

## Research Article

# The Cold War Between Englishes: Media Globalisation, Magic Bulletism and Implications on Media Professionalism in Nigeria

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## A B S T R A C T

This paper set out to investigate the apparent linguistic “Cold War” existing between British and American Englishes in contemporary African media space. The study showed that the linguistic awareness of the present generation of media professionals in Nigeria are hit by the magic bullet effect of the global media through their addictive and frequent exposure to “Americanisms”, thereby jeopardising their original British English orientation. An empirical method was adopted to investigate the choice of words/expressions (British or American) of media professionals as they perform their professional duties. To accomplish this aim, 50 media personnel based in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria, comprising radio/television presenters, producers, reporters, news editors (electronic and print), media content syndicates and information officers in the Bayelsa State Ministry of Information were randomly picked and given a questionnaire of 60 pairs of words/expressions of British and American English varieties to respond to. The study revealed that though British English is the variety that is meticulously and widely taught in Nigeria, the English of majority of media professionals today in Bayelsa State and by extension, Nigeria, has been grossly Americanised even when they have never set their feet on American soil, let alone received formal education in Nigeria in American English.

**Keywords:** Cold War, Englishes, Media, Globalisation, Professionalism, Magic Bullet

## Introduction

Following six years of intense hostilities, from 1939 to 1945, World War II ended abruptly after the United States decisively barraged two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with an atomic bomb each on August 6 and 9, 1945 respectively. Blakemore (2019) said in the event of the devastation caused by the nuclear bomb and the implications thereafter, writer George Orwell had written

to affirm that the bomb was a menace, capable of ending great wars and making powerful states that were once untouchable to be permanently at Cold War with their neighbours.

The end of the war ushered in decades-long battle for supremacy between two allies, the United States and Soviet Union, who fought against the Nazi Germany. This struggle was eventually referred to as the Cold War which had existed since the 1930s. The cold war did not require the

once strong allies to engage in conventional battle, because they were theoretically at peace with each other, but the competing world powers at the time, were in opposition through “political manoeuvrings, military coalitions, espionage, propaganda, arms buildups, economic aids and proxy wars between other nations” (JFK Library Museum).

As the Soviet Union worked to coordinate Eastern Europe, setting up pro-communist regimes in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Albania and subsequently, East Germany, the United States ensured Soviet Union’s communist ideologies did not have its way on the Western bloc comprising France, Greece and Italy.

The notorious Cold War, which spanned through 1946 to 1991, essentially, was a show of political and ideological ascendancy between the United States and Soviet Union. In comparison to the foregoing, there is, apparently, an enduring linguistic “cold war” between Englishes struggling for linguistic dominance in Nigeria. However, this particular war is dissimilar from the foregoing as it is “not” characterised by belligerent arms battle, proxy wars and ideological proposals for territorial supremacy. It is rather a war of two dominant Englishes-British English (BrE) and American English (AmE)-the latter labeled as “Uncle Samism” (Achimbe, 2006). It is a linguistic war of which variety should hypnotise the “lips and fingers” of Nigerians. The war between these two analogous Englishes is likely not to be won or lost in no time as both the educated and uneducated class in Nigeria are enveloped by the foggy clouds of choice, confusion and ignorance.

Before the ostensible competition of these two parallel Englishes in Nigeria, evidence has shown that English has become a global language as a result of the number of non native English speaking countries in the world that have adopted it either as a second or third language (Crystal, 1997: 5).

The contagiousness of the English language has made linguists and scholars almost liken it to the nature of viral diseases so that even unyielding entities cannot dissociate themselves from its “infectious tendency”.

Kperogi (2015: ix) says:

*Trying to ignore the English language in today’s dizzyingly globalising world is like trying to avoid daylight [...] It is for all practical purposes, the world’s lingua franca. It is the principal international language in the fields of communications, information technology, entertainment, science, business, diplomacy and so on. Its status as the language for aerial and nautical communications and as one of the languages of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation, the European Union, the North Atlantic*

*Treaty Organisation, the International Olympic Committee and most other international organizations enjoys official recognition.*

Nonetheless, the questions that come to mind since the English Language has become the world’s lingua franca are: which of the Englishes, then, is the dominant one? Which takes the centre stage and serves as the standard? Or are both seen as one and the same?

