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Meaning and Usages of Polysemy and Collocation in Nigerian English

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Abstract:
This work examines the existence, meaning and usage of Polysemy and Collocation in the Nigerian variety of English. English, as a cosmopolitan language, has different varieties spoken in different parts of the world. These varieties are determined based on the different environments they operate and how unique they appear in these environments. On this parameter, this work highlights the uniqueness of English spoken in the region of Nigeria under the linguistic elements of polysemy and collocation. Extracts from three (3) novels by Nigerians, namely: June 12, Devil's Pawn and Things Fall Apart, constitute data for the study. This work adopts systemic Functional Grammar as its theoretical framework: the aim is to focus on the functionality and acceptability of these nativized expressions and not their form or grammaticality. This work notes that some expressions in Nigerian English are direct transliterations from the local languages. Culture plays an important role in the legitimacy of Nigerian English. Many English words connote different meanings in the Nigerian context as opposed to an L1 Speaker of English. This work concludes the fact that polysemy and collocation co-exist as part and parcel of the concept of Nigerian English, which is a distinct variety within the world Englishes.

Keywords: *Polysemy, collocation, Nigerian English and grammaticality*

1. Introduction

Language is a vital tool for communication between individuals or groups. However, the choice of a particular language for a given society or environment serves as a vehicle for interaction and mutual co-existence. According to Edem (2022, p.1), the language chosen enhances the culture, traditions, values, norms and technological development of that given speech community. One important notion about linguistic discourse is that concepts that exist in other cultures usually find their way into the linguistic lexicon of other languages which have contact with such cultures. English language, being one of the most widely used languages in the world, has undergone a lot of such lexical changes, which invariably affected the meanings of such expressions.

The 'Context of Solution' and 'Context of Culture' are two inseparable yardsticks for any meaning interpretation of the lexical organization of a language (Daramola, 2004, p.242). These changes in meaning occasioned by the effect of context of situation and culture have given rise to the new concept or semi-autonomous varieties called the 'new English' or 'non-native English.'

As Kachru (1983, p.212) observes, the term new Englishes symbolizes the functional and formal variations, divergent socio-linguistic contexts ranges and varieties of English in creativity, and various types of acculturation in parts of the western and non-western world. The new English, according to Plaft, Weber and Ho (1984, p.201), can provide a background and an identity for its speakers, which an 'alien English, something abroad,' never could.

Before the arrival of the English language in Nigeria, other indigenous languages were in operation. Eka (2000) posits that 'English language came to meet about 400 indigenous languages that had taken deep root in various Nigerian communities where they were spoken and are still being spoken. Eka's assertion clearly indicates that Nigerians were not without language before English came and even when it arrived and was given prestige, other indigenous languages were, and are still not, abolished.

Arriving in a new environment, English language could not retain all the major features of that language, for the fact that the natives were not acquainted with the rules that govern the language. This process, according to Banjo (1996), Bamgbose (1997), Udofot (2003) and Edem (2016), is known as 'indigenization' and implies that English, having travelled through different stages had adopted local coloration and thereby departed systemically from the one used in the L1 setting of Britain.

The product of this English is technically referred to as 'Neo-English' – those emerging varieties of English localized in non-native environments, for example: Nigeria, and sharing the same core features with a native variety of English of British standard. Some of these neo-English include: Indian English, Philippian English and American English.

Again Edem (2016, p.85) brought different perspectives to the discourse when he said, "However, the nativization of English is what has given birth to a subset known as 'Nigerian English.'" English language has been nativized in Nigeria

in various linguistic fields like phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. However, despite this linguistic deviation, Nigerian English (NE) is still in full communion with the one spoken by the natives in Britain.

