

C U S O O R I E N T A T I O N

P I D G I N E N G L I S H

INTRODUCTION

It is usual for people, including children, in any village to yell at a 'whiteman' or 'whitewoman': Oyibo, or Onyatcha, Bekke, or Mbakara, in the south of Nigeria, either because of fascination or due to curiosity. This doesn't mean you are unwanted. You are! You are being welcomed; they want you in their midst: for a chat or for any question which they might not even be able to answer due to communication problem. In most areas of southern Nigeria, apart from the area language, Pidgin English is a language that is widely spoken, whether in the streets, markets, motor-parks, buses or post offices. We therefore feel your orientation wouldn't be complete without the following hints on Pidgin English:

<u>Pidgin English</u>	<u>English</u>
<u>Native:</u> Oyibo (or Onyatcha, Bekke, Mbakara) e don come-o! Oyibo!! Oyibo e don come! Welcome! Welcome!!	<u>Native:</u> The whiteman has come! Whiteman! Whiteman!! welcome! welcome!! welcome!!!
<u>Volunteer:</u> Thank you, my friend, thank you.	<u>Volunteer:</u> Thank you.
<u>TO BUY ANYTHING ON A STREET, MARKET, YOUR DOOR-STEP, OR ANYWHERE, HAGGLING MAY BE IN THIS MANNER:</u>	
<u>Native:</u> Oyibo: come buy orange, dem sweet and them get plenty water.	<u>Native:</u> Whiteman, come and buy some oranges; they are sweet and juicy!
<u>Volunteer:</u> Okay, how you de sell am?	<u>Volunteer:</u> O.K. how much are your oranges?
<u>Native:</u> Na only ten-ten kobo.	<u>Native:</u> They are ten kobo each.
<u>Volunteer:</u> I no go pay ten kobo; make I pay 5 kobo. I go buy plenty.	<u>Volunteer:</u> I won't pay 10 kobo each, let me buy them for 5 kobo each. I want lots.
<u>Native:</u> Like how many you wan buy?	<u>Native:</u> How many do you want?
<u>Volunteer:</u> I go buy like 20 for one Naira (N1.00).	<u>Volunteer:</u> I will pay N1.00 for twenty oranges.
<u>Native:</u> Okay, pay money.	<u>Native:</u> O.K. give me the Naira.

Pidgin English

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English

A VOLUNTEER REQUESTS HIS NIGERIAN FRIEND THAT THEY GO TO MARKET...

Volunteer: My friend, make we go to market now.

Native: No, I no go go, I de do something-o, go come.

Volunteer: Well, I wan go, becos I no wan waste time.

Volunteer: My friend, could we go to market now.

Native: No, I can't go now; I'm doing something; you may go if you want to.

Volunteer: Well, I think I'll go because I have little time to waste.

GETTING ON THE ROAD, VOLUNTEER TRIES TO CAT A TAXI CAB,
AND TAXI DRIVER BARGAINS WITH VOLUNTEER:

Volunteer: How much I go pay to go market?

Driver: Na one Naira (₦1.00).

Volunteer: Oga, dat is too much. I go pay 50 kobo.

Driver: No, I no fit take 50 kobo, i-too small-o!

Volunteer: Well, if dat be too small for you, I go come down.

Volunteer: What's the fare to the market?

Driver: It's one Naira (₦1.00).

Volunteer: Mister, that's exorbitant; I'll pay 50 kobo.

Driver: No, I can't accept 50 kobo, that's not fair.

Volunteer: Well, if that amount is too small, then I'm getting out.

AS VOLUNTEER TRIES TO OPEN THE CAR DOOR, TAXI DRIVER
QUICKLY ACCEPTS THE OFFER OF 50 KOBO AND SAID:

Driver: Okay, lefam, make we go.

Driver: O.K. I now accept, let's go.

IN THE MAIN MARKET, VOLUNTEER APPROACHES A SELLER OF A GIVEN COMMODITY (SAY, MEAT) AND ASKS FOR THE PRICE OF A PIECE:

Pidgin English

Volunteer: How much you de sell dis piece of meat?

Native: Na only ten Naira (₦10.00), how much you go pay?

Volunteer: Oga, I go pay three naira (₦3.00).

Native: No, three Naira is too small, Oga; Pay ₦5.00.

Volunteer: I no go pay ₦5.00. You go cheat me.
Let me pay ₦3.50.

Native: No I never cheat you, my friend; okay, pay
₦4.00. I no cheat you for dat.

Volunteer: Na this be your last price?

Native: Yes, I no go come down at all; if you
no wan buy, make you go!

Volunteer: Okay, I de go; dat price is too much.

English

Volunteer: How much is this piece of meat?

Native: It's only ₦10.00. How much will you pay?

Volunteer: Sir/Mister, I will only pay ₦3.00.

Native: No, ₦3.00 isn't enough, you must pay ₦5.00.

Volunteer: I won't pay you ₦5.00, that's exorbitant, but
I will pay ₦3.50

Native: No. I'm not trying to cheat you, so pay me
₦4.00. At that price, it's not cheating.