Unfortunately, this linguistic confrontation has not spared media professionals in Nigeria, who should function as “messiahs” and role models to media consumers that depend on them to satisfy their insatiable needs for education, entertainment and information; they also are caught in the imperceptible linguistic cold war between these two, just like their media “clients”. This “Englishic” anarchy, as it were, has caused some level of apathy to the prolonged discourse of which variety is acceptable in the Nigerian linguistic terrain. As media audiences continue to feed on the “variety of Englishes” they are being served with by the professionals, they end up unable to differentiate one from the other morphologically and syntactically ignorantly assuming both Englishes to be one, so long as they understand what is being said or disseminated.

### **Which of the Englishes Dominates?**

Before embarking on this discourse, the hypothesis of this investigation is:

*The prevailing English variety in Nigeria amongst media professionals is British English as a former British colony.*

Frankly speaking, engaging in the discourse of which variety between British and American is more superior in Nigeria, considering the influence and penetrative effect of the American variety, has been interesting. Because Nigeria was a British colony, a good number of Nigerians from primary to the tertiary level of formal education are educated in “British” English. Schools in Nigeria try to maintain the English variety of their former colonial masters and as a matter of fact, American English from inception has been presented as being a bastardised version of the British form. However, this argument can no longer be upheld since the country in the last two decades has experienced the establishment of a number of American-orientated institutions including the American University of Nigeria, Yola, Adamawa State, founded by former Vice President of Nigeria, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar in 2004. Apart from that, what about the penetrative success of the American variety of English in Nigeria since the advent of media globalisation?

Actually, the Brits strongly hold that their version remains the original tongue and should not be adulterated. Nevertheless, the status of it being the world’s lingua franca

has two similar propositions: (i) that it is a world language today not only because of Britain's colonial aggressive expansion, which of course was one valid reason at a point when Britain was once a strong force, but that the United States became a world economic power, with an overwhelming and influential culture after the second World War, thus giving its American variety the dominance (Graddol, 1997: 7); (ii) that it is a world language today because Americans speak it and not necessarily because the British speak it (Kperogi, 2015: 67).

Though the Brits would never succumb to the standpoint of both scholars, there is no more argument among other nations of the world that America, being their global "elder brother", has its variety considered as the world language. However, does it mean if any other nation were in the position of the United States, the language of that nation would be seen as the world language? In reaction to this, Eco (1995: 331) had supposed that German would have been the world language today had Hitler won World War II and on the lighter note, hints that Japanese electronics firms would have ended up advertising their products at Hong Kong Airport duty-free shops in German. Simply, the fact that the United States spearheaded the end of Hitler's reign, it invariably became the world power and its language, the world language, thereby confirming Kperogi's stance, "...because Americans speak it...".

Furthermore, the reflections of Crystal (ibid) were on track when he said a language has to be adopted by several other nations of the world for it to be recognised as a world language and English tends to be that language because of the high recognition it has been accorded. This Atechi (2009:24) ascribes to "strong power-base political, military, cultural and economic power", which the United States wields because of the major role it played in the war. Atechi (ibid) cements it like this:

*"The key role that the US troops played in this war catapulted them to the limelight as the world's leading power, acquiring growth, expansion and maintenance of the world language and that language was English and with an American coloration."*

But going forward, it would be instructive to quickly trace the emergence of the language that has become the lingua franca of the world, as well as keeping in mind the aim of this paper which is to investigate Nigerian media professionals' awareness of the linguistic cold war existing between British and American Englishes that has lingered for several decades. This would be achieved through testing their choice of words or expressions, if they (media professionals) were to report, present, disseminate, communicate and publish media contents.

## The Evolution of a Language into World Language-hood

The narratives of Kperogi (2015) and Graddol (1997) overlapped on the fact that English language came to being due to the movements and resettlement of people in new territories through series of successful forceful invasions. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the Angles (West Germanic warriors) overran what is called Britain today, then a confined population called the Celts. The Celts were further hurt as there was another Germanic invasion a set called the Saxons and the Jutes joined forces with the Angles to overpower the Celts, causing massive resettlements to occur. The inevitable outcome of this event gave birth to another language which was a fusion of the tongues of all the actors Celts, Angles, Saxons and Jutes. However, Albert & Thomas (2002) say the dialect of the Saxons was dominant, while the Celtic language, the indigenous one, was suppressed.

