


# The Grammatical Aftermath of English Language Monolingualism in West Africa

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v11i3.2372>

\*Samuel Akanbi Babatunde<sup>a</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: [babatundesam1@gmail.com](mailto:babatundesam1@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

This study examines the English language grammatical aftermath among 400 English monolinguals in Ghana and Nigeria. Grounded in the communicative competence framework, the research investigates how exclusive reliance on English, coupled with the non-acquisition of indigenous languages, impacts grammatical competence. Using a quantitative survey design, data on Standard English concord and tense were collected via structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-tests. Findings reveal grammatical incompetence; fewer than 40% of respondents mastered complex subject-verb agreement constructions. Notably, background data indicate that 95% of participants possessed no indigenous language proficiency, confirming a state of total monolingualism. While statistically significant differences emerged between Ghanaian and Nigerian cohorts in tense ( $p = 0.005$ ) and concord ( $p = 0.020$ ), both groups exhibited uneven competence. The study concludes that monolingual dominance fails to guarantee solid English competence, leaving learners without functional communicative proficiency in either English or their indigenous languages.

**Keywords:** *English Monolingualism, Non-Acquisition of Indigenous Languages, Grammatical Aftermath, Communicative Competence, Concord, Tense, Ghana, Nigeria*

### Article History:

Received 10<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Accepted 04<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Published 06<sup>th</sup> May 2026



## INTRODUCTION

Recent studies have shown a growing linguistic concern in West Africa, particularly in Ghana and Nigeria, where English has become the dominant medium of communication for younger generations. (S. Babatunde, 2022) contends that this has led to the emergence of **New English Native Speakers**, individuals who are primarily exposed to English with or without the ability to communicate in indigenous languages. Similarly, (Essien, 2019) observes that monolingual English learners often struggle with tense, concord, and pragmatic appropriateness, resulting in communication that is grammatically inconsistent. (Cummins, 2017) emphasises that without first-language support, second-language learners are more likely to experience partial or fragile linguistic competence. (Pennycook, 2017) adds that language policies favouring English often unintentionally marginalise local languages, undermining their cognitive and cultural value. (May, 2022) notes the social dimension of this shift, noting that English dominance shapes identity and societal participation, sometimes at the cost of communicative skill. (Garcia & Wei, 2014) argue that neglecting multilingual foundations diminishes metalinguistic awareness, while (Costa, 2020) stresses that speakers require both functional and formal mastery of language to navigate social and educational contexts effectively. Collectively, these studies indicate that English monolingualism, without indigenous language grounding, produces speakers who are linguistically underprepared.

Multilingualism, however, has been widely acknowledged as a factor that enhances communicative competence. (Canagarajah, 2012) argues that multilingual learners develop heightened sensitivity to linguistic structures and social context. (Cook, 2016) believes that exposure to multiple languages promotes greater cognitive flexibility, which facilitates language acquisition. (Ortega, 2009) suggests that learners with multiple language inputs are

more adept at managing discourse and pragmatics. (Ellis, 2019) points out that multilingualism supports the internalisation of grammar through comparison and contrast. (Halliday et al., 2004) stress that learners draw on multiple linguistic codes to negotiate meaning, while (Saville-Troike, 2017) shows that multilingual students exhibit better communicative adjustment in varied social contexts. (Hornberger, 2002) further emphasises that multilingual education strengthens literacy skills and confidence, making learners more effective communicators. In the context of Ghana and Nigeria, these insights suggest that encouraging multilingual competence can mitigate the grammatical and communicative deficits seen in English-only learners.

The role of indigenous languages as a foundation for learning English has also been widely discussed. UNESCO (2016) argues that first-language proficiency is essential for cognitive development and literacy acquisition. (Stavans & Jessner, 2022) believe that indigenous languages provide scaffolding for second-language learning, improving understanding and retention. (Heugh, 2012) notes that children with strong first-language skills demonstrate superior reading comprehension and oral expression in English. (Benson, 2017) contends that neglecting mother-tongue instruction can result in shallow bilingualism or semilingualism. (Bamgbose, 2004) highlights African case studies showing that initial literacy in local languages correlates with better English acquisition outcomes. Brock-Utne and (Brock-Utne & Garbo, 2009) observe that English immersion without first-language support often produces learners who can speak fluently but not accurately or appropriately. (Kimenyi, 2021) adds that indigenous language-first approaches enhance both classroom participation and socio-cultural identity, reinforcing the benefits of bilingualism in West African classrooms.

Finally, simultaneous bilingualism has been proposed as a strategy to achieve effective communication in multilingual societies. Amfo (2022) shows that early balanced exposure to two languages develops pragmatic awareness and conversational flexibility. Omoniyi (2023) finds that bilingual children navigate social interactions more competently than English-only peers. (Auer, 1998) highlights that code-switching and translanguaging strengthen both languages' internalisation. (Grosjean, 2016) argues that bilinguals have heightened meta-linguistic awareness, enabling them to select appropriate forms in context. (Wei, 2018) believes simultaneous bilingualism fosters both fluency and accuracy. (Lanza, 2018) demonstrates that children exposed to multiple languages from birth acquire communicative strategies earlier. Lightbown (2021) concludes that bilingual learners outperform monolinguals in narrative coherence and pragmatic control. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that in Ghana and Nigeria, structured bilingual education and support for indigenous languages alongside English can address the communicative gaps identified by (S. Babatunde, 2022), promoting both linguistic competence and effective communication across social and educational domains.

In West African multilingual societies such as Nigeria and Ghana, empirical research in Nigeria and Ghana has consistently demonstrated the growing dominance of English and its implications for indigenous language use and vitality. Studies on New English Native Speakers show increasing linguistic shift towards English among younger generations in both countries, with reduced functional use of local languages (S. A. Babatunde & Adebileje, 2023). In Ghana, research has showed how the prioritisation of English within formal education marginalises indigenous languages and weakens their cultural and communicative relevance (Asamoah-Poku, 2024), a situation reinforced by student attitudes that favour English over local languages in tertiary institutions (Akele Twumasi, 2021). Language-in-education policy studies further reveal persistent implementation gaps that continue to privilege English despite multilingual policy frameworks (Agyeman & Ansah, 2025). Demographic evidence also confirms English's institutional dominance within Ghana's complex linguistic ecology (Ghana, 2025). Similarly, Nigerian studies empirically document English-induced language shift and the accelerating endangerment of indigenous languages (Samuel & Akujobi, 2024), driven by language planning practices that prioritise English in education and governance (Eneremadu et al., 2024). Research on dialect extinction and moribund languages further

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illustrates the depth of linguistic erosion linked to sustained English dominance (Gordon & Ogbu, 2025; Odamah et al., 2025). However, while these studies robustly address language shift, policy, attitudes, and endangerment; they largely neglect the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa, thereby revealing a critical empirical gap. The study, therefore, premises its investigation on the following research questions:

*to what extent does English monolingualism affect grammatical competence?*

*are there differences between Ghanaian and Nigerian speakers?*

## Literature Review

*The English Language in West Africa*

The English language occupies a central position in West Africa, particularly in Ghana and Nigeria, where its introduction, expansion, and consolidation are closely tied to British colonial administration and missionary education. In both countries, English was institutionalised during the colonial period as the language of governance, formal education, and interethnic communication, gradually displacing indigenous languages from official domains (Adika, 2012; Ugwuanyi & Aboh, 2025). Colonial education policies entrenched English as the primary medium of instruction, a legacy that persists in post-independence language planning in both states (Tom-Lawyer & Thomas, 2020). While Ghana and Nigeria differ in demographic scale and linguistic diversity, English has similarly evolved into a stabilising lingua franca in multilingual environments, facilitating national cohesion and administrative efficiency (Akujobi, 2025; Akwa Ibom & Ukpong, 2024)

In Ghana and Nigeria, English functions not merely as an official language but as a dominant socio-educational and economic resource. English has increasingly operated as a first or preferred language among educated urban populations, particularly within schools and professional settings (Uwen et al., 2020; Mensah, 2024). In Ghana, the growing legitimacy of Ghanaian English reflects both local adaptation and external influence from British and American norms, especially in academic and professional writing (Mahama, 2024; Osei-Tutu, 2023). Similarly, Nigerian English has developed distinctive morphosyntactic and lexicosemantic features shaped by local sociolinguistic realities, yet it remains firmly anchored to English as the primary medium of formal communication (Chika & E., 2025; Ugwuanyi & Aboh, 2025). Across both contexts, English continues to dominate language-in-education policies, often marginalising indigenous languages despite policy rhetoric supporting multilingualism (Akwa Ibom & Ukpong, 2024; Appiah & Ardila, 2020).

Attitudinal research further reveals strong societal preference for English in both Ghana and Nigeria, driven by its perceived association with socioeconomic mobility, academic success, and global participation. Ghanaian students and teachers have been shown to privilege English over indigenous languages, even while expressing cultural attachment to local identities (Mahama, 2023; Mensah, 2024). Comparable attitudes are evident in Nigeria, where English is widely viewed as indispensable to national development and global relevance (Foyewa, 2022; Phineas et al., 2025). These perceptions reinforce the expanding functional load of English in everyday communication, higher education, and professional life, often at the expense of indigenous language transmission (Jangkam et al., 2024; Shoba & Quarcoo, 2012).

Looking ahead, existing work suggests that English will continue to consolidate its dominance in Ghana and Nigeria, albeit with increasing localisation and nativisation. The future trajectory of English in both countries points toward further entrenchment as a national and global resource, alongside ongoing debates about linguistic equity and cultural sustainability (Mustapha, 2024; Tom-Lawyer & Thomas, 2020). While English is likely to remain indispensable for governance, education, and international engagement, its expanding role raises critical concerns about linguistic imbalance and the long-term vitality of indigenous languages, particularly in formal domains (Adade-Yeboah et al., 2024; Languages of Ghana, 2025; Languages of Nigeria, 2025). Consequently, English in Ghana and Nigeria is best understood not as a neutral communicative tool, but as a historically grounded, socially

powerful language whose continued growth will significantly shape the linguistic futures of both nations.

#### *Enhancement of Communicative Competence via Bilingualism*

Research in bilingualism consistently shows that successful development of a second language depends on the presence of a strong first language. Cummins (1979) explains that languages within the learner interact cognitively, meaning that knowledge gained in one language supports learning in another. When learners have a weak or neglected first language, they struggle to internalise grammar and communicate effectively in English (Cummins 2000; 2001). This highlights the importance of maintaining indigenous language proficiency to strengthen overall communicative competence. Studies on bilingual education reveal that monolingual instruction rarely provides sufficient linguistic depth. Baker (2011) and García (2009) demonstrate that learners educated in additive bilingual programmes, where both English and indigenous languages are developed, show stronger grammatical awareness and greater flexibility in communication than those instructed exclusively in English. The findings suggest that bilingualism provides the structural support necessary for effective language use.

Grosjean (1989; 2010) emphasises that bilinguals function as integrated linguistic systems rather than two separate monolinguals. When one language is neglected, learners develop imbalance that manifests as inconsistent grammar and restricted communication. Maintaining competence in both languages allows learners to leverage cognitive resources for precise, contextually appropriate expression. Cook's (1991; 2003) concept of multi-competence reinforces this view, asserting that underdevelopment in one language negatively affects the learner's entire linguistic system. In contexts where English dominates schooling, learners often lose proficiency in their indigenous language while failing to consolidate English grammar. This dual deficiency weakens communicative competence across languages.

Language policy scholarship underscores the risks of prioritising a single global language. Phillipson (1992; 2009) and Skutnabb Kangas (2000) argue that marginalising indigenous languages in education deprives learners of a stable grammatical foundation. Without this anchor, learners internalise fragmented structures, limiting their ability to communicate effectively in any language. African scholars show similar concerns. Bamgbose (1991) and Prah (2009) note that removing indigenous languages from formal education erodes learners' linguistic confidence and precision. Indigenous language competence provides cognitive scaffolding that supports English learning, and its absence restricts both expressive and receptive abilities. Large-scale research affirms the benefits of bilingual instruction. Thomas and Collier (2002), UNESCO (2003), and the World Bank (2005) demonstrate that learners perform better academically and linguistically when both English and indigenous languages are supported. Alidou et al. (2006) also show that bilingual programmes enhance metalinguistic awareness and cognitive flexibility, which in turn strengthens communicative competence.

Heugh (2011) argues that neglecting indigenous language development produces fragmented grammatical knowledge in English, leading to speakers who can communicate only partially and inconsistently. May (2014) reinforces that bilingual instruction nurtures both cognitive and linguistic capacities, producing learners who are accurate, adaptable, and confident communicators. Skutnabb Kangas (2000) and Phillipson (1992; 2009) further caution that English-only education can undermine both the first language and the second, leaving learners linguistically vulnerable. Maintaining indigenous language alongside English ensures learners retain a stable foundation for complex linguistic tasks. Collectively, these works establish that bilingualism is essential for the enhancement of communicative competence. Indigenous language maintenance supports English learning, cognitive development, and grammatical stability. Conversely, English-only instruction risks producing learners with limited proficiency in both English and their indigenous languages, resulting in reduced communicative effectiveness. This evidence underscores that the most effective path to strong communication skills is a balanced, bilingual approach that values and develops both linguistic systems.

**METHOD**

This study employs a quantitative survey research design to examine the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa, with particular focus on Ghana and Nigeria. The design allows for systematic collection of data on the extent and patterns of English-only language practices in selected urban schools and communities, as well as their structural impact on language use. To ensure representation across major educational and socio-cultural contexts, a stratified random sampling method was adopted. In each country, urban centres with high concentrations of English-medium instruction and dominant English use were selected. For Nigeria, the cities included Lagos and Ibadan in the southwest, Enugu and Onitsha in the southeast, and Kano and Kaduna in the north. For Ghana, Accra and Kumasi were chosen as the primary centres. These locations were selected because they represent socio-economic hubs with extensive English-dominant educational environments, ensuring that participants reflect diverse socio-linguistic contexts where English monolingualism is prevalent. The selection does not imply that English monolingualism is absent elsewhere; rather, these cities serve as representative settings for the study.

