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Notes to Contributors

***JAPPIN* is the Journal of the Association of Phoneticians and Phonologists in Nigeria.** It is an outlet for reports of empirical studies and theoretical expositions within the purviews of the spoken language, phonetics and phonology, elocution and related areas.

Submissions should comply with the style adopted by the journal. Manuscripts should be original and must not have been previously submitted for publication in any other journal. Manuscript word length **must** not exceed **6000** words (including the Abstract, and References

Manuscript should be typed in Times New Roman, Font 12; the transcriptions may appear in Lucida Sans Unicode and the British spelling is preferred.

There should be an abstract of not more than **200** words. The manuscript title should be written in title case and in bold fonts. The major subheadings should appear also in title case and in bold fonts while other subheadings may be in title case but not in bold fonts. The cover page should include the Paper Title, Names of Author(s) with surname(s) appearing last, address of institution and the email address.
The number of pages should be below the page in the centre.

Introduction, review of literature, aim and objectives, methodology, analysis, findings and conclusion should be succinctly explained and clear.

Manuscript should be written in English. And not more than 15 pages. Double line spacing. Accurate translation into the English language of texts in other languages, is required.

Findings and Discussion Charts and Tables should be carefully labelled and discussions of findings should be clear to readers that are not Phoneticians and /or Phonologists.

The APA style sheet is preferred for the References. In-text citations should be correctly referenced and secondary citations should be avoided. The format of the Journal of International Phonetics Association is the recommended model. This may be downloaded online.

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Contents

EDITORIAL

Journal of the Association of Phoneticians and Phonologists in Nigeria (JAPPIN) is a blind peer-reviewed international journal. It is the official journal of the Association of Phoneticians and Phonologists in Nigeria. This is its second volume. All the fourteen papers that appear in this volume were carefully selected for quality and impact. They attempt to do justice to evolving developments in the areas of phonetics and phonology from diverse perspectives.

The journal publishes well researched original articles that address any issues, topics or phenomena in areas of phonetics and phonology and related sciences. Preference is given to data-driven scholarly articles. Well-written book reviews and review papers may also be considered. Papers submitted for publication must be original and must not have been published before and must not be under active consideration for publication elsewhere. Manuscripts should be typed in Times New Roman 12 points, and all special symbols embedded in the word file. The transcriptions may appear in Lucida Sans Unicode. The British-type spelling convention is preferred. There should be an abstract of about 200 words, which must be accompanied with not more than 5 keywords. Manuscripts' sections and subsections should be numbered as follows:

1 (Major heading)
1.1 (First Sub-heading)
1.2 (Second Sub-heading)
2 (Major heading)

Manuscripts files must be justified, with (sub-) headings aligned left; and paper title, author(s)'s name(s) and affiliation(s) centred. Data or examples should be numbered consecutively throughout the entire text; and any 'sub-examples' should be referred to by lower case letters, e.g., (1) a., b., etc.

Footnotes, which must be sparingly used only for substantive materials, should also be numbered consecutively. Only materials that are explicitly cited in the work should be listed in the References; and each reference item should include: (a) the full name of author(s); (b) the

date of publication; (c) for books, place of publication and name of publisher; (d) for articles, volume number for journals and page numbers for both journal articles and papers in collections. The APA style is preferred. No fee is charged for publication.

Editor-in-Chief

Marginal Phonemes in English

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Abstract
This paper is fundamentally concerned with questioning the canonicity of the British Received Pronunciation (RP) system, which is almost normally taken to comprise forty-four (44) distinctive segmental sounds, i.e. phonemes. It proceeds by making use of the idea of 'marginality', defined as characterizing that which lies close to the margins or edges of any entity. A marginal phoneme is thus one which is at present excluded from the canon (but perhaps ought not to be), or alternatively one which is at present included in it (but shows signs of attrition). Sounds discussed in detail are triphthongs, certain diphthongs, the consonants /hw/ and /ʒ/, and the nasal vowel /ã/. At each point attention is drawn to the distinctive way in which each sound might be realized in Nigerian English. The main conclusion is that the triphthongs /aɪə/ and /aʊə/ clearly have phonemic status and ought to be included in the canon, and that the diphthongs /eə/ and /ʊə/ and the consonant /ʒ/ ought to be retained in it, so that RP would have a total of forty-six (46) phonemes. Some implications of the analysis for Nigerian English are briefly explored, and in particular the point is made that, given the reality of language change, it is not reasonable to expect that Nigerian English phonology should, for an indefinite future, reflect any changes that occur in British RP.

1 Introduction

1.1 The phoneme

The phoneme continues to be widely understood, accepted and utilised as the minimal segmental sound of any language. Clark and Yallop (1995) describe it as 'a contrastive or distinctive sound within a language'. It has been a key concept in descriptive phonology, concerned with identifying, describing, and comparing segmental sounds. In generative phonology, epitomized by the work of Chomsky and Halle (1968), abstract 'features' are instead considered to be the fundamental elements; yet, as the work of more recent generativists such as Giegerich (1993) suggests, it is difficult in practice for the phoneme concept to be dispensed with.

A major function of the phoneme is semantic: it serves to distinguish lexical meaning. As such, it has no semantic value in isolation; only when it occurs with other phonemes does this value become apparent. The well-known idea of a minimal pair provides numerous examples: thus, where X and Y are contrasting phonemes, XA and YA are a minimal pair (*it-eat*), as also are AX and AY (*of-off*), AXB and AYB (*pool-pull,*), ABX and ABY (*sin-sing*), etc. There are also minimal triads (e.g. *saw-soar-sore*).

It is a commonplace observation that English has a large number of phonemes, both vowels and consonants; Nigerian languages, in contrast, generally have fewer vowels but in some cases have more consonants. Varieties of English vary somewhat in their phoneme inventories, although it is chiefly vowels that vary, consonants hardly varying at all.

1.2 'Received Pronunciation'

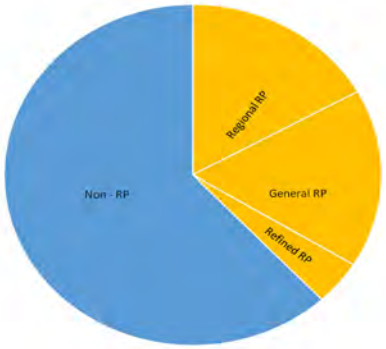
The official model or standard for pronunciation in Nigeria (indicated, e.g., by the WAEC syllabus) continues to be British 'Received Pronunciation', RP. Several scholars (e.g. Jibril 1982) have shown how Nigerian speakers at different educational levels and of different ethnicities approximate to this standard.

In Britain itself, however, both the name – 'Received Pronunciation' – and its referent have been increasingly questioned in recent decades. Awonusi (1989) sought to draw attention to this fact over three decades ago. A major criticism is that originally 'RP' referred to the accent of Britain's upper classes, a small group of people who have ceased to be politically or socially important. Another criticism is that, even if it now refers to a wider social group of the highly educated, they are still a comparatively small group and are found mostly in Southern England.

Some of Britain's leading scholars in the field have therefore modified or abandoned use of the expression. One of them is Alan Cruttenden, who today carries on the magisterial role with regard to RP earlier played by A.C.Gimson, and by Daniel Jones earlier still. In the sixth edition of Gimson's classic work (Cruttenden 2001), he distinguishes three sub-varieties of RP – 'General', 'Refined' (RP in the older sense),

and 'Regional'; but in the eighth edition (Cruttenden 2014) he abandons 'RP' altogether, and prefers 'General British', 'GB'. But he also uses 'RGB' ('Regional General British') and 'CGB ('Conspicuous General British') to refer to the other sub-varieties of the earlier edition. Roach (2009) prefers 'BBC English', on the grounds that not every educated person in Britain speaks with any variety of the accent referred to by 'General British'. But 'BBC English', which means the accent of the BBC's newsreaders, is also unsatisfactory because many such persons (especially those reading the news on BBC World) do not speak with this accent.

The following pie-chart illustrates a possible breakdown of speakers of English in the UK today based on the analysis of Cruttenden (2001), although it might be considered too generous in the proportion it allots to RP speakers (indicated by the yellow sections):



In view of these controversies, 'RP' will still be used in this article, and it should be understood as referring to the 'General RP' of Cruttenden (2001).

RP is usually said to possess twenty (20) vowel phonemes, of which twelve (12) are 'pure' and eight (8) are diphthongs. In contrast, General American (GA) has only sixteen (16). These and the other main varieties of English also contain twenty-four (24) consonants, so that RP is said to contain forty-four (44) phonemes altogether.

Acceptance of these figures for RP has been the normal and unquestioned and still live tradition: to take one explicit example

among many, it is cited in an online publication, 'The Reading Well' ('a virtual well of dyslexia resources'). Nigerian scholars reflect the consensus. Thus Eka (1996) lists the conventional twenty vowels, although he later mentions triphthongs. Triphthongs are an important example of 'marginal phonemes', and are fully discussed below.

2 Marginality

The main purpose of this paper is to question the fixedness of 44 as the number of RP phonemes. It demonstrates that there are certain segmental sounds that arguably should be included among the 44 – that, though they are at present excluded, some phonologists seem to recognize their phonemic status. Including them would obviously increase the number beyond 44. Conversely, there is the possibility that some of the 44 phonemes are currently suffering some kind of attrition, becoming conflated with other phonemes; excluding them would obviously reduce the total number again. To cover both possibilities, a concept is now here introduced under the name 'marginality'. The 'marginal' is what lies at the edges, is what is uncertain, is what might or might not qualify to be included in the main matter under consideration, the main text. A marginal phoneme is thus one that is close to qualifying for inclusion in the inventory, or alternatively one that is close to qualifying for exclusion from it. But the concept will be used here to discuss not only the two fundamental types already described, but elaborations or specifications of these. The full range of phenomena discussed below is therefore as follows:

(1) As suggested above, some segmental sounds might not be included in the canonical 44, but there are good reasons why they ought to be.
(2) Also as suggested, some sounds currently featuring in the list are believed by some phonologists to be disappearing, by being conflated with other sounds.
(3) Some sounds that do not feature in the list are ones that have disappeared in the fairly recent past by being conflated with other sounds.
(4) Some sounds which do not feature in the list are 'foreign' in the sense that the words in which they occur are 'borrowed' from 'foreign' languages.

3 Types and examples of marginality

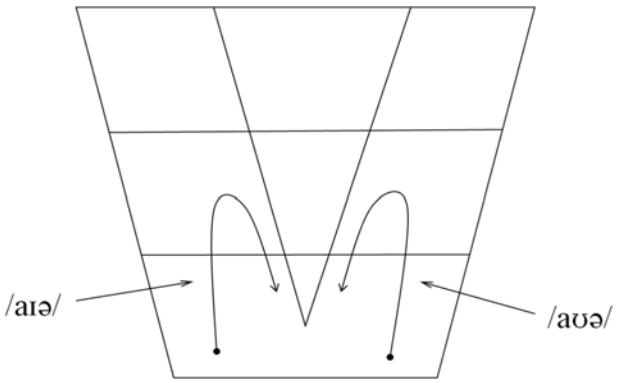
In this section, the different types of marginalities just listed are discussed.

3.1 **Excluded sounds**

Addressing marginality type (1) above, we here examine sounds that are not usually included in the RP vowel inventory.

3.1.1 Triphthongs

The most notable example of 'excluded' sounds is the triphthongs /aɪə/ and /aʊə/, i.e. a sequence of three vocalic elements that is naturally harder than a diphthong to pronounce. The first element may be retracted, especially in 'Refined' RP; thus /aʊə/ is often pronounced [ɑʊə]. The vowel chart illustrates the pronunciation of these triphthongs:



The first of the triphthongs, /aɪə/, has the common spelling '-ire', as in *fire, hire, spire, tire/tyre*; *admire*, *aspire, enquire, entire, inspire, require*, etc., and it occurs in numerous other words (*biro*, *choir, diabetes, dial, dialogue, iron, lion, via, violent*, *viral*, etc.). Its phonemic status is surely confirmed when it is contrasted with /aɪ/ in minimal pairs such as *die-dire*, *high-hire, line-lion, tie-tire, why-wire*, and *island-Ireland*. The second sound, /aʊə/, is less common but with the spelling correlate '–our' or '-ower' occurs in certain very common words: *our, hour, flour,*

scour; flower, power, shower, tower, etc. (*flour* and *flower* being homophones).

A strong case for including these triphthongs in the standard inventory is made by Jowitt (2001), and some listings do include them (e.g. Trudgill and Hannah 2008). Their exclusion seems puzzling. It seems to be due to the influence of Jones and Gimson, each of whom was primarily a phonetician rather than a phonologist. Thus Gimson in successive editions of his work regarded each triphthong merely as a diphthong + /ə/. As a description of the structure of the triphthongs just discussed this is correct; but the danger is that it implies that a syllable might contain more than one vowel, so flying in the face of classic analyses of syllable structure found in, for example, Giegerich (1992) and Roach (2009).

Gimson also believed that among 'advanced' RP speakers, undoubtedly meaning those belonging to the 'Refined' category, each was being reduced to [aːə] or [ɑːə], which would then have to be regarded as a new diphthong; and often reduction went further, the triphthong finally being conflated with /ɑː/. But 'Refined' RP (now 'CGB' in Cruttenden's work) is no longer taken to be representative of RP. Nevertheless, Cruttenden is right in pointing out that among RP and non-RP speakers alike, these triphthongs are pronounced in various ways.

Some scholars argue in favour of regarding other sounds or sound sequences as triphthong phonemes, and mention [eɪə] (as in *player, betrayer*, etc), [əʊə] (as in *grower, sower,* etc), and [ɔɪə] (as in *employer*). These are thus five triphthongs described by Eka (1996) and also in Cruttenden (2014). But, as Jowitt (2001) points out, this tendency seems to confuse phonetic and phonemic (or morphophonemic) levels of analysis. Each represents an accidental juxtaposition at the phonetic level of a diphthong + /ə/ but at the morphophonemic level the separation of the two is clearly seen: thus the noun *player* can be specified at this level as pleɪ + ə, i.e. the verbal root pleɪ to which agentive 'er' (i.e.) has been suffixed.

Many apparent /aɪə/ or /aʊə/ triphthongs are also 'accidental juxtapositions' – i.e. when the third element /ə/, represents a suffix, very often –'er' or '-al', but also '-ar', '-ard', etc. Word examples include

higher, trial, liar, coward (but not for example *dial* – a 'genuine' triphthong, where the *-al* does not represent a suffix). They are therefore morphologically complex, and this fact seems reflected in a slight consonantizing of the second element, which makes it questionable whether they should be regarded even as 'accidental' triphthongs.

One or two word examples suggest that [əʊə] might also be regarded as a phoneme. One is the verb *lower*. But the word is also an adjective, as an adjective it is morphologically complex, and it would be odd to treat the [əʊə] of the verb as a phonemic triphthong but that of the adjective as an 'accidental' one.

Another possible instance of /əʊə/would be the vowel of *Noah*. This takes us into the realm of the pronunciation of Biblical proper names, and there are other such names that are relevant to this discussion: notably those ending in '-iah', such as *Nehemiah, Jeremiah*, and *Isaiah*, where the final sound seems to be the triphthong /aɪə/. However, difficulties arise. Thus if we take the pronunciation of *Isaiah* to be [aɪ.zaɪə], we imply that the word has only two syllables, which seems counter-intuitive. If, instead, we break the word into three syllables – [aɪ.zaɪ.ə] – we are decomposing the putative triphthong. Moreover, it is doubtful whether much reasoning should be based on Biblical proper names, which originally occurred in languages other than English. Therefore, not much significance should be given to *Noah*.

Onoja (2016) suggests that /ə/ might be regarded as forming a true triphthong with /ɔɪ/ in *royal*; but the '-al' here is obviously another instance of an adjectival suffix – albeit attached to a root that is not 'English'. We should therefore regard only /aɪə/ and /aʊə/ as genuine, i.e. phonemic triphthongs. As Jowitt (2019) points out, these sounds tend not to be realized as triphthongs in Nigerian English speech. The trend, especially at sub-acrolectal levels, is to make a definite consonant of the second element, with /ɪ/ in the first becoming /j/ and /ʊ/ in the second becoming /w/, so that each triphthong becomes bisyllabic. If this is regarded as one form that simplification can take, another is reduction: thus *flour* may be realized as [flɔ:] (apparently to distinguish it from *flower*), and *entire* as [enteə]. *Ireland* may be

conflated with *island*; and *naira*, the spelling of which suggests /aɪə/ as the vowel of the first syllable, is often pronounced [naɪra].

3.2 'Lost' phonemes

With regard to marginality type (3) above, there are certain sounds which featured in the phoneme system in the past but have in quite recent times become conflated with other phonemes. The 'old' sound is nevertheless still not infrequently used by some native speakers. Two notable examples are /ɔə/ and /hw/, a discussion of each of which follows.

(a) **/ɔə/**. This is a centring diphthong, and has the spelling correlate '-ore'. Though 'lost', in Trudgill and Hannah (2008), it appears in their list of 23 RP vowel phonemes. Gut (2008) also has 23 as the number of vowels in 'Southern British English'.

/ɔə/ features, or featured, in some very common words or syllables: *bore, core, fore-, more, score, shore, sore, store, wore*, and *–plore* in *deplore, implore*; others, less common, are *gore, ore, pore, whore*. The '-re' element of the spelling aligns the sound with the other centring diphthongs (/eə/, /ɪə/, /ʊə/), and what they here have in common is that they developed in the seventeenth century through the loss of post-vocalic /r/ (represented by 'r' in the spelling). For some reason /ɔə/ in modern times became very widely conflated with /ɔ:/, and a number of new homophonous pairs (or even triads) resulted: *pore-paw, wore-war, ore-or-awe*. Precisely why this happened is not clear, but one might speculate that /ɔə/ was, as it were, attracted to /ɔ:/ because as a 'long' vowel, the latter frequently features in open syllables. It is likely also that /ɔə/ became stigmatized because its closeness to /ɔ:/ caused less educated or less careful speakers to use it where /ɔ:/ was required (*door, floor, for, four, saw*, etc). This of course is a description applying to certain English native speakers; /ɔə/ seems never to have been present in Nigerian English phonology.

(b) **/ʍ/**. Described by Gimson (1978) as a voiceless labio-velar fricative, this is sometimes regarded as a consonant cluster, /hw/. To the ordinary listener it sounds like [w] preceded by [h]. If treated as a single sound it once had a phonemic function, with the spelling correlate 'wh', and contrasted with /w/, 'w'; like /w/ it featured in

syllable onsets only. Minimal pairs are *which-witch*, *whales-Wales*, *what-WOT* (the popular Nigerian card game), and *whether-weather*, but it also featured in other *wh-* words: *when, where, why, wheat, wheel, white,* etc. Gimson (1978) said that, though still used in careful speech, it was increasingly being abandoned, especially by male speakers. More recently, Melchers and Shaw (2011) point out its occurrence in Scottish English, and it is also present in Southern Irish English. Jibril (1982) suggests that the influence of Scottish and Irish missionaries may explain its use by Nigerian speakers of an older generation, although by now its use in Nigeria must be very rare indeed.

3.3 'Threatened' phonemes

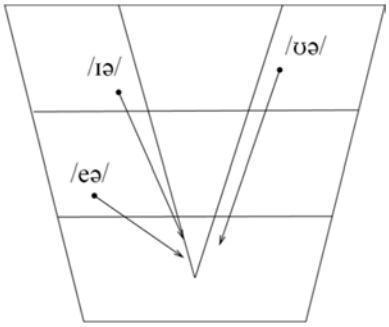
This section discusses phonemes which at present feature among the standard 44, although certain scholars, notably Cruttenden (2014), today regard them as being in the process of conflation with other sounds. Two examples are two of the centring diphthongs, /eə/ and /ʊə/, and it may be that, because another such diphthong, /ɔə/, has been largely lost, it is assumed that these others will follow suit. The third of the trio, /ɪə/, seems more stable.

/eə/. To take /eə/ first, this sound occurs in many common words with the spelling reflex '-are' or '-air' (e.g. *care, fare, share; air, fair, stair*), and with exceptional spelling reflexes in '-ere' (*there, where*) and '-ear' (*tear, wear)*. The argument concerning trends in RP today is that the second element of the diphthong is being dropped and that /e/ is left behind and that it is also lowered. But in older descriptions of RP, /e/, whether as the first element of the diphthong or as a pure vowel (as in *get*) was normally nearer to cardinal [ɛ] than to the closer cardinal [e], so that it was always misleading to use /e/ for the RP phoneme; Windsor-Lewis (1972), for one, preferred /ɛ/ for the more open sound.

Controversially, Cruttenden (2014) treats /eə/ as a new long vowel, /ɛ:/, but continues to use /e/ for the vowel of *get*. If /ɛ/ were used as the vowel of *get* there would be a curious contrast between two vowel phonemes contrasting only in terms of length. There is some evidence that this attrition of /eə/ is taking place, especially among younger native speakers. It is doubtful, however, if it is a general trend for words containing /eə/. It would mean that pairs such as *very-vary, ferry-fairy, merry-Mary* – where /eə/ occurs in a closed syllable – would

be regarded as homophonous; yet when one listens even to younger RP speakers, the vowel of a word such as *vary* is clearly a diphthong.

In Nigerian English, on the other hand, the evidence is that the trend occurs in closed syllables rather than in open syllables: thus *Mary* is often pronounced [mɛri], at least by 'PNE' or non-acrolectal speakers. But also in Nigerian English there is another trend: the conflation of /eə/ with /ɪə/, often with the realization [ia]; hence *chair-cheer, bare-beer*, *stair-steer, tear* ('rend)-*tear* ('water from the eye') all become homophonous pairs. The instability of /eə/ is probably due to the fact that in it the extent of the glide (from [e] to [ə]) is very short, shorter than it is in any of the other centring diphthongs, as the illustration suggests:



/ʊə/. The other centring diphthong often said to be threatened or even to have been conflated with another phoneme is **/ʊə/.** The rarest of the RP vowel phonemes, it occurs in an open syllable in a few words with the spelling reflex '-ure' (*lure, pure*; *endure, secure*) or '-oor' (*poor, moor*) or '-our' (*tour, contour*), sometimes in a closed syllable with the spelling reflex '-ur' (*curious, jury, rural*). Cruttenden, echoing Gimson, says that it is being conflated with RP /ɔ:/, so that *poor* becomes /pɔ:/ and *poor-pour-paw-pore* are a homophonous quartet. But the discussion usually focuses on one or two words, namely *poor* and *sure*; and, indeed, the pronunciation of the latter as [ʃɔ:] has become virtually universal. It is doubtful whether RP speakers realize *pure* as [pjɔ:] or *rural* as [rɔ:ral], as they would if the trend applied to all /ʊə/ words. Hence /ʊə/ still needs to be regarded as belonging to the RP inventory, though it certainly shows signs of instability.