There was another raid by the 7<sup>th</sup> century. This time, Germanic soldiers from the north attacked the Land of the Angles (the conquered Celtic territory), later abridged as England. Again, this intrusion came with its dialect which affected the syntax of the developing language. Invasions would keep coming as by the 11<sup>th</sup> century, combatants from the north of France, best known as the Normans landed England, ousting the ruling class that was made up of the Angles and Saxons (Anglo-Saxons). The result of this French (Norman) invasion was an official language spoken by the ruling class which some linguists call the Anglo-Norman French. Official documentation was done in this new language which eventually influenced the English vocabulary up till today.

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, English was now a coarse linguistic blend of Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Celts, the French, Latin, etc and as Kperogi (2015) puts it, "a mélange of several languages". By the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the English aggressively began their imperialistic and colonial expedition in Africa, Asia and the Americas, they had borrowed a lot of words into their language.

Finkenstaedt and Wolff (1973) study reveals that modern English vocabulary accommodates twenty-nine (29) percent of Latin, French has about twenty-nine (29) percent, the original tongue the Germanic languages comprising Angles, Saxons, Jutes makes up to twenty-five (25) percent. Interestingly, the vocabulary has about sixteen (16) percent of Greek, Arabic, Hindi, Spanish, Italian, the Scandinavian languages, Hebrew and Yiddish.

Alo (2008:97-98) corroborated in Tables 1-4 the submissions of Finkenstaedt and Wolff (1973), presenting some prefixes and roots English borrowed from Greek and Latin:

**Table 1. Latin Prefixes**

Prefix	Meaning	English derivatives
Bi-	Two	Bicycle; bilateral
Co-	Together	Cohesive; cooperate
Ex-	Out of	exclude
Extra-	Out of	extraordinary
In-	In	inequality
Post-	After	postmortem
Re-	Back; again	recharge
Retro-	Back; again	retroactive
Sub-	Below	subtract
Supra-	Above	supreme
Super-	Above	superstructure
Sur-	Above	surcharge

Source: English for Academic Purposes (2008)

**Table 2. Greek Prefixes**

Prefix	Meaning	English derivatives
a-	Not; without	Atypical; asymmetric
Anti-	Against	Antidote; antibiotic
di-	Two	Dissect; dichotomy
dys-	Not ; fail	dysfunction
ec-	Out(side)	eccentric
epi-	Upon	Epilogue; epitaph
eu-	Well; good	Eulogy; euphoria
ex-	Out(side)	external
pro-	Before; ahead	Prognosis; proceed
sym-	Together; with	Sympathy; symphony
syn-	Together; with	synthesis
Sur-	Above	surcharge

Source: English for Academic Purposes (2008)

**Table 3. Latin Roots**

Root	Meaning	English derivatives
Alt	High	Altitude
Annum	Year	Annual
Capit	Head	Capital; cap
Corpus	Body	Corpse
Cru	Cross	Crucify
Ego	Self	egocentric
Fac	Do; make	Factory
Fil	Thread	Filament
Hum	Earth; soil	Humus; exhume
Lac	Milk	Lactate

Mal	Bad	Malaise; malady
Os	Bone	Ossify

Source: English for Academic Purposes (2008)

**Table 4. Greek Roots**

Root	Meaning	English Derivatives
Anthropo	Man, human	Anthropology, Philanthropy
Bios	Living	Biology, symbiosis
Chroma	Colour	Chromatic
Chron	Time	Chronology
Eidos	Image, shape	Eidetic (memory)
Eikon	Image, shape	icon
Erg	Work	Energy, erg
Gam	Marriage	Bigamy, gamete
Ge	Earth	geology
Gen	Be born	Genesis, gene

Source: English for Academic Purposes (2008)

From the above Tables (1-4) compiled by Alo together with the findings of Finkenstaedt and Wolff, it would be safe to conclude that English deserves its status as the world language because of the multiple languages it incorporated, making it all encompassing and accommodating.

