Use of Nigerian Pidgin English in Television Commentary at the Russia 2018 World Football Competition: An Assessment of the Views of Audiences in Kogi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

During the 2018 world football competition in Russia, the Supersport Channel on DSTV adopted a new approach in running the commentaries of the championship to the Nigerian audience. It was the use of Nigerian pidgin by the commentators. This study was carried out to investigate the views of the football audiences who were watching the channel that transmitted the pidgin version of the commentaries. Among other objectives, the study was meant to determine the level of viewership of the channel during the competition; ascertain audience level of understanding of the commentaries in pidgin; identify aspects of the pidgin commentaries that the audience found interesting; and determine the influence of the use of pidgin on Standard English. The study adopted a triangulation approach, having observation, interviewing and questionnaire as instruments. Kogi State was the area of study. Using Taro Yamane, a sample of 400 was derived from a population of 4,473,490 people. From a return of 385 copies of the questionnaire, the observation and interviewing at viewing centres, the study found that the viewership of Supersport 230 which carried commentaries in Nigerian pidgin during Russia 2018 was very high as attested to by 83.4% of the sample. Majority (83.4) also had a very high level of understanding of pidgin as used. About the same number wanted the sustenance of the running of football commentaries in pidgin. Most respondents argued that the use of pidgin had no negative influence on the use of standard English. The study, therefore, concluded that there was a high level of patronage for pidgin in sport commentaries in Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that Supersport should keep up the running of world football commentaries in pidgin for the Nigerian audience and consider doing same in other major football competitions.

Key words: *Nigerian pidgin, football, commentaries, Supersport, Standard English*

Introduction

Among the functions of the mass media is provision of escape from boredom through entertainments of different brands. The entertainments come in the forms of pictures (as they appeal to the

sense of light) or sounds (as they appeal to the auditory system). Because of the continued increase in the number of available media, audiences have several options to choose from. What this implies is that a media house that does not improve on its entertainment contents is getting ready to be behind in audience patronage. No matter one's status as a medium, one must improve on one's entertainment aspect of delivery to have and keep the audience.

To this end, broadcast media houses engage in one form of entertainment or the other either as a programme, an interlude or even an accompaniment to a programme. For example, Channels Television is an acclaimed award winning television station in Nigeria, having emerged the Nigerian Media Merit Award's winner 12 times. It is known as a leading news station for its quick and relatively objective reporting and analysis of issues. Despite its full devotion to news, there are entertainment interludes on programmes. There are also purely entertainment programmes such as *The Other News,* a comedy session with raw news and satirical elements anchored by Okey Bakassi; *Metrofile,* and Ogechukwu Oshi-anchored showbiz that covers major events and ceremonies that feature high ranking dignitaries; *Entertainment News* is a programme that treats all matters of entertainment focusing on the movies, music and sports. Also, *sports this Morning* and *Channels Sports* are purely sports programmes analyzing issues of local and international sports. Other stations are not left out in ensuring entertainment on their programmes; and because of its huge benefits to the audience, some stations are strictly out to entertain. There are movies, music and sports channels.

Sports is in itself an entertainment programme. It provides huge entertainment to nearly all categories. Because of the patronage of sports world over, some broadcast stations and channels are dedicated to transmitting only sports programmes and news both live and recorded. Instances of such channels and their locations are:

- Skysports—United Kingdom
- Ten Sports—India
- Skysports 24—Italy
- Digi Sport—Romania

- ESPN—USA
- Sport 1—Hungary
- Sport +—French
- Nova Sport—Greece
- Fox Sport—USA
- Star Sport—India

In addition to the entertainment in sports, education and information are also indispensable. To meet up with these needs, media houses adopt a decentralizing approach to reach every category of audience. During the 2018 World Cup tournament in Russia, Supersports channels on DSTV adopted the use of indigenous and pidgin languages in running the commentaries of the football matches. This came as a fulfillment of the promise made by Multichoice Nigeria that both Nigeria and Ghana would enjoy pidgin commentaries at the world cup fiesta. This development could be described as a boost to the sports and entertainment in general.