In Nigerian English, a different kind of trend away from a [ʊə] pronunciation is noticeable. Or, rather, there are two trends. One is for /ʊə/ occurring in an open syllable to be realized as [ua], as in *pure* ([pjua]), *tour* ([tua]). The other trend, observable in closed syllables, is for /ʊə/ to be reduced to [u], as in *rural* [rural]). Both trends are noticeable particularly among non-acrolectal speakers.

3.4 Recent arrivals

This refers to a possible type of marginality not so far mentioned, namely phonemes that arrived in the fairly recent past and show signs of never having fully established themselves. Chiefly under consideration here is the voiced fricative /ʒ/, the rarest of the consonants, which arrived in English from French in the seventeenth century (Strang 1970). Its most common spelling reflex is '-s-' preceding '-ion', as in *confusion, decision, lesion, vision*, etc. Here it seems to be stable; but in other words, with the reflex '-ge-', notably in 'French'-sounding words such as *camouflage*, *montage, reportage, prestige,* and also *genre* it is less so with a tendency to be realized as the affricate [ʤ]; and this sounds more 'English', having been present in the language since the Old English period. Puzzlingly, it might seem, there are many other words borrowed from French and ending in '-age' where the consonant is pronounced [ʤ] and not [ʒ]: *college, courage, language, voltage*, etc; undoubtedly this is because in most cases the words were borrowed a considerable time before the arrival of /ʒ/, and so had longer time to be 'Englishized'.

Notoriously varying in its pronunciation is another '-age' word, *garage*. The *English Pronouncing Dictionary* (17th edition, 2006) lists no fewer than five attested possibilities. The first three on the list may be deemed more 'English' in so far as the stress is given to the first syllable. The very first has [ʒ] as its final consonant, as also has the last, the decidedly 'French'-sounding [gəˈrɑːʒ]; the others have the more 'English' [ʤ] as the final consonant.

3.5 'Foreign' phonemes

The discussion of the previous section leads naturally to the observation that in English there are a number of words containing a phoneme that is still regarded as 'foreign'; and that, unlike /ʒ/, the

phoneme in question does not feature in the standard inventory. The main, perhaps the only definite example is the nasal vowel /ã/. With the spelling '-an-' or '-en-', it occurs in a number of words borrowed from French: *encore, penchant, restaurant,* the increasingly common *tranche*, *en* in the phrases *en masse, en passant, en route,* and *en suite*, and in other phrases such as *carte blanche*. *Genre*, mentioned in the last section, is of special interest because it contains two 'French'-sounding phonemes, /ʒ/ and /ã/.

If frequency of occurrence is a criterion for inclusion in the inventory, the number of words in which /ã/ occurs is actually rather small. Moreover, there is, once again, a tendency to anglicize it – to 'Englishize' it - in speech, usually to [ɒ]: *en masse* may therefore be heard as [ɒn mæs], although a complication here is that [ɒ] will have a nasal colouring because of natural assimilation due to the following [n].

The commonest of the words is *restaurant*, and like *garage* in the last section, this has a number of possible realizations, five different ones for the final syllable alone being presented in the EPD entry. The order in which they are presented suggests that most common are the first three, in which the final '-nt' is realized as [ŋ] and the vowel is a nasal, but the fourth and fifth, with the final syllable realized as [ɒnt] and [ənt] respectively, are perhaps the more 'English'.

In Nigerian English, the main tendency is to adopt a spelling pronunciation for most of the words concerned, so that *restaurant* usually has a final [...nt[and *en masse* is often [en mas]. *Impasse*, another borrowing from French, has a nasal [ɛ] as the original vowel of its first syllable. In RP it is usually [æ], in Nigerian English [a] or [ɪ].

Most of the other 'foreign' sounds that might be considered here are names of persons or places that primarily occur in languages other than English and have in English been anglicized, although what seems to be 'political correctness' has sometimes in recent decades demanded the original pronunciation. Thus some BBC newsreaders began to pronounce the initial consonant of *Khartoum* as a voiceless velar fricative, [x], not a velar stop, [k]. If this trend becomes still more prevalent, we shall look forward to BBC newsreaders pronouncing Nigerian place-names in the proper way, so that they will say [ibada],

with three low tones and a nasal vowel in the third syllable, instead of [ɪbædn] (low-high-low).

The fricative [x] is included by Giegerich (1993) in his eccentric phoneme inventory, on the grounds that it features in Standard Scottish English (SSE), one of his three 'reference accents'. In SSE it derives from Scottish Gaelic, but it is rare, the most common example being *loch*, [lɒx], meaning 'lake'. When used by RP speakers mentioning Scottish place-names, it may be given this pronunciation, or anglicized to [lɒk].

3.6 Some more oddities

One oddity is the word *ruin.* If it is regarded as monosyllabic, the claim would be that it contains an otherwise non-attested diphthong, [uɪ]. The alternative - not altogether attractive – is to regard it as disyllabic, i.e. [ru.ɪn], which is how it features in the *English Pronouncing Dictionary* entry.

The disyllabic approach can account for other oddities. Thus if the word *chaos* is regarded as monosyllabic, a strange new diphthong, /eɪɒ/, would need to be recognized; but the EPD treats it as disyllabic, /keɪ.ɒs/. Likewise, *WAEC*, the acronym standing for 'West African Examinations Council', is best treated as disyllabic (/waɪ.ek/).

4 Conclusion

This article has shown that a number of sounds occur in the 'received' pronunciation of English words, i.e. in RP, that are in some sense 'marginal' to the RP system of 44 phonemes. Triphthongs are marginal because they are usually excluded from the system; but this article has restated the case for recognizing the phonemic status of /aɪə/ and /aʊə/, while arguing that other triphthongs should not be accorded this status since in most cases they are triphthongs by 'accident' at the phonetic level (i.e. in actual pronunciation). In contrast, certain sounds which once enjoyed phonemic status, such as /ɔə/ and /ʌ/, are rightly excluded because they have become largely conflated with other sounds. Some sounds are normally included in the system but they can be deemed marginal because they are often conflated with other sounds, /ʊə/ being an example. Other sounds might be considered marginal because, while included, they have a high infrequency of occurrence; /ʒ/ is the example discussed. Still other sounds are

excluded because, while they feature in English discourse, they originated in foreign languages, such as French, and in English they are often anglicized.

Altogether the conclusion must be that all the phonemes of the present RP system should continue to be recognized as such, but that the system should be expanded to include two phonemic triphthongs. The inventory thus comprises 22 vowel phonemes and 24 consonant phonemes, a total of 46.

The study has also demonstrated the reality of language change, and has shown that British Received Pronunciation (RP) is not a permanent, immutable fact of life. In its homeland, Britain, it has changed and will continue to change. But that being the case, the question – still needing to be asked, and answered - is whether or not Nigeria should automatically reproduce these changes. If not, the alternative, as suggested by Jowitt (2015), is for English in Nigeria to have its own Received Pronunciation. This need not be markedly different from standards of English pronunciation elsewhere; indeed, it should not, since international intelligibility remains an important criterion for the definition of any national Standard of English.

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Pronunciation Peculiarities across Ésàn Varieties

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Abstract
Some studies in language variation have been conducted on Ésàn. Previous efforts claim that Ésàn language contains varieties, and these varieties have been proven to display some differences in sound system and phonological structures. This study examines the specific pronunciation peculiarities that are traceable to the phonetic and phonological differences across the identified Ésàn varieties. It adopted the comparative method of data analysis. The Ibadan Wordlist of 400 basic lexical items was the main instrument for the collection of the primary data. Corpus were gathered from L1 speakers of 12 identified Ésàn varieties. Manually recorded data were transcribed in International Phonetic Alphabet format and subjected to simple comparative methods for the identification of the phonetic and phonological differences. The articulatory evidence from the data analysis showed that pronunciation differences across Ésàn varieties corresponded mostly with differences in consonant sounds across their sound inventories. This study developed on the existing literature on the study of variation in Ésàn. It highlighted the differences in the pronunciation between Ésàn varieties, and then, established some foundations for the instrumental testing in the area of Ésàn linguistics.
Key words: Ésàn varieties, Language variation, Phonetics, Phonology, Pronunciation

1. Introduction

The relevance of pronunciation as an aspect of the study of the nature of language is an endeavour that speaks for itself. This nature of language is variously expressed in the definitions proffered over time. De Saussure's (1916) definition of language is acclaimed to be one of the earliest to capture the true nature of language. He states that language is not to be confused with human speech, of which it is only a definite part, though certainly an essential one. It is both a social product of the faculty of speech and a collection of necessary conventions that have been adopted by a social body to permit individuals to exercise that faculty. He describes it as bi-componential, comprising two parts and two parts only with nothing in-between. These two parts are the thought component (or meaning) and the

symbolization component (or form). This categorization is instructive for directing the focus of this study. It goes without saying, therefore, that language fulfils its communicative role with the combination and cooperation of the form and meaning components.

This study falls within the realm of language form, also termed symbolization. Pronunciation may therefore be adequately categorized as an aspect of language form or symbolization. The description of language as comprising systematized vocal noises made in the mouth, nose and throat and organized into words and phrases for communication (Pike 1971), would seem to describe pronunciation. Pike clarifies this description when he states further that:

> If one can master the general types of movement which these parts can undergo and the combinations of their movements, one can then pronounce the sounds of any language since sounds of all languages are produced by combinations of these variables.
>
> Pike (1971, p.3)

According to him, the possibility of creating formulae in the form of phonetic alphabets to represent these movements shows that the sounds of any language can be represented graphically since these are caused by the movements of the vocal parts. In addition to the fact of being a key aspect of verbal communication, which would seem to be the most widely used amongst humans, the study of pronunciation falls within one of the two divisions into which the language phenomenon is empirically separated, which makes it indispensable for conducting language study.

This study examines differences in pronunciation between the identified Ésàn varieties. It is lexicon based and identifies the specific pronunciation peculiarities that are traceable to the phonetic and phonological differences across these varieties. This effort is perceived as a specific contribution towards the study of pronunciation and the larger goal of the study of the nature of language.

1.1 Review of Literature

Gimson, (1975) states that, the pronunciation system of a language operates within two categories of elements which include, the

segmental (consonants and vowel sounds) and the prosodic elements (syllable and pitch). He states that the realization of these elements would vary according to the situation or context of occurrence. The aspects of language formalization within which our subject matter in this study is treated are phonetics and phonology.

Phonetics concerns the physical properties of the speech sounds of language. This aspect of language study comprises the articulatory (concerning the production), the auditory (concerning the perception) and the acoustics (concerning the movement of air for formation) of speech sounds. Experimental phonetics concerns the testing and confirmation of results of analyses from any of these three branches of phonetic study.

Phonology concerns the functional properties of the identified speech sounds of a given language. In addition, it accounts for the relations between speech sounds when they are juxtaposed in utterances. This relationship sometimes results in phonological processes (changes which are brought about in the physiology of speech sounds when they co-occur). This second aspect of phonological study is more related to issues of pronunciation than the former. Thus, these phonological processes as well as the physical properties of speech sounds are co-participants in deliberations on pronunciation in languages.

That languages are always in a state of "flux" is well known (Crystal 1987, p.328). This condition of constant change of a language is brought about by changes in various aspects of the grammar of the language, such as pronunciation and syntax as well as vocabulary. Such changes result in gradual existence of differing forms of the same language. Thus over time, a given language could consist of more than one variety.

Highlights of previous related works on Ésàn include studies on its sound system and on variation in the language. The language is a member of the Edoid group. Specifically, it is classified as a member of the North Central branch of Edoid, with Edo and the dialect cluster of Ora-Emai-Iuleha as immediate neighbours on the classificatory chart (Elugbe 1989). Ésàn is spoken by the people referred to as 'the Ishans'. The people call themselves 'Ésàn'. The language is the mother tongue in five out of the eighteen Local Government Areas of Edo State (Ésàn West, Ésàn Central, Ésàn North, East, Ésàn South, East and Igueben). The language has a

proposed orthography (Okojie and Ejele 1989), which has since been reviewed (Ikoyo-Eweto 2016a).

Ejele (1982, 1986) are studies on the sound system and tense of the language respectively. The former is a phonemic analysis of Ésàn. It identifies the phonemes of the language i.e, speech sounds which cause a difference in the meaning of utterances. These phonemes are in contradistinction with the phones of the language, a term which describes all speech sounds in use in a language, irrespective of whether they are functional or not. Existing works state that Ésàn sound system comprises twenty-eight consonant phones, seven oral and five nasal vowels which contrast with their oral counterparts (Ejele 1982, 1994; Osiruemu 2010). These speech sounds are provided in Tables I and II.

Table 1: Ésàn vowel inventory

Table 1: Ésàn vowel inventory

place **manner**	**front/nasal**	**central/nasal**	**back/nasal**
High	**i ĩ**		**u ũ**
Mid	**e**		**o**
half mid	**ɛ ɛ̃**		**ɔ ɔ̃**
Low		**a ã**	

(Ikoyo-Eweto, 2016b)

Table 2: Ésàn consonant inventory

Place **manner**	**bilabial**	**labio-dental**	**alveolar**	**velar**	**Labio-velar**	**Palatal**	**Palato-alveolar**	**Glottal**
Plosive	**p b**		**t d**	**k ɡ**	**kp ɡb**			**h**
Fricative	**β**	**f v**	**s z**	**x ɤ**			**ʃ**	
Affricate							**ʧ ʤ**	
Nasal	**m**	**ɱ**	**n**				**ɲ**	
Lateral			**l**					
Trill			**r**					
Glide	**w**					**J**		

(Ikoyo-Eweto ,2016b)

The high **[’],** low **[‘],** rising **[∨]** and falling **[^]** tones are identified for Ésàn at the systematic phonetic level. However, only the high and low tones are phonemic in the language. Data in Table 3 illustrate these occurrences.

1: Tonal contrasts in Ésàn

a. / éfɛ̀ / rat
b. /èfɛ̀ / edge
c. /ékpà / vomit
d. /èkpà / punch
e. /ɔ̀kpá / one
f /ɔ̀kpà / cock
g. / áwà / dog
h. /àwà/ taboo
i. / énì / elephant
j. /ènì/ there

Osiruemu (2005, 2010) are studies on tone and grammar, and a dialect study of Ésàn, respectively. The former examines tone and syntax in Ésàn and identifies various modifications of tonal patterns in the lexicon of the language, while the latter examines varieties of Ésàn with the goal of identifying the dialects of the language. Ejele and Okojie (1987) is a proposed orthography of Ésàn. The work

identifies a writing system for Ésàn. Ikoyo-Eweto (2013) is a critique of that work. It examines the proposed writing system, identifies its strengths and weaknesses and recommends revisions to make it more representative of the language.

Other works include Ejele (2003) which is a study of tone and tonal modifications in Ésàn. The study establishes the falling [^] and rising [ ] tonal glides in Ésàn as derivations from phonological processes such as vowel elision. It explains further that these gliding tones occur due to changes in the syllable structures of the affected utterances. This change, which is referred to as disyllabification affects the first of two adjacent vowels which bear non-identical tone heights. Thus, a falling glide is formed when the tone pattern on the affected vowel sequence is a HL, while, a rising glide is formed when the pattern is a LH. These occurrences are illustrated below.

Ésàn data illustrating the formation of tonal glides

[ɔkpá # ɔkpá]	→	[ɔkpɔ̂kpá]
one one		one each
[èvá # èvá.]	→	[èvêvá.]
two two		in twos
[àmè # àmè]	→	[àmâmè]
water water		all water
[ɔnà # ɔnà]	→	[ɔnɔ̂nà]
this this		always this
[údò # údò]	→	[údǔdo]
stone stone		all stones
[áwà # áwà]	→	[áwǎwà]
dog dog		all dogs

Ikoyo-Eweto and Jamgbadi (2012) identifies Ésàn dialects using phonetic indicators as markers. Ikoyo-Eweto (2016b) identifies strategies of lexical derivation in Ésàn . The work, which focuses on aspects of the morphology of the language, examines the processes involved in the formation of lexical items in Ésàn. Non-empirical efforts by Ésàn language enthusiasts include Enojie et al (2000) which is a proposed teaching guide for the language, Okojie (2003) and Odiagbe (2004), both of which are attempts at compiling a vocabulary of the language.

1.2 The Purpose of Study

This study investigates what it terms 'pronunciation peculiarities' within the Ésàn language. Some earlier studies on the language show

that some Ésàn lexical formations exhibit differentia in the pronunciation of the same lexical item, without causing a change in the meaning or semantic import of the affected item. This occurrence is often a result of a change or difference in phonetic /phonological composition of the items in question, which difference is usually segmental or prosodic. One of such occurrences is the elision of the liquid segment [l] in word final syllables in Ésàn, as identified in Ejele's (1994) . The work explains this occurrence as a gradual loss the liquid [l] sound in the variety of the language spoken by the younger generation of its L1 Speakers. However, Osiruemu (2008) identifies the same feature as a dialectal index in the language. Some of these differences in the pronunciation within Ésàn have been identified as indices for identifying varieties in the language.

More differences in pronunciation between Ésàn varieties are identified in this study. These occurrences are more closely examined to enable further deductions to be made in this regard. This effort is a contribution towards improved understanding of the internal linguistic relations that may exist within Ésàn. Thus, although some studies on language variation in Ésàn have been conducted, the present study has the further goal of identifying those differences in the pronunciation of Ésàn lexical items which are peculiar to each identified Ésàn variety.

2. Methods

The data for this study were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The main instrument for the collection of primary data was the "Ibadan Word list of 400 Basic Items". The list comprises information about the language and the particular Ésàn variety spoken by the informant as well as a list of 400 basic lexical items in English language, whose Ésàn equivalents were provided by the consultants for this study. These items cover the lexical domains of body parts, food items, body wastes, plant and animal names, objects and implements, the elements, emotions, the professions, titles, human relations, numerals and human activities as well as 32 pronouns, comprising both the personal and interrogative.

Twelve Ésàn speech varieties are identified for this study. These varieties were deduced, in the first instance, from responses to preliminary questions on the instrument for data by the twelve

participants selected for this study. These participants were adult L1 speakers of Ésàn, one from each of the twelve identified Ésàn varieties. This selection was from an initial group of 20 adult L1 Speakers of the language, who were approached for the purpose of conducting the study. The final selection of the 12 participants was determined by the length of time each of them had lived in their speech areas as indication of their probable level of L1 competence, level of formal education up to primary school and willingness to participate in the study. The identification of 12 differently named Ésàn varieties by each of them was also a decisive factor for the initial identification of the varieties under focus in this work and for their final selection. At the end of the selection exercise, the participants for the study comprised seven (07) female and five (05) male L1 Speakers of Ésàn, who had resided in their respective speech areas since birth. The twelve Ésàn varieties are listed in their known nomenclature as: Ubiaza; Ugboha; Udo; Ewatto; Ogwa; Ekpoma; Ilushi; Uromi; Igueben; Ohordua; Irrua and Ugbegun.

Data collection and transcription were conducted solely by the researcher to ensure regularity and minimize transcription errors. Data were transcribed in phonetic tradition using the IPA format while tonal impressions were compulsorily marked on all data collected. Phonological speech processes observed to accompany the production of lexical items by informants were taken into consideration in the transcription of these items. This engendered the capturing of linguistic similarities as well as differences between the proposed Ésàn varieties. Secondary data for this study comprised previous relevant works on Ésàn.

The first part of this study examined the sound inventories, as well as phonological processes of each of the twelve Ésàn varieties under study in this work. For this aspect of the study, simple sound discovery procedures were employed. This process entailed the identification and isolation of all sounds in use in each identified Ésàn variety. At the end of the exercise, a phonetic inventory emerged for each variety. These phonetic inventories provided the input for an initial phonetic comparison between the identified Ésàn varieties. This initial step provided the basis for an identification of differences in pronunciation between these varieties. The second part of this study comprised a lexical comparison across identified Ésàn varieties to further examine peculiarities of pronunciation

across them. This aspect of the study included the identification of phonological processes as indicators of peculiarities of pronunciation, using the comparative method of analysis.

The comparative method, which was originally developed as a technique for establishing the genetic relatedness of a group of languages and for reconstructing, to some degree, the proto-language from which they descend, was introduced by philologists during the 19th century. It involves the systematic comparison of a series of languages, in order to prove a historical relationship between them. A set of formal similarities and differences between them are identified. Langacker (1974) states that this method was first applied to the Indo-European family of languages. He states that the cornerstone of this method is the notion of sound correspondences, where phonetic or phonological features are checked for degree of relatedness. According to him, this method, while often adequate for demonstrating relatedness among languages, is not best suited for investigation of sub grouping. Illustrations of differences in pronunciation across Ésàn varieties are presented in the following section to substantiate claims made in this study.

2. Findings and Discussion

The already established fact that differences in pronunciation between utterances with identical meanings, are mostly embedded in the phonetic and phonological structure of the affected data, largely informs the organization and presentations in this section. These presentations are therefore mostly data driven, to facilitate clarity and an appreciation of the subject matter. Towards this goal, treatment of differences in pronunciation between Ésàn varieties are as presented.