### Media Globalisation, Magic Bulletism and Americanism

Two things are worthy of note here: (i) the original English orientation in Nigeria, both in education and as an official language, which is basically due to colonialism, is the British English. (ii) it is assumed that the British English taught and spoken in Nigeria has been adulterated by the American variety. The reason for this adulteration, so to speak, would be established in the course of this paper.

Seemingly, after the end of World War II in 1945, the United States assumed the status of world power, though, not without the resistance of the Soviet Union contesting for supremacy, which eventually led to a prolonged cold war. The end of the war came with a capitalist concept of globalisation that corroborates the idea of shrinking nations into a "global village", a term coined by the Canadian thinker, Marshall McLuhan in 1964. With the advent of intercontinental corporations, globalisation was furthered through the promotion of commerce, international communication, trade, economics, international politics and policies in the midst of cultural diversity, "linking distant communities and expanding the reach of power relations across the world's regions and continents" (Held and McGrew, 2002). And this is mainly made possible through the outburst of communication technology and the global media "the principal means through which we make sense



of events of distant places and the information and images they carry are central to the development of shared systems of meaning and understanding across nations, regions and cultures" (Flew, 2007:72). That is to say, Media Globalisation is transforming media institutions into globally accepted outfits and promotion of local transnational interaction, thereby satisfying the information needs of the world (Ndela, 2009: 56). An outfit like CNN of America is a good example of one of the "globally accepted" media institutions that Ndela (2009) was referring to.

Going by the propositions of Flew (2007) and Ndela (2009) above, it will not be out of place to say the excessive consumption of American values, systems and culture (that includes their variety of English) propagated by the global media, apparently dominated by them, is the reason for the linguistic conflict in Nigeria. And media professionals who are first, Nigerians, before choosing the media profession are not exempted from the "needle" effect of this non-coerced acceptance of Americanism. This brings us to the Magic-Bullet theory, also known as Hypodermic or Stimulus-Response Media Effect Theory.

The Magic Bullet theory states that the mass media (global media, from henceforth) have the same influence on all members of the public; the audience receive messages from the mass media and they respond and react in the same manner (Ndimele & Kasarachi, 2007). The behaviour of media consumers is predictable; it means anyone that is exposed to media content, invariably, gets influenced by it. They do not have to wait for an approval from a second party to act similar to the media content they are exposed to—they receive mass (global) media information directly and not influenced by intermediaries (Bittner, 1977:374).

Media professionals in Nigeria, like every other individual, are also consumers of the products of the America dominated global media. Before the dawn of the millennium, when the Nigerian entertainment industry had not experienced the tremendous growth it is enjoying today, Americanisms were what penetrated the linguistic consciousness of Nigerians through their films and music. Local radio and television broadcasts in Nigeria would not be complete without promoting the American culture; Nigerian night clubs patronised more of American hits. This was one way, among others, the American variety of English had its way into Nigerian linguistic consciousness.

With the advent of cable television that popularised the CNNs and Fox TVs of this world, Walt Disney's Cartoon Network, film and drama shows that got hold of the younger population who are the main victims of this Americanism due to their susceptibility to imbibe western cultures and the nearly one hundred percent of American pop songs that dominated music channels, there was no way magic-bulletism would not have thrived in a country like

Nigeria. This is true because Nigerians are apparently confused of whether or not they should let loose of the imperialistic bounds of colonialism and succumb to the linguistic pressure that was overwhelmingly taking over the world. In confirming the foregoing, Campbell (2006) research in 1993 says that seventy-five percent of television broadcasting was monopolised by the United States to the extent that CNN and the Voice of America, VOA, had no rival in the world. Predictably, media personalities in Nigeria end up emulating their unrivalled American contemporaries.