Within each city, participants were randomly selected from secondary schools that operate English-medium instruction across the British, Ghanaian, and Nigerian curricula. Respondents were contacted through school administrations, professional networks of educators, and online social platforms. Residency and school enrolment were confirmed through official school records and brief follow-up communications. The fieldwork spanned five months to allow thorough data collection across multiple sites. To strengthen credibility, trained research assistants based in each city facilitated data collection. Their local familiarity reduced travel costs and allowed for faster coordination with schools and participants. In addition to administering the survey, research assistants conducted brief, non-intrusive visits to selected schools ( $n = 42$ ) to verify compliance with the English-medium instruction criterion. These visits served as a validation mechanism to ensure accuracy in reported language practices.

**Participants:** The study comprised 400 respondents (200 from Ghana and 200 from Nigeria) selected through a **stratified random sampling technique**, ensuring proportional representation across the selected urban centres and school types. Participants were drawn exclusively from senior secondary school populations, with an **age range of 15–19 years**, reflecting a stage where grammatical competence in English is expected to be relatively stabilised. All respondents were enrolled in English-medium institutions and had completed a minimum of nine years of formal education, thereby ensuring comparable educational exposure across both national contexts.

**Instrument:** A structured questionnaire, adapted from validated sociolinguistic and applied linguistics instruments, was employed. The instrument consisted of **three sections**: (i) background information and language history (multiple-choice items), (ii) language use patterns (Likert-scale and frequency-based items), and (iii) **objective grammatical competence tasks**, including **sentence correction and multiple-choice items**. The grammatical section comprised **20 items on tense usage** and **20 items on subject-verb agreement (concord)**, specifically designed to test both basic and complex constructions. Closed-ended formats were prioritised to minimise interpretive ambiguity and ensure consistency in responses. Surveys were administered both in-person and online to accommodate varying levels of access to digital platforms. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

**Validity and Reliability:** The instrument was subjected to a **pilot study involving 30 respondents** drawn from similar educational contexts but excluded from the main sample. Feedback from the pilot informed revisions for clarity, item relevance, and structural balance. To establish internal consistency, a **Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82** was obtained for the grammatical competence scale, indicating a high level of reliability. Content validity was ensured through expert review by scholars in sociolinguistics and English language education,

confirming that the instrument adequately captured the constructs of monolingual language exposure and grammatical competence.

**Data Analysis:** The sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Cochran's (1953) formula with a 95% confidence level, maximum variability ( $p = 0.5$ ), and a 5% margin of error, providing adequate representation for generalisation. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used to summarise patterns of English monolingual practices and grammatical performance. Inferential analysis was conducted using the **independent samples t-test** to examine differences between Ghanaian and Nigerian participants in tense and concord performance. In addition, the Chi-Square Test of Independence was applied to assess associations between socio-demographic variables and language use patterns. All analyses were carried out using **Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 26**, ensuring accuracy and robustness in statistical computation.

### Data analysis

Table 1. Participants' Language Background

Variable	Response Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Fluency in English	Yes	325	81.9
	No	72	18.1
	Total	397	100.0
Major Language of Communication at Home	English	385	95.0
	Indigenous languages	25	5.0
	Total	400	100.0
Spoke Another Language Besides English Before Age 8	Yes	53	15.0
	No	357	85.0
	Total	400	100.0
Mode of English Language Acquisition	School	65	18.0
	Home	345	82.0
	Total	400	100.0
Taught English Before Speaking It	Yes	92	21.0
	No	308	79.0
	Total	400	100.0

Table 1 gives an insight on participants' language background reveals the overwhelming dominance of English among the respondents. Regarding fluency in English, 325 participants, representing 81.9 per cent of the sample, reported that they were fluent in English, while 72 participants, or 18.1 per cent, indicated that they were not fluent. This shows that most participants can communicate in English, though the level of grammatical competence varies, as the subsequent tables indicate. When examining the major language of communication at home, 385 participants (95 per cent) reported using English predominantly, whereas only 25 participants (5 per cent) used indigenous languages. This indicates that English serves as the primary medium for domestic interaction, and the use of indigenous languages is minimal. Consequently, learners have almost no exposure to structured linguistic reinforcement from an indigenous language.

Early exposure to additional languages was also limited. Only 53 participants (15 per cent) reported speaking another language besides English before the age of eight, while 357 participants (85 per cent) had no such exposure. This confirms that for the majority, English was the only language available during critical language development periods. The mode of English acquisition further reinforces this pattern. A significant 345 participants (82 per cent) acquired English at home, while 65 participants (18 per cent) learned it primarily through school instruction. This shows that English learning is largely naturalistic and unmediated by formal instruction in early years. Additionally, only 92 participants (21 per cent) reported being taught English before they could speak it, whereas 308 participants (79 per cent) were not formally taught before speaking. This indicates that English acquisition was

predominantly experiential rather than structured, further explaining the partial grammatical competence observed in later tables.

Taken together, the figures show that participants operate almost exclusively in English. Indigenous languages are barely used, and early multilingual reinforcement is almost absent. While participants can communicate, their reliance on English alone, combined with incomplete formal instruction, results in a fragile linguistic system. They are left without a fully competent language, a phenomenon that exemplifies the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa.

### Presentation of concord and tense data

Table 2. Presentation of Standard English Grammatical Concord Table 2: Many a student \_\_\_\_\_ not read anymore

Answer = does		Many a student _____ not read anymore.				Total
		Does	Do	Is	was	
Country	Ghana	53	136	7	2	198
	Nigeria	86	104	5	3	198
Total		139	240	12	5	396

The responses to “*Many a student \_\_\_\_\_ not read anymore*” reveal a clear divergence between prescriptive grammar and actual usage. In Ghana, 136 of 198 respondents selected *do* instead of the correct singular verb *does*, while only 53 chose the accurate form. In Nigeria, 104 chose *do*, and 86 selected *does*. Minimal selections of *is* and *was* were observed in both countries, collectively accounting for 17 responses. Overall, only 139 of 396 participants adhered to the singular agreement required by *many a + noun*, indicating substantial misalignment between grammatical expectation and user behaviour.

These findings demonstrate the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa. Continuous exposure to English without complementary indigenous language practice appears to produce learners who communicate effectively but inconsistently apply rules. The preference for *do* over *does* suggests reliance on surface-level intuition rather than internalised structural knowledge. Speakers operate within a partially consolidated system where grammatical rules exist theoretically but are unstable in actual use, reflecting residual diffusion in subject-verb agreement patterns.

Consequently, the data shows a key implication of English monolingual dominance: it fosters functional communicative competence while simultaneously producing structural fragility. Learners may successfully convey meaning, yet recurrent misapplication of singular verbs points to lingering weaknesses in grammatical mastery. This illustrates that exclusive English instruction, in the absence of a robust linguistic foundation, generates users who are proficient in communication but limited in rule-governed grammatical accuracy; a central aspect of the grammatical aftermath observed in West African contexts.

Table 3. The chief, together with the elders, \_\_\_\_\_ welcomed to the party.

Answer = was		The chief, together with the elders, _____ welcomed to the party.				Total
		Was	Is	Were	are	
Country	Ghana	35	215	107	36	199
	Nigeria	23	6	126	43	198
Total		58	27	233	79	397

The responses to Table 3, “*The chief, together with the elders, \_\_\_\_\_ welcomed to the party*” highlight significant variation in subject-verb agreement. In Ghana, only 35 of 199 respondents selected the correct singular verb *was*, while 107 chose *were*, and 215 selected *is* or *are* collectively. In Nigeria, 23 selected *was*, 126 chose *were*, and the remaining 49 selected *is* or *are*. Overall, out of 397 participants, only 58 applied the grammatically appropriate singular form, indicating widespread confusion, particularly in distinguishing between singular subjects accompanied by plural phrases and plural subjects.

