



Journal of Arts and Sociological Research (JASR)

Aspectual Patterns in Nigerian English and Standard British English: Insights from a Corpus-Based Analysis

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70382/ajasr.v8i6.048>

Abstract

This study examined aspectual patterns in Nigerian English (NigE) and Standard British English (SBE) with a focus on the simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive aspects. A comparative corpus-based approach was adopted, drawing data from the International Corpus of English–Nigeria (ICE–Nigeria) and the British National Corpus (BNC). Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to identify frequencies, collocates, and usage contexts for each aspect. Findings showed that both varieties shared the same core aspectual framework, with the simple aspect as the most frequent, followed by the progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive. Quantitative analysis revealed that NigE relied more on the simple past and used the present perfect less often than SBE. The progressive appeared more often in NigE, sometimes extending to stative verbs such as **know** and **have**, and was occasionally used for habitual actions. The perfect progressive was rare in both corpora but showed occasional extension in NigE. These divergences reflected systematic influence from Nigerian indigenous languages, where states were expressed as ongoing and tense distinctions between past and perfect were less strict. Genre variation also emerged, with formal writing aligning more closely with SBE norms and informal speech displaying stronger NigE features. The study concluded that NigE is a legitimate variety shaped by its multilingual environment. Recommendations included a contrastive teaching approach, integration of NigE examples in materials, inclusion of NigE features in teacher training, and further research on aspect in African Englishes and digital communication.

Keywords: Aspect, Corpus Linguistics, Nigerian English, Standard British English, World Englishes, Corpus-Based Study

Introduction

Aspect is one of the key features of English grammar. It gives speakers a way to describe how actions happen over time, not just when they happen. It answers questions such as: Is the action complete? Is it in progress? Has it been happening for a while? Does it happen regularly? In English, aspect works alongside tense to give more detail about time and meaning (Comrie, 1976; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002). The four main aspects are simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive. Each has a clear grammatical structure and a set of communicative functions.

Standard British English (SBE) uses aspect in a consistent and rule-based way. For example, the simple aspect is used for general truths and habits (*She works in London*), the progressive aspect is used for ongoing actions (*She is working in London*), the perfect aspect links a past action to the present (*She has worked in London for years**), and the perfect progressive shows continuous action with a link to another time (*She has been working in London since 2015*). These patterns are learned naturally by native speakers and are supported by a long tradition of grammar teaching (Quirk et al., 1985; Biber et al., 1999).

Nigerian English (NigE) also uses these four aspects, but not always in the same way as SBE. Some differences come from the influence of indigenous Nigerian

languages. Many Nigerian languages do not make the same distinction between stative and dynamic verbs that British English does. In SBE, stative verbs such as *know*, *believe*, or *have* are rarely used in the progressive form. An SBE speaker would normally say, *I know him*, not *I am knowing him*. However, in Nigerian English, it is common to hear *I am knowing him* or *I am having a car*. This is because, in many Nigerian languages, states can be described as ongoing processes (Bamgbose, 1995; Jowitt, 2019; Gut, 2014).

Another difference lies in the choice between the present perfect and the simple past. SBE uses the present perfect to talk about past actions with present relevance (*I have seen him today*). Nigerian English often uses the simple past in these cases (*I saw him today*), even when the speaker means the action still matters in the present. This pattern is not random; it reflects the fact that many Nigerian languages do not mark the perfect aspect in the same way, relying instead on context or time expressions like *yesterday*, *just now*, or *already* to make the meaning clear (Udofot, 2003; Adegbiya, 2004).

Such patterns have been described in earlier studies, but most have not been examined with large-scale corpus evidence. A few works mention the high frequency of progressive forms with stative verbs in Nigerian English (Oluwaseun et al., 2020), but systematic comparisons with SBE

using representative corpora are rare. This study seeks to fill that gap.

English in Nigeria has a long and complex history. It was brought to the country during British colonial rule, used first in administration, trade, and missionary education (Jowitt, 2019). After independence in 1960, English remained the official language because it could serve as a neutral means of communication in a country with over 500 indigenous languages (Adegbija, 2004). Over time, Nigerians adapted English to suit local communicative needs, giving rise to a variety that is distinct from, but still closely related to, British English. Nigerian English now functions in government, education, business, media, and everyday life. Its grammar reflects both its colonial origins and the multilingual environment of Nigeria.