Just as the Magic bullet theory asserts, media professionals in Nigeria absorb, on daily basis, Americanisms (American culture—Language, in this regard) propagated on these global media and unconsciously or consciously, respond in the same manner. They tend to pick the pronunciation patterns of the Americans, their vocabulary and grammatical structures. For instance, "Diaper" the American English word for "Nappy" in British English, is what many Nigerians are used to and this is used in advertisements on Nigerian broadcast media. This proves why Nigeria female singer, Tiwa Savage, appeared on a television advert and used, "diaper" in promoting a brand. In fact, an entertainment programme, "Nigerian Movies Today", which airs on the Nigeria Television Authority, NTA, every Wednesday at 6 p.m., shows that even the NTA, a product of the British system, is not exempted from the American influence. Surprisingly, the station prefers to opt for "Movie" which is the American word for "film", the British equivalent. See evidence below:



**Figure 1. A lady presenting "Nigerian Movies Today"**

The above example simply shows that the confusion is ubiquitous and American English has come to stick on the lips and fingers of media professionals in Nigeria.

In the course of this research, a British trained Nigerian writer/broadcaster, Nengi Josef Illagha, was confronted with this conflict of Englishes and he opened up bitterly on how one Jake Tapper of CNN on his programme, "The Lead" was deliberately forcing his American expression, "take a listen" on him, but he would not fall for his antics. But, this is not about Jake Tapper alone, as Anderson Cooper also of CNN uses it very often.

In substantiation of this discourse, an online publication, THE HINDU, had a curious contributor/writer, S. Upendran asking if, “take a listen” was appropriate. But R.H. Fiske, a Brit, would respond thus: “Journalists and media personalities who use this offensive phrase ought to be silenced; business people, dismissed, public officials, pilloried.”

Though Illagha and Fiske could have their reservations about that expression, what would they say about CNN’s Christine Amanpour, who is British, yet uses it very frequently, in spite of the fact it is an American origination?

In extending the discourse of the unprecedented penetrativeness of the American variety in a former British colony like Nigeria, regardless of the contribution of media globalisation and global media, there are other strategies the Americans have adopted in spreading their variety, further cementing their linguistic authority on non-native English speakers who are not interested in which variety they are speaking, so far as they are being understood. One of the strategies, as Atechi (2009) mentioned, was how Peace Corps volunteers, which was an initiative of President J.F. Kennedy in 1962, were commissioned into working in the “medical sector, in agriculture and in teaching the English Language in different parts of third world countries”.

An interview with a graduate of a higher institution in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, reveals that some of his lecturers were Americans and Nigerian lecturers that were trained in the United States. The others, who had not been privileged to travel out yet, had also been influenced by them, so that they were beginning to feign American accents. He said quite a number of them picked up American expressions. He, too, by the time he rounded off his studies, was used to many American words, which he thought had no alternatives. For example, he had always pronounced the British word “sceptical” as /septikl/ due to the spelling pattern; but the American version of it, which is spelt as “skeptical” he pronounces as /skeptikl/. The fact is, both “sceptical” (BrE) and “skeptical” (AmE) are pronounced as /skeptikl/, but this was one of his challenges. He said before he came to know the difference, he always went for “skeptical”, if he must use it in his communications.

An encounter with a female interviewee shows that she has never known that “Jumper” was the British English form of “Sweater”, the American English alternative. She could not have imagined that there was a British version to it; she knew it was either “sweater” or “Pullover”, both being American.

Moreover, another globalisation approach was that many books that come to third world countries are mainly from America, thereby promoting their own tongue which is reflected on their spelling, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar etc. This is a very potent way of capturing the

world and making almost everyone gradually unlearn the British linguistic tenets. This turnaround and sudden love for American English, even in a society that claims to have pitched its tent with the British variety, has caused a conflict, confusion and of course, a cold war to exist between both Englishes, constituting a challenge to consistency in communication.

## The Investigation and Analysis

As earlier stated, this paper aims to investigate contemporary Nigerian media professionals’ awareness of the linguistic cold war existing between British and American Englishes that has lingered for several decades. This would be achieved through testing their choice of words or expressions, if they (media professionals) were to report, present, disseminate, communicate and publish media contents.

To test this conflict of supremacy of these two Englishes, 50 media personnel based in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria, comprising radio/TV presenters, producers, reporters, news editors (electronic and print), media content syndicates and information officers in the Bayelsa State Ministry of Information were picked at random and issued a questionnaire of 60 pairs of words/expressions of British and American English varieties to respond to. This questionnaire consists of words, phrases and sentences with the British and American varieties for the respondents to show which word or expression was common to them.