Table 3: Vowel sounds in lexical items across Ésàn varieties

V	Ubiaza	Ugboha	Udo	Ewatto	Ogua	Ekpoma	Ilushi	Uromi	Igueben	Ohodua	Irrua	Ugbegun
I	Irì rope	Irì rope	Irì Rope	írì rope	íbì charcoal	ikèkè back	ikèkè back	ikèkè back	Ìjèkè back	ígbɛ̀ thorn	ikèkè back	ikèkè back
u	ukpùdù heart	ùdù heart	Udù Heart	ùdù heart	udù heart	úkpùdù heart	ùdù heart	ùdù heart	ùdù heart	ùdù heart	ùdù heart	ùdù heart
e	ebàlè food	ébàè food	Ebàè Food	ébàè food	ebàè food	ẽbàè Food	ẽbàlè food	ébàlè food	ébà food	êbà food	ébàlè food	ẽbàlè food
o	ófɛ̀ fear	ófɛ̀ fear	ófɛ̀ fear	ófɛ̀ fear	ofɛ̀ fear	Ílò Song	óbɔ hand	ófɛ̀ fear	Óhã Fear	ófɛ̀ fear	óbɔ hand	óbɔ hand
ɛ	ekɛ́lè stomach	ékɛ́è stomach	Ekɛ́ Stomach	ékɛ́ stomach	ekɛ́ stomach	Ekɛ́ stomach	ékɛ́ stomach	ékɛ́lè stomach	Ekô Stomach	ɛkɛ́ stomach	ékɛ́ stomach	ékɛ́lè stomach
ɔ	ɔkà maize	ɔtà speech	ɔtà Speech	ɔkà maize	ɔkà maize	ɔtà Speech	ɔkà maize	ɔtà Speech	ɔkà maize	ɔkà maize	ɔkà maize	ɔtà Speech
a	awà dog	awà dog	awà dog	áwà dog	awà dog	áwà dog	áwà dog	áwà dog	Áwà Dog	áwà dog	áwà dog	áwà dog
Ĩ	asĩ horse	èsĩ horse	èsĩ horse	èsĩ horse	asî horse	àkàsí horse	èsĩ horse	èsĩ horse	èsĩ horse	èsĩ horse	èsĩ horse	èsĩ horse
ũ	Únù mouth	akùwaist	unù Mouth	únù mouth	unù mouth	únù mouth	únù mouth	únù mouth	Únù mouth	únù mouth	únù mouth	únù mouth
ɛ̃	ígɛ̀ wing	ígɛ̀ wing	ígɛ̀ wing	ésɛ̀ saliva	asɛ̀ saliva	ígɛ̀ feather	ésɛ̀ saliva	ésɛ̀ saliva	àsɛ̀ saliva	ésɛ̀ saliva	ésɛ̀ saliva	àsɛ̀ saliva
ɔ̃	u×ɔ	ù×ɔ	ù×ɔ	ù×ɔ	àkɔ	ù×ɔ	ù×ɔ	ù×ɔ	a×ɔ	ù×ɔ	à×ɔ	à×ɔ

1.3 Sound and Pronunciation differences between Ésàn varieties

Twelve Ésàn varieties are identified for this study - Ubiaza; Ugboha; Udo; Ewatto; Ogwa; Ekpoma; Ilushi; Uromi; Igueben; Ohordua; Irrua and Ugbegun. This final selection was based on an examination of phonetic data and subsequent identification of the sound systems of each selected Ésàn variety, which provided a more dependable basis for confirming their existence and identifying pronunciation differences peculiar to each of them.

Data analysis showed the differences and similarities between the sound systems of the Ésàn varieties as indicated below. All 12 Ésàn varieties featured all the vowel sounds and tonal patterns of the Ésàn language sound inventory, as identified from previous studies on the language. Data presented in Table 3 illustrate occurrences of these vowel sounds in words from each Ésàn variety.

Although similarity in vowel sound inventories of Ésàn varieties presented in Table 3, suggests the possibility of absence of pronunciation differences in vowel production between them, observed phonetic differences in consonant sound inventories proved more interesting. That occurrence became the empirical index for identifying varieties in the language. The observed differences in consonant sound inventories between Ésàn varieties under focus in this study were as follows:

A. 23 consonant sounds were commonly featured by the twelve Ésàn varieties while five consonant sounds were not. The 23 commonly featured consonant sounds were:

1. The plosives [p, b, t, d, k, g, kp, gb]
2. The fricatives [β, f, v, s, z, x, ɣ, h]
3. The nasals [m, n, ɲ]
4. The liquid [l]
5. The trill sound [r]
6. The approximants glides [w, j]

B. Five consonant sounds not commonly featured by to Ésàn varieties under study were:

1. The fricatives [ʃ, ʒ]
2. The affricates [ʧ, ʤ]
3. The labio-dental nasal [ɱ]

Details of these differences are presented as follows:
Data analysis revealed that Ubiaza, Ugboha and Udo exhibit identical consonant sound inventories. The total number of consonant sounds in the sound inventories of these three Ésàn varieties was 28. This was the largest consonant sound inventory which emerged from sound identification procedures.

Table 4: Consonant sound inventory for Ubiaza, Ugboha and Udo

Place **manner**	Bilabial	labio-dental	Alveolar	Velar	Labio-Velar	palatal	Palato-alveolar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	k ɡ	kp ɡb			h
Fricative	β	f v	s z	x ɤ			ʃ ʒ	
Affricate							ʧ ʤ	
Nasal	m	ɱ	n				ɲ	
Lateral			l					
Trill			r					
Glide	w					j		

Ewatto, Igueben and Ilushi did not feature the consonant sound [ʧ]. The sounds common to these three Ésàn varieties were [ʤ, ʃ, ʒ, ɱ]. These varieties featured a total of 27consonant phones.

Table 5: Consonant sound inventory for Ewatto, Igueben and Ilushi

Place **manner**	Bilabial	labio-dental	Alveolar	Velar	Labio-Velar	Palatal	Palato-alveolar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	k g	kp gb			h
Fricative	β	f v	s z	x ɤ			ʃ ʒ	
Affricate							ʤ	
Nasal	m	ɱ	n				ɲ	
Lateral			l					
Trill			r					
Glide	w					j		

Ugbegun lacked the phones [ʃ, ʧ, ɱ] and featured [ʒ, ʤ,], as well as the 23 consonant sounds commonly featured by all Ésàn varieties. Its sound inventory comprised a total of 25 phones. That occurrence made it the variety with the fewest number of consonant sounds.

Table 6: Consonant sound inventory for Ugbegun

Place **manner**	Bilabial	labio-dental	Alveolar	Velar	Labio-Velar	Palatal	Palato-alveolar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	k ɡ	kp ɡb			h
Fricative	β	f v	s z	x ɤ			ʒ	
Affricate							ʤ	
Nasal	m		n				ɲ	
Lateral			l					
Trill			r					
Glide	w					j		

Uromi did not possess [ʃ] in its consonant sound inventory which contained 27 consonant phones. It possessed the phones [ʒ, ʧ, ʤ, ɱ],

out of the five consonant sounds not commonly featured by the Ésàn varieties under focus in this study.

Table 7: Consonant sound inventory for Uromi

Place **manner**	Bilabial	labio-dental	Alveolar	Velar	Labio-velar	Palatal	Palato-alveolar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	k g	kp gb			h
Fricative	β	f v	s z	x ɤ			ʒ	
Affricate							ʧ ʤ	
Nasal	m	ɱ	n				ɲ	
Lateral			l					
Trill			r					
Glide	w					J		

Ogwa was the only variety which lacked [ʒ]. It also lacked [ʧ] and featured [ʤ, ʃ, ɱ], along with the 23 common consonant sounds. This brought its total number of consonant phones to 26.

Table 8: Consonant sound inventory for Ogwa

Place **manner**	Bilabial	labio-dental	Alveolar	Velar	Labio-Velar	Palatal	Palato-alveolar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	k g	kp gb			h
Fricative	β	f v	s z	ɪ ɤ			ʃ	
Affricate							ʤ	
Nasal	m	ɱ	n				ɲ	
Lateral			l					
Trill			r					
Glide	w					j		

Ekpoma did not feature the phones [ʃ, ŋ] in its sound inventory. It featured [ʧ, ʒ ʤ,] bringing the tonal consonants phones to 26.

Table 9: Consonant sound inventory for Ekpoma

Place manner	Bilabial	labio-dental	Alveolar	Velar	Labio-Velar	Palatal	Palato-alveolar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	k ɡ	kp ɡb			h
Fricative	β	f v	s z	x ɤ			ʒ	
Affricate							ʧ ʤ	
Nasal	m		n				ɲ	
Lateral			l					
Trill			r					
Glide	w					j		

Ohordua lacked the sounds [ʧ, ʤ] and featured [ʃ, ʒ, ŋ]. It was the only variety which lacked the doubly articulate consonant phone [ʤ]. Its consonant sound inventory comprised a total of 26 consonant phones.

Table 10: Consonant sound inventory for Ohordua

Place manner	Bilabial	labio-dental	Alveolar	Velar	Labio-velar	Palatal	Palato-alveolar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	k ɡ	kp ɡb			h
Fricative	β	f v	s z	x ɤ			ʃ ʒ	
Affricate								
Nasal	m	ŋ	n				ɲ	
Lateral			l					
Trill			r					
Glide	w					j		

Irrua lacked [ʧ, ɱ] and featured [ʤ, ʃ, ʒ]. Its sound inventory comprised a total of 26 consonant phones.

Table 11: Consonant sound inventory for Irrua

Place **manner**	Bilabial	labio-dental	Alveolar	Velar	Labio-velar	Palatal	Palato-alveolar	glottal
Plosive	p b		t d	k ɡ	kp ɡb			h
Fricative	β	f v	s z	x ɤ			ʃ ʒ	
Affricate							ʤ	
Nasal	m		n				ɲ	
Lateral			l					
Trill			r					
Glide	w					j		

Illustrations of lexical items in which the consonant sounds occur in each Ésàn variety are presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Identified consonant sounds in lexical items across Ésàn varieties

CN	UB	UH	UD	ET	OG	EK	IL	UM	IB	OD	IR	UG
p	ɔpjà Matchet	ɔpjà Matchet	ɔpjà matchet	ɔpjà Matchet	ɔpjà Matchet	ɔpjà matchet	ɔpjà Matchet	ɔpjà matchet	ɔpjà Matchet	ɔpjà matchet	ɔpjà matchet	ɔpjà matchet
b	bɔƎ build	b Ǝɔ build	bƎɔ build	bƎɔ build	bƎɔ build	bɔƎ build	bɔƎ build	bɔƎ build	bɔƎ build	bɔƎ build	bɔƎ build	bƎɔ build
t	tɪnɔ̀ dig	t ɔ́ dig	tɔ́ dig	tɔ́ dig	tɔ́ dig	tɔ́ roast	tɔ́ dig	tɔ́ dig	tɔ́ dig	tɔ́ dig	tɔ́ dig	tɪnɔ̀ dig
d	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy	dė buy
k	Kánɔ Carve	kɔƎ sew seed	k Ǝɔ sew seeds	kɔƎ sew seeds	kɔƎ sew seeds	kɔƎ sew seeds	kɔƎ sew seeds	k Ǝɔ sew seeds	k Ǝɔ sew seeds	k Ǝɔ sew seeds	kánɔ carve	ók Ǝɔ mortar
g	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover	gwè cover
kp	kpè wash	kpè wash	kpè wash	kpè wash	ɔkpá One	ěkpà bag	kpè wash	kpè wash	kpè wash	kpè wash	kpè wash	kpè wash
gb	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat	gbè to beat
β	Ĭβà you	Ĭβà you	iβà you	Ĭβà you	Ĭβà You	iβà you	iβà you	iβà you	méβɔ myself	Ĭβà you	iβà you	βòhjé to dream
f	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish	fò finish
V	òvɔlé sun	òvɔ̀é sun	òvwé sun	òvé sun	òvézé sunshine	òvɔ̀é sun	òvézé sunshine	òvɔ lé sun	Évá two	òvé sunshine	èvá two	òvɔ̀é sunshine
S	swilólɔ́ sing	swiló sing	swiló sing	swiló sing	swiló Sing	swiló sing	swiló sing	swiló sing	swihwá sing	Swiló sing	swilóré sing	Swiló sing
Z	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose	zé choose

Available data showed that most observed differences in pronunciation amongst Ésàn varieties are traceable to these

differences in consonant sound inventories between them. Consider a closer examination of some of such differences in pronunciation as provided in the following illustrations

3: Differences in pronunciation between Ésàn varieties due to variation in consonant sound inventories.

gloss:	**return**	**us**	**kick**	**thief**	**friend**
Ésàn varieties					
Ubiaza:	[ʧèré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Ugboha:	[ʧèré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Udo:	[ʧèré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Ewatto:	[kièré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Ogwa:	[kièré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údʒà]	[ói]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Ekpoma:	[ʧèré]	[ìmã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́si ɔ̀]
Ilushi:	[kièré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Uromi:	[ʧèré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́si ɔ̀]
Igueben:	[kièré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Ohordua:	[kièré]	[ìmɲã̀]	[údià]	[ózì]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Irrua:	[kièré]	[ìmã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́ʃɔ̀]
Ugbegun:	[kièré]	[ìmã̀]	[údʒà]	[ózì]	[ɔ́si ɔ̀]

The variations presented in 3 (a-m) are clearly tied to the relevant differences in the sound inventories of these Ésàn varieties as enumerated thus far.

3.2 Phonological processes and pronunciation differences between Ésàn varieties

An examination of the available data showed that the most significant phonological process which resulted in the pronunciation differences between the identified Ésàn varieties is the process of liquid elision. This is the deletion of the liquid [l] in word final syllables. This process sometimes results in the deletion of the entire host syllable (see 1.2).

4: Ésàn data showing differences in pronunciation between identified Ésàn varieties due to the process of liquid elision

gloss:	**eye**	**food**	**stomach**
Ésàn varieties			
Ubiaza:	[ɛ̀lòlò]	[ébàlè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Ugboha:	[ɛ̀lò]	[ébàè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Udo:	[ɛ̀ò]	[ébàlè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Ewatto:	[ɛ̀lò]	[ébàè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Ogwa:	[ɛ̀lò]	[ébà]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Ekpoma:	[ɛ̀lò]	[ébàè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Ilushi:	[ɛ̀lò]	[ébàè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Uromi:	[ɛ̀lò]	[ébàlè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Igueben:	[ɛ̀lò]	[ébàè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Ohordua:	[ɛ̀lò]	[ébà]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Irrua:	[ɛ̀lòlò]	[ébàlè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]
Ugbegun:	[ákpɛ̀lòlò]	[ébàlè]	[ɛ́kɛ́lè]

Data in 4 (a-l) show that while the speech forms of some L1 speakers exhibited this speech idiosyncrasy, others did not, and some others lost the entire syllable introduced by the liquid segment. Oservation showed that for some of these varieties, this process was found to be compulsory, while for others, it was non-existent, and yet for others, it was optional. The patterns of occurrence of this phenomenon across Ésàn varieties are highlighted below:

- Liquid elision in Ésàn was not restricted to word final syllables but sometimes occurred in penultimate ones.

5. /l/ elision in word final syllables

a. [émɲìlì] [émɲì] something
b. [ébàlè] [ébàè] food
c. [óxwàlè] [óxwàè] basket
d. [óxבlɛ̀] [óx˜ב] fight/war
e. [ɲɛ̀lɛ̀] [ɲɛ̀] dwell
f. [áràlɛ̀] [árà] blood

/ l /elision in penultimate syllables

g. [élàɱɛ̀] [éàɱɛ̀] meat
h. [ɛ̀gbòlìsɛ́] [ɛ̀gbòìsɛ́] one hundred

In some instances of the occurrence of the process of liquid elision, the affected lexical items in some Ésàn varieties lost the entire syllable introduced by the liquid /l/. This occurrence is illustrated with some data presented in 5 above (see 5 a, d, e, f).

Analyses presented in this subsection shows that the phonological process of liquid elision provided further evidence of pronunciation differences between the Ésàn varieties identified in this study. In this regard, this position may be summarized as follows. Observation from data presented in 4 (a-m) revealed that

the phenomenon of the elision of the liquid [l] was totally non-existent in Ubiaza, while in Ugboha, it occurred almost anywhere the phonetic conditions were present. Udo, Igueben, Ebhoato and Ekpoma seemed to feature this phonological characteristic averagely, while Ilushi, Irrua, Uromi Ohordua, Ugbegun and Ogwa did so sparingly. The deduction arising from this analysis therefore is that, the phonological process of the elision of the liquid segment [l], is one amongst other factors which engenders pronunciation differences between the Ésàn varieties under focus in this study.

5. Conclusion

This study examined some Ésàn varieties with the main goal of identifying differences in pronunciation peculiar to each of them. The Ésàn varieties under focus were Ubiaza; Ugboha; Udo; Ewatto; Ogwa; Ekpoma; Ilushi; Uromi; Igueben; Ohordua; Irrua and Ugbegun. The selection of these varieties was based in the first instance on information from the Consultants for this study, who were L1 Speakers of Ésàn. Final identification of Ésàn varieties was due to empirical evidence in the form of results from identification and comparative procedures, to which available data were subjected.

Findings showed that pronunciation peculiarities across Ésàn varieties ran along the lines of differences in consonant sound inventories on the one hand and phonological processes which were observed to occur in some of them. Concerning the sound systems of these varieties, while no differences were recorded in their vowel sound inventories, identification procedures revealed that 23 consonant sounds were commonly featured by the twelve Ésàn varieties while five consonant sounds were not. In this regard, Ubiaza, Ugboha and Udo exhibited an identical consonant sound inventory. The total number of consonant sounds in the sound inventory of this group numbered 28. This was the largest number of consonant sounds across all of the varieties. Ewatto, Igueben and Ilushi did not feature the consonant sound [ʧ]. The sounds common to them were [ʤ, ʃ, ʒ , ŋ]. This group featured a total of 27consonant phones in its sound inventory. Ugbegun lacked the phones [ʃ, ʧ, ŋ] and featured [ʒ, ʤ,], as well as the 23 common consonant sounds. Its sound inventory comprised a total of 25 phones. That occurrence made it the dialect with the fewest consonant sounds. Uromi did not

possess [ʃ] in its sound inventory which contained 27 consonant sounds. It possessed the phones [ʒ, ʧ, ʤ, ŋ] of the five uncommon sounds. Ogwa was the only dialect which lacked [ʒ]. It also lacked [ʧ] and featured [ʤ, ʃ, ŋ], along with the 23 common consonant sounds. This brought its total number of consonant phones to 26. Ekpoma did not feature the phones [ʃ, ŋ] in its sound inventory. It featured [ʧ, ʒ ʤ,] bringing the tonal consonants phones to 26. Ohordua lacked the sounds [ʧ, ʤ] and possessed [ʃ, ʒ, ŋ]. It was the only variety which lacked [ʤ]. Its consonant sound inventory comprised 26 consonant phones. Irrua lacked [ʧ, ŋ] and featured [ʤ, ʃ, ʒ]. Its sound inventory comprised a total of 26 consonant phones.

Although differences in sound inventories amongst the Ésàn varieties were shown to be the main sources of observed pronunciation peculiarities between them, the phonological process of liquid elision, which was shown to occur in varying extents amongst Ésàn varieties, was also identified as a source of some of these differences in pronunciation.

This study has shown that the phenomenon of pronunciation differences occurs within the Ésàn language. Further studies in this area on Ésàn, if strengthened with instrumental testing, may yet unveil more differences in pronunciation between Ésàn varieties. This study is a contribution to empirical research on Ésàn.

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Tone Polarity on Morphological Operation in C'lela

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Abstract
Polarity is a term used to express a contrast between positive 'pole' and a negative one. This suggests that in the study of polarity, the opposite 'pole' to negative is the positive. This paper examines another kind of tone polarisation that occurs during morphological operation in C'lela. Tone polarity in C'lela is an important issue associated with the behavioural pattern of C'lela tones. The polarity pattern observed in the language is an epiphenomenon influenced by morphological processes. I demonstrate that tonal polarity occurs in C'lela under at least three different contexts involving (i) inflectional suffix {–kV}, (ii) relative past tense suffix {-ini /-ine}, and (iii) diminutive prefix {**wa**-}. The relevant data for this study were sourced from the field and the extant literature on polarity and fundamentally from the C'lela dictionary by Rikoto et al.; (2002). Ten (10) selected C'lela native speakers drawn from students of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto participated in this study. A tape recorder and cardboard papers were used for data collection. The data from which tonal polarity was observed were elicited by means of a pronunciation test that consisted of words, phrases and / or short sentences written on cardboard papers. The study examined tonal polarity in the pronunciation of this group of words by the selected participants which were being audio-recorded. The collected data were then transcribed and analyzed. The results revealed that there exist in C'lela a morphologically conditioned tonal polarity in which a tone-bearing unit in a particular context shows a tonal value opposite to the one immediately adjacent to it.
Keywords: Tone, Polarity, dissimilation, C'lela, diminutive morpheme, perfective morpheme

1.1 Introduction
C'lela (or Dakarci), coded ISO 639-3 [dri] belongs to Northwest, Kainji subgroup of Benue-Congo, Niger-Congo language family ((Williamson 1989, Lewis, Gary & Charles 2015). It is spoken mainly by the Lelna people found across the Zuru Emirate in Kebbi State, and in some parts of Kontagora Emirate in Niger State, Nigeria. C'lela Language has an eight vowel system. All vowels in C'lela have contrastive length: long

and short (Rikoto and Rumu 1996). The C'lela vowel inventory is represented in the following figure 1 below

	Front	**Central**	**Back**
high:	i		u
Near Mid-high:		ə	
Mid-high:	e		o
Mid-low:		ɛ	ɔ
low:		a	

Figure 1: C'lela vowel inventory

C'lela has forty consonants out of which twenty one are simple speech sounds: p, b, t, d, k, g, m n, ŋ, f, v, s, z, h, r, l, tʃ, dʒ w, j, ʔ, and the other nineteen are labialised or palatalised consonants: pʲ, bʲ, tʷ, dʷ, kʲ, gʲ, kʷ, gʷ, mʲ, nʷ, fʲ, sʷ, zʷ, tʃʷ, dʒʷ, rʷ, lʷ, hʷ, hʲ. The language uses sequence of vowels that have the same quality to represent vowel length, indicating the relative duration within a vowel phoneme. Length usually occurs in the first syllable of the disyllabic root words, and such root word may have phonemic contrast with other disyllabic words that end in a short vowel as in the following examples: **/pe̱e̱te̱/** 'moon' and **/pe̱te̱/** 'to rush, **/nàamà/** 'cow' and **/nama/** 'to grind' (Dettweiler, 2015). These minimal pairs constitute evidence for contrastive vowel length.

There is also ATR harmony system within words which is specified with feature value /+ATR/ or /-ATR/. In addition to this kind of harmony which occurs within word, there exist also a height harmony which presumably operate within the stem and spreads to suffixes in the language (Dettweiler 2001:8). Consider the following harmonic alternation where the pronominal suffixes (**me**/**mi)** follow the noun stems **ìnù** 'mother' and **cètò** 'father'.

(1) a	I in- **mi**	b.	I cet- **me**
	It mother me		It father me
	"It is my mother"		"It is my father"

C'lela has two basic contrastive level tones transcribed as High **(á)** and Low **(à)** and these can be combined to form the third one perceived as falling tone (High to Low) indicated with a circumflex accent **(â)**. In many African languages, especially the Gur Languages ((Kenstowicz, Nikiema & Ourso 1988, Antilla & Bodomo 1996, Crouch 1985, and

Hyman 1993) tone has been analysed with vowel of the syllable as tone-bearing unit. In C'lela, a vowel of a syllable remains the tone-bearing unit. The most common types of syllable in C'lela are: V, CV, CVV, CVC, and CVCC. As with many other natural languages, the vowel of a syllable remains the tone-bearing unit in the language. However, in tone spreading and other morphological operations, the tone of the whole syllable is affected and this brings about tonal polarity.

