc reflect the register of religion. The first observation from the example given above is that each field has some peculiar phrase structure and individual words that mark them or define their field. Also, the choice of words used to reflect or portray the oppression going on in the text falls into the field of politics. This is the link between register and diction.

It is crucial to add that the markers or features of linguistic configurations are choices or selections used e.g. *detained, beaten, raped, castrated*. These belong to the field of oppression. Each field has some peculiar phrase structure and individual words that mark them or define their field. In other words, if we are looking for the crucial criteria that define a particular register, we can look at its grammar or lexis. Since our emphasis is on lexis, the particular choice of words selected, are common core features. Lexical items refer to individual words that occur most predominantly in a field, thus helping to define it e.g. the choice of the lexical items *rosary, church, heaven, the saved* may easily be associated with religious field because it helps to show what the people are involved in. So also is the choice of words in the field of politics. They show the socio-political situation of the people. These help to define the register of politics and are the features that mark it out as distinctive.

From the review of diction and register, we have seen how choice of words and technical phrases help to determine a field. It is clear that the words that are combined may help identify a particular field i.e. *we were jailed, crushed and bruised*. These choices of words form the register of oppression. The same pattern may be observed in the register of religion and politics. Knowledge of register studies gives us an awareness of the choice of correct words to use.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Diction and register are dependent on choice of words, yet they are different. Explain the points of departure

3.4   Connotation and Denotation

The relationship between words and meanings is extremely complicated, and belongs to the field of *semantics*. For now, though, what you need to

know is that words do not always have single, simple meanings. Traditionally, grammarians have referred to the meanings of words in two parts: *denotation***:** a literal meaning of the word; *connotation:* an association (emotional or otherwise) which the word evokes. For example, both "woman" and "chick" have the denotation "adult female" in North American society, but "chick" has somewhat negative connotations, while "woman" is neutral. For another example of connotation, consider the following:

Negative **:** There are over 2,000 *vagrants* in the city.
*Neutral***:** There are over 2,000 *people with no fixed address* in the city.
*Positive***:** There are over 2,000 *homeless* in the city.

All three of these expressions refer to exactly the same people, but they will invoke different associations in the reader's mind: a "vagrant" is a public nuisance while a "homeless" person is a worthy object of pity and charity. Presumably, someone writing an editorial in support of a new shelter would use the positive form, while someone writing an editorial in support of anti-loitering laws would use the negative form. In this case, the dry legal expression "with no fixed address" quite deliberately avoids most of the positive or negative associations of the other two terms -- a legal specialist will try to avoid connotative language altogether when writing legislation, often resorting to archaic Latin or French terms which are not a part of ordinary spoken English, and thus, relatively free of strong emotional associations.

Many of the most obvious changes in the English language over the past few decades have had to do with the connotations of words which refer to groups of people. Since the 1950's, words like "Negro" and "crippled" have acquired strong negative connotations, and have been replaced either by words with neutral connotations (ie "black," "handicapped") or by words with deliberately positive connotations (ie "African-Canadian," "differently-abled").

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Explain connotation and denotation in relation to choice of diction.

4.0   CONCLUSION

A good choice of diction is very important in speech and writing. A good speaker is someone who has a good mastery of appropriate diction. Using the toughest of words and phrases does not make us better writers. Wole Soyinka has been criticized for making his works inaccessible to his readers because of his choice of difficult diction. It is not all the time that one needs dictionary in order to understand our

speeches and writings. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is highly praised because of its subtle diction which makes it easy to grasp. The novel is read across ages from the primary school to the university with less difficulty. Some writers believe that high sounding words in their works will make them appear very highly placed but this is wrong because obscurantism is the bane of good communication. Your reader and your listener want to understand you not getting confused because you are using difficult diction. So, in writing your essays, choose simple diction for your writing even in speeches choose less difficult lexis because you are communicating, not confusing your readers and audience.