## Special Respondent Analysis

Before beginning the data analysis proper, some preference was given to the response to the questionnaire of a renowned award winning Nigerian poet, literary critic, columnist and editor of a popular local tabloid in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, who had a degree in English Studies at one of the respected Nigerian universities (BrE is what is emphasised in Nigeria institutions) and trained in the United Kingdom. Prior to his response, because of his reputation in the pen profession, the supposition was:

*His choices would be prevailed by the British Variety since he was first, an English graduate in Nigeria and second, a UK trained professional.*

Our poet and newspaper editor was given 60 pairs of words/expressions of American and British varieties to test if he would display his “Britishness” in his choices. This was the instruction on the questionnaire:

*Each number (1-60) comes with two words/expressions—A & B. Please tick the one that is common to you; the one you are used to or the one you would use in your presentation, report or communication. You don’t have to consult any material or anyone as you tick. What you tick is a confirmation of what you are used to. You are expected to be sincere to yourself and tick only one of the pair.*

A point of note is I deliberately left out the spelling forms of both varieties in the questionnaire because I have been able to confirm over the years from Nigerian newspapers, news bulletins, online publications, etc., that the British spelling forms are unarguably dominant in written English. The fact is one could hardly find a Nigerian writer spell the word, "colour" (BrE) as "color" (AmE); "neighbour" as "neighbor"; "labour" as "labor" and so on.

**Table 5. The choices made by our renowned poet/Editor**

No.	A	Tick here	B	Tick here
1.	Sweater	✓	Jumper	
2.	Diaper	✓	Nappy	
3.	Long Distance Bus	✓	Coach	
4.	Movie	✓	Film	
5.	Check		Bill	✓
6.	Line		Queue	✓
7.	Under-shirt		Vest	✓
9.	Pharmacy	✓	Chemist's	
10.	Apartment	✓	Flat	
11.	Hungry	✓	Peckish	
12.	Raincoat	✓	Mackintosh	
13.	Eraser	✓	Rubber	
14.	Schedule	✓	Timetable	
15.	Vacation	✓	Holiday	
16.	Main street	✓	High street	
17.	Truck	✓	Lorry	
18.	Station wagon	✓	Estate car	
19.	Restroom	✓	Loo	
20.	Pacifier	✓	Dummy	
21.	Trash can		Bin	✓
22.	Flashlight		Torch	✓
23.	Football field	✓	Football pitch	
24.	Uniform	✓	Kit	
25.	Mom		Mum	✓
26.	Specialty	✓	Speciality	
27.	Highway	✓	Motorway	
28.	Sidewalk		Pavement	✓
29.	Overpass		Flyover	✓
30.	Tie		Draw	✓
31.	Garbage	✓	Rubbish	

32.	A term paper	✓	A long essay	
33.	To supervise	✓	To invigilate	
34.	Dissertation	✓	Thesis	
35.	Check		Tick	✓
36.	Cab		Taxi	✓
37.	Baggage		Luggage	✓
38.	To rent	✓	To hire	
39.	To fill out a form	✓	To fill in a form	
40.	I got it	✓	I have got it	
41.	He'll fix it for free	✓	He'll fix it free of charge	
42.	He called me over the weekend		He called me at the weekend	✓
43.	Six minutes after two		Six minutes past two	✓
44.	Like I said		As I said	✓
45.	Come see me	✓	Come and see me	
46.	He is on the team	✓	He is in the team	
47.	You have to talk with him	✓	You have to talk to him	
48.	He just came back	✓	He has just come back	
49.	Are you home?	✓	Are you at home?	
50.	As gorgeous as she may be	✓	Gorgeous though she may be	
51.	Drivers' license	✓	Driving license	
52.	Potato chips	✓	Crisps	
53.	Trailer	✓	Caravan	
54.	Associate professor	✓	Reader	
55.	Crib	✓	Cot	
56.	Stove	✓	Cooker	
57.	Shrimp	✓	Prawn	
58.	Cigarettes		Fags	✓
59.	Bus	✓	Coach	
60.	Bucks	✓	Quid	

The American expressions were arranged on column A, while their British equivalents, on the B column, leaving only the clever one to decipher the Englishes as he ticks on, even some did argue that not all are absolute equivalents and it has to do with contexts of usage.