1.1. Review of Related Literature

Taiwo (2009) takes a look at the contemporary discourse of domestication of non-native varieties of English taking cognizance of the polysemous usage in domesticated English varieties: A case study of the verb 'see' in Nigerian English. These usages reflect the extension of the basic standard English senses of the word 'see' within the Nigerian worldview to express the Nigerian experience. Taiwo's work is similar to the present study because it agrees with the notion that culture plays a key role in the nativization of the language variety used in the new environment.

Furthermore, while Taiwo's work is situated within the frameworks of lexical semantics and contact linguistics, the present study adopts Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar in carrying out its investigation.

Enang and Udoka (2018) examine a recolored variety of Standard British English in Nigeria: A new English variety in a New Environment. Adopting Zhang Guruo's 2016 'norm-breaking to norm-making' approach as its theoretical model, the work agrees with the present study with a submission that Nigerian English, which is a nativized variety, is not an inferior variety because it breaks metropolitan norms; rather, the new variety is tailored to meet the communication needs of the new environment. The present work is different in a theoretical framework and the focus, which is targeted to show the existence, meaning and usages of polysemy and collocations in Nigerian English, and how these concepts have been embraced in the new environment.

Edem (2018) examines the Nativization of English Language in a Multilingual and Cultural Setting: The Nigerian Experience. This study agrees with the present work because they all shared the sentiments that the fast spread of English Language has metamorphosed into designations such as World English, New English, Modern English, West African English, and Nigerian English, to mention just a few. Edem (2018) avers that the nativization and the resulting New English, which is altered to suit the new environment but is still in communion with its ancestral home, are seen as evidence of cultural and linguistic identity.

Edem's (2018) and the present study are related in their views on the concepts of the different variants of World English, but while the former adopts a norm-breaking and norm-setting approach in determining the corpus, the present work adopts Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar as the theoretical model also have polysemical and collocational undertones.

Several scholars have examined the new English, identifying their distinct features and proposing that they be recognized in line with their new status. These scholars include: Bamgbose (1982), Banjo (1971), Eka (1985, 1993), Udofot (1996, 1997, 2003), Enang and Urujzian and Udoka (2013), Tunde Awe (2014) and Edem (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018) and so forth have asserted the authenticity of Nigerian English as one outstanding variety of World English. Some scholars, such as Banjo (1971) and Prato (1968), consider Nigerian English a linguistic aberration because, in their view, it embodies the totality of deviations from SBE. Howbeit, these deviations signify the domestication which, in the words of Adegbija (2004, p.21) and Edem (2016, p.144), has given birth to Nigerian English.

When Nigerians attempt to speak English in the English way, there are bound to be deviations naturally being a direct function of interference from their mother tongue. This interference has since been scholarly addressed to stem from the learners' ignorance or involuntary transfer of the linguistic features of the mother tongues to the structures of English, their target language. See Edem (2015, p.227) for details.

Adegbija (2004, p.20) observes that Nigerian English is homegrown and substantially tailored from SBE to suit the Nigerian environment and its culture. Edem (2016) doesn't agree less when he said, "'Educated Nigerian English' is fast becoming a multi-colored one language due to the heterogeneous linguistic climate perennial in the various regions of Nigeria, bearing in mind that each of these regions has its own language in existence before the advent of English in Nigeria."

Edem (2023, p.32) observes, "The diction of a writer or author could be denotative, which means the words do not have any further interpretative meaning. It could be connotative, in which case, the words attract various associated meanings, feelings and ideas that usually cannot be obtained from the bare form of the word itself.

The author's creativity and mastery of words are examined, in addition to how their use of narrative techniques and other devices further add meaning to the discourse.

The objectives of this work are:
- To show the existence, meaning and usages of polysemy and collocation in Nigerian English.
- To showcase the legitimacy of Nigerian English.
- To examine the influence of the environment on the language.

This research is a qualitative one as data are primarily drawn from three novels by Nigerians: Ugweko Odobo's *June 12*, Kukogho Sampson's *Devil's Pawn* and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

Systematic Functional Grammar, propounded by Michael A. K. Halliday, was selected for this work. Before the emergence of Halliday, there was another scholar in this grammatical field known as J. R. Firth, the founder of the London School of Linguistics.