5.0   SUMMARY

Diction is the study of word choices. A good diction is the mark of a good writer and speaker. Diction could result in deviation if what is written results in obscure interpretation. Diction and register are related as both of them pertain to word choice in our speaking and writing repertoires. Register is strict diction because it relates to choice of words within a given environment, profession or vocation. However, the term diction absorbs register in another sense. Sometimes, the words we choose could connote what we never intended saying. This type of situation occurs when there is no linguistic harmony between the speaker and the hearer. It is possible to write correct nonsense because of our choice of words. In contemporary English usage, there is the need to use simplified diction to foster communication, especially with the emerging dialects of English bringing in varieties of diction on a daily basis.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions correctly:

1.   Explain the major causes of obscure diction
2.   Clearly differentiate diction from register
3.   Discuss with examples the meaning of connotation and denotation in diction
4.   What is deviation in diction? Use ample examples in your answer
5.   In a second language situation, do you believe that obscure diction would enhance communication? Explain thoroughly

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UNIT 5 INTERNET ENGLISH/WEB WRITING

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction
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3.0 Main Content
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    3.2 English as Internet Language
    3.3 Writing E-mails
    3.4 Web Surfing/Writing
4.0 Conclusion
5.0 Summary
6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will study the use of English language on the Internet. English language is regarded as the most widely used language on the Internet. Most linguists believe that English is widely used on the Internet because of the influence of America and Britain in the development of world technology especially in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). In most computers the version of English in use is the American English with options to choose the other dialects of English, if desired. This means that most computer producers have direct relationship with American technological requirements. English in use in the internet is a contemporary usage. The internet is widely used from the late 20th century which marked the rise of contemporary English. We will study the rise of internet English, the characteristics of internet English, English use in e-mails, web surfing, group mails, the use of English in internet chat and other aspects of English use on the Internet, like advertisement and announcement.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- recognize the existence of Internet English
- understand the characteristics of Internet English
- appreciate the importance of English in Internet business
- distinguish Internet English from the other varieties
- discuss English in the Internet as a contemporary variety.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   General Overview

Access to the Internet is empowering. It gives access to uncensored material of enormous variety; access to a world-size encyclopedia; access to almost instant communication with individuals located thousands of miles away. A person using the Internet can adopt a new persona, you can change gender, acquire beauty, lose disability, develop aggression. On the Internet, there is information, entertainment and insight into other cultures. Various governments have attempted to control some of this information, either in terms of what can be placed in URLs or in terms of what can be downloaded. But so far no effective way of controlling the reading of documents placed on the web has been found. We may be in a Golden Age of Net use, when controls become more effective and when more sites are either commercially motivated or no longer cost-free, we will lose the present sense of uncensored liberty. However, this empowerment has on the whole been extended most to those who are already most empowered. To gain good access to the web, three things are needed:

- to live in a location that supports the technology needed to gain access
- to have access to a service provider
- to be able to use English

In the early 90s, many countries did not possess servers that were linked to the web. Africa was worst hit, with only Egypt, Morocco, South Africa and Zambia as having access. Europe, both East and West, was well covered, as was both North and South America. In many countries which do have Internet access, large portions of the population live in rural areas, away from the electricity and telephone provision that supports this basic access, or are not wealthy enough to have such facilities themselves. Even within wealthy countries with effective electricity and telephone systems, the nearest service provider may be sufficiently far from some rural users to make accessing the web prohibitively expensive, due to the cost of long distance or satellite telephone calls.

After the establishment of the Internet by the military in the USA, it was universities that first took advantage of the web. To this day, academic users of the web (mostly on *edu* and *ac* servers) are especially privileged. They have unusually free access to the Internet, seldom paying for their own access time, and seldom accountable for their use of it. In some universities there may be corporate constraints on the Internet-users' freedom to develop their own sites. Users in commercial

organisations and governmental organisations generally experience less freedom. In many countries access through educational, commercial and governmental bodies preceded the availability of private Internet accounts, and corporate users still dominate the Internet. Private access to the Internet has developed over the 1990s, although there are still technical and commercial problems in private accounts, as the recent blockages at America Online have shown. Many countries have been slow to provide private access to the Internet. Even where private access is possible, it is costly, with rental fees and telephone costs being added to very substantial hardware costs. In the UK, for example, the average cost of a computer is around £2000. Thus, someone in full time work would have to spend 6 weeks' salary on a computer. The lower the national and individual salary, the more this cost becomes out of reach. In countries with lower average salaries, like Nigeria, computers tend to be more expensive both in real and proportional terms. The first two things needed for Internet access make it an advantage:

- to be in a country with good electricity supply, good telephonic connections and the political will to allow Internet access
- within those countries, to be an academic user, a user with other corporate access, or wealthy enough to afford a private account

These requirements, essentially economic in foundation, point to countries with high GNP, and to an urban environment within them.

World Distribution of English Users/Internet Users

However, the third thing helpful for Internet access, the ability to use English, divides the world into rather different groupings. Sociolinguists have traditionally grouped countries into three categories according to the dominant pattern of English use within them:

- *English as a Native Language*: Most people grow up speaking English at home. Here, English is the dominant language of daily usage for most people. (examples: UK, USA, Australia) (ENL)
- *English as a Second Language*: Those who know English mostly learnt it after they had learned another language. English is often learnt at school. English is used (by varying proportions of the population) in everyday and in official usage, with citizens often speaking to each other in English.(examples: India, Singapore, Ghana, Nigeria, Philippines) (ESL)
- *English as a Foreign Language*: Those who know English mostly learnt it at school. English is hardly ever spoken within the country (outside English lessons). (Examples: France, Japan, Thailand) (EFL)

Due to patterns of migration (voluntary and forced) and colonization involving people from the British Isles, ENL and ESL countries are predominantly countries which were formerly British territories or (in the case of the Philippines) territories of one of Britain's former colonies. These countries are geographically widespread. EN/ESL countries are however poorly represented in Europe, where only the UK and Ireland (both ENL) historically represent this kind of intimate involvement with English. In Europe, only the Northwestern countries (especially Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands) have achieved an extent of English use comparable to that in most former colonies.

Within the ESL countries a high level of use of English is virtually universal among precisely those socio-economic groups who have access to the Internet. In these countries, being educated and knowing English go hand in hand. Within most of the ENL countries, however, a privileged, highly educated position is no guarantee of access to English. Thus, in practice, the usefulness of English in the Internet places someone from a poor ESL country who has access to the Internet at a considerable advantage over someone from a much richer ENL country who does not know English or does not know it well. In national terms, the factors that matter are:

i.   High GNP / low GNP
ii.   Predominantly urban / large rural population
iii.   Extensive use of English / little use of English

The Internet was established by, and still is dominated by, that most rich and central nation, the USA. Much Internet communication is routed through US servers, as all of us outside the US are only too aware. The centre of the Internet is the US. However, access to the Internet does weaken the geographical sense of centre in a number of ways. Although accessing a site overseas may be slower than accessing a local site, there are times of day in all locations when overseas sites are as fast to access as local ones, thus equalizing the cost of access all over the world. E-mail, unlike telephone, fax, and postal mail, gives equally fast and cheap access to correspondents anywhere. In all countries, however wealthy, access to the Internet is unevenly distributed, and in those countries which are Anglophone postcolonial, the widespread knowledge of English among those who have Internet access places them at an advantage over equivalent people in ENL countries.

The culture of the Internet is still a predominantly American one. Users of the Internet become acculturated to its norms and to a style of presentation of self and of discourse which is essentially still American At the same time, as more Internet users from outside the US participate

in the Internet, the culture of the Internet will in part be internationalized. A major factor in determining the extent to which acculturation or internationalization prevails will be the participation of users in ESL Anglophone postcolonial settings. If more people in the Anglophone countries of Africa could participate, this would be a major contribution to a balanced internationalization.