This pattern exemplifies the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism. Learners appear to overgeneralise plural verb forms when phrases such as *together with the*

elders are present, despite the main subject being singular. Exposure to English as the dominant or sole medium of education has not led to stable internalisation of structural rules. The lack of engagement with indigenous languages, which could reinforce subject-verb distinctions, results in a partially consolidated grammatical system. Users thus rely on surface cues rather than formal rules, producing inconsistent agreement.

The data show that English monolingual dominance fosters functional communication but leaves persistent structural gaps. The frequent misapplication of plural verbs in a singular-subject context demonstrates residual instability in grammatical competence. Such outcomes reflect the lingering effects of monolingual instruction: speakers may convey meaning effectively but fail to apply standard rules consistently. This aligns with the study's aim, showing that exclusive reliance on English can produce communicatively active learners whose grammatical knowledge remains diffuse and fragile, a hallmark of the grammatical aftermath in West African English.

Table 4. Neither those girls nor that boy \_\_\_\_\_ to blame for the error.

Answer = was		Neither those girls nor that boy _____ to blame for the error				Total
		are	were	Was	Have	
Country	Ghana	76	78	41	5	200
	Nigeria	65	79	44	9	197
<b>Total</b>		<b>141</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>397</b>

The responses to Table 4, "Neither those girls nor that boy \_\_\_\_\_ to blame for the error" indicate widespread difficulty in applying singular agreement in coordinated subjects. In Ghana, 41 of 200 respondents selected the correct singular verb *was*, while 76 chose *are* and 78 chose *were*. In Nigeria, 44 selected *was*, 65 chose *are*, and 79 chose *were*. Very few respondents selected *have*. Overall, only 85 of 397 participants applied the correct singular form, suggesting that the majority of speakers defaulted to plural verbs despite the grammatical rule requiring singular agreement.

This illustrates the lingering effects of English monolingualism on grammatical competence. Learners frequently overgeneralise plural forms when faced with coordinated subjects, relying on semantic perception rather than structural knowledge. The limited exposure to indigenous languages means speakers lack additional reference frameworks to reinforce singular agreement rules. As a result, internalised grammatical systems remain partially developed, producing inconsistent verb choices that exemplify the grammatical aftermath in everyday English use.

The educational implication is that English monolingual instruction produces learners who can convey meaning but without stable rule-based competence. Persistent selection of plural verbs in a singular context highlights residual instability and incomplete internalisation of agreement rules. Speakers achieve functional communication, yet their structural understanding remains fragile, confirming that exclusive English exposure in West Africa fosters a communicatively active yet grammatically diffuse user base.

Table 5. The principal, as well as the teachers, \_\_\_\_\_ in School.

Answer = is		The principal, as well as the teachers, _____ in school.				Total
		is	Were	all are	are	
Country	Ghana	47	35	25	93	200
	Nigeria	18	49	28	103	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>65</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>398</b>

Table 5 indicates a strong preference for plural verb forms despite the singular subject. In Ghana, 93 of 200 respondents selected *are*, while only 47 chose the correct singular *is*. Similarly, in Nigeria, 103 of 198 chose *are*, and just 18 applied *is*. Smaller numbers selected *were* or *all are*, reflecting minor variation in plural misapplication. Overall, only 65 of 398 participants used the grammatically accurate singular verb, showing that pluralisation dominates across both countries.

This reflects the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa. When a singular subject is accompanied by a plural phrase (*as well as the teachers*), learners

consistently overgeneralise plural verbs. English is learned primarily through formal education, yet limited practice and the absence of indigenous language reinforcement prevent proper internalisation of complex agreement rules. Speakers thus operate within a partially consolidated system, relying on surface cues rather than structural knowledge.

The educational implication is that exclusive English exposure fosters communicative functionality but not stable rule-based competence. The persistent use of plural verbs in contexts requiring singular agreement demonstrates residual grammatical instability. Speakers achieve meaning but lack consistent structural accuracy, illustrating the lasting effects of English monolingual instruction – the hallmark of grammatical aftermath in West African contexts.

Table 6. Neither Jack nor Jill \_\_\_\_\_ there yesterday

		Neither Jack nor jill _____ there yesterday				
<b>Answer = was</b>		are	Were	is	was	Total
Country	Ghana	22	109	17	52	200
	Nigeria	31	94	10	63	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>398</b>

The data in Table 6 , reveals a strong tendency to select plural verbs despite the singular subject requirement. In Ghana, 109 respondents chose *were*, while only 52 correctly selected *was*. In Nigeria, 94 chose *were* and 63 chose *was*. Smaller numbers selected *are* or *is*, with 22 in Ghana and 31 in Nigeria choosing *are*, and 17 and 10 choosing *is* respectively. Overall, only 115 of 398 participants applied the correct singular verb, showing that the majority rely on plural forms even when grammatical rules dictate otherwise.

Learners appear to overgeneralise plural agreement in coordinated subjects introduced by *neither...nor*, showing reliance on semantic intuition rather than formal rule internalisation. The limited use of indigenous languages removes a potential scaffold for reinforcing singular verb rules. As a result, speakers' internal grammatical systems remain partially developed, producing inconsistency in verb selection and illustrating lingering instability in subject-verb agreement.

The educational consequence is that English monolingual instruction produces communicators who can express meaning but without firm structural control. Persistent pluralisation in singular-subject contexts demonstrates residual grammatical diffusion. Learners achieve functional communication but remain grammatically fragile, providing a clear example of the lasting effects of exclusive English exposure – the hallmark of the grammatical aftermath in West African English.

Table 7. Either James or you \_\_\_\_\_ sick.

		Either James or you _____ sick.				
<b>Answer = are</b>		is	Have	Was	are	Total
Country	Ghana	87	15	31	66	199
	Nigeria	77	16	61	43	197
<b>Total</b>		<b>164</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>396</b>

Table 7 reveals considerable difficulty with verb agreement in either...or constructions. In Ghana, 66 of 199 respondents correctly selected *are*, while 87 opted for *is*, and 31 selected *was*. In Nigeria, 43 of 197 participants chose *are*, while 77 selected *is* and 61 chose *was*. Smaller numbers chose *have* in both countries. In total, only 109 of 396 participants applied the grammatically correct plural verb, indicating that the majority of respondents misapplied agreement rules when the subject combined singular and plural elements.

These patterns indicate persistent grammatical instability resulting from monolingual English exposure. Speakers frequently extend singular verb forms to contexts requiring plural agreement, suggesting a limited consolidation of agreement principles. The absence of complementary engagement with indigenous languages reduces opportunities for cross-linguistic reinforcement, leaving users to navigate structural challenges through approximate or heuristic strategies. Consequently, subject-verb pairing in coordinated structures remains inconsistent and prone to overgeneralisation.