It would be instructive to quickly mention that I have read a number of publications by our poet/editor and I can authentically confirm that his spelling forms are British and never American. However, from what our poet/editor did as shown on Table 5, it proves our initial supposition wrong that his choices would be prevailed by the British Variety since he was first, an English graduate in Nigeria and second, a UK trained professional. It might interest you to know that before he responded to the questionnaire, he sounded as an unrepentant British English advocate and one would imagine he would be consistent with BrE.

The result shows he is even more American than British. Out of the 60 expressions, he ticked only 19 British expressions, as against 41 American expressions. The implication is, if he had to use all 60 expressions in his writing, only 32 percent of British expressions would appear in the writing and American expressions would take 68 percent. For instance, if he were to advise someone who was shivering from cold to protect him/herself, he would naturally and comfortably tell him/her to wear a "sweater" (AmE) instead of "Jumper"

(BrE). He would rather say to a friend that his "drivers' license" (AmE) has expired than his "driving license" (BrE) has expired. His response, therefore, indicates that his word bank of British English has been overridden by his exposure to American English. This could, probably, be blamed on the magic bullet effect of the America dominated global media and perhaps the books he reads, which might mainly be authored by Americans. Obviously, the Table shows he is more consistent with American expressions (excluding the spelling forms), which he might not be aware of.

### General Analysis

All 50 questionnaires were returned and duly responded to. 17 out of the 50 respondents were female, while 33 were Male. The respondents were made up of presenters, news reporters and editors, producers and information officers in the Bayelsa State Ministry of Information. 90% of the respondents had tertiary education, while 10% stopped at the secondary level of education. The discourse of this paper has been that contemporary media professionals in Nigeria have been influenced by Americanisms, which we have seen with our award winning poet and writer. Would this still reflect on the vast majority of media professionals?

A presentation and analysis of the investigation carried out on 50 media professionals in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. First is the distribution of female respondents in Table 6 below:

**Table 6. Female Respondents**

S.No	Highest level of Education	Total AmE	Percent %	Total BrE	Percent %	Prevailing English
1.	BA	32	53	22	37	American
2.	PGD	22	37	35	58	British
3.	BA	33	55	27	45	American
4.	BA	31	51	23	38	American
5.	PGD	40	67	20	33	American
6.	B.ED	32	53	28	47	American
7.	BA	34	57	20	33	American
8.	MSc	39	65	17	28	American
9.	HND	38	63	20	33	American
10.	BA	35	58	25	42	American
11.	SSCE	23	38	36	60	British
12.	SSCE	40	67	20	33	American
13.	BSC	37	62	20	33	American
14.	DIP	26	43	22	37	American
15.	BA	40	67	20	33	American
16.	SSCE	31	51	28	47	American
17.	BA	35	58	25	42	American
Total		568		408		American



17 female media professionals responded to the questionnaire. Unfortunately, some of the spaces were left un-ticked. Perhaps, the respondents were confused of the words or were not conversant with the words. Some respondents ticked both AmE and BrE as against the instruction of ticking only the one s/he was familiar with. This might be due to they being reluctant to ticking only one of the options because they use both expressions equally and regularly.

The table above shows that only three (3) did not go beyond the secondary level of education. The other 14 respondents were spread into Diploma, Bachelor of Arts/Science, Post Graduate Diploma and Master's of Arts/Science. Out of the 17 respondents, only two (2) had their choices dominated by British English. However, the American English had its fair share in the choices of these two (2) respondents. For

instance, respondent number 2, with a PGD, ticked 22 AmE words/expressions out of the 60 and 35 for BrE, i.e. 37% of the total number. Respondent number 11 ticked 23 out of 60 (38% of AmE). American words/expressions prevailed in the choices of the other 15 respondents. Overall, American English dominated the choices of female media professionals in Bayelsa State, thereby making the British variety appear as the adulterated version. Just like our poet/editor that was earlier examined, I noticed from the responses to the questionnaire that virtually all the female media professionals prefer "over the weekend" (AmE) to "at the weekend" (BrE). That is, they would rather say:

- Richard visited me over the weekend (American English) Instead of:
- Richard visited me at the weekend (British English)

**Table 7. Male Respondents**

S.No	Highest level of Education	Total AmE	Percent %	Total BrE	Percent %	Prevailing English
18	BA	35	58	25	42	American
19	BA	30	50	29	48	American
20	B.ED	28	47	23	38	American
21	MA	33	55	26	43	American
22	BA	31	52	29	48	American
23	BA	26	43	20	33	American
24	MA	38	63	19	32	American
25	BSc	23	38	33	55	British
26	BSc	25	42	16	27	American
27	MA	30	50	30	50	Draw
28	BSc	39	65	15	25	American
29	PGD	29	48	24	40	American
30	BA	35	58	25	42	American
31	HND	35	58	24	40	American
32.	PGD	35	58	25	42	American
33	MA	41	68	16	27	American
34	BSc	30	50	30	50	Draw
35	BSc	33	55	26	43	American
36	BSc	25	42	33	55	British
37	BSc	36	60	24	40	American
38	MSc	27	45	33	55	British
39	MSc	36	60	22	37	American
40	BSc	38	63	20	33	American
41	BSc	40	67	20	33	American
42	MA	37	62	22	37	American
43	SSCE	26	43	29	48	British
44	BA	39	65	17	28	American

45	BA	29	48	21	35	American
46	MSc	27	45	30	50	British
47	BA	36	60	24	40	American
48	BA	37	62	22	37	American
49	BA	30	50	30	50	Draw
50	SSCE	33	55	26	43	American
Total		568		408		American

For the male media professionals, out of the 33 respondents, only two (2) never had tertiary education as they ended at secondary level and eight (8) respondents had a second degree. Respondents 27, 34 and 49 chose 30 AmE and 30 BrE respectively; British words/expressions prevailed in the choices of respondents 25 (55%), 38 (55%), 43 (48%) and 46 (50%). American words/expressions prevailed in the choices of 26 respondents. In total, the American variety remains dominant amongst the male media professionals. This further cements the stances of Kperogi (2015), Graddol (1997), Atechi (2009), who all argue that the English language is the world language because the Americans emerged as the global power, thereby making their variety the dominant one.

## Conclusion

This paper established the dichotomy between two varieties of English in the modern media space in Nigeria British and American. An outlook of the evolution of the English Language was examined up to the point of it assuming the status of a world language. However, the question of which variety has penetrated the linguistic consciousness of Nigerian media professionals was confronted and answers provided. Nigeria being colonised by Britain is believed to be maintaining the British/Queen's English as it is taught in schools, from primary to tertiary level. But studies have shown that the world language, which is English, is dominated by the American version because of the exploits of the United States in World War II. This domination is further sealed with the advent of media globalisation and global media dominated by American content. Media consumers have had no choice, but are directly influenced by these Americanisms, reacting in like manner and proving the Magic Bullet or Hypodemic Media Effect theory (Bittner, 1977; Ndimele & Kasarachi, 2007) which says media audiences act less differently from the messages they receive.

This paper successfully tested media professionals in Bayelsa State on variety consistency between the Englishes of America and Britain, though excluding their choice of spelling forms. The investigation so far showed that the media professionals are unaware that they have been expressing themselves in American English, in spite of

the trainings they had received in British English. The American English, unknown to them, have found a place in their consciousness. Attaining linguistic consistency has become a challenge since they are constantly exposed to the American Expressions on daily basis through the stimulus-response effect of the media and other penetrative forms which the Americans have deliberately adopted to promote their culture.

Based on the result of the investigation, this paper hereby recommends that:

- No variety, between American and British, should be emphasised in Nigerian (or any other non-native English speaking country that is faced with this conflict) educational system and linguistic space both should be allowed to exist concurrently.
- Media professionals in Nigeria should not be subjected to choose between the two competing varieties as no success can be recorded in this regard, since the American variety has become rooted in their consciousness and it would be an effort in futility to discard it, all in trying to maintain the variety the colonial masters bequeathed them.
- Both varieties should be accepted as one and the same, without trying to correct anyone for combining both varieties in their communications since it would be difficult to unlearn one variety completely and adopt the other totally.

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