The participation of the non-Anglophone countries of Europe in the internationalization of the Internet is at present limited in part by lack of knowledge of or confidence in English. The Internet is one of a number of pressures on those countries resulting in increasing learning of English. However, in those countries English is not indigenized, it is not seen as a local possession in the way that it is in the ENL and ESL countries, in both of which English can be part of an expression of a cultural identity. Thus, participants in the Internet from EFL countries have no vested interest in re-locating the dominant American-led culture of the Internet. The knowledge of English in the ESL countries allows them to be brokers, who, along with the non-American EFL countries, could re-culturate the Internet to a more genuinely international environment.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What are the factors responsible for English as the most widely used language in the Internet?

3.2   English as Internet Language

English of the Internet, undoubtedly, Internet English appears to be up-to-date, very flexible and quite straightforward; it comprises such texts as eye-catching layout, pictures, cartoons, hypertext links, video clips and sound. Internet English is related to electronic discourse and its characteristic features: - informality, - de-capitalization, - abbreviation (eg, EOs as essential oils), - the use of capitals for emphasis, - frequent misspelling (eg, magickal, flutes made from the branches of oak wood), - omission of the subject, - cleft sentences, imperatives and - carefree punctuation. Be these peculiarities due to the efficiency of the medium or the laziness of its users, English as a Foreign Language and Second Language learners should be aware of this phenomenon and be able to adopt this new register. It is easy, for example, to notice there is no single, agreed upon spelling for many terms related to the Internet and other electronic media, eg: *e-mail* vs *email.*

Internet English should not be neglected by teachers whose new role is to provide students with the activities presenting distinctive features of Internet English. One way to do it is by having the students analyze texts

of different origin but the same topic, which could be a part of a larger project taking into consideration:

i.   Vocabulary: idioms, colloquial phrases and words, phrasal verbs, specialized terminology;
ii.   Grammar: grammatical clauses, structures and tenses,
iii.   Register: formal, informal, stylistic devices.

Nine out of ten computers connected to the Internet are located in English-speaking countries and more than 80% of all home pages on the web are written in English. More than four fifths of all international organisations use English as either their main or one of their main operating languages. At the moment no other language comes anywhere near English. The next biggest is German. But less than 5% of web home pages are in German. There is nothing about the English language which makes it particularly useful as a world language. Much more important is the economic and political power of the USA. The rise of English is all about the power of the people who speak it - first as the language of the British Empire and now, in a slightly different form, of American corporations, advertising and pop culture and of other countries worldwide. It is estimated that more than half the world population will be "competent" in English by the year 2050. But it is likely that this new form of English will be very different to the language we understand now. Experts already classify the use of English around the world in three ways:

a.   Standard American-British English - also known as SABE. This is the "native" English as used in the USA, UK, Australia and the rest of the English-speaking world.
b.   Oral and Vernacular Englishes - known as OVE. These are mixtures of English and local languages, or versions of local languages incorporating lots of English "pop" or commercial phrases. Examples include *Konglish* - an amalgam of Korean and American slang, Singlish and *Chinglish* (Singaporean English and Chinese English). According to experts there are "hundreds" of other examples, including *Niglish* (Nigerian English) and *Japish* (Japanese English).
c.   International Colloquial English, or ICE - a rapidly mutating "world" language based on English but borrowing large numbers of words from other languages as well as American "street" slang and text messaging-style abbreviations and even symbols.

Some of the most far-reaching claims about English and the Internet come from David Crystal, editor of the *Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Crystal says the Internet represents the biggest change in communication in the whole of human history. These are

changes which are immensely bigger than those which followed the invention of the printing press. This new technology is causing a "revolution" in human communication to rank alongside the advent of human speech itself. So far we have been communicating in speech, writing and with sign language. But the internet is neither speech nor writing. It has aspects of both and represents a new form. E-mail is not merely a faster way of sending letters. It is a dialogue between two or more people happening instantly. There is no example from human history of anything like this happening before. Crystal believes that it will affect the way in which people communicate and may eventually lead to entirely new forms of communication. Online chat is also an "entirely new" type of communication. "There has never been a case where a person could pay equal attention to what thirty people are saying all at the same time.