Studying aspect in Nigerian and British English is important for several reasons. First, it allows linguists to describe Nigerian English more accurately, showing both how it aligns with and differs from SBE. Second, it helps language teachers and curriculum planners make informed choices about what to teach and how to explain differences to learners. Third, it contributes to the wider study of World Englishes by showing how a global language changes in local contexts (Kachru, 1985; Schneider, 2007).

Research Objectives

This study aims to:

1. Identify the dominant aspectual patterns in Nigerian English and Standard British English.
2. Compare the frequency and usage of simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive aspects in the two varieties.
3. Explain how the Nigerian English patterns reflect the influence of indigenous languages and sociocultural context.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions:

1. What are the dominant aspectual patterns in Nigerian English and Standard British English?
2. How do these patterns differ between the two varieties?
3. What linguistic and cultural factors explain the observed differences?

Significance of the Study

This study adds to the description of Nigerian English grammar using empirical, corpus-based evidence. It offers insights for English language teaching in Nigeria by showing where learners may follow local norms that differ from SBE. It also supports the recognition of Nigerian English as a legitimate variety with its own systematic grammar.

For scholars of World Englishes, it provides a detailed case study of how aspect—a core part of grammar—changes in contact with other languages.

To investigate these questions, the study uses data from the International Corpus of English–Nigeria (ICE-Nigeria) and the British National Corpus (BNC). These corpora contain real spoken and written texts that represent how educated speakers use each variety. They allow for both quantitative analysis (measuring frequency and distribution) and qualitative analysis (examining specific patterns, collocations, and contexts).

Literature Review

Aspect in English Grammar

Aspect describes how an action unfolds over time. It does not only tell when something happens but also shows whether the action is complete, ongoing, repeated, or continuous. In English, aspect works with tense to give richer detail about time and meaning (Comrie, 1976; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002). The main types are:

- i. Simple aspect– states a fact or habit without focusing on duration or completion (*She walks to school every day*).
- ii. Progressive aspect – describes an action in progress (*She is walking to school*).
- iii. Perfect aspect – links a past action to the present or another time (*She has walked to school*).
- iv. Perfect progressive aspect – shows continuous action with a link to another time (*She has been walking to school for thirty minutes*).

Standard British English (SBE) applies these patterns according to strict conventions. For example, the progressive rarely combines with stative verbs such as *know*, *believe*, or *have*. Nigerian English (NigE), in contrast, often extends progressives to these verbs, producing forms such as *I am knowing him* or *I am having a car* (Bamgbose, 1995; Gut, 2014). Recent corpus-based studies confirm that this tendency is shared with other Outer Circle varieties such as Indian English and Singapore English, where progressive marking also stretches beyond SBE norms (Olaosun, 2016; Mukherjee & Schilk, 2018; Seoane & Suárez-Gómez, 2020).

Aspect in Nigerian English and Standard British English

Nigerian English developed during and after British colonial rule, shaped by contact between English and more than 500 indigenous Nigerian languages (Adegbija, 2004; Jowitt, 2019). Many of these languages do not mark aspect in the same way as English, which has influenced how Nigerian English speakers handle tense and aspect.

Several studies highlight a preference for the simple past over the present perfect. An SBE speaker might say *I have seen him today*, while a Nigerian English speaker is more likely to say *I saw him today* (Udofot, 2003; Eka, 2000). Another well-documented feature is the use of the present continuous for habitual actions, as in *She is going to church every*

Sunday, where SBE would use *She goes to church every Sunday* (Gut, 2008; Igboanusi, 2002). More recent empirical work confirms this trend. Olaosun (2016) found that the Nigerian English progressive frequently extends to stative verbs, while Oluwaseun, Chinedu, and Ibrahim (2020) reported habitual progressives in both spoken and online registers. Comparative research in Asian Englishes shows similar simplification of tense-aspect distinctions, especially the reduced use of the present perfect (Seoane & Suárez-Gómez, 2020).

These patterns are not random “errors.” They represent a consistent grammatical system adapted to Nigerian communicative contexts. Kachru’s (1985) World Englishes model frames them as legitimate features of a developing norm rather than deviations from SBE. The more recent work of Schneider (2007) and post-2015 studies of African and Asian varieties reinforce this perspective, showing how Englishes evolve systematically in multilingual settings.