The educational consequence is that English monolingual instruction produces learners who can communicate basic meaning but struggle with precise grammatical

alignment. The recurrent preference for singular verbs in plural contexts signals enduring weaknesses in formal rule application. This illustrates the grammatical aftermath in practice: learners demonstrate functional competence yet retain gaps in structural control, revealing the subtle but lasting influence of monolingual instruction on the grammar of West African English speakers.

Table 8: Each of the footballers \_\_\_\_\_ to receive \$1000.00.

		Each of the footballers _____ to receive \$1000.00.				
<b>Answer = is</b>		Is	Have	were	are	Total
Country	Ghana	64	27	25	83	199
	Nigeria	33	13	48	104	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>97</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>397</b>

Table 8 indicates a clear divergence in verb selection among participants. In Ghana, 64 of 199 respondents chose the correct singular verb *is*, while 83 selected *are*, 27 selected *have*, and 25 selected *were*. In Nigeria, 33 selected *is*, 104 chose *are*, 13 chose *have*, and 48 chose *were*. Altogether, only 97 of 397 participants applied the correct singular verb, indicating that plural forms were overwhelmingly preferred, despite the singular subject *each of the footballers*.

This trend illustrates the lingering effects of English monolingualism on grammatical competence. Respondents consistently extend plural verbs to singular distributive subjects, suggesting incomplete mastery of number agreement. The lack of reinforcement from indigenous language structures may contribute to this overextension, leaving learners dependent on contextual guesses rather than firmly established rules. As a result, subject-verb agreement is applied inconsistently, producing a diffuse grammatical system in which formal singular rules are frequently overlooked.

The educational implication is that exclusive exposure to English fosters communicative functionality but not precise grammatical control. Recurrent pluralisation in contexts requiring singular agreement reflects residual instability in formal grammar. Learners can convey meaning effectively, yet structural accuracy remains fragile, exemplifying the grammatical aftermath of English monolingual instruction in West Africa, where functional use coexists with persistent rule-based gaps.

Table 9. Only one of the contestants \_\_\_\_\_ able to answer the question

		Only one of the contestants _____ able to answer the question correctly.				
<b>Answer = was</b>		can be	Are	Ware	was	Total
Country	Ghana	1	8	26	165	200
	Nigeria	2	6	16	174	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>398</b>

The data in Table 9 shows a strong tendency for respondents to select the correct singular verb *was*. In Ghana, 165 of 200 participants chose *was*, while smaller numbers selected *ware* (26), *are* (8), or *can be* (1). In Nigeria, 174 of 198 selected *was*, with 16 choosing *ware*, 6 selecting *are*, and 2 opting for *can be*. Overall, 339 of 398 participants answered correctly, indicating a higher level of grammatical accuracy compared to previous items, though a minority still applied plural or inappropriate forms.

This pattern suggests that singular agreement is more effectively applied when the subject is clearly singular, as with *only one*. Learners appear capable of recognising straightforward singular constructions, but residual errors—particularly plural or non-standard verbs—show that inconsistencies remain in less transparent contexts. The lack of indigenous language reinforcement still limits exposure to structural contrasts, so while participants can often follow simple agreement rules, challenges persist with more complex or less familiar constructions.

The findings imply that monolingual English instruction can produce partial mastery of grammatical rules: users perform well when agreement is overtly singular but struggle in ambiguous or compounded subjects. The residual selection of plural and incorrect forms underscores that English monolingualism yields functional communicators with uneven

structural competence. This demonstrates the continuing influence of grammatical aftermath, where learners achieve communicative success but with occasional lapses in formal accuracy.

Table 10. Sixty per cent of the students \_\_\_\_\_ absent.

		Sixty per cent of the students _____ absent.				
<b>Answer = are</b>		Is	are	Have	has	Total
Country	Ghana	28	163	9	0	200
	Nigeria	31	157	6	5	199
<b>Total</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>399</b>

Table 10 shows that most respondents correctly selected the plural verb *are*. In Ghana, 163 of 200 participants applied *are*, with 28 choosing *is*, 9 selecting *have*, and none choosing *has*. In Nigeria, 157 of 199 chose *are*, while 31 selected *is*, 6 chose *have*, and 5 opted for *has*. Overall, 320 of 399 participants answered correctly, indicating strong awareness of plural agreement when a percentage phrase modifies a plural noun, though a small proportion still misapplied singular or auxiliary forms.

This pattern highlights that plural constructions are more reliably produced when quantitative markers signal multiple subjects. Learners demonstrate the ability to align verbs with semantic cues such as *sixty per cent*, showing partial grammatical consolidation. However, occasional selection of singular verbs or auxiliary forms suggests that underlying agreement rules remain fragile in contexts that are not purely numeric or where conceptual ambiguity exists. The data illustrates that even functional competence in English is accompanied by residual instability in structural control.

From an educational perspective, the findings suggest that exposure to English as a monolingual medium can reinforce certain high-frequency patterns effectively. While students correctly produce plural verbs with clear numeric subjects, inconsistencies elsewhere indicate that grammatical mastery is uneven. This outcome aligns with the study's focus on the grammatical aftermath of monolingual instruction, demonstrating that learners communicate successfully in familiar structures but retain subtle vulnerabilities in formal rule application.

Table 11. Bode and Tunji are very selfish; they care only about.

		Bode and Tunji are very selfish; they care only about.				
<b>Answer = each other</b>		each other	one another	themselves	them	Total
Country	Ghana	38	28	129	5	200
	Nigeria	38	23	127	10	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>76</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>398</b>

Table 11 shows that most respondents selected the incorrect reflexive pronoun. In Ghana, 129 of 200 participants chose *themselves*, while only 38 selected the correct reciprocal *each other*. In Nigeria, 127 of 198 opted for *themselves*, with 38 correctly choosing *each other*. Smaller numbers chose *one another* or *them*. In total, just 76 of 398 participants applied the accurate form, highlighting a pronounced tendency to overgeneralise reflexive pronouns in place of reciprocals.

This pattern demonstrates the subtle challenges of English monolingual exposure on pronoun use. Learners frequently misapply reflexive forms where reciprocal pronouns are required, suggesting incomplete grammatical consolidation. Limited engagement with indigenous languages deprives speakers of alternative structural frameworks, leaving them to navigate English rules through approximation. The result is an inconsistent system in which formal distinctions, such as reciprocal versus reflexive, are not reliably observed.

From a linguistic and pedagogical perspective, the findings indicate that English monolingual instruction fosters communication that is largely intelligible but structurally fragile. The persistent substitution of *themselves* for *each other* shows that learners retain gaps in precision, even in apparently simple constructions. This outcome underscores how exclusive reliance on English can produce users who convey meaning effectively yet exhibit

recurring weaknesses in formal grammatical control—a clear example of the grammatical aftermath in West African contexts.

Table 12. Present Perfect Continuous Tense: I am tired. I \_\_\_\_\_ for seven hours!

		I am tired. I _____ for seven hours!			
		have studied	have been	had been studying	Total
Country	Ghana	58	142	0	200
	Nigeria	50	147	1	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>108</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>398</b>

Table 12 shows that only a portion of respondents consistently applied the correct present perfect continuous form *have been studying*. In Ghana, 142 of 200 participants selected the accurate form, while 58 chose the simpler *have studied*. In Nigeria, 147 of 198 used the correct form, with 50 selecting *have studied* and 1 choosing *had been studying*. Overall, 289 of 398 participants answered correctly, yet a significant minority misapplied the tense, suggesting uncertainty even in a familiar continuous structure.