Statement of the Problem

Pidgin was used on Supersport 230 for Nigeria and Ghana during the 2018 world cup fiesta. Full of humorous accompaniments, it was meant to carry the audience along on the details of the football events, more so that innovations such as the use of Video Assistant Referee (VAR) and golden rules for qualifying from the group stage were introduced by the Federation of International Football, (FIFA). The pidgin English carried with it its own entertainment which were aside the game of football.

Despite these seeming advantages, it is not clear whether the Nigerian audiences derived utility from the use of pidgin. It is not also clear whether adopting the use of pidgin corrupted the use of English language among Nigerians. Similarly, the level of patronage of the "pidgin channel" has not been ascertained. One cannot automatically conclude that transmitting a programme of sports in pidgin English makes it more interesting to viewers without putting certain variables to the test. These knowledge gaps are potent enough to constitute research problems to the media scholar.

The 2018 football ceremonies and the pidgin commentaries have come and gone, but a study into the level of patronage of the use of pidgin instead of only standard English plus its influence on the use of standard English as well as the level of understanding of pidgin commentaries as against the usual standard English needed to be examined. These were the issues that constituted the problem of this study.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are

1. To determine the level of viewership of Supersport 230 on DSTV during the 2018 world cup.
2. To ascertain audience level of understanding of commentaries in pidgin during the 2018 world cup.
3. To identify aspects of the pidgin commentaries that audiences found interesting.
4. To determine the influence of the use of pidgin on Standard English.
5. To ascertain audience views on the sustenance of the use of pidgin English in sports commentaries.

Research Questions

1. What was the level of viewership of Supersport 230 on DSTV during the 2018 World Cup?
2. What was the audience level of understanding of the commentaries in pidgin during the 2018 World Cup?
3. What aspects of the commentaries did the audiences find interesting?
4. What was the influence of the use of pidgin on Standard English?
5. What are the views of the audience on the sustenance of the use of pidgin in sports commentaries?

Review of Concepts and Literature

Series of arguments have been advanced in favour of and against the use of pidgin in broadcast stations. While some scholars see pidgin as a bad influence on the Nigerian users of the English language, others see nothing wrong with it as we have had a good number who speak both in the standard and "corrupted" versions fluently (Endong, 2015; Kaan & Hanior, 2017). Advocates of effective communication believe that one should pay more emphasis on the receiver of the message than the giver. To this end, they argue that if a particular group of people, the so-called semi-literate and illiterate, understand some or all of the information conveyed in pidgin, then they should be given a fair share of broadcast possibilities in pidgin. On the other hand, advocates of Standard English like Aruwa (2009) who are a bit categorical feel that the English language is one and should not be confused with mix-ups called pidgin. After all, it did not emanate from the original owners and users of the language. Kaan and Hanior (2017, p.194) argue that the continued use of English in Nigeria has made the number and interest of its speakers to continue to expand, and this has encouraged the growth of Nigerian pidgin. They further assert that "not everyone has access to school and the process of acquiring English is decidedly longer and more tedious than that of 'picking up' Nigerian pidgin."

The level of popularity of pidgin in Nigeria is not only overwhelming but convincing to the point that among many Nigerians most especially in rural areas where communication could have become a problem, it is spoken and understood. In such areas as Edo, Rivers, Delta, Enugu, Lagos, Kano, Sokoto and Plateau, etc, Nigerian Pidgin English is well used as the indigenous language. In fact, Ekundayo and Adeoti (2011) have advanced a position that "Nigerian pidgin is currently in a stage of conquest where it is bulldozing its way into areas that were hitherto almost the exclusive reserves of English and native languages." Studies by Elugbe and Omamor (1991), Elugbe (1995), Osakwe (2005), Kaan and Amase **(**2015**),**Ugot and Ogundipe (2011) among others have said **that**the Nigerian pidgin was a versatile language that met the demand for a growing number of Nigerians who needed to communicate. It is therefore not surprising that both the broadcast and print media houses adopt it. In the broadcast media, the use of pidgin is

prevalent in advertising, music and even some dedicated programmes strictly in pidgin. Nearly every radio and television station in Nigeria has one programme or the other or a segment of a programme in pidgin.