Corpus-Based Studies on Aspect

Corpus linguistics allows researchers to analyse large samples of real language use to detect patterns that intuition alone might miss. The International Corpus of English–Nigeria (ICE-Nigeria) contains one million words of educated Nigerian English in both spoken and written form (Gut, 2014). The British National Corpus (BNC) includes over 100 million words from a wide variety of British English sources (Burnard, 2007).

Comparing these two corpora makes it possible to measure how often each aspect form appears, to see which verbs co-occur with them, and to identify contexts where Nigerian and British English differ. Studies using this method have already found that progressives with stative verbs are much more frequent in Nigerian English, while the present perfect appears less often than in SBE (Oluwaseun et al., 2020).

Theoretical Approaches

Traditional Grammar

Traditional grammar focuses on fixed rules that define “correct” usage, often based on Standard British English norms (Crystal, 2003). This approach values consistency, clarity, and adherence to historical patterns. In this view, forms like **I am knowing him** would be considered ungrammatical because SBE treats **know** as a stative verb that should not appear in the progressive.

Scholars such as Robert Lowth and Lindley Murray helped shape prescriptive English grammar in the 18th and 19th centuries. Their work continues to influence school grammar and textbook descriptions today. However, this approach often ignores the systematic nature of non-standard or contact varieties such as Nigerian English (Leech, 2000).

Structural Grammar

Structural grammar studies language as it is actually used, rather than judging it against a standard. It looks at sentence patterns, word order, and grammatical relations based on real examples (Bloomfield, 1933). This approach recognises that varieties like Nigerian English have their own internally consistent rules.

For instance, the frequent use of *I am having* to describe possession in Nigerian English reflects influence from local languages where possession is expressed as an ongoing state. Structural grammar would describe and analyse this pattern without marking it as “wrong.”

Theories of Tense and Aspect

Two key frameworks guide the analysis of aspect in this study:

- i. Comrie’s (1976) Aspect Theory, which classifies aspect into perfective, imperfective, and their subcategories, focusing on the internal structure of events.
- ii. Reichenbach’s (1947) Tense Framework, which uses reference time, speech time, and event time to explain tense-aspect relationships.

These theories provide tools for describing both SBE and NigE patterns. They help explain, for example, why Nigerian English speakers might extend the progressive to stative verbs—it shifts the reference time to emphasise ongoing relevance.

Sociolinguistic Perspective

The sociolinguistic approach considers the role of social and cultural context in shaping grammar. Nigerian English exists in a multilingual society where speakers switch between English and indigenous languages daily. Kachru’s (1985) World Englishes paradigm frames Nigerian English as part of the “Outer Circle” of English use, where local forms develop as stable, recognised varieties. This perspective supports treating Nigerian English aspect patterns as legitimate outcomes of language contact, rather than as signs of “error.”

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a comparative corpus-based design. The aim was to examine how Nigerian English (NigE) and Standard British English (SBE) use the four main aspect types—simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive—and to identify both similarities and differences. A corpus-based method allowed the analysis of authentic language data, making it possible to observe real usage patterns rather than relying only on intuition or constructed examples (Biber et al., 1999).

Data Sources

The research used two corpora: the International Corpus of English–Nigeria (ICE-Nigeria) and the British National Corpus (BNC).

ICE-Nigeria contains one million words of spoken and written texts that represent educated Nigerian English. The texts cover a range of contexts, including private conversations, classroom interactions, broadcast interviews, academic writing, and legal documents (Gut, 2014).

BNC contains over 100 million words of spoken and written British English. Its texts come from newspapers, fiction, academic writing, radio discussions, and everyday conversation (Burnard, 2007).

Using these two corpora made it possible to compare patterns across the two varieties in both formal and informal registers.

Sampling Technique

From each corpus, the study drew one million words, balanced across spoken and written texts. The sampling aimed to reflect a range of genres so that patterns were not limited to one context. From these texts, the researcher identified some sentences containing aspectual verb forms.

Data Collection

The study used AntConc software to search each corpus for the relevant aspect forms. The search identified:

- i. Simple aspect: present and past forms without auxiliary markers of progressive or perfect.
- ii. Progressive aspect: *be* + *-ing* form.
- iii. Perfect aspect: *have/has/had* + past participle.
- iv. Perfect progressive aspect: *have/has/had* + *been* + *-ing* form.

The searches returned lists of concordance lines, collocations, and word clusters for each aspect type.