Previous Literature on Polarity

Tonal Polarity (or polarisation) is a term used in the study of tone languages in referring to cases where a tone is always opposite that of a preceding or following tone (Crystal 2008:373). Tone polarisation therefore is a system of contrast in tone languages where a morpheme takes a tone opposite to an adjacent one. Studies on Tonal Polarity by Schuh (1978) and Newman (1995) suggest that morphemes may be polar in nature, if their surface tone is determined exclusively by the context in which they occur. Picanco (2002) argues that polarization is identical to dissimilation. He maintains that if there is evidence which demonstrate that these morphemes have an underlying tone, then the process is one of dissimilation rather than polarisation (Picanco, 2002).

The question of whether or not polarization is identical to dissimilation is beyond the scope of this paper. The term "polarity" designates a binary contrast in tonal qualities mainly between High and Low tones Chahill (2004). Polarity is used by some linguists for the system of positive/negative contrastivity found in a language. In English for instance, the distinction between 'positive' and 'negative polarity' may be expressed syntactically by negative particle *not; or* morphologically for instance *happy v. unhappy* or lexically e.g. *high v. low*.

Chahill (2004), reports that "tone polarity has been analysed from a number of African languages". These languages include Margi (Hoffman 1963, Pulleyblank, 1986), Bambara (Dwyer 1976, Creissels & Gregoire 1993), Moore and Lama (Kenstowicz, Nikiema, & Ourso 1988), Dagbani (Hyman 1993, 01awsky 1996), Hausa (Newman 1995), Dagaare (Antilla & Bodomo 2000, 2001), and Fur (Kutsch Lojenga 2002). Schuh (1978) also mentions Ngizim, Igbo, and Hausa examples of tone polarity". For instance, Schuh (1978) and Newman (1995) demonstrate that in the Guddiri dialect of Hausa, the diminutive *ɗán* (masc.) shows polarity: *ɗàn ràagóo* 'a small *ram*' *and ɗàn yáaròo* 'a

small boy'. However, the fact that the diminutive exists in the language as an independent (H-tone) noun *ɗán* 'son of/a small/ a little of/' suggests that this is a case of dissimilation rather than true tonal polarity (Newman 1995; Schuh 1978). Similar example obtains in Munduruku where for instance, the morpheme /tep/ 'leaf'' and /tey/ 'tooth' are **H** following Land L following H, as in the following examples:

(1)	a.	**ákò dép**	'banana leaf'
	b.	**bóró dèp**	'cotton leaf'
(2)	a	**ò- néy**	'my teeth'
	b.	**ò-cé nèy**	'our teeth'
		(Pianco 2002:238)	

Similarly, Pulleyblank (1986) identifies polarising morphemes in Margi as those morphemes having underlying floating H tone which is lexically marked as extratonal. However, in their contribution to the study on tonal Polarity, Kenstowicz, Nikiema, and Ourso (1988) observe that polar tones are underlyingly H in all languages and the apparent polarity is in fact the result of dissimilatory rules. Using a constraint-based account of the phenomenon, Suzuki (1998), reveals that tonal polarity is a dissimilatory process that results from the requirements of two Generalized Obligatory Contour Principle (OCP) constraints - one prohibits a sequence of H-tones, (*H ... H), while the other prohibits a sequence of L-tones, (*L...L), in a given domain.

In his contribution to discussions on tone polarity, Cahill (2004) analyses the Kɔnni tonal behaviour of the plural suffix of noun class 1 which he considered to be synchronically High-toned. In his analysis, Cahill (2004:14) explained that tone polarity exists in Kɔnni in a Noun Class 1 plural, where the last tone of the plural is opposite in value to the immediately preceding tone as presented in the following data. While the singular suffix for each is a High-toned [-1)], the suffix of the plural form is either [-a] or [-e], depending on ATR vowel harmony, and this suffix is not surface High-toned, but surfaces with a tone opposite to the preceding stem tone.

3.	Singular	Plural	Stem tone	Plural suffix tone	
	tă-ŋ	tàn-á	L	H	'stones'
	sí-ŋ	sí-à	H	L	'fishes'
	bìis-í	bìia-á	L	H	'breasts
	tíg-íŋ	tíg-è	H	L	'houses'

The purpose of this paper is to examine the C'lela tone polarity pattern. It will demonstrate that tone polarity is the feature of C'lela tone. The study will show the value of two adjacent opposite tones when followed or preceded by an affix in particular context.

2.0 Methodology

The data for this study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained from recording the pronunciations of a set of verbs and nouns from which phrases with polar tones were realized, while the secondary sources were collected mainly from the C'lela Dictionary (Rikoto 2002) and other extant literature on C'lela and tonal polarity. In the analysis, the set of words, phrases and / or Short sentences together with gloss showing polarity in C'lela will be provided. The tone patterns of most source verbs or nouns and the derived polar forms will also be explained. The analysis in this paper will be based on autosegmental representation of tones as proposed in Goldsmith (1976). The one-to-one mapping of tones to TBU's as the general default case is assumed in this work. The tones will be abbreviated simply as H for High tone and L for Low tone throughout the work.

3.0 Analysis on Polarity in C'lela

As explained earlier, the perfective, the progressive/present and the future tenses are morphologically realised from a simple verb stem in C'lela. The suffixation of past tense suffix [-**k**(V)] and the relative perfective suffix {-ini /-ine} to a verb stem triggers tonal polarisation.

3.1 The polar past tense suffix -k(V)}

C'lela contains monosyllabic and disyllabic verbs that surface on a tone opposite to that of an adjacent syllable. The data below show how the inflectional suffix -kV in conjunction with monosyllabic verb roots indicate tone polarity. This suggests that when the vowel of the input verb stem has a **L** tone, the vowel of the past tense suffix ends in a **H**

tone, and when the tone of the verb root vowel is **H**, the suffix vowel takes the opposite tone which is **L.** It suggests that the difference in tonal behavior between *ù-sɔ̀:-kɔ́* 'he/she drank' and *ù-tɔ́:-kɔ̀* 'he left' is the result of the presence of the past tense suffix -KV.

	Present Verb Form	**Tone Polarity in the Past Verb Form (with suffix -kV)**		
4a.	sɔ̀: 'drink' L	ù-sɔ̀:-kɔ́	'he/she drank'	LH
b.	tɔ́: 'leave' H	ù-tɔ́:-kɔ̀	'he left	HL
5a.	tɛ̀: 'chew' L	ù-tɛ̀:-kɛ́	'he chewed'	LH
b.	né 'give H	ù-né:-kɛ̀	'he gave'	HL
Disyllabic verbs with Final Vowel deletion in all word-medial contexts:				
6. a	dɔ̀vɔ̀ 'touch' LL	ù-dɔ́v-kɔ̀	'he touched'	HL
b.	kùmù 'get' LL	ù- kùm-kú	'he got'	LH
7. a.	wá:gà 'sweep' HL	ù-wá:g-kà	'he swept'	HL
b.	lɛ́vɛ̀ 'sleep' HL	ù-lɛ̀v-kɛ́v	'he slept'	LH

3.2 The Polar Relative Perfective Suffix {-ini /-ine}

The data below show how the relative past tense suffix -ini /-ine in combination with the monosyllabic or disyllabic verb roots generates the polarity effect. It can be observed that in (8a), the first suffix vowel bears an **L** tone, opposite to the tone on the initial vowel of the verb root. But in (8b) the initial suffix vowel /i/ bears a H tone, opposite to the tone on the second vowel of the verb root. This applies to disyllabic verbs whose final vowel were either deleted or retained after suffixation. It can be observed that in the set of data in (10-12), the second vowel of the verb root drops and the tone on the final suffix vowel is opposite to that of the preceding syllable. In this kind of phenomenon, Dettweiler (2015) suggests that the initial suffix vowel is toneless and the second suffix vowel is polar. Consider the following examples in (8) and (9):

	Preset Verb Form		**Tone Polarity in Relative Past Form (with -ini /-ine)**		
8a	sɔ̀:	'drink' L	sɔ̀-ìné	'that drank'	LLH
b.	tɔ́:	'leave' H	tɔ́-ínè	'that left'	HHL
9a	tɘ̀:	'chew' L	tɘ̀-ìní	'that chewed'	LLH
b.	nɛ́	'give H	nɛ́-ínè	'that gave'	HHL

Disyllabic verbs with Final Vowel deletion in all word-medial contexts:

10a. dɔ̀vɔ̀	'touch' LL	dɔ̀v-ìnê	'that touched'	LLH (L)
11b.kùmù	'get' LL	kùm-ìnî	'that got'	LLH (L)
12a. wá:gà	'sweep' HL	wá:g-ínè	'that swept'	HHL
b. lʊ́vɔ̀	'sleep' HL	lʊ́v-ínì	'that slept'	HHL

Disyllabic verbs with Final Vowel retained in some word-medial contexts:

13a. sɛ́:tɛ̀	'help'	sɛ́:tɛ̀-ìnê	'that helped'	LLH (L)
14b. nóktà	'bring'	nóktà-ìnê	'that brought'	LLH (L)
15a. ʔùnú	'rise'	ʔùnú-ínì	'that rose'	HHL
15b. kʷèsá	'show'	kʷèsá-ínè	'that showed'	HHL

3.3 The Polar Diminutives prefix {wa-}

The C'lela diminutive prefix {**wa**-} has its source from the word for 'child'. Diminutive derivation is an operation that attaches the prefix wà-, which has a diminutive referent 'young/little', to a noun stem. It is worth pointing out that the wà - diminutive marker in C'lela is gender-free, and it is as well associated with the singular noun which has corresponding plural marker **ya**-. For example, in (16a), the diminutive wà- combines with the noun kèmpá 'boy' and the resulting diminutive word is wà-kémpà 'young boy'. The diminutive **wà**- is lexically a Low-toned prefix morpheme. One may well assert that the presence of this diminutive prefix in the diminutive form generates polarity where the tone of the initial syllable of the derived diminutive form polarises to **H** and the final syllable manifest a tone opposite to the previous stem tone. Consider the following examples as given in (16):

	Noun Stem		Tone Polarity in the Diminutive Form	Gloss
(16)	a. kèmpá	'boy'	wà-kémpà	'young boy'
	b. wàntá	'girl/female'	wà-wántà	'young woman'
	c. a̱rma̱	'man'	wà- a̱rma̱	'young man'
	d. rùsú	'twins'	wà-rúsù	'little twins'
	e. gyòzó	'baby'	wà-gyózò	'little baby'
	f. ma̱crì	'grandchild'	wà ma̱crì	'little grandchild'
	g. ka̱cì	'chiken'	wà- ka̱cì	'little chicken'

4.0 Findings and Discussion on tone Polarity in C'lela

This paper examines the type of polar patterns involved in verbal inflection and diminutive derivation in C'lela. Some of the morphological forms in which polarisation occurs in the language include suffixation and prefixation. The paper demonstrates how underlying tones of tone-bearing segments of words undergo polarisation. This study reveals that tonal polarisation applies in a set of contiguous syllables in lexical items in certain contexts in C'lela. It also discovers that this recurring polarisation feature emerges from attaching main perfective affix {–kV} and main relative perfective {-ini /-ine} suffixes on verb roots, and the diminutive prefix morpheme {wà-} shows polarity in C'lela.

C'lela verbal phrase comprises a verbal root with possible suffixes and clitics. C'lela verbs may be classified into four morphological forms: the verb stem, the present progressive, the past and the simple future. In contrast to English language which differentiates past from perfect, the language does not show a difference between past and the perfect. The present progressive and the past are formed from the verb stems. All the noun class prefixes {**a'-, i'-, u'-, d'-, k'-, v'-, m'-, c'-,** and **s'-**} may be used on verbs to mark present progressive action in the language. The past is represented by a {-**k**(V)} suffix which attaches to the verb root; while the formation of future tense involves prefixing a {**t**-} morpheme on an overt subject pronoun that usually precedes a verb.

Verbs in C'lela take subject and direct or indirect objects appropriate to the verb. Similarly, the progressive aspects may be expressed by means of auxiliary construction in the language. The clitics [-ini/-ine] are suffixes that mark a verb in a subordinate clause.

5.0 Conclusion

Tonal polarity in C'lela can be assumed to be morphologically based specifically through the process of affixation. The paper has shown that the polar tone pattern in C'lela may be generated from an input in at least three independent processes. It has been established that tonal polarisation applies arbitrarily in a set of contiguous syllables in lexical items in certain contexts in the language. Thus attaching perfective affix {–kV} and relative perfective suffix {-ini /-ine} on verb roots manifest polarity. So also prefixing the diminutive morpheme {wà-} on the animate noun stem generates polarity in C'lela. Hence the surface polar tone can be generated from underlying representations in the language.

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Vowel Reduction in the New English Native Accent: A Pilot Acoustic Investigation of New English Native Speakers in Nigeria

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Abstract
This paper reports on a preliminary acoustic study of schwa /ə/ production in unstressed syllable position by young Nigerians who acquired English and use it as a first language, otherwise referred to as New English Native Speakers (NENS). The goals are to verify the status of vowel reduction in the New English Native Accent (NENA) and establish possible influence of gender on the speakers' realisations. An acoustic analysis was conducted, using raw vowel formant values on a small data set containing schwa /ə/ which were extracted from a passage and a wordlist read by 12 speakers (four NENS, four Nigerian L2 English speakers and four native British English speakers). The analysis, which focuses on the position of /ə/ on the vowel space, reveals a close proximity between NENS' and BrE speakers' schwa /ə/ productions, which suggests vowel reduction in NENA and a shift in the direction of traditional native English accents.
Keywords: New English Native Accent, vowel reduction, L1 English speakers, Nigerian English, schwa.

1. Introduction

In Nigeria, the English language has undergone structural changes that mark it out from Standard British English, its progenitor, at all linguistic levels. This is due, principally, to the influence of over 500 indigenous languages with which it co-exists (Eberhard, Simmons, & Fennig 2019). One of such noticeable differences at the phonological level is the absence of vowel reduction; that is, the inability of Nigerian English (NigE) speakers to weaken vowels in unstressed syllables that typically undergo reduction and shorter duration in native Englishes. This has been traced to the absence of the mid-central lax vowel (schwa) /ə/ in NigE (Adetugbo, 2009), which is the most frequent weak vowel in native Englishes (Roca & Johnson 1999, Akinjobi, 2004). Another possible explanation for this trend is the tendency for syllable-timing in NigE, which is a consequence of the interaction of English with predominantly tonal indigenous Nigerian languages where

emphasis is placed on the pronunciation of every syllable (Oladipupo, 2004).

Various studies have attested to this phenomenon in Nigerian L2 English (NigL2E), especially from geo-tribal perspectives (e.g. Akinjobi, 2006; Ilolo, 2013; Adesanya, 2020). However, the investigation has not been extended to a growing number of Nigerian youths who acquired English and use it as a first language. This, obviously, limits our understanding of vowel reduction phenomenon among this category of speakers referred to as New English Native Speakers (NENS) in this study, following Jowitt (1991). In view of their early exposure to English at home and in school, and continuous learning through non-enculturation sources such as electronic and social media (Akinjobi, 2013), there is a tendency for them to be competent in vowel reduction. Therefore, this paper attempts a preliminary acoustic study of NENS' pronunciation of the vowel quality that is expected to be reduced to schwa /ə/ in unstressed syllable position. The objectives are to verify the status of vowel reduction in the New English Native Accent (NENA) and show the influence of gender on the speakers' realisations.

2. New English Native Accent

The implantation of the English language in Nigeria has a long history, from commercial activities with the Europeans in the coastal towns of Lagos and Calabar in the 16th century to the missionary activities and British colonisation from the 19th century (Taiwo, 2009). Today, English functions as a second language, a lingua franca and the official means of communication in the media, education, politics and governmental administration, amongst others (Jowitt, 2019). Its age-long interaction with more than 500 indigenous languages (Eberhard, Simmons & Fennig, 2019) has subjected it to significant structural changes which has resulted in a New English (Schneider, 2007), known as Nigerian English. This variety of English has been rigorously examined and findings have shown that its features are markedly different from traditional native Englishes (e.g. British and American English) at all linguistic levels.

Within the New English context is a teeming population of Nigerian youths who do not speak English as a second language. They acquired English from home as a sequentially first language, attended straight-for-English schools, are continuously exposed to the language through electronic and social media and use it as their primary code of

communication. For some of them, English is their sole language, while others are incipient bilinguals with English as a first and primary language (Jowitt, 1991; Banjo, 1996; Schneider, 2007; Kperogi, 2015). It is against this backdrop that Jowitt (1991) categorise them as New English Native Speakers (NENS), to differentiate them from the traditional native speakers of English in the inner circle on account of the environment of acquisition.

There has been a surge in the number of this category of English speakers in Nigeria, obviously, due to the importance attached to English as a language of prestige, upward occupational mobility and affluence. Many parents deliberately introduce English to their children from childhood and enrol them in straight-for-English schools so they could be competent in the language early enough (Akinjobi, 2013). According to Udofot (2007, p. 36), 'For homes where children are made to acquire both English and the parents' mother tongue/s simultaneously, English soon gains dominance over the other languages.

The designation of these speakers as NENS or L1 speakers of English, even though they did not grow up in an inner-circle country, is a sequel to the realisation in World Englishes that competence in a language, rather than the context of acquisition, is the most significant factor for categorising speakers of English around the world. In Schneider's (2003) view:

> Competence in a language is tied to its constant use… indigenous native speakers of English in the narrow sense (like minorities of Indians or Sri Lankans who grew up speaking English), whose intuitions may differ significantly from those of British or American people…can be classified as 'first-language English' speakers, although they do not qualify as native speakers in the strict sense (p. 238).

This study, therefore, focuses on these speakers of English whose accent is referred to as New English Native Accent (NENA).

3. Previous Descriptions of Vowel Reduction in Nigeria

It is typical of English that, in unstressed syllables, full vowels are replaced by weak or reduced vowels or are sometimes deleted

completely. This is a phenomenon commonly referred to as vowel reduction, a well-known and documented process by which unstressed syllables undergo a process of gradation which may be a complete disappearance of phonemes or obscuration of vowels (Gimson, 1980). It is a principal feature of English stress which contributes, amongst other factors, to the rhythm of Standard English. According to Skandera & Burleigh (2005), the sound qualities of the vowels that usually feature in unstressed syllable position include vowel phonemes /ə/, /ɪ/ and /ʊ/ (as in *a̲gree* /əgri:/, *re̲gard* /rɪga:d/ and *neighbourho̲o̲d* /neibəhʊd/) and phonetic /i/ and /u/ (as in *eas̲y̲* [i:zi] and *act̲u̲al* [aekʧuəl]). However, the most prominent vowel in such a position is the schwa /ə/ (Crosswhite, 2004; Skandera & Burleigh, 2005).

Whereas vowel reduction is commonplace in traditional native English accents, it has been established (e.g., Akinjobi, 2006; Ilolo, 2013; Adesanya, 2020, 2021) that it has a very rare occurrence in the NigE accent, possibly due to the absence of schwa /ə/ in the NigE phonemic inventory (Awonusi, 2009). In an auditory and acoustic study of 100 Educated Yoruba English speakers, Akinjobi (2006) examines the production of the vowels in twenty English words whose syllables typically become unstressed due to stress shift, as in *a̲tomic* and *dramatic* from *á̲tom* and *drama* respectively. Her finding shows that full and strong vowels, rather than schwa /ə/ or other weak vowels, were produced in such syllables. Ilolo (2013) further extends the vowel reduction study to Educated Isoko English (EIE), a sub-variety of English spoken by a minor Nigerian language group, in order to determine its rhythm. Her findings corroborate earlier study: weak vowels were scarcely used in unstressed syllable position and no durational variability was observed between full and reduced vowels.

In a bid to determine the suitability of Yoruba English language teachers' (YELT) as possible candidates for standard NigE pronunciation models, Adesanya (2020) investigates their performance in vowel reduction. She finds that, in both content and grammatical words, vowels in unstressed positions were predominantly produced strong and, sometimes, substituted with other strong vowels. Adesanya (2021) is an attempt to verify the impact of technology on vowel reduction phenomenon amongst educated Nigerian teenagers of Yoruba extraction. The assumption is that the teenagers' level of technology contact with native English will likely impact positively on their vowel reduction competence. The study establishes a correlation

between participants' level of exposure to technology and their mastery of vowel reduction and weak syllable production.

As revealed in the foregoing, what we know so far about vowel reduction in Nigeria is largely based upon data from Nigerian users of English as a second language and teenagers of mixed linguistic background. The investigation does not specifically account for Nigerian youths that acquired English as a first language who are the subjects of this study.

4. Methodology

Based on the assumptions that vowels in unstressed syllables hardly get reduced to schwa in the NigE accent, an acoustic analysis was conducted, using raw vowel formant values, on a small data set extracted from the reading of a passage and a word list by 12 speakers (four NENS, four NigL2E speakers and four British English (BrE) speakers). Although NENS are the focus of this inquiry, we decided to include NigL2E and native BrE speakers in order to obtain comparable experimental evidence for this phenomenon amongst NENS. While university students, aged 18-22, supplied data for BrE; secondary school students, aged 13-16, were chosen as sample representatives for NENS and NigL2E speakers. The four NENS (two males; two females) were drawn from a straight-for-English private school, while the NigL2E speakers (also two males and two females) were selected from a public school. Although NENS and NigL2E speakers were born and educated in Nigeria, NENS were exposed to English from childhood and so acquired it as a first language; whereas, NigL2E speakers have Yoruba as their first language and only learnt English in school later. Native BrE speakers, on the other hand, were born and have lived in Britain all their lives.

The data for the study were drawn from a word list and a reading passage titled 'The boy who cried wolf', which contains 221 words with a full range of phonemic distributions. The speakers' productions were recorded in a language studio with Audacity version 2.3.3, installed on a laptop, at the rate of 44100 Hz. Thirty-one (31) content words, which contain syllables that are typically weakened to schwa /ə/ in unstressed syllable position, were extracted from both the passage and the word list for analysis. We decided to combine both datasets in view of the size of the tokens and the number of speakers.

5. Analysis and Findings

In the analysis, the acoustic methods of data segmentation and labelling, formant measurement and extraction, using Praat (Boersma &Weenink, 2021) version 6.1.40, were adopted. Each audio clip was imported into Praat window and converted to TextGrids which were annotated as word, vowel and speaker interval tiers. The 31 content words from both datasets were segmented on word tier and then time-aligned using Montreal Forced Aligner (McAuliffe, Socolof, Mihuc, Wagner, & Sonderegger, 2017). With the aid of a Praat script (getformant), the vowel duration and the first three formants (F1, F2, F3) for every segment in the MFA-aligned TextGrids were extracted and loaded into R Studio (RSTUDIO Team, 2020) for processing, plotting and reporting. Through this process, 2376 vowel tokens were obtained, which were later reduced to 433 when tokens with schwa /ə/ only were selected. This produced an average of 36 syllables per speaker.