This shows the erosion of grammatical competence caused by exclusive English monolingual exposure. Learners are not fully mastering complex English tense forms, and, at the same time, reduced engagement with indigenous languages weakens their ability to apply similar temporal constructions in their first language. The result is a partially consolidated linguistic system: learners can sometimes communicate, but structural control is inconsistent, leaving them with fragile or incomplete competence in both languages. Overreliance on English without cross-linguistic scaffolding undermines deeper grammatical understanding.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings suggest that English monolingual instruction produces speakers who achieve functional expression but fail to develop stable, rule-governed proficiency. Errors in tense selection—even in structured exercises—show that learners' grammatical systems are diffuse, reflecting a broader trend where neither English nor indigenous languages are fully internalised. This exemplifies the grammatical aftermath in West Africa: learners maintain partial communicative ability but lack consolidated competence in any language, highlighting the long-term consequences of monolingual education.

Table 13. Simple Past Tense: My family \_\_\_\_\_ in Canada for a year when I was a child.

		My family _____ in Canada for a year when I was a child.			
		was living	Lives	lived	Total
Country	Ghana	23	16	161	200
	Nigeria	18	43	137	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>398</b>

Table 13 presents responses to the item "My family \_\_\_\_\_ in Canada for a year when I was a child," which tests the use of the simple past tense. In Ghana, 161 of 200 respondents selected the correct form *lived*, while 23 chose *was living* and 16 selected *lives*. In Nigeria, 137 of 198 respondents chose *lived*, while 18 selected *was living* and 43 opted for *lives*. Overall, 298 of 398 participants provided the correct response, indicating a relatively high level of accuracy compared to several previous items, though a notable proportion still selected incorrect tense forms.

This pattern suggests that learners demonstrate stronger control over basic tense structures, particularly when temporal markers such as "when I was a child" clearly signal past time reference. The high selection of *lived* indicates that many respondents can correctly align verb tense with explicit contextual cues. However, the presence of responses such as *was living* reflects some confusion between simple past and past continuous forms, while the

selection of *lives* suggests occasional failure to recognise past time reference. These deviations indicate that although the rule is generally understood, its application is not entirely stable across all learners.

From the perspective of English monolingualism, the findings show partial grammatical consolidation. Learners appear more confident with straightforward tense constructions than with more complex agreement patterns observed in earlier tables. Nevertheless, the persistence of incorrect forms demonstrates that reliance on English alone does not ensure complete mastery of tense distinctions. The limited reinforcement from indigenous languages may reduce opportunities for deeper grammatical comparison, resulting in residual inconsistencies.

The educational implication is that English monolingual instruction can effectively support the acquisition of basic and high-frequency grammatical structures such as the simple past tense. However, the remaining errors highlight underlying instability in tense usage, particularly in distinguishing between related forms. This reinforces the broader conclusion of the study: learners achieve functional communicative competence in familiar contexts but continue to exhibit gaps in precise grammatical control, reflecting the enduring grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa.

Table 14. Future Perfect Tense: Most major states \_\_\_\_\_ significantly over the last 30 years.

		Most major states _____ significantly over the last 30 years.			
<b>Answer = have</b>					
<b>drown</b>		<i>grew</i>	<i>have drown</i>	<i>will grow</i>	<b>Total</b>
Country	Ghana	63	131	6	200
	Nigeria	77	104	17	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>140</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>398</b>

The data in Table 14, shows that most participants correctly selected the future perfect form *have grown* (assuming the answer “have grown” rather than “have drown”). In Ghana, 131 of 200 participants answered correctly, while 63 selected *grew* and 6 chose *will grow*. In Nigeria, 104 of 198 selected the correct form, with 77 choosing *grew* and 17 opting for *will grow*. Overall, 235 of 398 participants applied the accurate future perfect tense, yet a sizeable proportion defaulted to simple past or future forms, indicating partial understanding and inconsistent tense application.

This pattern highlights the fragility of grammatical competence among West African English speakers. Learners show partial awareness of perfective constructions, but errors in tense selection suggest that structural knowledge is not fully internalised. Coupled with reduced engagement with indigenous languages, which could reinforce temporal distinctions, these learners are left with a diffuse grammatical system. They communicate meaning but cannot consistently apply formal rules, illustrating how monolingual English exposure erodes competence across languages.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings suggest that English monolingual instruction produces functional users who struggle with precision in complex tense forms. Frequent misapplication of past or future forms in contexts requiring future perfect shows residual instability and incomplete grammatical consolidation. This demonstrates the grammatical aftermath in West Africa: learners maintain partial communicative ability yet possess fragile competence in both English and indigenous languages, leaving them vulnerable to persistent structural errors.

Table 15. Future Perfect Tense: "We will have finished by 6 pm". What is the name given to the quoted expression?

		"We will have finished by 6 pm". What is the name given to the quoted expression?			
<b>Answer = future perfect</b>		<i>future perfect</i>	<i>future continuous</i>	<i>future simple</i>	<b>Total</b>
Country	Ghana	143	24	32	199
	Nigeria	116	46	34	196

<b>Total</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>395</b>
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The data in Table 15 shows that while a majority of respondents correctly identified the tense as *future perfect*, a notable number selected other forms. In Ghana, 143 of 199 participants answered correctly, whereas 24 chose *future continuous* and 32 selected *future simple*. In Nigeria, 116 of 196 chose the correct form, while 46 selected *future continuous* and 34 chose *future simple*. Overall, 259 of 395 participants applied the accurate label, leaving 136 participants who misidentified the tense, which indicates considerable uncertainty in recognising formal temporal structures.

This shows inconsistent control of English grammar. Even in a clear and contextually supported example, many learners failed to identify the correct future perfect tense. Combined with reduced engagement with indigenous languages, which limits opportunities to reinforce grammatical structures, this suggests that learners are developing neither full competence in English nor in their indigenous languages. Their grammatical systems are incomplete and unstable, allowing communication but lacking formal accuracy.

From an educational and linguistic perspective, the findings indicate that learners operate with a partially formed linguistic system. They can convey meaning but do not consistently apply tense rules in English, while the decline in the use of indigenous languages prevents reinforcement of grammatical concepts across languages. This leaves learners without a fully competent language. They are able to express themselves at a basic level, yet neither English nor their indigenous language is fully mastered, demonstrating the grammatical aftermath in West African English speakers.

Table 16. Soon as She \_\_\_\_\_ home, she sits on the chair and asks her children how they spend their day

		Soon as She ___ home, She sits on the chair and asks her children how they spend their day				
<b>Answer = comes</b>		Came	comes	has come	none	Total
Country	Ghana	62	121	12	1	196
	Nigeria	61	117	19	0	197
<b>Total</b>		<b>123</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>393</b>

Table 16 shows that most respondents selected *comes*, which is the expected form in this habitual present time construction. In Ghana, 121 of 196 participants chose *comes*, while 62 selected *came*, 12 chose *has come*, and one provided no answer. In Nigeria, 117 of 197 participants selected *comes*, with 61 choosing *came* and 19 opting for *has come*. Altogether, 238 of 393 responses were correct, while 155 responses reflected tense mismatch or inappropriate aspectual choice.