According to Senam (2014, p.12), 'the system' refers to the view of language as "a network of system, or interrelated sets of options for making meaning." Halliday believes that grammar is described as a system, not as a rule, on

the basis that every grammatical structure involves a choice from a describable set of options that is, language is meaning potential.

Eka (1994, p.25) asserts, "Halliday's work was based on…Firthian conception – the systemic grammar is also sometimes referred to as neo-Firthian Grammar – the model has a structure at the surface grammar and a system of semantic features at the deep grammar." Hence, the sole aim of Halliday's model of grammar is for an expression to convey meaning for the purpose of communication. Certainly, expressions have meaning since they are context-based or driven. Systemic grammar is based on the context of the text and the context of culture to enhance a further meaning and understanding of what is expressed (Senam, 2014, p.12-13 and Edem, 2017, p.105).

According to J. R. Firth (1957), meaning has a significant place in grammar; for instance, for transformational generative grammarians, grammar describes the competence of an ideal native speaker/hearer. Therefore, within the framework of systemic grammar, there is hardly any ideal speaker who uses language perfectly, consciously or unconsciously, without any noticeable error. Thus, systemic functional grammar emphasizes meaning and exchange of ideas but not as though it tries to permit ungrammatical structures.

Following the tenets of this model of grammar, all languages have 'units,' 'structures,' 'classes' and 'systems.' Eka (1994, p.26) asserts, "Sentences and clauses are instances of the category of the unit verb; nouns are instances of class; subjects and complements are instances of structure." From this perspective, unit, structure and class form a system of categories of the theory of grammar, while clauses, sentences and subjects may be said to be descriptive categories, that is, particular instances of description.

On the other hand, systemic grammar theory shifts attention from structure to contextual grammar. In this sense, the emphasis is not so much on how an expression conforms to the rules of a language but on how effective it is in a particular context of use. Thus, it emphasizes the acceptability of expression rather than grammaticality (see Eka 2000; Udofot 2003 and Edem 2016, 2017).

1.3. Nigerian English (NE)

Over time, there has been doubt over the legitimacy of Nigerian English. The big question has always been whether or not there is a subset of English known as 'Nigerian English.' This is because the language has a foreign origin and only came to Nigeria through their contact with the native owners (Eka, 2000, p.73). In this regard, notable linguistic scholars in Nigeria have come up with different scholarly postulations and findings to back up the claim of the existence of Nigerian English (NE).

Eka (2000, p.15) posits: …Nigeria is a classic example of a country in which English has got into contact with indigenous languages and has co-existed with them. Since, in any such situation, the visiting language **must**, after a period of time, acquire the characteristics of the new environment, we can claim justifiably that English, which has been with us in Nigeria since the 16th century, has acquired the local color and the mile of the Nigerian environment. It is on the basis of the above that we can describe Nigerian English as a variety of World English learnt, spoken and/or written by Nigerians who are born and/or brought up within the Nigerian environment.

From Eka's viewpoint, Nigerian English is a legitimate variety of English because the language has "acquired the local color" of the Nigerian environment, thus losing some of the properties it came with and replacing them with the properties of the new environment.

In view of this, Edem (2018, p.155) posits that the process of nativization often leads to the recognition of a new variety as part of the linguistic repertoire of the new community as well as its acceptance as an independent variable on his own right. Here Edem gives recognition to the existence of Nigerian English in the aspect of nativization it has undergone in the Nigerian environment.

Similarly, Adeniyi and Adelugbo (2006, p.93) seemed to agree with Eka (2000) when he said, "Nigerian English is the variety of English spoken and used by Nigerians just as American English which is a branch of English spoken by Americans." Edem (2018, p.161) appeared to add impetus to this assertion when he said, "Nigerian English originated from the linguistic notion of domestication…Domestication or nativization refers to the various changes undergone by a language in the course of its spread and implementation in alien communities."

