

English as a global language and the problems of teaching English in non-native English speaking multilingual countries: a Nigerian perspective

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There is ample evidence that the real problem with the increasing use of English as a global language, particularly the spread of American influence in former British colonies, is the acceptable variety to be used in teaching and examination between British English and the American variety. This problem becomes even greater with the emergence and acceptance of indigenized varieties of English in such countries. The question that arises is whether it is still possible to recommend a single model of the older varieties or a standard local variety for use in teaching and examination in these countries. This study therefore, explores this question within the context of English teaching and examination and intercultural communication in Nigeria. It investigated the knowledge, use and attitude of teachers and students towards a lexicon-based corpus of the three variants of the British, the American and Nigerian English. The study investigated usages in two communicative modes – speech and writing and four communicative contexts - informal and formal speech and informal and formal writing. The study also considered variations between teachers and students. Based on the results, implications for English teaching and examinations and intercultural communications in Nigeria have been discussed. Furthermore, recommendations for English teaching and examinations as a global language in multilingual non-native English speaking countries have also been made.