It has reached a stage where, because of its acceptability, Nigeria as a name now has the pidgin version called Naija. To this end, Kaan and Hanior (2017, p.194) contend that "Nigerian pidgin has survived and flourished by generally being readily useful and handy, thus filling veritable communication vacuum in Nigeria. This acceptability could be ascribed to the ease with which it is understood and its adoption of local dialects in some parts of the usage. For example, to say "you may come in" one using the pidgin could simply say "*oya*come." Note that *oya*is an Igbo (and Yoruba) expression that suggests "okay" or a sort of agreement.

In the course of this study, I put down some of the expressions in the pidgin commentaries during some of the matches such as the final between Croatia and France, the group matches between Nigeria and the other countries as well as the semi-finals. These were the collections and their possible interpretations from both personal understanding and ethnographic research.

- *Jam body* Pushing or collision of two or more players
- *Sham* To dribble
- *Put for net* Score a goal/put the ball in the net
- *Start/enterokada* Speed up/ run very fast
- *Concrete wall* Tight wall of defence
- *Star boy* Goal scorer
- *Kparakporism* Team work/playing in unison
- *Jolificate* Rejoice/jubilate
- *If they continuate* If they continue
- *Kiyawork* To work quickly
- *Posi* Position
- *E go find* He looks for (a player to collect the ball)

- *Kpo* Zero/last
- *Ginger* Put in an effort
- *No be moimoi* Not an easy task
- *Toro* Small/ a drop/ not significant
- *Jejenwayorly* Easily/ simply/ carefully
- *Open koro* Open/create a space
- *Wunjor* Injury
- *Jump wella* Jump well/high
- *Denge pose* Style
- *Jara time* Additional time
- *Ogbonge* Great
- *Chop goal* Concede a goal
- *Mama put* Silver medal
- *Presido* President

These terms are not exhaustive but have been highlighted to suggest the huge discrepancy between the Standard English and the pidgin version. Communication takes place when what is said is understood as said. This is what Okoro (2002, p. 157) means when he stresses what he calls vivid communication. It means "what is communicated is what is meant and what is meant is what is understood and what is understood is what is done and what is done is the desired action." Using pidgin to run football commentary was for a purpose. Vivid communication could not be far from that purpose, but whether the desired purpose was achieved was a matter for investigation.

Related Studies

Related studies on the use of pidgin in Nigeria media and its acceptability are in abundance. These ones have been selected because of their peculiar relationship with our focus in this study.

Ugot and Ogundipe, (2011) conducted a study on Reduplication in Nigerian Pidgin: A Versatile Communication Tool. The study

focused on the various reduplication strategies employed to enrich the vocabulary of the Nigerian Pidgin (NP) given the limited internal resourcefulness of the language which cannot precisely and adequately capture certain terms, concepts, ideas and notions. The focus of the research was on the various reduplicative techniques that have been used to form verbal categories and lexical items in the language. The basic assumption was that in a multilingual/multi pluralistic society such as Nigeria with diverse languages, there was the need to have a deliberate interventionist policy to encourage the growth of a language that served as a common denominator in a multilingual Nigeria.

Ugot and Ogundipe (2011) concluded their study by stating that the NP was a versatile language that met the demand for a growing number of Nigerians who needed to communicate. The morphological process of reduplication has been found to be one of full reduplication which has been very useful in this endeavour as it enlarges and enriches the vocabulary and verbal categories of the language. The NP is a language of necessity in a multilingual and pluralistic society such as Nigeria. An enhancement of its status through effective corpus planning would go a long way in further uniting the country through a future Naija language.

The conclusions of Ugot and Ogundipe could be linked with available scenarios where both the broadcast and the print media of mass communication adopt it in some or all parts of some programmes. Kaan and Hanior (2017, p. 197) in what may be termed a corroborative remark say:

> …the functions of Nigerian Pidgin have become more extensive. Apart from extending its territorial spread as a lingua franca in ethnically heterogeneous areas such as Warri, Sapelle, Port Harcourt, Lagos, Abuja and other cities and among the lower ranks of the security forces, it is now used in radio and television broadcast.