There is speed of information on the internet. People who use chat-rooms a lot can already conduct two or three conversations simultaneously. That is completely unprecedented. The web itself is a new form. If you look at a page in a book, go away and then return to it will still be the same. A web page can change - there are all sorts of possibilities. English, as the leading language of the internet, is already changing with increasing speed. Crystal estimates that the vocabulary of ICE-type "World English" is increasing at the rate of at least 5,000 new words every year. There are attempts by the *Oxford English Dictionary* to record and codify all the new words and ways in which they are trailing way behind but they can not keep up. The fact is that the English-speaking countries have given up ownership of English. There's no turning back with the Internet as English is a world language now. A new version of the world English now becomes *Internet + English = Netglish.*

We are in the age of the Digital Word. Just as the printing press, widely used throughout Europe by 1500, changed our use of words, leading to new written forms such as the novel and the newspaper, so the computer has created change. E-mail, chat rooms, and Web pages have made words on the screen almost as common as on the printed page. We already see changes taking place, as onscreen language becomes more informal (often creating new words, such as "online"). Words get shortened: electronic mail becomes *e-mail*, which in turn becomes *email*. Note, however, that this is not new. "Today" was spelled "to-day" in the early twentieth century. The online experience has spawned various means of conveying tone including acronyms (such as LOL for "laughing out loud" and IRL for "in real life", ASAP "as soon as possible" —as distinguished from the virtual world of cyberspace) and emoticons such as >: D for "demonic laughter" and >: P for "sticking tongue out at you."

English continues to change with influences of all kinds. There are also sounds as communication in Internet English. There are uses of 'buzzing', a particular sound made by pressing ctrl + Z made in order to alert someone on the other side of the chat. It brings someone back to consciousness in case he forgets that the other party is still online in the chat. To buzz at times results in violation of someone else's privacy. Sometimes, it is regarded as disturbance or abuse if the other party is not interested in the chatting. However, to buzz brings in fun, musicality and alertness in the internet chat. There are also uses of emoticons which combines visual and audio reactions in the internet chat. Some emoticons when used may refer to 'waving', 'goodbye', 'anger', 'laughter' and 'joke' etc. Each emoticon represents a total message signified by the moving art it represents.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

According to David Crystal, the Internet is bringing a revolution in English language use. What are these revolutionary trends?

3.3   Writing E-mails/Text Messaging

Electronic mail system (e-mail or email) is a contemporary means of world wide communication through the Internet. Unlike the normal snail mail usually through the post and which takes several days, weeks or months to arrive to the addressee, the email is the fastest means of correspondence ever invented by man after the fax system. E-mail is a paperless correspondence unlike the fax system, processed through the internet by means of internet connectivity. To be able to apply correspondence through the internet, both parties: the sender and the receiver must be connected by means of the internet. Electronic mail system is managed by the computer because the layout of the mail is already set in the system. By clicking 'reply' after reading an e-mail, a particular reply site will appear with the sender's address already placed at the destination column. One just has to type one's reply and click 'send' and the mail is sent immediately. The recipient will receive it instantly and might reply the mail immediately if he is online and where otherwise, the mail will remain in his e-mail inbox until he reads it and decide to reply or not. There are many unsolicited mails that occur frequently in people's inboxes. Sometimes, it becomes embarrassing receiving mails from unknown clients and people whom you never contacted. These mails are called 'junk mails'. Many people have been deceived through this mail. These Internet fraudsters assume some identities and influence some gullible people who fall headlong into their skimming.