From the views of these scholars, the legitimacy of Nigerian English (NE) is based on the fact that the language has been nativized by the Nigerian environment, thus taking a new shape that can hardly be recognized by the L1 Speakers of the language. On this note, Bamgbose (1997, p.224) posits: "Of all the heritage left behind in Nigeria by the British at the end of colonial administration, perhaps, none is more important than the English language."

According to Eka (2000), consequently, Nigerian English as a subset has legitimacy now more than ever before and this has generated some scholarly arguments leading to two schools of thought, namely: the Deviation School and the Variation School. Deviation School argues that what is called 'Nigerian English' is a contraption that is filled with errors and highly deviated from Standard English. Scholars like Vincent, Brann and others regard Nigerian English as 'anomalous' and so they recognize only standard British English. Variation School, however, believes that there is a variety called 'Nigerian English.' Scholars like: Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Banjo, Bamgbose, Odeimuh, Udofot and Edem, etc. are of this school of thought. These scholars see the expression of Nigerian English as having a subset that is distinct and reflects the Nigerian Society or environment where the language is used. Therefore, it is evident from the variation school of thought that there is a variety of English called 'Nigerian English,' which is unique and different from other English all over the world.

1.3.1. Polysemy

The word 'polysemy' has its etymology from two Greek words, 'poly' and 'sema,' which means, "When one word has more than one meaning and consequently more than one referent, the sense relation involved is polysemy." Vincente and Falkum (2017, p.292) assert that polysemy is characterized as a phenomenon whereby a single word form is associated with two or several related senses. Hence, it is different from 'monosemy,' where a single word form is associated with a single meaning, and 'homonymy,' where a single word form is associated with two or several unrelated meanings. Although the distinctions between polysemy, monosemy and homonymy may seem clear at an intuitive level, they have proven to be difficult to draw in practice.

Polysemy is a spread phenomenon when words have multiple related senses that arise through the process of semantic change and extension of the literal meaning. When a symbol, word or phrase means many different things, then such a word is polysemic; for example, the verb 'get' is a good example of polysemy – it can mean 'become,' 'procure,' or 'understand.' Gries (2013, p.84) posited, "Polysemy is the form of ambiguity where two or more senses are associated with the same word." Hence, polysemy is the capacity for a sign, symbol, a morpheme, a word or a phrase to have multiple related meanings. Linguists say that polysemic words are ambiguous in nature in the aspect of semantics (bringing about more than one meaning).

Udofot (1998) cited Nagy (1995) as saying, "About 40 percent of English words have more than one meaning listed in a dictionary." Udofot (1998, p.46) added, "...the dictionary lists the different sets of meaning of a polysemous word usually under one entry". Based on these scholarly postulations, polysemy is different from homonymy because while the former is a single entry in the dictionary, the latter are words that sound alike but have different meanings and different entries in the dictionary. For example, 'sale,' 'sell,' 'sail.'

Consequently, one of the fundamental characteristics of polysemous words is that all the different meanings are associated in a related sense, that is, the ability of two words to replace each other in the same context and still have the same meaning. Against this backdrop, polysemous words often have denotative and connotative meanings. For instance, the 'head' of a body (denotative) and the person at the top of a company (connotative), while 'bright,' shinning (denotative) and intelligent (connotative), 'run' on the other hand, means to move fast on foot (denotative) and also means to manage a group, a firm of company, etc. (connotative).