The analysis focused on acoustic measurement of raw F1 and F2 vowel formant values only; duration was excluded due to variation in production caused by variability in speech rate. Using the R package, we plotted the vowel as (i) points on the vowel space for each speaker, indicating the spread of F1/F2 values as ellipses for each speaker group (see Fig. 1), and as (ii) boxplots showing NENS' F1 and F2 gender values (see Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

5.1. The Position of Schwa /ə/ on the Vowel Space

Figure 1, representing all tokens of /ə/ produced as points by each speaker and as ellipses by each speaker group, shows that NENS' and BrE speakers' productions occupy roughly the same position /dimension on the vowel space, with fewer outliers, unlike the NigL2E speakers' realisations. The F1 values range roughly from 260-750 Hz for NENS and 240-780 Hz for BrE speakers, while the F2 values range between 550-2200 Hz for NENS & 1100-2400 Hz for BrE speakers. This indicates that the position of /ə/ in the vowel space is comparable for both NENS & BrE speakers, suggesting similarities between both sets of speakers' realisations of /ə/ in unstressed syllable position. As for L2 speakers, the values of F1 range roughly from 120 Hz to 980 Hz (cf. BrE 240-780 Hz), while the F2 values fall between 100 Hz to 2700 Hz (cf. BrE 1100-2400 Hz). This suggests that L2 speakers' realisations of /ə/ fall largely outside the scope of the BrE norm.

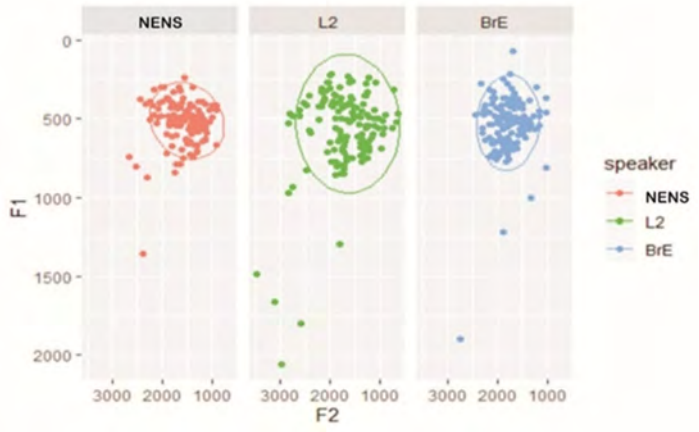

Fig. 1: F1 and F2 values for /ə/ plotted as ellipses on the vowel space for each speaker group.

As figure 1 further reveals, the clustering of the vowel points for NENS and BrE speaker groups appears more compact and homogenous, which suggests that the pronunciation of schwa /ə/ by the speakers within each group is similar. On the other hand, the L2 productions are more dispersed, suggesting internal variability in the realisation of /ə/ within the group.

5.2. NENS' F1 and F2 Gender Values

Having established a close approximation of NENS' production of schwa /ə/ to the BrE norm, we attempt to investigate gender variation in NENS in order to establish the gender that exacts greater influence on NENS' pronunciation of schwa /ə/.

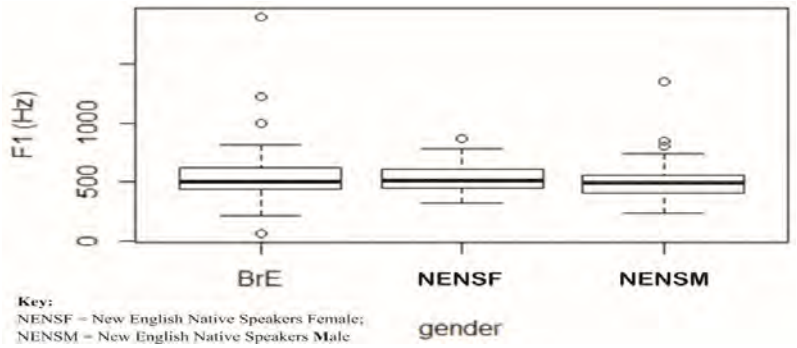

Fig. 2: F1 gender values for /ə/ plotted as a boxplot for each speaker group

The F1 boxplots in Fig. 2 display the values of schwa /ə/ production by BrE speakers (irrespective of gender) and by NENS (based on gender). This is to facilitate NENS' gender comparison with the BrE norm. The BrE boxplot shows that the speakers' pronunciations are homogeneous (the boxplot is short) and positively skewed (most speakers fall above the median value). The NENS Female (NENSF) boxplot is also homogenous and positively skewed, as most speakers' pronunciation values also lie above the median value. The lower and upper bound values are close to the inter-quartile bound, which further confirms the homogeneity of NENSF pronunciations. Compared to the BrE speakers, NENSF inter-quartile rage is very similar, which shows that most of their pronunciations fall within the BrE norm. That is, NENSF approximate to BrE speakers in schwa production.

The NENS Male (NENSM) boxplot inter-quartile bound is short, which also shows the homogeneity of the speakers' pronunciations, but negatively skewed (most speakers' pronunciation values fall below the median value). In comparison with BrE and NENSF, the NENSM inter-quartile range is lower, which shows that most of them did not fall within the BrE pronunciation norm and that variations exist between NENSF and NENSM speakers in schwa production, with female speakers approximating to the BrE norm more than male speakers.

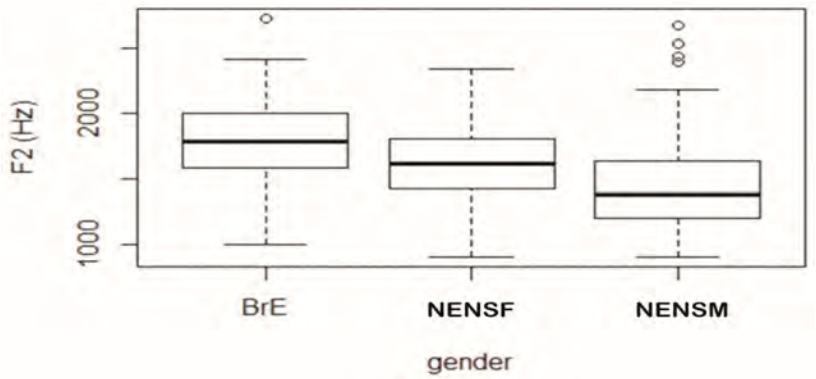

Fig. 3: F2 gender values for /ə/ plotted as boxplot for each speaker group

The median position of F2 boxplot for BrE speakers in Figure 3 shows that the values are normally distributed, which indicates that the pronunciations are well distributed within the sample size. The NENSF boxplot is similar to that of BrE in terms of the normal distribution of the pronunciation values but is slightly lower, as shown by the inter-quartile median, which suggests that female speakers slightly differ from BrE speakers in the production of schwa.

The NENSM boxplot shows that the pronunciations are skewed towards the upper quarter of the distribution, which suggests that the values are not normally distributed. The boxplot also reveals a few outliers above the upper whisker, which indicates unusual pronunciation variants of schwa /ə/ among Nigerian male speakers. In comparison with BrE speakers and NENSF, NENSM have much lower boxplot, inter-quartile range and median point; which shows that NENSM speakers' pronunciations differ considerably from the BrE pronunciation norm.

5.3 Summary of Findings

The results of the acoustic analysis of the data collected from four NENS in Nigeria and compared with four NigL2E speakers and four BrE speakers have shown that:

- There is a high level of agreement in the production of schwa /ə/ by NENS; that is, a good number of the tokens produced have similar quality.

- The quality of schwa /ə/ vowel produced by NENS is closely identical with that of BrE speakers, which implies that NENS' articulation of schwa /ə/ closely approximates to the BrE norm.
- NENS' performance indicates a departure from the NigL2E norm in which the mid-central lax vowel (schwa) /ə/ is claimed to be absent (Akinjobi, 2006).
- Gender variation exists in NENS production of schwa /ə/; female speakers approximate to the BrE norm closer than male speakers.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to acoustically investigate the quality of vowels produced by NENS in unstressed syllable position where full vowels are expected to be reduced to schwa /ə/ in some English content words. This was with a view to verifying the status of vowel reduction in the New English Native Accent and the influence of gender. The study has provided evidence that vowels in unstressed syllables do undergo reduction to schwa /ə/ in NENA. In view of the homogeneity of NENS' production, it is obvious that the realisation of this vowel was not just a one-off event but occurred in many tokens examined. This suggests a shift in the pronunciation of schwa /ə/ in the direction of traditional native Englishes amongst NENS and suggests a gradual emergence of an exonormative rather than endomormative model of English in Nigeria. This trend may be a corollary of NENS' constant exposure to English at home, in school and through non-enculturation sources (Akinjobi, 2013; Adesanya, 2021). However, it is too early to accept this position, since this is only a pilot study. The paper, therefore, recommends that the study be extended to a larger number of NENS in Nigeria.

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Context Sensitivity in the Production of English Sibilants by Undergraduate Yoruba-English Bilinguals

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Abstract
Sibilants' realization which remains problematic to the Yoruba-English bilinguals is best explicated if studied in social and linguistic contexts. This research, examined within the purview of Labov's Variable Rule, English sibilants' production by undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals. The perceptually and t-test-statistically analysed data were collected from two hundred and forty Part Three regular students of six selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria, through structured questionnaire and a text containing thirty words and thirty sentences with English sibilants at all word positions. The analysis revealed that the wrong realisations of each tested sibilant were its variants. The word positions of wrong realisation constitute the most problematic positions: [θ], [ʧ] (word-medial); [ð] (word-final); [ʒ] (word initial). The unattested [z] and [ʤ] in Yoruba were insignificantly wrongly realised. The correct realisation of attested [s] and [ʃ] in Yoruba phonology are linked to the convergence between English and Yoruba. The sociolinguistic variables significant to the correct realisations of sibilants by Yoruba-English bilinguals were gender, age, educational background and ethnicity. The variations and phonemic alterations in English sibilants' realisation by undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals cannot be declared as deviations, but a reflection of the phonological aspect of Nigerian English at regional level.

1.1 Introduction

Nigerian English as a distinct variety of English increasingly attracts the interest of language scholars world-wide. Hence, the need for a description and codification of standard variety of Nigerian English to meet both national acceptability and international intelligibility becomes imperative. Pioneering studies (Bamgbose, 1971; Banjo, 1971, 1995; Jibril, 1982; Jowitt, 1991; Akinjobi, 2004; Olaniyi, 2011; Utulu, 2014; Oladipupo, 2014) have explored the phonological description and analysis of Nigerian English at different levels and confirmed that Nigerian English is markedly different from Standard British English. Previous studies have persistently concentrated generally on the description of consonants with little independent focus on challenging

English sibilants and their context sensitivity. This study examines the production of English sibilants by undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals in Southwestern Nigeria. The need for more description of phonological markers of identity peculiar to educated Nigerians spoken English at the regional level therefore, necessitates this study. The alternation patterns are explicable when the linguistic context of individual sounds is taken into consideration. This, therefore, explains that context sensitivity is very germane in the study of the phonetic variation in the human speech production.

1.2 Review of Literature

Individuals are sensitive to socially conditioned variation when perceiving speech. Different evidence attest to it that the perception of phonetic variables can be affected by social characteristics of the speaker. This implies that phonetics can be studied in relation to the social factors that underlie various human speech, thereby giving rise to the field of study called sociophonetics.

Sociophonetics is widely used among sociolinguists to refer to phonetically inclined variationist studies, pioneered by Labov, which emphasises interrelationship between speech form and social factors such as speaking styles and the background or characteristics of the speaker (Labov 1994: 201). Sociophonetics studies phonetic variation in speech which correlates with social factors. These factors include, mostly, those social categories such as gender, age, ethnicity, social class, group affiliation, geographical origin and speaking style. Although, these have been examined extensively by sociolinguists and dialectologists (Foulke and Docherty, 2006), sociophonetics differs from sociolinguistics. While sociolinguistics is applied to a wide range of studies that relate language and society, sociophonetics specifically studies speakers' and listeners' sensitivity to the social context in which language is produced and perceived. Sociophonetics, therefore, accounts for why production and perception targets vary across lexical items, people and communities.

This study is related to William Labov's (1966) variationist theory. This is to explain that variation in speech production is systematically influenced by independent social variables such as speakers' educational background, age, gender, speaking styles, social class, ethnicity and

religion. Research on linguistic variation, according to Jalali (2013:31), revealed that the frequency at which a speaker uses variable forms depends not only on the speaker's demographic characteristics, but on the linguistic environment in which the form occurs. This phonetic variability is due not just to differences among individual speakers but also to the phonetic context. The general effect referred to as *context-sensitivity*. It is based on this premise that this study seeks to examine the context sensitivity of undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals in the realization of English sibilants.

Sibilants are group of sounds whose manner of articulation involves direction of airstream with the tongue towards the sharp edge of the teeth, which are held close together. Because all sibilants are also strident, the terms are sometimes used interchangeably. However, the terms do not mean the same thing. While stridents subsume all sibilants, sibilants are a more of high-pitched subset of the stridents. The identified sibilants are /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /ʧ/ and /ʤ/. The labio-dentals fricative /f/ and /v/ are classified as stridents because they are produced with lower pitch. Non-sibilants fricatives and affricate produce their characteristics sound directly with the tongue or lips and the place of contact in the mouth, without the secondary involvement of the teeth (Ladefoged and Maddieson,1996). While English attests to eight sibilants comprising six fricatives [s], [z], [θ], [ð], [ʃ], [ʒ], and two affricates, [ʧ], [ʤ], Yoruba has three sibilants which are voiceless alveolar fricative [s], voiceless palato-alveolar affricate [ʃ] and voiced palato-alveolar affricate [ʤ].

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Observations have pointed out that the educated Nigerian spoken English is markedly different from that of Received Pronunciation of Standard British English. The multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria as well as the status of English in the country makes many of her people bilinguals because of the need to communicate in further tongue for the purpose of achieving both national and international intelligibility. Thus, the productions of many Nigerians who speak English do not demonstrate the same level of proficiency with that of the English native speakers. The reasons adduced by language scholars range from level of education to regional background of the speaker. It is of importance to mention that different sociolinguistic factors such as age, sex, level of social

exposure and socioeconomic background of the speakers do influence their speech. This explains that context sensitivity is very germane in the study of the phonetic variation in the human speech production. However, as challenging as sibilants are to Nigerians, it is rarely studied independently. The aim of the study is to examine the production of English sibilants by Yoruba-English bilinguals with a view to offer explanation on the possible sources of linguistic variation that may exist. The objectives of the study are to:

i. identify the variation that exists in the production of English sibilants by undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals;

ii. identify and describe the sociolinguistic variables that account for the variations in the realisations of English sibilants by selected participants';

iii. examine the extent to which the production of English sibilants by Yoruba-English bilinguals impedes national and international intelligibility.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is Labov's Variability Rule to explain possible sources of variation that occur in the realisation of English Sibilants by educated Yoruba-English bilinguals. Labov's (1963) work on the social motivation of a sound change marked a turning point in the study of language change. He argues that the role of language in self-identification is important for phonological change. Labov (1966, 2006) opines that no speaker is wholly consistent in his use of language and that variation in language is explicable if studied in its proper social, phonetics, stylistic and historical contexts. He then proposed the study of performance as the central business of linguistics. His work focuses on phonological variation involving variants that are discrete and quantifiable. Labov (1966, 2006) explored the effects of social factors on language variation and also proposed variable rules (VARBRUL) as a way of incorporating variation into linguistic theory. As rightly observed by Olaniyi (2011), Labov's work in New York was an important stride forward not only for sociolinguistics but also for linguistic theory. In Labov's theory, variation is an inherent part of language which can be observed and studied both systematically and diachronically, in that it shows variation and change in its historical

development. It also denotes that language varies across different dialects within linguistic communities and socio-geographical distribution. This explains that language variation is not a haphazard phenomenon, but happens rather systematically.

2. Methodology

The sample for this study comprised two hundred and forty Part Three regular students of selected six Universities in Southwest, one of the six geo–political zones in Nigeria. In all, a total of twenty-four faculties and twenty-four departments were used for the study. Multistage sampling technique was used in this study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select two universities from each of the three major dialect areas identified. Purposive sampling was used to select a department from each faculty. Simple random sampling was employed to select ten (10) students from each department selected in four faculties in each university, making a total of forty students from each university. All the selected forty students from each institution were used for this research. The selected universities from North-West Yoruba are University of Ibadan, Ibadan, and University of Lagos, Lagos. Olabisi Onabanjo university, Ago-Iwoye and Adekunle Ajasin university, Akungba Akoko were selected from South- East Yoruba while University of Ilorin, Ilorin and Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti were selected from Central Yoruba.

The data for the study were collected through structured questionnaire and a prepared list comprising thirty words and thirty sentences with English sibilants at word-initial, word-medial and word-final positions. These were read into a recording device by one hundred and twenty Yoruba-English bilingual part three undergraduates selected from six universities. All the selected students from the institutions were used for this research. The motivation for the study was that young speakers are usually regarded as linguistic motivators and agents of change such that their speech patterns can provide an insight into the direction of variation in the production of sounds in a speech community (Kerswill, 1996).

The data were listened to and transcribed using the International Phonetic Alphabet. They were subjected to perceptual and statistical analyses. To test the accuracy of the subjects, the voices recording were scored and awarded marks in order to compare the performance of each

participant with his/her sociolinguistic indices identified. Scores were assigned to participants according to the variants produced. Each sibilant produced correctly was allotted one mark while zero was assigned to each mispronounced sibilant. The statistical analysis was done with frequency, simple percentage measured with t-test in which the observed variance is partitioned into components attributable to different sources of variation. The acoustic analysis was done with Speech Filing System (SFS) version 1.51 to capture the correct and wrong realisations of the words with the highest percentage of wrong realization.

3. Analyses, Findings and Discussion

This section presents the analysis of data collected, the findings and the discussion.

3.1: Distribution of sibilant realisation at different word positions and overall performance of the respondents

In this section, correct pronunciation of each sibilant at word-initial, word-medial and word-final positions was allotted one mark. Also, the wrong pronunciations were awarded zero and the total score was recorded. The data collected are presented below:

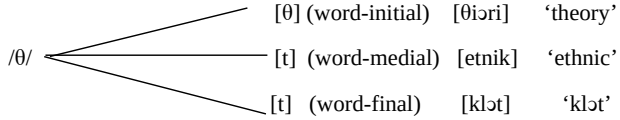
Table1:1

		TARGET SOUNDS							
		/θ/	/ð/	/s/	/z/	/ʃ/	/ʒ/	/ʧ/	/ʤ/
INITIAL	**TARGET WORDS**	theory	They	saved	zealous	Shelter	genre	cheap	justice
	CORRECT REALISATION	96	142	234	196	230	22	187	23
	%	40	51.2	97.5	81.7	95.8	9.2	77.9	98.8
	INCORRECT REALISATION	144	98	06	44	10	218	53	03
	%	60	48.8	2.5	18.3	4.2	90.8	22.1	1.2

MEDIAL	**TARGET WORDS**	Ethnic	Weather	Wastful	doesn't	Action	Vision	Virtuous	Enjoy
	CORRECT REALISATION	75	153	233	213	229	66	155	236
	%	31.3	63.8	97.1	88.8	95.4	27.5	64.6	98.3
	INCORRECT REALISATION	165	87	07	27	11	174	85	04
	%	68.7	36.2	2.9	11.2	4.6	72.5	35.4	1.7
FINAL	**TARGET WORDS**	Cloth	Bathe	Envious	Rise	Banish	garage	March	Savage
	CORRECT REALISATION	158	132	237	171	220	45	209	234
	%	65.8	55.0	98.8	71.3	91.7	18.8	87.1	97.5
	INCORRECT REALISATION	82	108	03	69	20	195	31	06
	%	34.2	45	1.2	28.7	8.3	81.2	12.9	2.5

As indicated in Table 1.1 above, the voiceless dental fricative /θ/ which is not attested in the inventory of Yoruba phonemes was wrongly realised as [t] by 144 (60%), 165 (68.7%) and 82 (34.2) undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals at word-initial, word-medial and word-final positions respectively. The wrong realisation of the sibilant as [t] has highest occurrence word-medially. This shows that word-medial position constitutes the most problematic position in the realisation of

voiceless dental fricative [θ] for the learners of English as a second language. The phoneme /θ/, therefore, has two variants: [θ] and [t] as shown below:



Both the correct and wrong pronunciations of *ethnic* which has the highest frequency of incorrect realisation are acoustically analysed below:

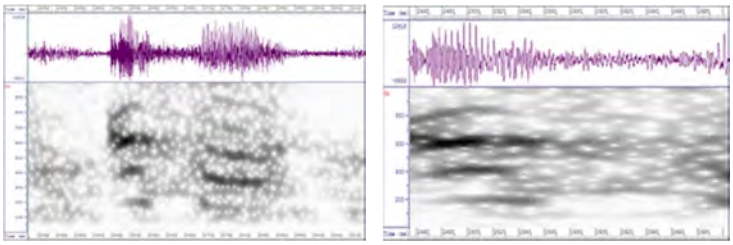


Figure 1a **Figure 1b**

Figure 1a Spectrogram of [eθnik] 'ethnic' (correct realisation of [θ] at word-medial position)
Figure 1b Spectrogram of [etnik] 'ethnic' (wrong realisation of [θ] at word-medial position)

The spectrogram displayed in Figure 1a represents the correct realisation of [θ] at the word-medial position in *ethnic* by the respondents. The sound was produced within 100ms between 2490ms and 2590ms. This attests that the sound is a continuous aperiodic sound. The spectrogram presented in Figure 1b represents the productions of respondents who wrongly realise [θ] at the word-medial position in the word *ethnic*. The sound, which was realised as [t], was produced within 70ms between 3630ms and 3700ms. This attests that the sound is a transient aperiodic sound.

Also, the voiced dental fricative /ð/ was wrongly realised as [d] by 98 respondents at the word-initial position in the word 'they' and by 87 respondents at word-medial position in the word 'weather'. It was

equally wrongly realised as [t] by a total number of 108 respondents in the word 'bathe' at word-final position. The variants of the phoneme are presented below:

/ð/ → [ð] (word-initial) [ðei] 'they'
/ð/ → [d] (word-medial) [wedæ] 'weather'
/ð/ → [f] (word-final) [bæf]/ [bæt] 'bathe'

The result shows that the word-final position is the most difficult in the realisation of the sound by the Yoruba-English bilinguals. Thus, we have the variants of the voiced dental fricative as [ð],[d], [f] and [t] respectively. The acoustic analysis of this is represented by the production of *bathe*.