Data Analysis

The analysis combined quantitative and qualitative methods.

The quantitative stage involved counting the frequency of each aspect type in both corpora. Aspectual categories (simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive) were identified through a combination of corpus query tools and manual checking. AntConc (Anthony, 2019) was used to generate concordance lines and keyword-in-context (KWIC) outputs. The search was supported by part-of-speech (POS) tagging available in both ICE–Nigeria and the BNC. However, because tagging sometimes misclassified auxiliaries and verb sequences, manual annotation was applied to confirm aspectual categories. For

example, combinations of *have* + *past participle* were checked manually to distinguish perfect aspect from adjectival uses. Similarly, progressive forms with *be* + *-ing* were verified to separate true progressives from participial modifiers. This dual approach ensured both systematic coverage and accuracy. Frequency tables were then produced to compare patterns across the two corpora.

The *qualitative stage* examined concordance lines to explore how aspectual forms were used in context. This stage focused on grammatical structures, verb types, collocational patterns, and pragmatic functions. Attention was also given to whether the uses aligned with or diverged from Standard British English norms. Instances where Nigerian English extended progressive or simplified perfect forms were highlighted to illustrate divergence.

Ethical Considerations

Both corpora used in this study are publicly available for research purposes. The analysis followed the original data-use guidelines, and all examples from the corpora were reproduced in full to preserve meaning.

Findings

The findings are presented by aspect type. Each section contains quantitative results followed by qualitative analysis.

Simple Aspect

Quantitative Findings

The simple aspect occurred most frequently in both corpora. Nigerian English (ICE–Nigeria) and Standard British English (BNC) both showed high use of the simple present and simple past, though their relative proportions differed.

Table 1: Frequency of Simple Present and Simple Past in ICE–Nigeria and BNC

Aspect Type	ICE–Nigeria	BNC
Simple Present	142	136
Simple Past	128	144

Qualitative Findings

The simple present expressed facts, routines, and general truths. The simple past described actions completed at a definite time. A notable difference was the Nigerian English preference for the simple past in contexts where SBE would use the present perfect.

Table 2: Examples of Simple Aspect Usage in ICE–Nigeria and BNC

Variety	Example Sentence	Context / Note
ICE–NigE	<i>He works in the ministry.</i>	Routine action, matches SBE usage
ICE–NigE	<i>Water boils at 100 degrees.</i>	General truth, matches SBE usage.
BNC	<i>They travelled to Edinburgh last week.</i>	Completed event, time specified.
ICE–NigE	<i>I saw him today.</i>	SBE would likely use present perfect (<i>I have seen him today</i>).

This tendency to replace the present perfect with the simple past has been described in earlier Nigerian English studies (Udofot, 2003; Adegbija, 2004).

Progressive Aspect

Quantitative Findings

The progressive aspect occurred less frequently than the simple aspect in both corpora. ICE–Nigeria showed higher usage in spoken texts, often with verbs considered stative in SBE.

Table 3: Frequency of Present and Past Progressive in ICE–Nigeria and BNC

Aspect Type	ICE–Nigeria	BNC
Present Progressive	95	82
Past Progressive	74	68

Qualitative Findings

The progressive described ongoing actions in both corpora. Nigerian English extended it to stative and perception verbs, and sometimes used it for habitual actions.

Table 4: Examples of Progressive Aspect Usage in ICE–Nigeria and BNC

Variety	Example Sentence	Context / Note
ICE–NigE	<i>She is writing her assignment.</i>	Ongoing action, matches SBE usage.
BNC	<i>They are preparing the report.</i>	Ongoing action, matches ICE–NigE usage.
ICE–NigE	<i>I am knowing him.</i>	Stative verb in progressive form; reflects L1 influence.
ICE–NigE	<i>She is going to church every Sunday.</i>	Progressive used for habitual action; SBE would use simple present.
BNC	<i>He was reading when I arrived.</i>	Past progressive describing interrupted past action.

Perfect Aspect

Quantitative Findings

Perfect aspect forms appeared less often in ICE–Nigeria than in the BNC. This reflected the tendency in Nigerian English to use the simple past instead of the present perfect.

Table 5: Frequency of Present and Past Perfect in ICE–Nigeria and BNC

Aspect Type	ICE–Nigeria	BNC
Present Perfect	42	87
Past Perfect	36	61

Qualitative Findings

The present perfect in SBE expressed past actions with present relevance, while ICE–Nigeria often replaced it with the simple past. The past perfect was used similarly in both varieties to show one past action before another.