Also in a study carried out by Balogun (2013) the researcher concludes that Nigerian pidgin is a fully developed language with its

own rich lexico-semantics and syntax which have evolved like any other language through contact and modification. Balogun (2013) argues from his findings that the semantic and lexical veracity of the Nigerian Pidgin cannot be vitiated in spite of its serious marginalization.

Studies on the use of pidgin in many instances are equally narrowed down to how it is used in advertising. On this, Dada (2013) investigates the stylo-rhetorical devices in pidgin English advertisements in Nigeria. He concludes that Nigerian Pidgin should be seen as a language in its own right and left to develop along its own line since it has been this accepted and is used even in advertising. This position is not different from that of Osoba (2014) in Kaan and Hanior (2017) who in his study on the use of pidgin in media advert holds that the Nigerian Pidgin has come to stay, despite critical issues against it.

Finally, Endong (2015) carried out a study on the use of Nigerian Pidgin English in Print Advertising: Deviation from Standard Orthography and Effectiveness. Adopting content analysis Endong randomly selected print advertising copies partially written in Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE), and used for the promotion of services and products made in Nigeria. The researcher also used focus group discussion with 15 literate and semi literate users (readers) of these copies. The study attempted to understand the complexity of advertising copy due to the prevalence of different and personalized spelling systems in the representation of NPE words. It illustrates how most Nigerian advertising copywriters artfully deviate from the standard orthography developed by the Naija Languej Akademi (NLA) in preference to relatively individualized/personalized orthographies.

The study equally shows how effective the use of NPE may be in catching the attention of readers. It argues that while the use of pidgin may be relatively unnoticed in cases where its use is not dominant in the body of the advertising copy, the language has the potential of triggering the curiosity and interest of the consumer to know more about the product.

It also has the potential of creating fun, and increasing the entertaining qualities of the print advert. All these characteristics may motivate consumers to go for the product or service on promotion.

All studies considered here have one relationship or the other to our study in hand. First, they all attest to the spread and acceptability of the use of pidgin in Nigeria despite its potential danger of corrupting the Standard English. Second, there appears to be a consensus on the use of pidgin by most broadcast and print media houses in Nigeria. Where there is a knowledge gap is the fact that no study has actually pinned down its focus on the use of pidgin English in running sports commentaries. This may be due to the newness of the trend on Supersports Channels, hence the uniqueness of this study in contributing to knowledge.

Theoretical Underpinning

This study adopts the theory of ethnography of speaking. Proponent of the theory Hymes (1972) believes that any speech can be seen as comprising several components and the analysis of this is a major aspect of ethnography of speaking. Hymes identifies seven types of components which every speech possibility involves. They are sender, receiver, message, channel, code, topic and setting. The theory, according to Kaan and Hanior (2017, p. 200), examines situation and use, pattern and functions of speaking, rules or conventions about how language should be used in social interaction within a particular society. Furthermore, the theory focuses on linguistic and paralinguistic approaches to the use of a language. Thus, ethnography of speaking is concerned with the use of language to achieve effective communication.

The theory derives its relevance to our study from putting the use of pidgin English to the test of meeting the expectations of the use of a particular language in communication. The questions posed at the opening of this study border on whether the audiences understand the use of pidgin in the Russia 2018 sports commentary on Supersport channel 230. By this theory, we restate the questions and

provide answers to support or negate the claim of acceptability and usefulness of the language.