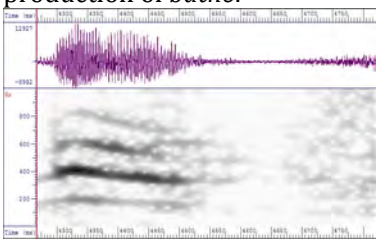


Figure 2a

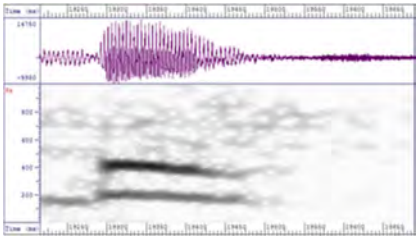


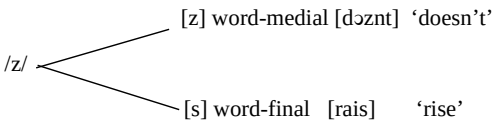
Figure 2b

Figure 2a Spectrogram of [beið] 'bathe' (correct realisation of [ð] at word-final position)
Figure 2b Spectrogram of [beit] 'bathe' (wrong realisation of [ð] at word-final position)

Figure 2a exemplifies the production of the respondents who had the correct realisation of [ð] at the word-final position in the word *bathe*. The sound, as a continuous aperiodic sound, was realised for 130ms between 4660ms and 4530ms. Figure 2b exemplifies the production of the respondents who had the wrong realisation of [ð] as [t] at the word-final position in the word *bathe*.

Moreover, the voiced alveolar fricative /z/ was correctly realised by most of the participants as [z] in the given words, despite the fact that the phoneme is not attested in the inventory of Yoruba language which is the mother tongue of the respondents. Notwithstanding, as specified in Table 1.1., 44 respondents wrongly realised it as [s] in the initial position of the word 'zealous'; 27 respondents wrongly realized it as [s]

at the word-medial position of the word 'doesn't' and 69 respondents realized it as [s] at the word-final position of the word 'rise'. Hence, the following variants are generated from [z] as shown below:



Furthermore, the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ which is present in Yoruba phonology was correctly realised as [s] by a majority of the participants at word-initial, word-medial and word-final positions of the given words. This is to justify the assertion that the areas of convergence between English and Yoruba languages enhance correct realization of sounds.

Its voiced counterpart, [z], was properly pronounced word-initially by significant 196 (81.7%) respondents. At word-medial and word-final positions, it was correctly realised by 213 respondents making 88.8% and 171 respondents constituting 71.3% respectively. It was noted that most respondents realised the sound correctly at word-medial positions than the other two positions.

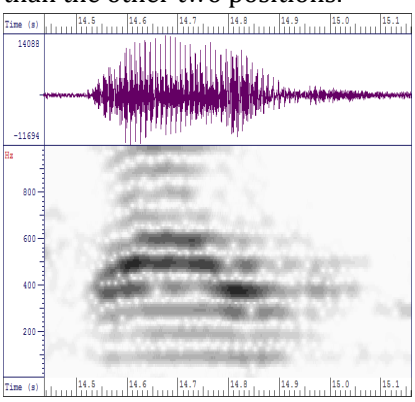


Figure 3a

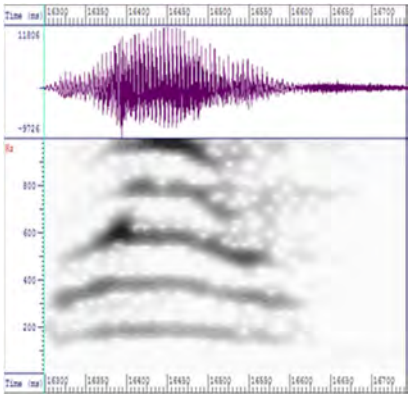


Figure 3b

Figure 3a Spectrogram of [raiz] 'rise' (correct realisation of [z] at word-final position)

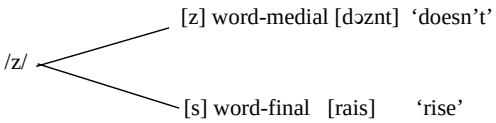
Figure 3b Spectrogram of [rais] 'rise' (wrong realisation of [z] at word-final position)

Figure 3a represents the production of the respondents who had the correct realisation of [z] at the word-final position in the word *rise*. As a continuous aperiodic sound, the sound was produced for 140ms between 15000ms and 15140ms. As shown in the spectrogram, the waveform and the formant structure produced within the aforementioned duration differ from those of the immediate sound produced before it, which is periodic. The vertical striations corresponding to the opening of vocal folds between 14660ms and 149000ms are indices that the produced sound is periodic. Figure 3b shows the production of the respondents who had the wrong realisation of [z] at the word-final position in the word *rise*. The targeted sound, which is a voiced alveolar fricative, was wrongly realised as its voiceless counterpart. Usually, a voiced sound lasts longer in duration than voiceless sound. Thus, the realised sound, although a continuous aperiodic sound, was realised within fewer minutes as opposed to longer duration spent for realising the target sound Figure 3a.

The voiceless post-alveolar fricative, /ʃ/, which occurs in the inventory of Yoruba language, was realized correctly by 95% of the respondents both at the word and sentence levels. Despite its occurrence in the phonology of Yoruba language, as illustrated in Table 1.1, 10 of the participants wrongly realized it as [s] at the initial, 11 respondents wrongly pronounced it at the medial and 20 of them mispronounced it at the final positions of the words: 'shelter', 'action' and 'banish' correspondingly. This gives us [ʃ] and [s] as variants of [ʃ] in the spoken English of educated Yoruba –English bilinguals in Southwestern Nigeria.

The voiced post-alveolar fricative, /ʒ/, can be described as one of the sibilants that constitute problem to the Nigerian learners of English as a second language. The sound was correctly pronounced by insignificant 22 (9.2%) respondents in the word 'genre' at word-initial position, 66 (27.5%) respondents in the word 'vision' at word-medial position and 45 (18.8%) respondents at the final position of the word 'garage'. While the sound was realized correctly as [ʒ] by some participants at initial, medial and final positions of the given words, it was wrongly realized by 218 participants as [dʒ] at initial position of the word 'genre'. Also, the sound was realised by 195 respondents at the final position of the word 'garage'. In addition, the sound was substituted with [ʃ], voiceless post-alveolar fricative, at the medial position of the word 'vision' by a total

number of 174 undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals. The result clearly indicates that word-initial position constitutes the most problematic area for the undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals. It is worthy of note that the sound is absent in the sound system of Yoruba phonology. Thus, the Nigerian learners of English "are forced to interpret the English system in terms of the systems of their own indigenous languages" (Banjo 2014:4). Also, the complexities that accompany the realization of the sound is motivated by difference in the vocal tracts of English as a first language users and English as a second language users. Therefore, the phonemes [ʒ], [dʒ] and [ʃ], are realized as variants of voiced post-alveolar fricative [ʒ] in the spoken English of educated Yoruba-English bilinguals. Examples to justify the assertions are displayed below:



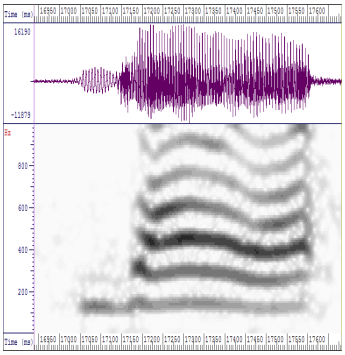


Figure 4a

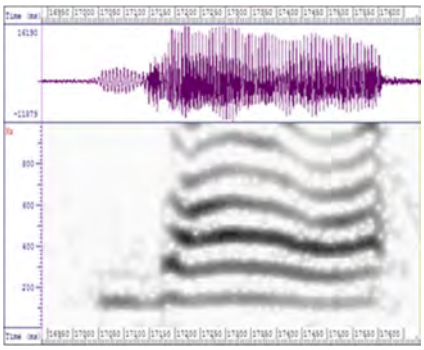


Figure 4b

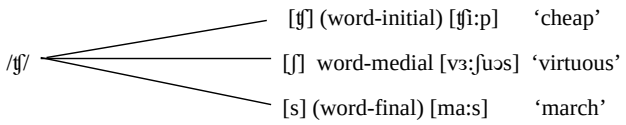
Figure 4a Spectrogram of [dʒɒnri] 'genre' (wrong realisation of [ʒ] at word-initial position)

Figure 4b Spectrogram of 'genre' (correct realisation of [ʒ] at word-initial position)

Figure 4a represents the production of the significant 218 respondents who had the wrong realisation of [ʒ] at the word-initial position in the word *genre*. It was wrongly produced as /dʒ/ for 100ms between

17050ms and 17150ms. The spectrogram in Figure 4b is a representation of the realisation of the few respondents with the total number of 22. As a continuous aperiodic sound, it was realised for 140ms between 10980ms and 11120ms.

Moreover, the sibilant, [ʧ], (voiceless alveolar affricate), was correctly pronounced by a majority of the respondents despite the fact that the sound is not attested in the inventory of Yoruba mother tongue. However, 53 respondents wrongly realized it as [ʃ] at the initial, 80 at the medial and 31 at the final positions of the words; 'cheap', virtuous' and 'march' respectively. The word-medial position constitutes the most problematic area for the undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals. Even, the sound[ʧ] was also wrongly realized by 05 participants as [t] at the medial position of the word 'virtuous'. Hence, the sound is realized as [vɜ:tuɔs] as opposed to the Received Pronunciation [vɜ:ʧuɔs]. Such kind of pronunciation can be described as being spelling-induced because of the occurrence of the sound intervocalically. Thus, we have the variants [ʧ], [ʃ],[s] and [t] as displayed in the following:



3.2 Social Variables of Sibilants Realisation

Based on the overall performance of undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals in the realisation of English sibilants, an attempt was made to examine the possible social differentiation of the respondents in relation to their performance. The respondents were grouped into social variables of gender, age, previous school attended and ethnicity.

3.2.1 Social Variable of Gender

The participants were equally stratified into 120 females and 120 males, and their performance was calculated in relation to their gender.

Table 2.1: Performance by Gender

Sex	**Number of participants**	**Percentage**	**Performance mean score**
Male	120	50.0	35.5

Female	120	50.0	35.3
Total	240	100	70.8

The data analysed in Table 2.1 specified that the participants comprised equal number of males (50%) and females (50%) and higher performance was recorded by the males at 35.5 while that of females was at 35.3. The result exemplified a bit difference between the performance of male and female respondents which indicates that males approximated better in the realisation of English sibilants than their female counterparts. It is usually claimed in sociophonetic tradition that females use more standard speech variants than the male counterparts.

Previous studies (Labov, 1966, 2006; Milroy, 1987) confirmed this assertion that women of all classes and ages employ more standard linguistic variants than men. However, the result of the performance of males and females in this study denies this assertion because the performance of male respondents was better than that of female counterparts. The better performance of the male participants may have stemmed from better exposure than the female counterparts.

3.2.2: Social Variable of Age

Table 2.2: Age of Respondents and their Performance

Age group of respondents	**Number of participants**	**Percentage**	**Performance mean score**
17-20	64	26.7	34.6
21-24	130	54.2	35.5
25-28	42	17.5	35.9
Above 28	4	1.6	37
Total	240	100	35.8

As presented in Table 2.2, the respondents were grouped according to their ages. Those between ages 17-20 who constitute 26.7% had mean score of 34.6, those between ages 21-24 representing the highest population with record of 54.2% had 35.5 mean score, ages 25-28 also representing 17.5% scored 35.9 and those above 28 who represents the least population with 1.6% had the highest mean score of 37. The result shows that the performances increased with the age of the respondents. That is, those between ages 20-24 performed better than those between age 17-20 and those between ages 25 and above approximated better

than the other two groups. Those between ages 17-27 can be classified as adolescents and early adults who are at stage of identity construction and whose activities at this stage involve linguistic innovation (Eckert, 1997). The respondents above 28 years of age are few but came up with a distinct performance. This group belongs to the adult. Labov (1966) describes adulthood as a period of stable and fixed phonological language system. They were more conservative in their use of variables than the younger age group. This explains that age is very significant in approximating to Standard British English.

3.2.3. Social Variable of previous school attended

A total number of 135 participants indicated the previous school attended by them while the remaining 5 were invalid. The respondents were distributed based on previous school attended and mean scores were calculated alongside their performances.

Table 2.3

Previous school attended	Number of participants	Percentage	Performance mean score
Private	144	60	36.8
Public	91	37.9	35.1
Invalid	5	2.1	-
Total	240	100	36

As presented in Table 2.3, the higher proportion of the participants,144 representing 60%, claimed they attended private school while 91 respondents representing 37.9% claimed they attended public school. The result showed that those who attended private schools had a mean score of 36.8 while those who attended public schools by their performance had a mean score of 35.1. The result reveals that those respondents who claimed to have attended private school performed better than those who attended public schools. This has clearly delineated that those respondents who had private school background approximated to Standard British English pronunciation than their counterparts who had public school educational background. It was discovered that while most respondents who attended public school could not differentiate in pronunciation, the difference between the dentals, [θ], [ð] and the alveolar stops, [t], [d], those who claimed to have attended private schools could differentiate and pronounce correctly.

Also, the voiced post-alveolar fricative, [ʒ], and voiceless post-alveolar affricate [ʧ] constituted problem for those who had public school educational background. Better approximation of those who claimed to have attended private school may have stemmed from the fact that English teachers in both primary and secondary schools have good pronunciation skill. More important is that the respondents may have been exposed to basic educational facilities such as Information Communication and Technology (ICT), Television educative programmes as well as equipped language laboratory that could promote learning as well as enhance effective pronunciation.

3.2.4: Social Variable of Ethnicity

A total number of two hundred and thirty eight participants who indicated their ethnical background were grouped as specified and mean scores were calculated based on their performances. The remaining two respondents left the column void.

Table 2.4: Distribution of ethnical background of respondents

State	**Number of participants**	**Percentage**	**Performance mean score**
Ekiti	42	17.5	34.8
Ondo	48	20	34.6
Osun	35	14.6	35.2
Oyo	37	15.4	26.4
Ogun	56	23.3	37.2
Lagos	20	8.3	37.9
Unspecified	02	0.8	-
Total	240	100	38.8

The result showed the performance of each group in respect of the realization of English sibilants. Most of the participants from six different states, except few, manifest lots of dialectal variations in the realization of English sibilants. As earlier stated, some of the sibilants

which are absent in the inventory of their mother tongue constitute problems to the respondents. An observation showed that most of the respondents demonstrate a homogenous feature in their pronunciation of English sibilants, this may be due to the fact that they bear the same affinity in term of their ethnic background. Oladipupo (2014: 89) posits that the above manifestation is understandable due to the fact that language has been proved to vary according to region, nation and wider geographical areas that bear the same affinity. Hence, the spoken English of Nigerian speakers tend to be marked with the phonetic features of each of their different indigenous languages which in turn have evolved regional varieties such as Yoruba-English, Igbo-English and Hausa-English. The performance of the respondent who hailed from Lagos was very significant in approximation to Standard English sibilant. The performance may have stemmed from the kind of exposure which the respondents have that is different from others.

4. Conclusion

The findings obtained from data presentation and analyses revealed and confirmed that variation exists in the realization of English sibilants by undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals. It was also discovered that the frequency at which variation occurs in the pronunciations of the respondents depends not only on the speakers' demographic characteristics but on the linguistic environment in which the variations occur. However, this study has revealed that the realization of English sibilants by undergraduate Yoruba-English bilinguals in Southwestern Nigeria may not impede national intelligibility because the respondents' performances cannot be classified as errors but variants of the Standard British English. The convergence opinion of the earlier researchers, (Jibril, 1982; Udofot, 1989; Akinjobi, 2004; Olaniyi, 2011; Utulu, 2014) confirmed that the variations are peculiar characteristics of Nigerian English which can otherwise be referred to as marker of identity. The interesting thing about these pronunciations is that even many well-educated people who are aware of the pronunciation in native varieties of English tend to refrain from the native model in order not to sound snobbish or affective (Akinjobi, 2004 and Bamgbose, 2014). This implies that the variations confirm the peculiar phonetic properties that differentiate Nigerian spoken English from Standard British English.

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Discourse Functions of Intonation in Nigerian Spoken English

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Abstract

This paper investigates the discourse functions of intonation as used in conversational interaction. Previous researches have examined traditional linguistic functions of intonation in discourse with focus on British English. However, little attention has been paid to career Nigerian English such as the Nollywood which has global reach and draws intonation semblance with British English. Using the theoretical approach of Discourse Intonation model of Chun (2002) this paper examines discourse functions of intonation, drawing from English spoken discourse of educated characters in six Nollywood movies. The movies include Isoken, Just for Two, Dry, The CEO, Lion- Heart and Fifty. The data which include intonation tracks was subjected to acoustic analysis using Praat software (version 5.4. 12). Discourse intonation guided the identification of sentence function which were represented statistically in tables and frequencies to indicate patterns. The findings reveal that intonation contributes significantly to cohesion in discourse, such as in indicating clause boundaries, non-finality, listing including different sentence types. The attitudes revealed through intonation include anger, appreciation, and emphasis among many others. Similarly, the study reveals that the use of intonation in Nollywood spoken English is a reflection of approximation to the Received Pronunciation (RP).

Keywords: Intonation, Pitch, Discourse function, Nollywood

1. Introduction

Since the adoption of English as Nigeria's official language, the methodologies for teaching the language have aimed at the achievement of native-like proficiency for learners. So far, achievement of native-like proficiency has not been possible, especially in pronunciation. A fundamental aspect of phonology which accounts for a speaker's level of fluency, competence and proficiency in a language is intonation. However, for many learners of English as a second language, intonation remains a complicated matter, owing to its flexibility, as it can be influenced by emotions, attitudes and context of usage. In an attempt to promote national and international

intelligibility, this study embarks on a sociophonological description of the intonation used by characters in Nollywood English films with focus on intonation in conversational discourse.

Discourse analysis is the study of language in context of usage (Fasold, 1990). In the same vein, language beyond grammar accounts for functionality as well as paralinguistic variance such as prosodies, gesticulation, physiognomy and so on, which contribute to the cohesion of a text. For instance, the written text, 'it is December' can be articulated as a statement or as a polar question, through intonation by the means of the information structure (Halliday, 1967; Halliday & Hassan, 1976). For grammatical grouping of a spoken language, it is expected that the interpretation of the distinctive units and the tonal elements of a text in a discourse should be dependent on the information structure realized through intonation. This information structure is regarded as the intonational phrase. Grouping the written speech is generally based on observable data, but the case is more complex for a spoken language, which has no observable data. The only recognized speech signal delimitations are by breathing and silences, which have been taken as boundary signals for phonological groupings (Liberman, 1960). However, this is less rewarding as it does not help to identify immediate phonological constituents.

Delongova (2010) notes that fall-rise intonation tune indicates clause boundary and other forms of non-finality, such as listing, amongst others. In this vein, the appropriate use of fall-rise tune by a speaker in a conversational discourse indicates that the speaker is still holding the floor of discourse, and is expected to say more. It also contributes to the meaning that is derived from the text. Some other functions of intonation, or prosody in a broader sense, are gender identification (Simpson, 2009), and illustration of speakers' attitudes (Gbadegesin, 2018). Intonation which is influenced by pitch can be high or low, depending on the gender. Simpson (ibid.) notes that males generally have low pitch and females have high pitch. Likewise, in discourse intonation, prominence and emotionality from the point of view of the speaker can help portray attitudes.

1.1 Literature Review

The global status English language enjoys in the world today, and the important role it plays in the Nigerian situation where it is considered as indigenised and nativised (Igboanusi, 2002, p.2) has encouraged research into the Nigerian English. Research in recent time is also ongoing on Nollywood which happens to be the world's second most prolific film industry after India's Bollywood (Fayomi, 2015). Okome and Haynes (2013) examine the evolving Nigerian video films from the initial production of celluloid movies in Nigeria to the industrial boom in film production which has resulted in large quantities of films in Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Pidgin and English languages. In the same vein, Ebewo (2011, p.1) in his paper on 'the Emerging Video Film Industry in Nigeria' recalls that motion pictures were first screened in Nigeria in August 1903. He provides information on film production companies, with the first being Latola Film in 1962 followed by Calpeny Nigeria Limited in 1970. Evolving from the economic downturn and harassments meted to film makers, which led to the collapse of celluloid film production in the 1980s, Ebewo provides positive flashes into the upgrade the Nigerian movie started recording from the production of video films. This growth, in the early 1990s, results in what has since been referred to as 'NOLLYWOOD'.

On Onuzulike's (2011) part, he investigated that the origin of the term "Nollywood" has been uncertain. However, he suggests it might be an imitation of Hollywood in the same way which Bollywood was derived from the combination of Bali and Hollywood which describes the Indian film industry. However, Haynes (2000) notes the term was first invented by a foreigner and first appeared in 2002 in The New York Times in an article by Matt Steinglass; albeit, *Nollywood,* is a term used for Nigerian movies. Finally on the emerging growth in Nigerian Film Industry, Haynes (2011) focuses on Nollywood in Lagos. He suggests that the Lagos based Nigerian film industry is by far the third largest film industry in the world. In the same vein, it is the hub for imaging Nigeria domestically and internationally. The Lagos based thematic incursion into Nigerian movies proves to showcase the social class subdivisions, violence, hard drugs, supernatural forces which reflect the desires and fears of the Nigerian audience.

Syntactic studies such as Sobola and Agboola (2016) are part of the investigation into language use in Nollywood movies. They focused on syntactic processes involved in forming conceptual metaphors. They suggest that language use in Nollywood encapsulates language phenomenon at different linguistic levels. Selecting two movies *Aya wa ni* and *He Goat*, they argue that conceptual metaphor has structural patterns not too different from what operates in kernel and transformed sentences of non-literary language. Thus, the syntactic structure of conceptual metaphor does not affect grammatical interpretations. In the same vein, Sobola (2018) provides relatable evidence of how Nollywood movies serve to portray real life contextual situations in interactional discourse. Investigating Metaphor of Abuse, Sobola laid emphasis on the use of linguistic and cultural nuances to fulfill some forms of expression. Employing the Speech acts theory, he brought out illocutionary forces on metaphors used in a movie *House of Trouble*. He opines that 'metaphors' are performative utterances capable of instigating perlocutionary reactions being reactions to abuse; which could result in physical reactions. This is not far-fetched, as Nollywood movies help to mirror real life social practices. These studies corroborate the possibility of mapping English intonation use of movie discourses as mirroring what could be expected in real life situations. It suggests the projection of interactive social practices which are ongoing or may be actualised in time; one of which is the thesis of recommending English intonation used in film discourses as a standard form. This view can be inferred in Sobola's (2019) The *Relevance of Metaphors to Sociolinguistic Meaning in Nollywood movies* who asserts that the relevance of metaphor (an aspect of literature just as intonation points to phonology) by contributing to sociolinguistic interpretations is worthy of investigation in the sociolinguistic study of language in different speech communities.