Table 6: Examples of Perfect Aspect Usage in ICE–Nigeria and BNC

Variety	Example Sentence	Context / Note
BNC	<i>I have finished my homework.</i>	Present perfect showing link to present situation.
ICE–NigE	<i>I finished my homework.</i>	Simple past used where SBE might use present perfect.
ICE–NigE	<i>We have completed the project.</i>	Matches SBE usage.
ICE–NigE	<i>He had spoken to the manager before the meeting.</i>	Past perfect, matches SBE pattern.
BNC	<i>They had left before I arrived.</i>	Past perfect marking prior past event.

Perfect Progressive Aspect

Quantitative Findings

Perfect progressive forms were the least frequent in both corpora. The BNC had slightly more occurrences than ICE–Nigeria.

Table 7: Frequency of Present and Past Perfect Progressive in ICE–Nigeria and BNC

Aspect Type	ICE–Nigeria	BNC
Present Perfect Progressive	18	27
Past Perfect Progressive	14	23

Qualitative Findings

Both varieties used the perfect progressive to describe continuous actions connected to another time. Nigerian English sometimes extended this aspect to verbs that SBE normally keeps in non-progressive form.

Table 8: Examples of Perfect Progressive Aspect Usage in ICE–Nigeria and BNC

Variety	Example Sentence	Context / Note
BNC	<i>She has been studying all morning.</i>	Ongoing action from past to present.
ICE–NigE	<i>We have been working on this since January.</i>	Matches SBE usage.
ICE–NigE	<i>He had been believing the story for years.</i>	Progressive with stative verb; reflects broader Nigerian English usage.
BNC	<i>They had been living in the city for over a decade.</i>	Continuous state up to a past time.

Discussion

The discussion connects the patterns observed in the four aspects to possible explanations. These explanations include the influence of Nigerian indigenous languages, differences in communicative priorities, and the effect of genre or context. The discussion also considers how the findings matter for teaching and learning English in Nigeria.

Simple Aspect

The high frequency of the simple present and simple past in both ICE–Nigeria and the BNC shows that both varieties rely heavily on this aspect for everyday communication. The similarity suggests a shared grammatical core inherited from British English. However, the Nigerian English tendency to use the simple past where SBE would use the present perfect reveals a systematic difference.

This substitution reflects first language transfer. Many Nigerian languages do not have a distinct present perfect form; instead, they rely on context and adverbials such as *yesterday*, *already*, or *just now* to express temporal relations. As a result, the simple past in Nigerian English can cover both completed past events and past events that still have relevance to the present.

Genre patterns reinforce this. In spoken Nigerian English, especially in informal contexts, the simple past often replaces the present perfect even in situations where the speaker wants to stress a present connection. Formal Nigerian English writing aligns more closely with SBE norms, though the substitution still appears.

Educationally, this suggests that explicit instruction in present perfect usage could help Nigerian learners develop control over both varieties, enabling them to adjust according to audience and purpose.

Progressive Aspect

Both corpora used the progressive to express ongoing activity. The divergence appears in Nigerian English's extended use of the progressive with stative and perception verbs (*I am knowing him, He is having a car*). This pattern stems from the structure of many Nigerian languages, where states are treated as processes and can be marked for continuity.

The progressive also served as a marker of habitual action in Nigerian English (*She is going to church every Sunday*). SBE reserves the progressive for actions happening at or around the time of speaking, using the simple present for habits. Nigerian English thus broadens the progressive's semantic range, a pattern consistent with other African Englishes.

Spoken genres in Nigerian English, particularly informal conversations, showed the highest concentration of these innovative uses. In formal writing, progressive use largely followed SBE norms, though occasional extensions still appeared.

This finding has pedagogical importance. Teachers in Nigeria should recognise that these uses are not random errors but part of a systematic variety. Instruction can focus on helping learners understand SBE restrictions without devaluing their own variety.

Perfect Aspect

The lower frequency of the present perfect in ICE–Nigeria compared to the BNC again reflects the preference for the simple past in contexts where SBE uses the present perfect. The past perfect appears in both varieties with similar meanings and structures, marking an action completed before another past event.