Research Methods

Survey was adopted for the study, using the triangular approach of instrumentation. Thus, participant observation, interviewing and questionnaire were the instruments. I (the researcher) watched the matches at viewing centres in two places at Idah: Jalingo Hall at Ubomu (during the opening match between Russia and Saudi Arabia on 14 June 2018), and Idah Club beside the Headquartres of the United Evangelical Church, Idah (during the group match between Russia and Uruguay on 26 June, 2018). I watched the match between Nigeria and Iceland on 22 June 2018 at Wisdom Home Hotel Conference Hall, Anyigba; while in Lokoja, it was at Halims Hotel Hall, by Ganaja Junction during the match between France and Argentina on 30 June, 2018. Participant observation was adopted in all the viewing centres visited. Each centre had a minimum of 50 viewers. Interviewing was used on at least 10 of the viewers in each of the locations. Questionnaire was purposively administered on those who watched the matches from the comforts of their homes. The population of Kogi State, using the 2006 census was used. Out of a population of 4,473,490 according the 2016 projection of the National Bureau of Statistics, a sample of 400 was derived using the Taro Yamane formula for sample determination.

Three local government areas other than the cities where observation and interviewing were carried out were selected. Those were Igalamela/Odolu, Ajaokuta and Yagba West to represent the east, central and western senatorial districts of the state. Purposive sampling method was adopted in administering the instrument as only those who watched Supersport channels were considered for the study. Out of 400 copies distributed, 385 were returned and found usable, leaving us with 96.25% to analyse in tables and simple percentages.

Data Presentation and Discussion

From the participant observation and interviewing, a majority of the audiences preferred the channels that carried the sports commentaries in pidgin English. As a matter of fact, most of them admitted coming to watch the match at the centres because of the choice of channel. From the observation also, the viewers were more attentive to the commentaries. This was observed as they listened to the commentaries without noise and rowdiness as was always the case in football viewing centres. Asked why they were attentive to the commentaries in pidgin English, nearly all the respondents said it was because they understood all that the commentators had said and would like to hear more. They also attributed it to the fact that they derived some level of entertainment from the commentary. Finally, the viewers liked the commentaries because the commentators were people of Nigerian origin and it instilled a sense of belonging in them.

On the aspects of the commentaries the viewers liked, a majority mentioned entertainment from use of local slangs and jargons to match with the event. These were in addition to the ease in understanding the message. On whether it would corrupt their use of Standard English, most of the respondents in an interview said it could not. To them, pidgin English was another version of English which could be used independently without an impairment to the use of standard English if one was thoroughly taught in school. This became clearer when most of those who held this view were asked to discuss with me in standard English, and they spoke well in terms of grammar, but poorly in terms of phonetics.

Further analysis from the Questionnaire Instrument

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

	Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Total**
Age	15-24	166	43.1	385
	25-34	112	29.1	100%

	35 and above	107	27.8	
Sex	Male	284	73.7	385
	Female	101	26.3	100%
Education	No education	75	19.5	385
	Primary/SSCE	133	34.5	100%
	BA, BSc, NCE, ND, HND, MA, MSc, PhD	137	35.6	
Occupation	Student	109	28.3	385
	Civil servant	122	31.7	100%
	Farming	58	15.1	
	Business	39	12.1	
	Others	57	14.8	
Marriage	Married	192	49.9	385
	Single	190	49.4	100
	Widowed	3	0.7	
	Divorced	00	00	

The demographics of the respondents show that the majority of the respondents are within the youthful ageand mostly males. There is a tie between the married and unmarried. Most respondents are civil servants while a few are business people. Their characteristics had no negative influence on their objective response to questions.

Table 2: Regularity of Viewership of Supersport 230 on DSTV

Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Regularly	**262**	**68.1**

During major competitions	**103**	**26.8**
Not Regularly	**20**	**5**
Total	**385**	**100**

From the table above, we see that most respondents watched Supersport 230 regularly. We needed to know if they also watched the channel during the world cup in which commentaries were in pidgin English. See the table below.

Table 3: Whether Respondents watched the Supersport Channel 230 on DSTV during the Transmission of the 2018 World Cup in Pidgin English

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, I watched all	**153**	**39.7**
Yes, I watched most	**173**	**44.9**
I watched a few	**59**	**15.3**
No, I did not watch	**00**	**00**
Total	**385**	**100**

Table 3 shows that most respondents watched all or most of the matches on the channel in pidgin English commentaries.