Ehineni (2016) considers the socio-pragmatic imports of socio-cultural contexts on English forms which are now largely used in the Nollywood. Ehineni argues that analyzing the use of Nigerian English in Nollywood will provide further insights into the linguistic peculiarities of the Nigerian English in other contexts. He asserts that investigated linguistic features are informed by underlying socio-pragmatic variables, thus showcasing the roles Nigerian contexts play on the nature of English usage in the Nollywood and Nigeria at large. Reflected

linguistic features according to Ehineni (2016) are code switching, semantic extension, translation equivalents, prepositional redundancy, coinages, idiomatic expressions and modality uses. A lot are still embedded in the Nollywood movies which could point to Nigerian English usage, one of which is English intonation which is the focus of this study.

With a focus on sociolinguistics, Omoniyi (2014) considers how style is used to carve identity by artistes in Nollywood movies. She uses imaging and construction of socio-culture as features employed by scriptwriters in creating socio-cultural backgrounds and thematic conflicts for identity creation for their movies. Omoera (2013), moving away from popular culture, investigated audience reception of Benin video films in order to examine their roles as part of a growing film culture in Nollywood. Reaffirming the need to focus on audience and audience reception in film studies, Omoera affirms majority of Benin viewers are gratified in Benin video films as a reflection of their culture. This study helps to contribute to the growth in film studies in Nollywood, also drawing away from the focus on Nollywood movies in English and major languages of Nigeria. What is left unsaid in the study is the way thoughts are primarily conveyed whether in Benin language, Nigerian Pidgin or English.

Relating Nollywood to discourse intonation, Gbadegesin (2018) provides the sociocultural implication of discourse intonation to conversational discourse focusing on usage by women. In this work, the reflective nature of women intonation was established, which shows a cultural transition of women from the status of being submerged in a male dominated society to protesting against limiting primitive cultures. This current study explores discourse function of intonation within the purview of discourse intonation theory; as it seeks to investigate intonation function (grammatical and attitudinal) and intonation practice (sociolinguistic context and communicative value).

Theoretical Background

Discourse Intonation theory proposes that intonation choices are tied to the context in which they occur. In other words, intonation informs language users on the relatedness of their utterances to discourse as a whole. Chun (2002, p. 47-48) explains that discussing discourse

intonation should be for defining discourse. Crystal (1975, p. 238) views discourse as a continuous stretch of speech larger than a sentence. It could also be explained as a set of utterances which constitute any recognizable speech event. This means that in the interpretation of language in discourse analysis, one must consider the context of language use. Thus, Chun (2002, p. 32) rightly suggests that pragmatic explanations which look at language from the viewpoint of the users, especially of the choices they made, the constraints encountered and the effects their language use has on other participants must be brought into view when examining discourse.

Chun's explicit aim is to move on "from theory and research to practice", by proposing a model for teaching intonation (Chun 2002, p. 42). The theory spotlights intonation functions with a focus on sociolinguistic and discourse functions rather than the traditional grammatical interpretation of intonation for sentence types. An all-encompassing discourse intonation recognizes information structure including sentence-level and beyond, to achieve continuity and coherence within discourse irrespective of the length of the discourse. Some of the discourse functions of intonation suggested therefore include marking prominence, focus or notable information in a discourse; marking boundaries in a discourse; controlling interactive structure; continuing an established topic or signaling a new topic in order to foster cooperation between the speaker and listener (Chun 2002, p. 56).

Analytically, the descriptive roles of the linguistic components of intonation pertaining to discourse are prominence, tone, key and termination. Chun (2002, p. 202-206) recognizes five *tone* units showing pitch movements, which are: *falling, rising, fall-rise, rise-fall* and *level*. *Prominence* distinguishes marked from unmarked syllables and correlates to the major pitch movement. The *key* of a tone unit can be low, mid or high; while the *termination* addresses the low, middle or high pitch-level choice made by the speakers at the tone unit initiation or end.

Purpose of study

This study examines the functions of intonation in conversational discourse. The aim is to consider how well intonation plays discourse

roles in Educated Nollywood English and to examine if they are appropriately used in comparison to existing literatures. The objectives are to: examine appropriate use of intonation for sentence types among educated Nollywood English characters (ENE); examine how intonation performs cohesion in discourse and reflects non-finality; determine how intonation indicates clause boundaries; and investigate the use of intonation in attitudinal discourse;

2. Methodology

Content analysis was employed as a research design. It was facilitated by the need to consider Nollywood English as a standard variety of Nigerian spoken English. Six Nollywood movies, *Isoken, Just for Two, Dry, The CEO, Lion Heart* and *Fifty* were subjected to acoustic analysis. Praat software (version 5.4. 12) was used for extracting and exporting intonational pitch tracks. The nature of the data is spoken texts across different discourses such as sentence types and discourse moods of: assent, dissent, regret, apology, politeness, impoliteness etc. The intonation tracks were subjected to Discourse intonation analysis as suggested by Chun (2002). The approach focuses on investigating how intonation patterns affect or influence discourse. Samples of intonation patterns were collected from educated characters. Apart from the qualitative description which discourse intonation provides in analyzing 'expressions', we employed quantitative methods in representing different discourse groupings. Expressions representing different intonation functions were presented in tables and chat with statistical percentage count carried out on them.

3. Findings and Discussion

The investigation reveals that intonation performs grammatical function of indicating sentence types. Grammatically, sentence types include statements, wh-questions, polar questions, commands and exclamation. It was observed that falling tune functions to indicate statements, wh-questions, commands and exclamations. Rising tune on the other hand, functions to indicate polar questions as well as non-finality. The fall-rise was found to indicate listing and non-finality, while the rise-fall functions to indicate moods such as disapproval, anger and impression. For the purpose of this paper, few annotated grids will be included in this section.

Below are sample annotated grids showing selected sentence types:

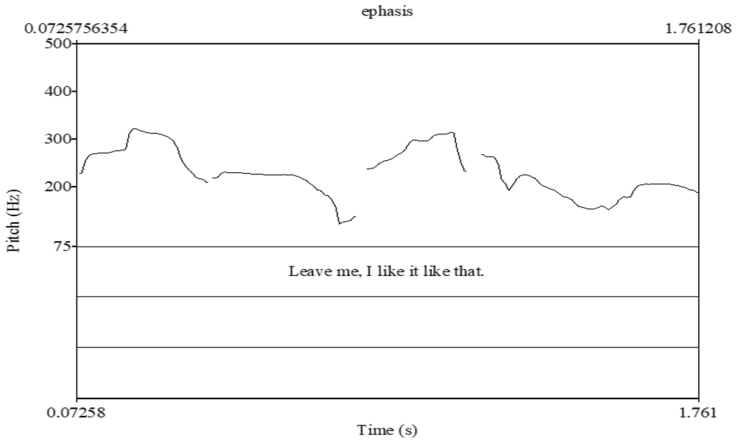


Fig.1. Showing emphatic statement with falling intonation (Isoken in Isoken, 23:15-23:20)

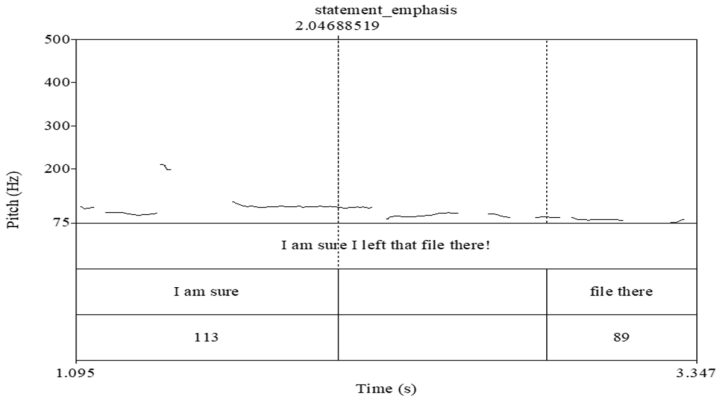


Fig.2. Showing emphatic statement with falling intonation (Obi in *Just for Two*, 7:05-7:10)

Both representations (Fig 1 &2) denote 'emphasis' and are constructed in the statement form. Moreover, emphasis denotes finality. Chun (2002, p. 77, 192) notes that when constructions are expressing finality, they take the falling intonation. In other words, the falling intonation pattern for emphatic statements agrees to that in the British English. It should be noted however that the difference in pitch height

noted between fig.2 and fig.1 is related to the pitch range which was unique to the individuals.
Tables (1) and (2) present the summary of intonation usage for sentence types by educated characters across the six movies.

Table 1. Showing the use of falling intonation

Sentence type	**Appropriate use**	**Inappropriate Use**	**% of appropriateness**
Statements	47 of 50	3 of 30	94
WH questions	38 of 41	3 of 41	92.6
Commands	31 of 36	5 of 36	86
Exclamations	35 of 38	3 of 38	92

In Table 1 above, we have a record of 94, 92.6, 86 and 92 percentages across statements, wh-questions, commands and exclamations, respectively. The downward movement of the intonation contour which characterizes statements, wh-questions, commands and exclamations indicating finality reveals that they were said with the proclaiming tone as the tonic stress of the tone unit.

Table 2. Showing the use of rising intonation

Sentence type	Appropriate use	Inappropriate Use	% of appropriateness
Yes/No questions	36 of 39	3 of 39	92

Table 2 showcases a summary of educated Nollywood character's use of rising tune. 92% of the educated characters used the rising intonation appropriately. These findings indicate high degree of appropriateness to the propositions of Bolinger (1989) and Delongova (2010) in the use of rising and falling tunes in the literature and reflects Chun's (2002, p. 211-216) teaching of intonation for second language learners. Below is one of the annotated grids showing polar question with rising tune.
Fig.3. Showing polar question with rising intonation (Pascal in *Lionheart* 3:3)

In Fig 3, there is the upward movement of the intonation contour. //Is it ALREADY three ↗Months?// This is said with a referring tone as the

tonic stress of the tone unit. Therefore this serves as a common ground marker between the speaker and listener.

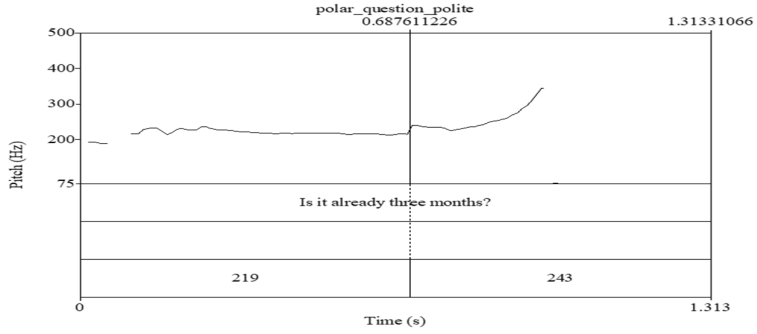
Cohesion in Discourse and Non-Finality

There could be a personal use of an intonation pattern by an individual for different discourse situations. This is what discourse intonation tends to investigate. Even, when an individual usage is concerned, discourse common ground reflecting a shared knowledge among participants in the discourse is salient to coherence, in such a way that appropriate use of intonation is expected to denote particular grammatical and semantic information. In this sense, an appropriate intonation pattern is a cohesive device. Intonation is revealed to be a significant cohesive device in the intertextuality of spoken texts (Chun 2002, p. 232). Intonation used appropriately by individuals help to indicate non-finality, clause boundary, listing and so on. Table 3 indicates the summary of the use of fall-rise tune which indicates non-finality.

Table 3. Showing the use fall-rise intonation

Sentence type	**Appropriate use**	**Inappropriate Use**	**% of appropriateness**
Non-finality	32 of 36	4 of 36	88

The finding here reveals a high percentage of appropriate use of intonation to show non-finality and this is similar with what Chun (2002, p. 232) reported in the use of fall-rise. An unsaid agreement permeates the use of the intonation tune for non-final statements in such a way that it makes a text to flow easily into one another. Consider the examples below:



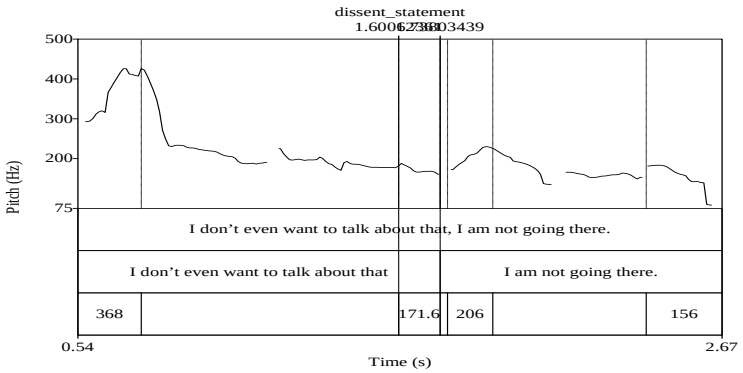


Fig. 4. Showing fall-rise indicating non-finality (by Dr. Zara in *Dry*, 11:00-11:03)

The statement in Fig. 4 expresses an assertion and also a negation. It follows a previous utterance to which the current speaker disapproves or disagrees with. In this current Figure 4, the annotation reflects the movement of the pitch across the utterance. The intonation begins with a pitch range of 368 Hz, with the initial clause in the sentence falling to the range of 171.6 Hz. The following clause making up the sentence also starts with 206 and falls at 156. The annotation here provides some of the discoursal roles of intonation. It shows that statements have the falling tones at the boundary between the clauses, and also a fall-rise situation indicating non finality (Chun, 2002, p. 37, 64, 206, 209) which helps achieve cohesion in discourse.

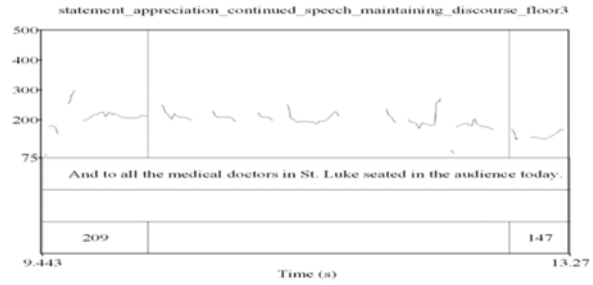


Fig.5. Continued speech showing non-finality (by Dr Zara in *Dry* 2:00-3:00)

The appreciative utterance annotated in Figure 5 is from a stretch of appreciative text. What follows is that 'we say thank you'. If that is the case, it means the annotated utterance here is a complement of the preposition 'to' in *we say thank you to all the medical doctors in St. Luke seated…* However, with the 'complement post' presented, a part of the whole clause in the initial position is formed. Being as it is, the utterance clocks with a fall-rise which we have established as expressing non-finality. Thus, we can say that, although the utterance is part of a statement, it terminates for itself with a fall-rise pattern to indicate non-finality.

Indicating Clause Boundaries

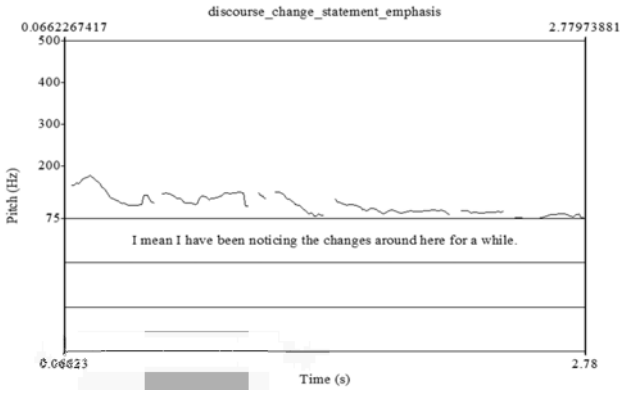


Fig.6. Showing intonation used to hold the discourse floor (Ozaze in *Isoken*, 11:00-11:05)

The representation in Figure 6 indicates that apart from the general progression towards a falling tone for the statement, there are inherent intonation patterns which contribute to the flow of discourse. Looking within the statement are two clauses: '*I mean'* and *'I have been noticing the changes around here for a while'.* The boundary between the two clauses shows a fall-rise pattern which means the speaker is not done and still trying to hold the discourse floor by raising the pitch high. However, within the second clause, there is another fall-rise tune which occurred due to the speaker's attempt to continue holding the floor when almost interrupted by the second speaker. Hence, fall-rise

intonation pattern occurs not just because the current speaker has more to say, but primarily to hold the discourse floor.

Intonation in Attitudinal Discourse

A way of indicating the intonation usage beyond the traditional use of it in grammar is to examine its usage in conversational interactions, such as attitudinal function. The findings reveal intonation performing attitudinal function as is shown in the table below.

Table 4. Mood with falling and rise-fall intonation patterns

Mood	Appropriate use	Inappropriate use	% of appropriateness
Anger	30 of 33	3 of 33	90
Disapproval	15 of 16	1 of 16	93.7
Surprise	19 of 24	5 of 24	79
Appreciation	12 of 15	3 of 15	80

The moods indicated in Table 4 are that of anger, surprise, appreciation and encouragement. The graphs in which the anger and disapproval moods were represented have appropriate intonation use of 90% and 93.7% respectively. Utterances which indicate surprise were 79% while appreciation had 80% appropriate use.

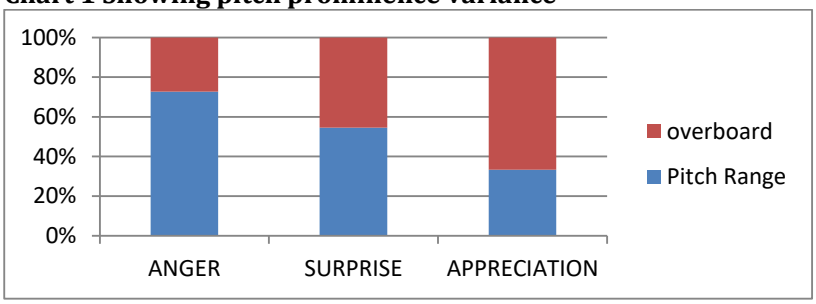
Table 5. Mood with rising intonation

Mood	Appropriate use	Inappropriate use	% of appropriateness
Encouragement	3 of 8	5 of 8	37.5
Apologetics	1 of 16	15 of 16	6

In Table 5, soberness or apologetic which should have been rendered in rising tune had many of the educated character not using intonation here appropriately. The findings as shown in table indicates a complete deviation, with the rising tune not employed for attitudes indicating positive polite responses to incredulous or exasperated questions as noted in Chun (2002, p. 223-224).

A chart showing variance in pitch prominence is indicated below:

Chart 1 Showing pitch prominence variance



The mood function of intonation is not only identifiable by the extrapolation of the words that make up the sentence. Coupled with the semantic interpretation is what is known as the pitch prominence. As illustrated in the chart above, there is a perceived higher prominence when anger is expressed compared to surprise and appreciation. Anger indicates higher pitch prominence which can go overboard the spectrograph especially in female utterances. For example, the rise-fall intonation of angry mood is indicated by a rising reinforcement of a fall. The expressions are notable to end in a fall but could have a rise at the point of stress and emphasis. In other words, the high key of an angry speaker in the tone unit is the point of rise in the tone unit. The low key, respectively, is the point of the fall in the tone unit.

4. Conclusion

This paper examined the discourse functions of intonation in Nigerian spoken English using Nollywood movies as a case study. The analysis reveals how intonation controls interactive structure by constraining a hearer to reply or discourage reply, continue an established topic or signal a new topic and indicate a speaker's expectations about a listener's reply, to mention a few. The study concludes that intonation in Nollywood contributes significantly to cohesion of spoken texts not only by indicating clause boundaries, non-finality, differentiating sentence types, but, also performing attitudinal functions which could be revealed in the form of anger, appreciation, and emphasis among many others. In line with the high level of appropriateness recorded, the use of intonation in Nollywood spoken English can be described as

a reflection of the approximation towards British English and this recommends the adoption of Nollywood English as a standard variety for Nigerian spoken English.

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Emerging Free Style of Pronunciation in Postmodern Broadcast Media in Nigeria: An Exploration

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Abstract

This article explores, through an interview with selected broadcast media managers, some of the factors militating against the practitioners in their agenda-setting roles as implementers of the standard structures and patterns of English sounds and pronunciation. It also explores factors in contemporary broadcasting that make the maintenance of standard a challenging effort: one of such factors is the influence of postmodernism, which is a departure from the modernist characteristics of the past. It is a self-conscious life style which resonates in culture and media as a deconstruction of the grand-narratives of the past and involving ideas (re)formation in the contemporary world. This study concludes that a more cautious, distilled, and reasonable way of examining the contemporary broadcast media will reveal the importance of approaching the study from a postmodern perspective. This will give clarity to the reality of the emerging free style of pronunciation adopted by contemporary broadcast media practitioners. The paper therefore suggests a development of a synergy between academics and practitioners as one of the possible ways of ameliorating and overcoming the highlighted challenges.

Keywords: Broadcast Media, Commercialization, Postmodernism, Phonologists and phoneticians, Pronunciation.

Introduction

The broadcast media is a key institution in leading the promotion of standard pronunciation of English language among the people because of the training in Received Pronunciation that is provided them (Kperogi, 2007; Omoera, 2008; Jowitt, 2019; Oyebola and Gut, 2020). The fact that the broadcast media through the media personalities can reach a large mass of people and influence the usage of English language among the people is also a critical point to note. Although there have been instances of such influences that have led to the popularization of trends in language use, slangs, neologisms and other

linguistic 'fads'; still, the high requirement of specialization and professional skills by the industry and the regular training by broadcast organizations for their media personnel to have good command of language, good grammar and elocution make it a necessary focus on standard. More so, this is a requirement of the industry regulator, the Nigerian broadcasting commission (NBC 2016:22). Therefore, the media organizations are bound by the rules of engagement spelt out by the commission to 'use current and generally acceptable English in their newscast (and programme) presentations (Omoera, 2008). This point also suggests that the media could contribute to 'legitimise' the misuse of English language or popularize wrong pronunciations of certain words when not properly guided. This is a point made by Adegbite (2010) in his Inaugural lecture where he highlights instances of mis-pronunciations of certain words by some Nigerian broadcasters. In some cases, such errors have shaped the way the masses of the people who listen to them pronounce the words. Thus, the concern of this study on the significance of pronunciation in the broadcast media is well grounded, especially in an era where there is a decline in the standard of pronunciation by some media personalities. Also, the lack of uniformity in the acceptable standard of pronunciation by Nigerian broadcasters in their different broadcast media organizations is impacted by the lack of identifiable/agreed standard by academics who are studying the subject-matter in their research works.