Other examples of polysemy include:

Dish:
- It is your turn to wash the dish - (plate)
- How long does it take to cook the dish - (food)

Wing:
- One of the bird's wings is broken – (part of the bird for flying)
- The company is building a new wing – (a new part of a building)

Serve:
- He has served his term in prison - (stay in prison for a stipulated number of years)
- The food is served to the people - (to give)
- This old bike has served me well - (to be useful)
- The new mall will serve the community well - (to be helpful)
- My dad served in the army - (to work)

2. Data Collection and Analysis

2.1. Polysemy: Meaning and Usages in Nigerian English

Since Nigerian English is a distinct variety of English, as alluded to by different scholars, there are some polysemous words that reflect Nigerian sensibilities. These data are collected from three novels by Nigerians: Ugwoke Odobo's *June 12* and Kukogho Samson's *Devil's Pawn* and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart.*

S/N	Polysemy	Source/ Page	Meaning	Nigerian Usages
1	See	*June 12* p.2	To perceive visually	1. When last did you see your husband (to engage in a sexual relationship)? 2. I am waiting for you to see me (expecting some form of gratification, especially money). 3. See! I do not like what you are doing (to draw attention). 4. She did not see her period (she is pregnant).
2	Head	*June 12* p.2	Part of the body	1. Use your head (be wise) 2. You have no head (unintelligent) 3. No head (no positive outcome) 4. I am the head (leader or one in-charge)
3	Home	*June 12* p.262	The place where one lives	1. He has gone home to be with the Lord (death) 2. I feel at home (welcoming) 3. John is my home man (relative, kinsman)
4	Pocket	*Devil's Pawn* p.91	A small bag on a cloth	1. He pockets it (hide, steal) 2. He goes about with an open pocket (generous) 3. You cannot pocket me (control)

S/N	Polysemy	Source/ Page	Meaning	Nigerian Usages
5	Computer	*Devil's Pawn* p.168	An electronic device	1. Emeka is like a computer (intelligent) 2. In this computer age (modern world) 3. She is becoming computerized (unpredictable)
6	Politician	*June 12* p.1	An elected member of the government	1. He is a politician (liar) 2. He is a politician in the field (highly skilled)
7	Joy	*June 12* p.66	Excitement	1. The contractor will give joy (to give money) 2. Margaret is preparing joy (cooking food) 3. There is no joy in the meeting (no refreshment)
8	Man	*Devil's Pawn* p.2	A male human	1. Be a man (be strong) 2. He is a man of the occasion (leader or to protect others)
9	Waste	*Devil's Pawn* p.104	No longer useful	1. The Police will waste the armed robber (kill) 2. Waste no time (be fast) 3. She is a complete waste (nothing to write home about)
10	Read	*Devil's Pawn* p.132	To study	1. Read my lips (listen carefully) 2. He reads the action (to understand) 3. She is well-read (educated)
11	Die	*Devil's Pawn* p.7	Seize to live	1. He decided to die for the project (gives everything) 2. He died of the work (becomes tired)
12	Kill	*Things Fall Apart* p.112	To make a living thing die	1. Kill the feeling (withdraw interest) 2. Kill your eyes (stop looking) 3. Kill the project (discourage)
13	Back	*Devil's Pawn* p.85	Part of the body	1. Back me up (support) 2. Watch your back (be careful) 3. Watch my back (be my witness)
14	Block	*Devil's Pawn* p.92	Solid substance	1. I will block him (to confront or waylay) 2. He pays him in block (full payment)
15	Chill	*Devil's Pawn* p.48	To be cool	1. Can we chill out (to hangout) 2. Chilled from that matter (to calm down, to withdraw)
16	Face	*Devil's Pawn* p.72	Part of the body	1. Face your life (mind your business) 2. Face your fear (be brave) 3. Face your job (be focused)
17	Sweet	*Things Fall Apart* p.77	Pleasantly tasty	1. The movie is sweet (interesting) 2. What a sweet place (beautiful) 3. The food is sweet (delicious) 4. He is a sweet boy (handsome)
18	Senior	*Devil's Pawn* p.92	Higher rank	1. He is my senior brother (elder) 2. Although he is the senior person, we are in the same rank (longest serving)
19	Big	*Devil's Pawn* p.92	Large in size	1. Sylvan is a big man (rich) 2. He is too big for such a job (overage)