Table 4: Level of Audience Understanding of the Commentaries in Pidgin English

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	**321**	**83.4**
High	**25**	**6.5**
Low	**30**	**7.8**
Very low	**9**	**2.3**
Total	**385**	**100**

Table 5: Aspects of Pidgin English Respondents found Interesting

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Ease in understanding	**49**	**13**
Use of humour	**83**	**22**
Sense of identification	**25**	**6.5**
Use of local slangs	**27**	**7**
All/most of the aspects	**201**	**52.2**
None of the aspects	**00**	**00**
Total	**385**	**100**

The respondents were mostly interested in all the possible interests in commentaries in pidgin. That reflects in up to 52% finding all items or most interesting. Could this influence the respondents negatively? The next question was meant to answer this.

Table 6: How the use of Pidgin in Sports Commentaries Influenced Respondent's use of Standard English

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Corruption of pronunciation and grammar	**21**	**5.5**
Reduced interest in the use of Standard English	**30**	**7.8**
Improvement in use of Standard English	**12**	**3.1**
No perceived negative influence	**322**	**83.6**
Total	**385**	**100**

Respondents were unanimous from the Table 6 that the influence of pidgin English in running sports commentaries was not negative.

Table 7: Whether use of Pidgin in Sports Commentaries should be sustained in other Competitions

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	**312**	**81**
No	**12**	**3.1**
No response	**61**	**15.8**
Total	**385**	**100**

Table 7 shows that a majority of the respondents clamour for the sustenance of the use of pidgin English in other sports commentaries.

Discussion on Findings

The research questions posed were meant to achieve the objective of determining the views of the audiences of Supersport channels especially in the use of pidgin English to run the commentaries of Russia 2018 World Cup. Research Question 1 was asked to gauge the level of viewership of the channel during the fiesta. To properly achieve this, it was germane to provide options for the respondents on whether they watched the channel and if they actually watched it when the world cup was being transmitted in pidgin English. From tables 2 and 3, we realize heavy patronage. First, 262 respondents, an equivalent of 68.1% said they watched the channel regularly. This was followed by 103 respondents (26.8%) who said they watched the channel only when major competitions were being played live.A negligible 5% of the sample said they did not watch the channel regularly. This implies that the viewership and regularity of the patronage of Supersport 230 and other Supersport channels was high. High or heavy viewership of a television channel

suggests that there is a derivation of maximum utility and a considerable dosage of gratification from the audiences.

On whether they watched the matches transmitted with commentaries in pidgin, all the respondents answered in the affirmative with varying degrees of commitment. On Table 3, 39% of the respondents admitted watching all the matches on the channel with pidgin commentaries; 44.9% watched most of the matches while 15% watched a few. From this, it is clear that the Supersport Channel 230 had high patronage during the 2018 World Cup. This was not only for its entertainment role as a sports channel naturally but because of the use of pidgin English in running the commentaries. Earlier studies (Ukot & Ogundipe, 2011; Kaan & Hanior, 2017; Balogun, 2013; Dada, 2013; Osoba, 2014 in Kaan & Hanior, 2017) have suggested that the Nigerian Pidgin has received tremendous acceptability among the people.

It became necessary to ask the respondents their level of understanding of messages on the channel in pidgin English. This was the subject of Research Question 2, to which answers were provided on Table 4. While nearly all the respondents (83%) affirmed that their understanding of the commentaries in pidgin English on Supersport Channel 230 during the 2018 World Cup in Russia was very high, a minority figure (6.7%) chose high; while 7.8% and 2.3% chose low and very low respectively. It has therefore been established here that the level of understanding of pidgin English among the Nigerian audience, using Kogi State environment, is very high. The findings from the instruments of observation and interviewing also agree with this. It has already been stated that the understanding of the language made the viewers to pay attention to the commentators and allowed no noisy session at the viewing centres. This means the more the viewers understand the commentaries in sports (football in this case) the higher their attention to the events.