In writing e-mail, care is taken not to write too long because of some people's inability at concentrating long hours on the computer monitor. Some people believe that the rays from the monitor could affect one's sight. There are certain characteristics associated with the writing of e-mail:

i.   There is the use of ellipsis. As stated in module 3, ellipsis involves the use of expressions that have incomplete grammatical structure but are assumed to give complete meaning as the reader is expected to complete the missing words in the course on understanding the message sent. In writing e-mails, care is taken not to write in long sentences.

ii.   There are uses of short grammatical forms or abbreviations such as: 'u' for 'you', 'ur' for 'your'; '4' for 'for', '4rm' for 'from', 'hlp' for 'help', 'cos' for 'because'; 'fin' for 'find', 'con' for 'connect'; 'pro' for 'profile'; 'upd' for 'update'; 'nd' for 'and', 'asl' for 'age, sex, location' etc.

iii.   There are uses of references. The former mail to be replied is also placed at the reply page to enable the person replying have access to the mail he is replying.

iv.   The use of grammar is very concise. There are uses of simple language forms for easy understanding. There is no need for reference to dictionaries while reading e-mail

v.   The diction in e-mails is various depending on the nature of the mail to be sent or replied. It could be subtle, harsh or medial in tone.

vi.   There are occurrences of misspellings in e-mails. The writer may type wrongly because of his attempts at typing fast to beat the time for the browsing. Sometimes the misspellings are never noticed the mails are already sent in which case there would be no room for correction. The only solution here is to constantly spell-check before sending the mail, especially through the spellchecker already in the e-mail environment.

All these characteristics are common with both the e-mails and text messaging. Text message is sent through GSM phones and even through the internet. It occurs between GSM and GSM, GSM and email or email to GSM. Both GSM and email share the same linguistic characteristics in writing except that the email could contain larger mails because it contains wider space than the GSM, unless the GSM is the Blackberry type which has almost the same facility as the computer itself. Both computers and GSM phones have facilities for connecting to the Internet. Not all GSM could connect and not all computers could connect. It all depends on the necessary installations that should foster the connectivity.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Discuss the characteristics of email and text messaging as they relate to English language writing and other uses.

3.4 Web Surfing/Writing

The popularity of the Internet has opened the door of opportunity to many established and aspiring writers alike. This medium of communication has also given rise to the question of writing quality in the Internet age. Writers' advocates believe the Internet has led to a lower level of writing standards. While new modes of communication through the Internet are constantly advancing and changing, the issue of writing quality questions the very definition of writing in the Internet age. Whether writers are devoted to the craft or not, they are expected to be able to write well both offline as well as online, or at least recognize the difference between the two. When writing for the Web, it is the content that matters. Writing for the Web is very different from writing for print. Print today remains superior to the Web when it comes to visible space, image and type quality, and speed. Web visitors are quickly scrolling through sites seeking specific information and will not always take the time to read every word. Traditional writing techniques and standards are less of a priority, as multiple headings, bullets and lists are needed to aid scanning readers. Although reputable writers compose much of this writing, the quality can appear less than professional. Also, with the increase of tech people writing for the Web, the rules of grammar need to be put into effect.

Writers not writing for a living often find enjoyment and small payouts from Web sites seeking material to raise their sites higher in the search engine rankings. Although this is a legitimate philosophy, the writing being published on the Web can often be less than professional. This lack of professionalism distorts the line between qualified and amateur writers. Writing standards are often not the highest priority as Websites seek to drive traffic to gain advertising exposure. It seems as if readers are not as concerned about the writing quality, as long as they feel they are reading a relevant account on a particular topic.

Blog Writers

Amateur writers are often attributed as bloggers. Blogs are avenues by which to get information or opinions out into the Web for exposure. Bloggers have taken on a new wave of communication seeking to benefit all Internet users. Anyone with Internet access and a computer can set up a Website or blog wherein to publish his/her writing. The difference between writing on a blog versus a Web site is the amount of

readers, along with the credibility each receives. Though blogs are generally informal and written by individuals, marketers and advertisers have recently taken to them and use them as a tool to promote companies and receive feedback from consumers. Blogs are easy to create in the 21st Century due to the availability of templates offered on free blog Web sites. With blogs being easy to access and editable for both blog authors and readers, the contributions are virtually limitless.