The distribution reveals uncertainty in handling tense sequencing within routine or habitual contexts. Although many learners recognise the present tense requirement, a substantial number shift to past or perfect forms, suggesting difficulty in maintaining temporal consistency within a single clause sequence. This inconsistency points to weak grammatical anchoring, where tense selection appears driven by surface meaning rather than stable rule application. Such instability indicates that English tense use remains only partially internalised.

When viewed alongside the declining functional use of indigenous languages, the findings suggest a broader grammatical gap. Learners are not consolidating tense systems in English, yet they also lack sustained engagement with indigenous grammatical structures that could reinforce temporal distinctions. As a result, they operate with an incomplete linguistic framework. They can narrate daily activities, but their tense choices lack precision, leaving them without a fully competent language system in either English or their indigenous languages. This reflects the ongoing grammatical aftermath observed in West African English usage.

Table 17. \_\_\_\_\_ very little when you are with people you are meeting for the first time.

\_\_\_\_\_ very little when you are with people you are meeting for the first time.

Answer = always speaks		had always spoken	was always speaking	always speaks	always speaking	Total
Country	Ghana	69	53	52	20	195
	Nigeria	62	48	56	31	197
<b>Total</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>392</b>

Table 17 responses show a wide spread across the available tense and aspect options, with no single form clearly dominating. In Ghana, 69 participants selected *had always spoken*, 53 chose *was always speaking*, 52 selected the expected form *always speaks*, and 20 chose *always speaking*. In Nigeria, 62 selected *had always spoken*, 48 chose *was always speaking*, 56 selected *always speaks*, and 31 opted for *always speaking*. Overall, only 108 of 392 respondents chose the grammatically appropriate present simple form, while 284 responses reflected tense or aspect choices that do not fit the context.

This distribution suggests difficulty in selecting tense forms that align with general behavioural statements. Rather than maintaining the present simple for habitual actions, many learners shifted to past or progressive constructions. This tendency points to uncertainty in distinguishing between time reference and aspectual meaning. The data indicates that learners recognise the idea of repeated action but struggle to express it using a stable grammatical form.

In broader terms, the findings reflect a fragile grammatical foundation. Learners appear unable to consistently apply English tense patterns, even in familiar social situations. At the same time, reduced reliance on indigenous languages limits exposure to structured tense systems that could support grammatical clarity. As a result, learners function with an unsettled linguistic system, communicating meaning without firm grammatical control in English, while also lacking strong competence in their indigenous languages. This reinforces the claim that they are left without a fully competent language.

Table 18. Last month, while I \_\_\_\_\_ a walk in the garden, I met Prof. Udah.

		Last month, while I _____ a walk in the garden, I met Prof. Udah.				Total
Answer = was taking		have taken	Took	was taken	was taking	Total
Country	Ghana	15	38	33	114	200
	Nigeria	14	36	25	122	197
<b>Total</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>397</b>

Table 18 indicates that while a majority of respondents selected the correct past continuous form *was taking*, a significant number chose alternative forms. In Ghana, 114 of 200 participants answered correctly, while 38 selected *took*, 33 chose *was taken*, and 15 selected *have taken*. In Nigeria, 122 of 197 chose *was taking*, with 36 selecting *took*, 25 choosing *was taken*, and 14 opting for *have taken*. Overall, 236 of 397 responses were correct, leaving 161 responses that reflected tense or voice errors.

This pattern suggests that learners struggle to consistently apply past continuous constructions, even in a context where the temporal cue *last month* and the subordinate clause *while I* make the intended tense clear. Many defaulted to simple past, passive, or perfect forms, indicating incomplete internalisation of English tense rules. Their errors reveal that their grammatical system is fragmented, relying on intuition rather than consolidated knowledge.

From a linguistic perspective, the findings indicate that these learners operate with only English, yet their command of the language is partial and unstable. They are able to convey meaning but cannot reliably produce accurate tense forms. Without the support of

another language, their incomplete English leaves them with no fully competent linguistic system, demonstrating the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa.

Table 19. "I will be walking tomorrow" The quoted expression is an example of \_\_\_\_\_ tense

		"I will be walking tomorrow" The quoted expression is an example of.....tense				
<b>Answer = future continuous</b>		perfect	present simple	future continuous	none	Total
Country	Ghana	17	61	119	3	200
	Nigeria	22	33	142	0	197
Total		39	94	261	3	397

Table 19 reveals that most participants correctly identified the tense as *future continuous*, but a significant portion chose other forms. In Ghana, 119 of 200 respondents selected the correct tense, while 61 opted for *present simple*, 17 chose *perfect*, and 3 gave no answer. In Nigeria, 142 of 197 participants selected *future continuous*, 33 chose *present simple*, and 22 selected *perfect*. Overall, 261 of 397 responses were accurate, leaving 136 participants whose answers reflected misunderstandings or uncertainty regarding English tense classification.

The distribution indicates uneven understanding of progressive tense forms in future contexts. While many learners can recognise and apply *future continuous* correctly, a substantial number default to simpler forms or unrelated tenses. This demonstrates that even when learners are exposed to clear temporal markers, their grasp of English tense rules is inconsistent. The errors highlight a lack of consolidated grammatical knowledge, suggesting that English has not been fully internalised as a structured system.

From a broader perspective, the findings show that these learners, who operate entirely in English, possess only partial competence. Their ability to communicate meaning exists alongside frequent structural mistakes, meaning they lack a fully competent language system. Without alternative linguistic support, their incomplete English leaves them vulnerable to persistent errors and indicates the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa.

Table 20. This time next year, I \_\_\_\_\_ in London for seven years

		This time next year, I _____ in London for seven years.				
<b>Answer = will have been living</b>		will have been living	will have lived	will be living	none	Total
Country	Ghana	44	55	98	2	199
	Nigeria	33	41	122	2	198
Total		77	96	220	4	397

The responses in Table 20, show that only a portion of participants correctly identified the tense as *will have been living*. In Ghana, 44 of 199 participants answered correctly, while 55 selected *will have lived*, 98 chose *will be living*, and 2 provided no answer. In Nigeria, 33 of 198 selected the correct form, 41 chose *will have lived*, 122 selected *will be living*, and 2 gave no response. Overall, 77 of 397 participants applied the grammatically accurate future perfect continuous form, leaving 320 responses that did not align with the expected tense.

This pattern reflects a clear difficulty in handling complex progressive future constructions. Even when temporal markers such as *this time next year* and the duration for *seven years* provide strong contextual cues, many learners defaulted to simpler future or future perfect forms. Their responses indicate incomplete consolidation of English tense rules and

uncertainty in expressing prolonged future actions. The uneven application suggests that learners' grammatical knowledge is fragile and not fully internalised.

From a linguistic perspective, these findings underline that learners operate entirely in English yet remain without a fully competent language. Their capacity to communicate meaning is present, but structural control over complex tense forms is limited. With no support from indigenous languages, learners' English remains partially formed, leaving them with a fragmented linguistic system. This illustrates the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa, where speakers can convey ideas but fail to achieve stable and complete language competence.

Table 21. Would you have left for school very late? The quoted expression is an example of what?