Communication takes place when the information passed from the sender gets to the receiver and is understood as intended by the sender. It is common knowledge that the lack of proper understanding breeds communication gap. It could be argued also that certain factors such as mother-tongue interference, geographical factor and low level of education impair the understanding of Standard English among many Nigerians, especially when spoken by the western media experts on television. With this, one can say communication does not take place adequately between many Nigerian audiences and the television channels with Standard English, especially those ones that observe the rules of English phonetics to the full. One may then suggest that the acceptability and high patronage of the pidgin commentaries over that of Standard English was due to the points raised above. Beyond these assumptions, it was necessary to identify the aspects of the commentaries in pidgin that aroused the interest of the audiences. This was the issue raised by the Research Question 3.

What aspects of the commentaries did the audiences find interesting? Respondents were provided possible areas of interest to suggest as shown on Table 5 above. While a few picked specific areas of interest such as ease in communication (13%); humour (22%); sense of identification (5%); and use of local slangs (7%), most of the respondents (52.2%) said they were attracted by all or most of the aspects. This means there was a maximum gratification from the audiences of the sports channel that carried the pidgin English commentaries.

Research Question 4 was asked to ascertain the influence of the use of pidgin English on the use of standard English among the audiences. It was meant to establish the veracity or otherwise of the claim that pidgin English corrupts people's use of the standard English and that it makes it difficult for learners to properly adopt the standards of the use of English. In the course of the study, respondents interviewed had said that one could be proficient in the use of standard English despite being a user of pidgin English.

Those ones dismissed the claim that pidgin English usage or promotion could impair the understanding and correct usage of the standard English. To further prove this, they were asked to speak both the standard English and the pidgin version, and they spoke well, as mentioned in earlier discussion. To put the findings in the quantitative perspective, respondents who were administered questionnaire were given options of possible negative, positive or no perceived influence to pick. Five and a half percent of the respondents agreed that the use of pidgin in running commentaries on television had the capacity to corrupt the pronunciation and grammar of the standard English. Another 7.8% said it reduced audience interest in the use of standard English. A smaller proportion of the sample (3.1%) said it helped in improving the audience use of standard English. But a substantial segment of the sample (83.6%) averred that there was no perceived negative influence of the use of pidgin over standard English. From the findings, it means the use of pidgin English in running football commentaries has no negative influence on the audience in terms of their adherence to basic grammar and pronunciation rules of standard English.

On whether the sports channel should sustain the use of pidgin in running commentaries, close to all of the respondents (81%) answered in the affirmative, while 3.1% responded in the negative. This means that respondents are of the view that the innovation of pidgin English commentaries in sports is a welcome development that requires sustenance, judging from its attendant benefits.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is concluded first that the viewership of Supersport Channels among the Nigerian audience is very high. It is also concluded that the acceptability, utility and clamour for the sustainability of the use of pidgin in sports commentaries on Supersport Channel 230 and other channels is high. While it is argued that pidgin English has the capability of reducing the competence in the use of standard English, this study concludes that there is no clear relationship between the use of pidgin English and

the standard English to the point of one corrupting the other. Findings are that the use of pidgin English in sports commentaries makes the Nigerian audiences understand the commentaries more easily, have a sense of identification, derive more entertainment in form of humour, and pay more attention to the commentaries than those run in the standard English.

The following recommendations have been put forward from the conclusions:

1. Supersports Channels should sustain its transmission of commentaries in pidgin English as it was during the 2018 world football tournament in Russia.
2. The channel should consider running commentaries in pidgin English for other major football competitions such as English Premier League, La liga Santanda, African Cup of Nations, Confederations Cup, FA Cup and UEFA Champions League, etc. This recommendation receives backing from the fact that a large proportion of Nigerians patronize Supersports Channels on DSTV, especially 230, which carried the commentaries in pidgin.
3. Commentators in pidgin English should continually improve on their innovative abilities in terms of use of familiar terms to Nigerian audiences to enhance their understanding.
4. Since the use of pidgin has received high acceptability from the Nigerian audience, other television stations should key into the adoption of pidgin English in running their commentaries in football and other sporting activities.

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