Table 1: Showing Examples of Polysemy in Nigerian English

2.1.1. Analysis of Polysemy in Nigerian English

The word 'see' in example 1 ordinarily means to perceive usually. However, to a Nigerian, to 'see' means either to engage in a sexual relationship, someone not seeing her period (being pregnant) or someone expecting some form of gratification, especially money changing hands. In example 2, polysemy is also manifest in the word 'head,' which in standard British English means part of the body, but if one says, 'use your head,' it connotes that you are unintelligent or you should apply wisdom. 'Head' could also mean a leader or someone in charge, depending on the context in Nigerian usage.

In example 3, 'home' and 'pocket' also attract different interpretations among Nigerian speakers of the language. While 'home' ordinarily means a place one lives, in Nigerian setting, 'going home' could be death, 'feeling at home' could mean one is welcome or it could mean a relative or a kinsman. A 'pocket,' on the other hand, refers to a small bag or a piece of cloth, but in Nigerian English, 'to pocket' means to hide or steal or misappropriate public funds. An open pocket could also mean one is generous or to pocket (someone) is to exert control over some people.

In a similar vein, a 'politician' in example 6, for instance, in Nigerian English, is likened to a liar or highly skilled person. 'Joy' means excitement. But in example 7, Nigerian context, to give joy in the text could mean either to give money or to offer some form of refreshments to guests.

In examples 8 and 17, we have the words 'man' and 'sweet,' respectively. For instance, a man means a male or human, but in Nigerian English, being a man connotes more than being a male or human; it connotes strength or exerting authority or leadership over a home or people or a project. In other words, when a Nigerian movie is said to be sweet, this means it is interesting or inspiring, while a sweet place means it is beautiful or a sweet girl means she is beautiful or well-mannered.

The above examples of polysemy have made it possible to know that some words in Standard British English (SBE) mean different things in Nigerian English (NE). For example, 'sweet' (pleasant taste) has many connotative meanings in Nigerian context, like: 'interesting,' 'beautiful/handsome,' and 'delicious' based on the context of usage. Also,

some polysemous words in Nigerian English are used to best describe the speaker's intention, such as 'read' – read my lips. In that case, the speaker's intention is to tell the listeners to pay absolute attention because, perhaps, the speaker may not intend to repeat himself/herself. Thus, the speaker's intention is communicated and accepted by the listeners in unambiguous terms.

2.1.2. Collocation

Aboh and Uduk (2017, p.101) averred that collocation refers primarily to the sense of a connected discourse created by the close co-occurrence or relatively low-frequency words that tend to appear in similar contexts. Collocation deals with the relationships between words on the basis that these often occur in the same surroundings. Collocations are words that agree together and co-occur more often than would be expected by chance. These words are used together frequently and these combinations are established. This assertion means that collocations appear to move together in discourse appropriately. On this note, collocations form an integral part of written and spoken speech in every language. They can be easily recognized by native speakers and it is this recognizability that makes a collocation most significant.

However, collocation can be inappropriate if the words that collocate do not fit together. Also, inappropriate collocation of words may alter the meanings of an intended expression or bring out a poor expression. Based on this assumption, collocation can be defined as the combination of words from a single or separate word class that conveys almost the same meaning in an expression. However, it is noted that, in collocation, the paired words establish a relationship irrespective of the social class of people to which they belong. It is this relationship that brings about the meaning of the 'collocate.'

Consequently, there are two types of collocation: typical collocation and non-typical collocation. The former is a collocation that is correct and quite familiar, while the latter is a collocation that sometimes appears inappropriate. Below are some examples:

- "Make the bed" and "do the dishes" (typical)
- "Make the dishes" and "do the bed" (non-typical)
- "Heavy shower" and "strong wind" (typical)
- "Heavy wind" and "strong shower" (non-typical).