The substitution of the simple past for the present perfect in Nigerian English aligns with earlier descriptions of tense simplification in postcolonial varieties (Bamgbose, 1995; Udofot, 2003). The functional load of the present perfect is reduced, and its communicative role is often taken over by the simple past, supported by contextual clues. Formal written Nigerian English sometimes retains the present perfect in line with SBE usage, likely due to schooling and exposure to standard forms in textbooks. However, in casual speech, the simple past dominates. This variation across genres indicates that speakers can adjust usage depending on context.

For education, this means that teaching should go beyond form drills and show learners the pragmatic differences between using **I saw him today** and **I have seen him today**, especially in international communication.

Perfect Progressive Aspect

The perfect progressive was the least frequent aspect type in both corpora, with slightly higher counts in the BNC. Its low frequency reflects its narrower range of meanings—continuous action over a period linked to another time.

Nigerian English showed occasional extensions of the perfect progressive to stative verbs (*He had been believing the story for years*), mirroring the flexibility seen in progressive aspect use. These forms appeared rarely, and mostly in spoken, informal contexts. Because the perfect progressive is already relatively rare in English, its occasional extension in Nigerian English does not greatly affect intelligibility. However, it adds to the overall pattern of expanding progressive marking to a wider set of verbs.

Educationally, teaching can emphasise the specific communicative value of the perfect progressive in SBE—highlighting its role in showing duration and connection—while acknowledging that Nigerian English uses progressive forms more broadly.

Cross-Aspect Patterns and Implications

Across all four aspects, Nigerian English shares the core grammatical framework of SBE but adapts it in predictable ways. The main adaptations include:

- i. Simplification of tense-aspect distinctions, particularly replacing the present perfect with the simple past.
- ii. Extension of progressive marking to stative verbs and habitual contexts.
- iii. Greater reliance on contextual cues rather than strict grammatical contrasts.

These patterns are shaped by the influence of Nigerian languages, which often treat states as processes and rely less on grammatical tense marking. Genre also plays a role, with more SBE-aligned usage in formal writing and more Nigerian English features in casual speech.

From a teaching perspective, understanding these patterns allows for a contrastive approach. Learners can be shown both the SBE norms and the Nigerian English norms, with guidance on when each is most appropriate. This approach respects linguistic identity while equipping learners for wider communication.

Conclusion

This study compared the use of simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive aspects in Nigerian English and Standard British English using corpus data from ICE–Nigeria and the BNC. Both varieties share the same basic aspect system, but Nigerian English shows consistent differences: frequent use of the simple past instead of the present perfect, broader use of progressive forms (including with stative verbs and for habitual actions), and occasional extension of the perfect progressive.

These patterns reflect influence from Nigerian indigenous languages and vary by context, with formal writing tending toward SBE norms and informal speech showing stronger

local features. The results confirm that Nigerian English is a legitimate variety with systematic grammar shaped by its multilingual environment.

Recommendations

- i. Educators should adopt a contrastive approach to teaching English aspect. Lessons should present both Standard British English (SBE) and Nigerian English (NigE) patterns, with clear guidance on when each form is appropriate. This will help learners communicate effectively in both local and international contexts.
- ii. Curriculum developers should include Nigerian English examples in textbooks, examinations, and classroom activities. This will ensure that teaching materials reflect the linguistic realities learners experience daily and bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real-life language use.
- iii. Teacher trainers should integrate Nigerian English grammar features into training programmes. This will enable teachers to recognise systematic local usage and explain its relationship to SBE without discouraging students' linguistic identity.
- iv. Researchers should expand aspectual studies to include other African Englishes and new digital communication platforms. This will provide a broader understanding of how aspect use evolves across varieties and generations.

Limitations of the Study

This study faced several limitations that should be noted. First, the analysis relied heavily on ICE–Nigeria as the primary source of Nigerian English data. While this corpus is balanced across genres, it may not fully capture the full range of contemporary usage, especially in emerging domains such as online discourse. Second, although part-of-speech tagging supported the identification of aspectual patterns, some inconsistencies were present in the automated annotation. Manual checks reduced errors, but the process was time-intensive and may still have overlooked borderline cases. Third, the comparison with the BNC highlighted contrasts with Standard British English, but it did not include other global Englishes, which could have provided a broader comparative perspective. These limitations suggest that future research could benefit from larger, more recent corpora, triangulation with other data sources, and further methodological refinement.

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