Volunteer: Is this your lowest price?

Native: Yes, I won't go any lower at all.
If you don't like it, go!

Volunteer: O.K. I'm going. Your price is too high.

AS VOLUNTEER WALKS AWAY SLOWLY AND LISTENS, THE
CALLS HIM BACK TO SAY:

Native: Oyibo (or Onyatcha/Bekke/Mbakara) bring
money, bring money, my friend.

Native: Whiteman, come back, and bring your money,
bring money, my friend.

IN THIS CASE, YOU PAY BUYER'S LAST PRICE, I.E. ₦3.50

AT HOME WITH YOUR VILLAGE FRIEND:

Pidgin English

Native: How you de, my frend?
Volunteer: I dey well-o and God dey or "We" thank God.
Native: Which country be your own?
Volunteer: My country be Canada.
Native: I be you no go come for house; please enter my house.
Volunteer: Ckay thank you.
Native: Make you si down.
Native: Thank you, you don come
Volunteer: Na you get all dis children?
Native: Oh yes, dem be my children.
Volunteer: Abi na dis wan be the oldest pikin?
Native: Yes, na him be my oldest pikin.
Native: Make I bring you some palmwine or soft drink, or kai-kai or Oyibo hot drink, or moonshine?
Volunteer: Yes, I go drink some palmwine.
Volunteer: My good frend, thank you for de plenty things wey you don do for me. I wan go now becos I wan do something for house.
Native: O.K. thank you and go well-o.

English

Native: How are you my friend?
Volunteer: Oh, I am well, thank you. We give thanks to God.
Native: Which country do you come from?
Volunteer: I'm from Canada.
Native: Would you like to come into my house?
Volunteer: O-Yes, thank you.
Native: Sit down in this chair please!
Volunteer sits.
Native: Thank you, you are welcome.
Volunteer: Are all these children your own?
Native: Oh yes, they are my children.
Volunteer: Is this your eldest child?
Native: Yes this is my eldest child.
Native: Would you like a glass of palmwine, or soft drink, or kai-kai or Oyibo hot drink, or moonshine?
Volunteer: Yes please, I'll have a glass of palmwine
Volunteer: Thanks for the drink; I have to go home now!
Native: Goodbye, see you.

TRIP BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT FROM PORT HARCOURT TO UMUAHIA

Pidgin English

Volunteer: Which car de go Umuahia?

SOMEONE POINTS A FINGER TO ONE OF THE TAXIS TRAVELLING TO UMUAHIA AND SAID:

Native: Na . dat one wey dey for dat Umuahia side.

Volunteer: How much you de charge to go to Umuahia?

Taxi-man: Na six Naira for one passenger.

Volunteer: I go pay three Naira last.

Taxi-man: Okay, pay your money, and enter motor.

GETTING TO TOWN, TAXI DRIVER TAKES VOLUNTEER AND HALF WAY TO DESTINATION, DEMANDS MORE MONEY:

Taxi: Oga, the place we de go is too far/or there is plenty go-slow; I never chop for 50 kobo for town, so make you pay me 80 kobo.

Volunteer: But we don talk about the money finish and we stop for 50 kobo, why you de ask for another money. Una too make wahala for passengers. You see, I no get extra money for pocket.

Taxi: Oga, I beg-o, make you add something.

Volunteer: Okay, I go put 10 kobo on top, make e be 60 kobo.

English

Volunteer: Which Taxi is going to Umuahia?

Native: That Taxi is going to Umuahia.

Volunteer: How much will the trip cost me?

Taxi-man: Pay ₦6.00.

Volunteer: I will only pay ₦3.00.

Taxi-man: O.K. Give me your money.

Taxi: Sir we have gone to and far/the traffic is too heavy. Please, I can't break even for 50 kobo. Pay me 80 kobo.

Volunteer: We already agreed on the price at 50 kobo. Why are you asking for more? I haven't got any more money anyway. You taxi drivers complains a lot.

Taxi: Please Sir, pay me something more!

Volunteer: O.K. I will give you 60 kobo.

TAXI DRIVER THEN SMILES!

AT THE HOSPITAL

Pidgin English

Volunteer: You fit tell me where the hospital dey?

Native: The hospital e dey down, down, this place.
Go, when you reach down there, make you
ask somebody to show you.

Volunteer: I wan see doctor. E dey for office?

Nurse: No, E no dey for office. E don go town-o.

Volunteer: What time doctor go come back?

Nurse: Na for afternoon - say, by 2 O'clock.
If you come by dat time you go see-am.

Volunteer: Okay I go come back by 2 O'clock.

Thank you!

English

Volunteer: Can you direct me to the hospital please?

Native: The hospital is down this way. Ask someone
else when you are farther on.

Volunteer: I wish to see the doctor! Is he in his office?

Nurse: No, the doctor is not in, he has gone to town.

Volunteer: When will the doctor be back?

Nurse: He will come back this afternoon at 2:00 p.m.
If you come at 2:00 p.m. he will be here and
you can see him.

Volunteer: O.K. I will come back at 2:00 p.m.

Thank you!