Blogs and blog writing are taking on more meaning than just idle gossip between users and contributors. Educators are seeing the benefits of maintaing blogs in the classrooms as an educational tool. Teachers are able to keep an easy-to-maintain line of communication open with parents and other educators. Blogs also stimulate students to compose reflective responses to issues within an open forum.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

'To blog' and 'to surf' are closely related yet they serve different purposes. Explain the purposes with ample examples

4.0   CONCLUSION

English is clearly the dominant language of the Internet. Computers are in any case English-oriented. Netscape and Java are in English, the vocabulary of computing and of the Internet is overwhelmingly English, and most of the texts that are accessed through it are in English. The search engines are in English and are in the US. The reasons for the dominance of English are firstly historical because the Internet began in the USA, which is still the leading user of it, and the USA is an English-using nation. The norms of the Internet are established in ASCII texts, and even now texts transmitted unaltered from (for example) Francophone keyboards may produce garbage on English-favouring keyboards. To avoid this from happening, those who post, for example, French on ASCII lists must omit diacritics. Two things constrain the use of languages other than English on world-wide web documents and communications:

- the difficulty of writing languages using non-ASCII characters, and characters that have diacritics
- the desire to reach as large a readership as possible.

The first of these constraints can be overcome, though not necessarily with ease. The second constraint, however, means that most documents in languages other than English, including those in countries where English is little used internally are mirrored by English translations. The World Wide Web is in the position of a permanent international

conference, where papers are either in English or are accompanied by English translations. The role of English reflects the dominance of English in cross-national communication. While it is easy to see picture of words in a variety of fonts and scripts, using them in an intuitive and natural way in the context of the Internet becomes an altogether more challenging problem.

One topic, however, does not appear to have a compellingly obvious localization solution in this multi-lingual environment, and that is the *Domain Name System* (DNS). The subtle difference here is that the DNS is the glue that binds all users' language symbols together and performing localized adaptations to suit local language use needs is not enough. What we need is a means to allow all of these language symbols to be used within the same system, or internationalization. The DNS is the most prevalent means of initiating a network transaction, whether it's a torrent session, the web, email, or any other form of network activity. But the DNS name string is not just an arbitrary string of characters. What you find in the DNS is most often a sequence of words or their abbreviations, and the words are generally English words, using characters drawn from a subset of the Latin character set. Thus, English is the predetermined language of the Internet.

5.0   SUMMARY

The World Wide Web is now the dominant means of transferring information in this contemporary age. The old means of information transfer is giving way to the internet. English language is the most widely used language of the internet. Since America is the initiator and dominant user of Internet and English is the language of the Americans, it means that every internet transaction must have more than 70% English in its usage. Thus, the users of English will have more advantage using the internet. Those who are limited in the use of English will find the internet very uninteresting because of the language constraints. E-mails and the other forms of communication like web mails, Internet chat, group mails, webcam, blogging etc have become a part of the world's communication means since the late 1990s and most businesses are now transacted through the Internet. Writing in the internet has become very lucrative. Those who engage in blogging are paid because they surf the net, write important research and are paid for the job. In most offices, information is routed through interconnectivity thereby making most offices paperless.

Writing emails and other forms of internet writings is very systematic. For those with little education, it becomes necessary to teach them English and the basic computer skills to enable them work with the internet. The internet is the fastest means of writing, communication,

enculturation and transmission of values. Today, there are many web professionals who live by writing through the internet. Businesses like forex trading, stock trading, bond trading, transfer of funds and other financial transactions are now faster, easier and simpler through the internet procedure.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

1.   Explain the origin and functions of the internet.
2.   English language is regarded as the most widely used language in the internet. Discuss how this came to be since Chinese is the largest spoken language on earth.
3.   Emails are written in specialized forms. Explain the processes for writing correspondence through e-mails.
4.   Distinguish between web surfing and web blogging. Give adequate explanations in your answer.
5.   Write brief notes on the following internet activities in relation with English usage: (i) Group mails (ii) Web cams (iii) Internet chat (iv) DNS.

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