On this note, typical collocations feel natural to native English speakers because they are common and are heard often. There is often no logic about why these words belong together – some collocations just feel right.

Adjective + Noun	Verb
Strong coffee	Listen to the radio
Hearty meal	Falling in love
Drastic change	Meet you at 7 pm
Bright future	Burning with joy
Adverb + Adjective	Verb + Adverb
Slightly late	Opening admit
Filthy rich	Deeply regret
Highly intelligent	Strongly agree
Ridiculously expensive	Softly whisper
Noun + Noun	Adverb + Preposition
A bunch of flowers	Accountable to
A pride of lions	Responsible for
A troupe of actors	Familiar with
A murder of crowd	Dependent on
Verb + Noun	Noun + Preposition
Break the silence	With respect to
Waste time	On account of
Have a laugh	In accordance with
Pay attention	In response to

Table 2: Showing Collocational Types

2.1.3. Collocation in Nigerian English, Meaning and Usages

One of the basic linguistic elements that have made Nigerian English a subset medium of communication is morphology. There are words in Nigerian English that are coined and paired together to reflect a typical Nigerian environment or setting. These paired words may appear untypical to the native speaker of the language, but they make meaning to the Nigerian users of English. These data are collected from three novels by Nigerians: *Things Fall Apart*, *June 12* and *Devil's Pawn*.

S/N	Collocations	Source/ Page	Meaning in Standard British English	Usages in Nigerian English
1	Evil Forest	*Things Fall Apart* p.14	Thick forest where people are buried	Do not enter the evil forest
2	Snuff-bottle	*Things Fall Apart* p.51	Small bottle for storing snuff	Something very unique or important
3	Foo-foo	*Things Fall Apart* p.58	A traditional Nigerian food made from cassava	A local delicacy common in Eastern Nigeria
4	Bag-snatching	*June 12* p.68	Confiscation of one's bag	Bag-snatching is rampant in Nigerian cities
5	Pocket-picking	*June 12* p.68	Stealing	A way some youth steals without any fear
6	High-life	*June 12* p.68	A kind of music in Nigeria	He enjoys an extravagant lifestyle and does not live within his means
7	Hot-soup	*June 12* p.81	Meal is hot	Someone being in trouble
8	Egwusi-soup	*June 12* p.89	Traditional Nigerian soup	A local Nigerian delicacy
9	Mouth-full	*June 12* p.89	Overload	Bites more than he can chew
10	Tear-rubber	*Devil's Pawn* p.274	Never in use	Brand new car
11	Okada-man	*June 12* p.41	Motorcyclist	Cyclist used for commercial purposes
12	Medicine-man	*Things Fall Apart* p.61	One who gives medical attention	One who treats ailments, a fortune-teller
13	Palm wine	*Devil's Pawn* p.68	Wine got from palm tree	Local gin with high alcoholic content
14	Fire-place	*Devil's Pawn* p.139	A local kitchen where food is cooked	A house or home with no peace and constant quarrels
15	Dry-meat	*Things Fall Apart* p.72	Smoked meat	Often refers to a girl with little or no exposure to civilization
16	Pounded yam	*Things Fall Apart* p.113	Food made with yam	A local delicacy in Nigeria
17	Age-old	*Things Fall Apart* p.78	Primitive	This refers to traditions and customs
18	Seed-yam	*Things Fall Apart* p.18	Small pieces of yam seedlings for planting	Amaka prepares her seed yams for planting
19	Close-fisted	*Things Fall Apart* p.93	Not generous	Someone who pretends not to have what to give
20	Waist bead	*Things Fall Apart* p.93	A bead worn around the waist by some African women	Normally worn by maidens or new wives
21	Iron horse	*Things Fall Apart* p.110	Bicycle	The traditional means of transportation
22	Oil lamp	*Things Fall Apart* p.81	Traditional lanterns used at night	Traditional light used in rural areas
23	Widely-travelled	*Things Fall Apart* p.78	Expose	Educated or sophisticated
24	On seat	*Things Fall Apart* p.82	An item placed on a seat	Someone is not available
25	Bitterleaf-soup	*Things Fall Apart* p.113	Traditional food in Nigeria	Local delicacy in Nigeria
26	Bean-cake	*Things Fall Apart* p.85	A cake made from beans	Local delicacy in Nigeria