		'Would you have left for school very late? The quoted expression is an example of what?'				
<b>Answer =conditional perfect continuous tense</b>		past perfect	present simple	future perfect continuous	none	Total
Country	Ghana	117	41	39	2	199
	Nigeria	116	38	40	1	195
<b>Total</b>		<b>233</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>394</b>

Table 21 Examination of the responses reveals that more than half of the participants correctly identified the tense as *conditional perfect continuous*. Specifically, in Ghana, 117 out of 199 respondents answered correctly, while 41 selected *past perfect*, 39 chose *future perfect continuous*, and 2 left the item blank. In Nigeria, 116 out of 195 participants gave the correct response, whereas 38 chose *past perfect*, 40 selected *future perfect continuous*, and 1 left it unanswered. Collectively, 233 of 394 participants recognised the correct construction, leaving a sizeable 161 whose responses indicate uncertainty in tense classification.

The pattern indicates that while many learners can identify complex conditional forms, a substantial number struggle to distinguish them from other perfect or future forms. The frequency of incorrect choices shows that learners' English grammar knowledge is inconsistent. They may grasp the general meaning of the sentence, but the precise temporal and conditional relationships required by the tense are often misunderstood.

Viewed more broadly, these findings illustrate that learners, operating exclusively in English, do not achieve full command of grammatical structures. Their ability to communicate remains intact to a limited degree, yet the precision expected in formal tense usage is frequently absent. Without a second language to reinforce structural rules, learners' English competence is uneven, leaving them unable to rely on a fully developed linguistic system. This underscores the grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in West Africa, where meaning is often conveyed at the expense of formal accuracy.

Table 22. Independent T-test Analysis

<b>Independent Samples Test-Test</b>						
	Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Std. Error Mean
<b>Tense</b>	Ghana	200	50.6907	4.58396	0.005	0.32911
	Nigeria	200	52.0054	4.26369	0.005	0.31014
<b>Concord</b>	Ghana	200	35.7062	3.66488	0.020	0.26312
	Nigeria	200	33.5615	3.42197	0.020	0.25024

Table 22 shows the T-test results indicate statistically significant differences between Ghanaian and Nigerian participants in both tense and concord performance. For tense, Ghana had a mean score of 50.69 with a standard deviation of 4.58, while Nigeria scored slightly higher with a mean of 52.01 and a standard deviation of 4.26. The two-tailed significance value of 0.005 shows that this difference is statistically meaningful. Regarding concord, Ghanaian participants achieved a mean of 35.71, compared to 33.56 for Nigerian participants, with a significance value of 0.020, indicating a reliable difference between the groups.

These findings suggest variation in grammatical performance between the two countries. Nigerian learners slightly outperformed Ghanaians in tense, yet lagged behind in

concord. The differences may reflect subtle distinctions in instruction, exposure, or familiarity with specific grammatical structures. Despite these variations, both groups demonstrate uneven command of English rules, particularly when dealing with complex tense sequences or subject-verb agreement. The standard deviations show that performance is not uniform within either group, indicating that many learners still struggle to internalise tense and concord rules reliably.

Viewed in the context of the broader study, the T-test results support the argument that West African learners are operating entirely in English yet lack full competence. While mean scores provide evidence of some ability, the observed errors and inconsistencies across both countries suggest that learners do not possess a fully consolidated linguistic system. They can communicate meaning to a functional degree, but structural precision in tense and concord remains fragile, reflecting the ongoing grammatical aftermath of English monolingualism in the region.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that English monolingualism among educated speakers in Ghana and Nigeria produces a distinct grammatical aftermath marked by instability and incomplete linguistic competence. Background data indicate that approximately 95% of respondents could not speak any indigenous language at all, confirming non-acquisition rather than language loss. English therefore functions as the sole communicative resource for most participants, a situation consistent with monolingual ideologies observed in multilingual African educational contexts (Mathabata & Munir, 2025). Despite exclusive reliance on English, performance across concord items reveals persistent grammatical inconsistency. Fewer than 40% of respondents consistently produced grammatically appropriate verb forms in constructions involving distributive expressions, coordinated subjects, and complex noun phrases. High rates of plural overgeneralisation suggest reliance on surface semantic cues rather than internalised syntactic rules. Similar outcomes have been reported in African contexts where dominant-language schooling promotes functional fluency without grammatical depth, reinforcing monoglossic norms (Feltman, 2025).

Tense usage followed a comparable pattern. While respondents performed relatively well in simple past constructions, accuracy declined sharply in perfect, continuous, habitual, and complex future tenses. Notably, fewer than 20% correctly produced future perfect continuous constructions, indicating weak control of aspectual sequencing. This supports arguments that monolingual language environments, particularly those shaped by colonial language policies, often yield structurally fragile competence rather than full grammatical mastery (Aroge & Makalela, 2024). Comparative analysis revealed statistically significant differences between Ghanaian and Nigerian respondents in both tense ( $p = 0.005$ ) and concord ( $p = 0.020$ ). However, these differences do not obscure the broader pattern of grammatical instability evident across both contexts. The findings align with evidence from Southern African settings showing that English-only policies constrain linguistic development even among formally educated speakers (Set, 2023).

Importantly, within the communicative competence framework adopted in this study, grammatical competence represents only one component alongside sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences. The persistent grammatical instability observed therefore extends beyond isolated structural weakness to indicate a broader limitation in overall communicative competence. Although participants rely exclusively on English as their primary communicative resource, their inability to consistently apply grammatical rules undermines effective meaning-making, coherence, and contextual appropriateness. When combined with the near-total absence of indigenous language proficiency, this suggests that these speakers lack not only grammatical accuracy but also the integrated linguistic resources required for full communicative functionality.

The results show that English monolingual dominance produces speakers who depend entirely on English yet lack stable grammatical competence, while simultaneously possessing no functional proficiency in any indigenous language. This dual deficit confirms that monolingualism in multilingual African societies does not guarantee communicative competence but instead generates structurally incomplete linguistic systems.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that English monolingualism among educated speakers in Ghana and Nigeria results in grammatical instability alongside the near-total non-acquisition of indigenous languages, leaving learners without full communicative competence in any language. Exclusive dependence on English does not guarantee structural mastery but instead produces incomplete linguistic systems shaped by monoglossic educational and societal norms. The key findings reveal that despite widespread use of English, a significant proportion of learners fail to consistently demonstrate mastery of core grammatical structures, confirming uneven and fragile competence. The findings highlight the urgent need to reconsider English-only language practices in multilingual African contexts. The study shows the need for language policy reforms that promote bilingual or multilingual education, integrating indigenous languages alongside English to strengthen learners' cognitive and linguistic foundation. For curriculum design, there is a clear need to incorporate structured indigenous language instruction while reinforcing English grammar through contrastive and context-based teaching approaches. Accordingly, it is recommended that educational systems actively encourage indigenous language learning, particularly at early stages, to enhance both grammatical competence and overall communicative effectiveness. Future research should adopt longitudinal and experimental designs to examine how early indigenous language exposure influences grammatical development in English. However, the study is limited by its focus on selected urban centres in Ghana and Nigeria, which may restrict generalisability, and by its partial reliance on self-reported language background data, which may introduce response bias. Future research should therefore extend to longitudinal studies and controlled experimental designs to more robustly examine the impact of bilingual exposure and instructional models across diverse sociolinguistic contexts.

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