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## **New Englishes in diachronic light: Evidence from Nigeria English Phonology**

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The impetus for this study is the truism that there is a permanent relationship between the synchronic and the diachronic in human experience: that relationship is simply that one explains the other, such that no conclusions may be entirely satisfactory which tries to exclude one from the other. The study is in pursuit of the proposal that history is a major reason for the existence of New Englishes and the essential ground for their justification as sociolinguistic realism.

The study investigates this paradigm using Nigerian English as a test case. It examines this national variety in terms of synchronic phenomenon whose basis is consecutive diachronic processes which date back to the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. This includes among others historical conditions and contact situations by which this English appears irreversibly rooted; the sub-varieties which are definable in terms educational attainments understood as progress made over time; the phonological changes occasioned by indigenization, acquisition process and internal structural changes associated with phonological processes, which together account for the uniqueness of Nigerian English and its varieties. We therefore provide a review of historical developments with respect to Nigerian English and position the resultant facts with conventional history, in the first part. In the second part, we deal with the dialects which develop along socio-educational and ethno-linguistic paths, and specify three dialect typologies. The third part discusses structural changes at the phonological level involving sounds and prosodies. The last part provides concluding notes and information which confirm that “nothing in linguistics makes full sense except in a diachronic light” with respect to Nigerian English in particular and the New Englishes in general.