Table 3: Showing Collocations and Usages in Nigerian English

2.1.4. Analysis of Collocations in Nigerian English

In extract 1, the collocate 'Evil Forest' in 'Things Fall Apart p.14' means a thick forest where people are buried, but in Nigerian usage, it connotes someone or something in danger. A snuff-bottle in extract 2 is a small bottle used in storing snuff, but in Nigerian context, it is often used to depict the loss of something very unique or important by Elders. As is often said, if you see an old woman running, it is not for nothing; it is either she lost her snuff bottle or her grandchild is seriously sick.

In extract 6, 'High life' in 'June 12, p.68,' refers to a brand of local music in Nigeria made popular by the likes of Sunny Okusen or Sir Victor Uwaifo but 'high life' depicts one who exhibits an extravagant lifestyle or one who does not live within his means. A 'hot soup' in extract 7 refers to 'the meal is hot,' but connotatively, it refers to someone being in serious trouble or stranded or both. The collocate 'mouth-full' in extract 9, June 12, p.89 generally refers to overloading, but in normal Nigerian parlance, it means someone biting more than one can chew.

Furthermore, 'tear-rubber' in extract 10, 'Devil's Pawn, p.274,' normally means 'never in use,' but in Nigerian context, it is normally used to refer to a brand new car or a brand new wife or house. Extract 11 refers to a motorcyclist, but in Nigerian usage, it refers to a motorcyclist who trades for commercial purposes, not just anyone who drives a motorcycle. A 'medicine-man' in extract 12, 'Things Fall Apart p.61,' is one who gives medical attention (trained or untrained), but in Nigerian English, a medicine-man refers to a 'native' doctor who practices fetish things and can provide healings to his adherent. Another collocate, 'fire place' in extract 14, 'Devil's Pawn p.139,' ordinarily refers to a local kitchen where food is prepared, but in Nigerian English, it is mostly used to refer to a house or home where peace is elusive, and occupants are always quarreling with each other. On the other hand, 'on seat' in extract 24 means in British English (BE) to place something on a seat, but in Nigerian English, if one is not on seat, it means that person is not around or unavailable.

From the above collocations, it can be seen that most paired words are non-typical collocations in Standard British English but the cultural background of Nigerian English makes them recognizable collocations. Also, some collocations are practical transliterations from the local languages and examples are 'iron-horse,' 'feet-fingers,' 'tear-rubber,' etc. More so, some collocations are coinages, such as 'oil-lamp,' 'pounded-yam,' 'seed-yam,' 'white-soup,' etc., as explained earlier.

These collocations perform the function of conveying almost a different meaning to users of Nigerian variety of English and also make it possible to form a word that does not necessarily exist in Standard British English.

3. Conclusion

The Nigerian culture and environment have given English language a new horizon. Its original lexical items have gone through some changes, expansions and even new ones have been coined or transliterated in line with the "context of situation" and "context of culture as exemplified in Nigeria. This effort has been noticeable in so many linguistic aspects of the language that this work has examined, such as polysemy (semantics) and collocations (morphology).

In addition, many lexical items in English go out of their denotative meaning to connote new meanings in Nigerian culture based on the context of usages – polysemy. Words are paired together to form new meanings in Nigerian English, and some of these paired words appear non-typical to the native speakers of English – collocations. On this note, this work has further affirmed Nigerian English as a subset of World Englishes through the contributions of polysemy and collocations in the communication act.

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