These issues have been examined and analysed for decades, by several scholars (Adetugbo (1979), Kujore (1985), Akere (2004), Adegbija (1989; 2004), Bamiro (1991), Alo & Mesthrie (2008), Omoera, (2008), Kirkpatrick (2011) Gut & Fuchs (2013), Jowitt (2019). Furthermore, other scholars have also studied the issues as they relate to media practitioners in Nigeria (Akinjobi and Oladipo, 2015; Jowitt, 2019; Oyebola and Gut (2020). However, none of these scholars examine the prevailing influence of postmodernism on the works of media practitioners in contemporary broadcast media.

A Review of Literature

The reality of the scholarship in English language pronunciation has highlighted the weaknesses in the Received Pronunciation of English, which has led to the debate on what the acceptable standard should be. Since the early days of scholarship in the English language

pronunciation in Nigeria, scholars of phonology have studied different aspects of pronunciation of English and the different influences that impact them. One example is the major influence by indigenous languages as noted by Isiaka (2019) when he observes that 'the indigenous languages (L1) characteristically influence the speakers' English accent (1). Keshavarz and Abubakar (2017) also studied the pronunciation problems of Hausa speakers of English and reached a conclusion that the influence of Mother Tongue is 'noticeable and long-lasting' (62). Another view is by Oshodi and Owolewa (2020) who take 'a critical look at the features of Standard Nigerian English' (29) and explore the works of several linguists who have studied the different areas of concern examined by the scholars. Such works like Adetugbo (1979), Kujore (1985), Akere (2004), Adegbija (1989; 2004), Kachru (1987), Bamiro (1991), Ajani (2007), Alo & Mesthrie (2008), Kirkpatrick (2011) Gut & Fuchs (2013), Akinjobi (2015), and Bemigho and Olateju (2006) were all examined critically and analysed.

These two scholars focus on some who 'believe that the form tagged Nigerian English is a product of inadequate knowledge of Standard English which makes the form "incorrect" English and by extension an inter-language' and others who believe it is a form which has emerged with its own distinct features that are peculiar to Nigerian speakers of English' (Oshodi and Owolewa,, 2020). They also observe that 'there is a form regarded as Standard Nigerian English acclaimed to be exclusive to educated Nigerians. This form has been tagged a "variety" of Standard English. However, existing literature revealed that this particular type possesses some unusual linguistic features not peculiar to either a dialect or a variety which makes the claim that it (i.e., Standard Nigerian English) is a variety of English somehow contentious' (Oshodi and Owolewa). This is because of the systematical and structural inconsistency notable among regular users and the yet to be reached agreement by scholars on what should constitute the standard in the spoken form of the English language in Nigeria. Oshodi and Owolewa close their study with the admission that 'The different forms identified among Nigerian speakers are not even consistent. The forms have the tendency to change and improve as the speakers gain more exposure to the Standard English … [therefore they submit that] … the forms tagged Nigerian English appear more like inter-language, which can be grouped into different levels .

In the same vein, Jowitt (2020) also discuss some of the works of scholars in special areas who 'seek to identify varieties of Nigerian English'. In his introduction to a collection of essays written in honour of another leading scholar, Jowitt (2020), explains that the English language is heavily influenced by environmental and social interference. He explains that Awonusi's (2004) observation that 'British Received Pronunciation (RP), has undergone and is still undergoing changes in its homeland, and is not homogeneous' is 'a consequence of the decline of the political and social élite whose power it once symbolized and the movement of British society in a more democratic direction . He also examines, especially the older works of such scholars like Brosnahan (1958); Banjo (1971; Adekunle (1979); Bamgbose (1983); Jibril (1986); Bamiro (1991); Criper-Friedman (1990); Udofot (2003) among others.

In truth, as languages interact, there are interferences at different levels; for example, such features as phonology, syntax, lexis and others are affected. However, the focus of this paper is on the phonological features and this is why the first point is on Received Pronunciation. Several other scholars have explained the different ways that the English language has been influenced by indigenous languages, thereby influencing the manner of pronunciation and other features of the language. There have also been research works on the influence of education on the manner of pronunciation. This issue appears to be a major focus of scholars through the years, as noticed by Oshodi and Owolewa (2020).

Notable scholars like Banjo (1995), Adekunle (1979), Jowitt (1991), Akere (2004), Egbe (2004) and Bamiro (2006) have identified and grouped Nigerian speakers of English language into different varieties. While Banjo, Egbe and Jowitt identified 4 varieties of speakers on the basis of their education, Adekunle, Akere and Bamiro identified 3 varieties on the basis of their levels of competence. These varieties are influenced by the educational level, environmental conditions and level of exposure of the speakers. What this means is that these factors could change or modify the pronunciation of the language. This point is clearly highlighted by the experience of the original English speakers themselves, in which case the Received Pronunciation has suffered a decline due to environmental and social influence as noted by Jowitt (2020). He further observes that:

> The loss of RP's prestige and pre-eminence in its homeland… is a consequence of the decline of the political and social élite whose power it once symbolized and the movement of British society in a more democratic direction.

This is a pointer to the fact that L2 speakers of English language cannot truly attain a standard level of pronunciation but can only strive to achieve a close level of acceptable standard. Okoro (2017) itemizes some of the factors that could militate against achieving a standard form of pronunciation in the Nigerian context. She observes that 'interference, followed, in no particular order, by inadequate motivation, poor teaching and learning resulting from lack of facilities, and crowded classrooms' are all such factors. She also explains that the outcome of the effects of these factors could be a situation describes as fossilization whereby 'learning and further improvement cease, either because the learner feels frustrated or because he/she perceives no further need for such improvement' (Okoro 2017, 1).

In concluding their examination of the works of several scholars studied in their different researches, Jowitt (2020) as well as Oshodi and Owolewa (2020) still could not reach an agreement on what should be the acceptable standard of pronunciation for Nigerian speakers of the English Language. There seems to be different perspectives which seem to add to the layers of views by many scholars projecting acceptable standard of pronunciation for Nigerian English. While Jowitt concludes that 'One variety [of Nigerian English] is likely not to prove, or has not proved to be as acceptable in Nigeria as another'; Oshodi and Owolewa conclude that Nigerian English appear more like inter-languge which can be grouped into different levels .

Oyebola and Gut (2020) take the research further by focusing on 'newscasters', the 'focus group' in the broadcast media deploying pronunciation as their 'tool of trade'. The two scholars review the works of different scholars (several scholars were mentioned above, you need to mention the scholars being refrred) and observe that 'it is difficult to categorize speakers of English solely by their educational qualifications…'and conclude that 'there is little or no agreement, either among Nigerians or among researchers, whether any particular sub-variety of English spoken in Nigeria has indeed achieved the status of a prescriptive standard … . The duo then carried out an extensive study

to 'investigate the attitudes of Nigerians to the variety of Nigerian English used by Nigerian newscasters …' and to determine 'whether the form of English spoken by Nigerian newscasters might be adopted by Nigerian speakers as a prestigious model …'. At the end of the study, they reached a conclusion that 'Nigerian newscasters' English currently has limited potential of being accepted as a standard in Nigeria … due to the fact that no uniform "newscasters' accent" exists …' . The same is through for all broadcast media practitioners.

These conclusions have implications for the decision on what standard of English to deploy in the pronunciation used by practitioners in the Nigerian broadcast media. This is why the ongoing debate keeps throwing up ideas that have not ceased to attract scholars studying the phonological development of English language in Nigeria. Thus, many researchers continue to study the various situations that condition the English speakers in Nigeria and the factors that influence the pronunciation of the language. One of such factors is the gradual gestation of new ideas that are fundamental to the vision of contemporary life, powered by a youth culture, which is manifesting in the characteristics of the broadcast media. Its impact is deconstructing the age-old tradition and breaking down the grand-narratives of the foundational structure of broadcast media practice.

The other fundamental issue, which is the focus of this research is the postmodernist bent identified in the system of promoting standard pronunciation by media personalities in the broadcast industry in Nigeria. This manifests in different areas of the broadcast field; whether in the organizational structure, administrative system or presentation styles of individual media personalities. In the contemporary world, there is a complete departure from the essentialism of the modern era, which has led to the continuous deconstruction of the grand narratives of the past system. On this deconstructed platform, the citizens of the space act accordingly, thus, many of the presenters in the contemporary broadcast media are not passionate about maintaining any grand standard or keeping their pronunciation free of any interference. In addition to this, the systemic corruption in the public service of the Nigerian broadcast media, which has weakened the employment process [administrative system], particularly of presenters, has contributed to this postmodern standard of pronunciation as noted by participants in the selected interviews

conducted by this researcher (www.youTube.com/ruby woman). A development also noted by this researcher who happens to be a former presenter with the major broadcast organization owned by the Federal government of Nigeria.

Postmodernism and the Free Style Standard of Pronunciation

Postmodernism is a framework that exhibits skepticism or outright rejection of the grand truth narratives that was the focus of the modernist period. The major proponent of the idea, Jean Francois Lyotard (1984) observes that the present postmodernist era is witnessing the collapse of the 'grand narratives' that explained human experiences in terms of master narratives. He argues that 'we now know the world through smaller micro-narratives that do not all fit together into a greater coherent whole' (Berke et al, 2015). Lyotard's further description of postmodernism is that it is a rejection of epistemological discourse that assumes a knowing and active subject seeking access to objective reality, that which 'puts forward the unpresentable in presentation itself', denying itself 'the solace of good forms' (The Postmodern Condition, 1984). Could this be seen as a devaluation of the modern form? He continues his clarification by giving an example of a postmodern artist or writer. He says:

> A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by preestablished rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgment, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work .

The rejection of the epistemological discourse, which is the hallmark of postmodernism, is what Jameson, another proponent, has linked to the commonly identified component of the new perspective, 'the death of the subject', which he also describes as 'the end of individualism' (17). This means that the idea of a modernist aesthetic which conceives of a unique individual with a unique identity and a unique vision of the world no longer exists; it is long dead (17). Jameson continues to explain the different areas of human endeavor that are easily concerned, he observes:

> Yet today, from any number of distinct perspectives, the social theorists, the psychoanalysts, even the linguists, not to speak of those of us who work in the area of culture and cultural and formal change, are all exploring the notion that that kind of individualism and personal identity is a thing of the past; that the old individual or individualist subject is 'dead' (17).

Thus, in a specific and general way, postmodernism has deconstructed the idea of 'the subject'. This is a devaluation of the essential ideas of the society, for it focuses more on multiplicity of ideas rather than a single grand subject matter. As such, the idea of an essentialist subject or a single focused idea by an intelligent individual has become obsolete.

In the Nigerian media, one of the epistemological discourses is the importance of setting a standard for pronunciation and the need for announcers and presenters in the media institutions to reach for the goal of pronouncing English words as RP. This was an essential factor in promoting quality broadcasting as required by the organization overseeing the activities of the broadcast industry. In an effort to document the development of broadcasting in Nigeria, Adejumobi (1974) describes the focus of the broadcast media as stated by the first Director General of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service, T.W. Chalmer:

> The declared aim of the NBS is to train Nigerians to run the service with the same standards as those set by the BBC. Nothing less is worthy of this country and people.

And when NBS gave way to NBC on August 24, 1992, by Decree 38 of 1992 later amended as an act of the National Assembly by Act 55 of 1999 and now known as National Broadcasting Commission Laws of the Federation 2004, CAP N11, it continued the tradition by reiterating that:

> A Broadcaster shall ensure that its presenter/continuity announcer shall have a good command of the language of presentation, in diction, grammar and elocution.

However, there is no specific section of the Broadcast code that deals with the Pronunciation Standard except by inference as noted in section 1.9.2 and the convention linked with the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which stipulates that the country's lingua franca is British English, as noted by a notable face (Ayo Makinde, 2021), on the foremost cable news channel in Nigeria, Channels TV, in a scheduled online interview with this researcher. But, another well-known media manager, (Tokunbo Ojekunle, 2021), a veteran in the industry who has traversed the public and the private in his over three decades of experience, contends that in reality, there is nothing called lingua franca. He explains:

> Nigeria has no lingua franca! Let me explain … English we don't own it. … It's not ours. That is the reason why a student in the class will explain to me that he can not board a bus and ask the bus to … stop at ¬challenge bus stop what they know is sha¬llenge … So, education is key …
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5E5PlibQkI

This point is quite similar to what many of the scholars have noted about the lack of uniformity in the pronunciation of English words among the different categories of speakers in Nigeria. Therefore, individual broadcast institutions have to make the efforts to set up structures by setting up regulations to build and maintain the standard on the basis of their individual organizations' policy. Thus, when broadcasters are recruited, they have to go through the rigorous exercise of auditioning and 'sitting-in' on shifts, attached to a professional for months before they could be considered ready for live presentations. In an interview with selected broadcasters from both the public and private organizations – Federal, State and Private, the respondents provide information on how the set standard has gradually declined for various reasons. According to a former manager at Eko *FM, Lagos*, (Tokunbo Ojekunle, 2021); in a scheduled online interview, he contends that Lagos state broadcasting service, the early days of broadcasting were days of principled requirements:

> I remember in those days, you were made to sit down with the

> Announcer on duty… and you could sit down for three/four months without really doing anything …
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5E5PlibQkI

The first respondent (Makinde, 2021) also corroborates this point when he says:

> … if you want to be a duty continuity Announcer, a DCA you'll still have to gawk at the microphone for something in the region of three to six months before you give a time-check!
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnXLBE2D4Rs

In a private discussion with an old broadcaster, a female manager of a private station and a former staff of Radio Nigeria who has also experienced both public and private realities explains that in the past, requirements were strictly followed; a situation that was experienced also as a broadcaster in the public service.

These concerns are basically focused on maintaining the essentialist form of presentation which has always been the focus of the NBC code for Presenters and Announcers. These essentialist regulations have been followed by broadcasters, especially of the federal government institutions since the early days of broadcasting in Nigeria. However, things are gradually changing, the postmodernist trend has gradually crept into the broadcast industry; both the regulators and the practitioners are not following the strict principles as it was in the early days. The grand narratives are beginning to get deconstructed in a multiplicity of ways. While the strict recruitment policy of the past has given way to nepotism and corrupt tendencies in the authorities; the would-be 'Announcers and Presenters' are also not focused on strict practice of the accepted standard of pronunciation.

A number of professionals were interviewed for the purpose of this research, highlighted this point. One of the notable faces on the foremost cable news channel in Nigeria, *Channels TV*, (Makinde, 2021) explains that in the early days of broadcasting, high premium was paid on recruitment and training. At the time, the entry level requirement was very high and would-be employee must meet the requirement or be rejected, but today, 'most of the standard has been whittled down' so

much. He explains that in many of today's institutions, 'so long as you can speak any form of accent, be it American, Australian, Irish, Finish … whatever, you are allowed in …' This, he attributes majorly to what he describes as 'owner influence', which is the control by the private owner of the organization who in most cases may not be a professional but someone with enough money to set up the organization.

When the deregulation of the broadcast media came into effect, there were '… contending forces or elements that put pressures on the broadcast media …' They include:

> advertisers (brand/service, institutional and individual); institutional political advertisers or spot buyers who are also enticed into programme sponsorship; owners of the broadcast stations, both private broadcast operators who demand patriotism and loyalty of the station's programming to their interests and allies … (Akashoro et al, 2013)

So, the businessman does not care so much about standard but about making money; commercialization simply took over the broadcast terrain. The Channel's News media personality (Makinde, 2021) observes that there are some authority figures 'who do not cherish the standard', this he concludes is a 'sad reality but the truth'… 'the unfortunate reality … now'. This is corroborated by the other media executive (Ojekunle, 2021) when, in response to the question on what are the factors contributing to the decline in pronunciation of English by media practitioners, he says that 'ownership is one … another is politics …', then there is nepotism and other such issues. These issues are complex and they cut across the institutions, public and private.

In the government organizations such as the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, broadcast stations where the regulations supposedly emanated from, the reality is that the standard seems not to be the focus anymore; commercialization has taken over. It is noted that while it may not be painfully unexpected that 'private broadcast media may likely subordinate editorial judgment to economic pressures from the proprietors or owners, advertisers or other financial sources …' it is a sad reality that even 'Government-owned broadcast media are likely to subordinate editorial judgement to economic pressures from government as the proprietor and sponsor.'

(Akashoro et al, 2013) The truth of the matter here is that contemporary realities have opened up the consequences like a can of worms; many broadcast media, today, have slaughtered standard on the altar of commercialism. Sometimes, the employees bear the brunt of the negative effect of these lapses.

For example, an Announcer with one of the FM stations in the Northern part of Nigeria (Maureen, 2021) was employed as a Producer but eventually had to be transferred to the Continuity section to fill a void. She was not trained neither did she have any educational background in Phonology, yet she was 'thrown' in front of the microphone. She explained that there was 'No standard, there's no formal standard requirements' … 'no formal training' … 'you just learn on the job'… 'everything goes' (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdkmGYrOrC8).

On training, a highly important factor to the employees' development, many of the organizations have pushed this responsibility to the employees who are neither empowered nor motivated to deal with it. Maureen, the Announcer mentioned earlier, complains that 'Radio Nigeria has stopped funding the training of the staff … it is now self-funding'. '… You know, we have a training school but, people don't go there because we can't sponsor ourselves ...'For one thing, the Announcer/Presenter cadre is basically for middle-level officers whose take home pay could hardly take them home let alone be used to finance a middle level training in the government's training institution. Maureen (2021) concludes that 'there has to be a structure' in order to set a standard and maintain it. This may not be the norm in all the broadcast stations but a large number are in such situation, especially with the dwindling fund available to these organizations under the prevailing troubled economic system.

Another Announcer/Presenter with one of the FM stations of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, (Ive Gulu, 2021) also in the North of Nigeria confirms that although there used to be a semblance of standard in the institution, but currently, presenters have the tendency to 'free-style' and 'Americanize' their pronunciation. Most of the times, there are no structures put in place to help maintain the standard.

Postmodernism, Youth Culture and the Media

The development of a 'free-style' presentation and pronunciation is a hallmark of youth culture that is manifesting in the broadcast media. It is a fundamental point that is of utmost important in this paper; a postmodernist impact on the media. A large number of the media personalities, especially in this part of the world, are young people; this makes the point of our concern very important. For one thing, today's youths live in a crisis-ridden world facing a deteriorating future; yet, they have to create a survival strategy for themselves in a difficult era. Thus, this unpretentious position of simplifying life and deconstructing grand narratives is highlighted by the intensely transformative life-style of the youths lived in the 'realms of cyberspace and hyper-reality' (Best and Kellner, 2003)

In a detailed study of the youth culture and postmodern adventure, Best and Kellner (2003) discuss extensively the experiences of the generation of young people (also identified as 'post-boomers, post 60s, postmodern etc.) and the realities they face as different from those of the generation of their parents before them. The duo observe that 'the youth of the new millennium are the first generation to live the themes of postmodern theory'. Thus, they are described as busters who burst all the myths and fantasies of the older generation and proceed to live a life of thrills and spills on the fringe of adventure and danger. This generation also grows up with technology, starting with extensive television watch and developing with personal computers, CD-ROMs, the Internet and the World Wide Web. These technological devices provide the opportunities for adventures in the cyberspace and tools for developing various technological skills. As a result, these youths are able 'to create their own culture'.

This culture, a new way of life, includes 'sharing of music, video, computer programs, and other digitized products …' (Best and Kellner, 2003). These products are deployed in various ways including in programme presentations, productions and other forms. Thus, a new media culture has evolved 'which absorbs and pastiches anything and everything …'. It is the postmodern media culture' a culture that has heavily influenced the various aspects of the media. The style of presentation, the on-air grooming, the presenter positioning and even the pronunciation of English, in the case of people living in English colonized countries. This is not surprising because for these youths,

'postmodernism is not merely an avant-garde aesthetic, or academic topic, but is the form and texture of their everyday lives'. In such a situation where there is an intersection of digital technologies with the Media and where there is such heavy influence redefining the foundational system and designing new creative codes, the idea of a 'free style' pronunciation could just be accepted as part of the new culture.

Conclusion

The purpose of communication is to be able to pass a message and make meaning; to do this, one has to be clear in the use of words and presentation of ideas. The media has been set up as the institution to help disseminate information to the mass of the people and in doing this, it deploys the codes of communication like good pronunciation in order to reach a large number of people effectively (Lasswell, 1948; Omoera, 2008). This means that the role of the media is very crucial in the communication link; this is why many of the theories of communication are linked with the distinguishing features of the media as an institution that disseminates information. The broadcast media is a very important institution of the contemporary society; as noted by one of the numerous theories of communication, it is an Agenda-setting institution for the society. Yet, these organizations do not have a single, monolithic idea of standard; each organization tries to set up its own policy upon which the standard is fixed. As noted by Omoera (2008), 'The ultimate aim is to make the task of listening/ viewing an agreeable and enjoyable experience for the listener/viewer/audience.' Thus, individual stations 'may have their different styles of presentations', but many of them 'use current and *generally acceptable English* (my emphasis) in their newscast presentations' (2). This is why they focus on the NBC generally acceptable English which follows` in the steps of the BBC. However, with the development of the postmodernist trend in the society, coupled with the gradual commercialization and other negative issues like nepotism and corruption, pronunciations have become further liberalized in the broadcast industry.

Although, some media organizations in the urban areas seem to be doing well, yet, many others are merely presenting *a good voice* on their platform without strict requirements, especially the government owned organizations. The idea of postmodernism which encourages a

devaluation of the essentialist vision has contributed to the emerging free style noticeable in the pronunciation of some media personalities in contemporary time. However, this is not to conclude that 'anything goes' in the media. When asked to project a way to arrest the dwindling broadcast values, many of the practitioners look up to the scholars to help lit the way to a brighter future. The veterans as well as the young practitioners, who need the scholarship and the training to grow, speak collectively of developing a synergy between the academics and the practitioners and build a structure to carry the product, an acceptable Standard Nigerian English, which all broadcasters could and should adhere to. In this postmodern system, this may not be a monolithic idea, but one that follows a standardized pattern that maintains a free style within an acceptable focus.

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English Intonation as Attitudinal Discourse Marker: A Study of Graduate Students of UNIUYO

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Abstract
This study investigated how Nigerian speakers of English use English intonation to express attitude. The respondents were graduate students of the University of Uyo. It was conducted for the purpose of the different attitudes used by the respondents in trying to convey their message and the problem of misinterpretation by graduate students. Intonation is an important language phenomenon which is believed to have a strong effect on communication. It is often said in reference to primary intonation meaning over lexical content that "it's not what you said, it's how you said it". To ascertain these claims the data were obtained through recording of respondents' spontaneous speeches. Twenty students from the University of Uyo made up the sample. The study adopted Roach's model as its conceptual framework. The findings from this study show that the way language users mark their attitude in utterances differ from person to person depending on the attitudes of the speaker and the listener. Moreover, the use of intonation, inappropriately, can lead to the misinterpretation of utterances that are ambiguous. Thus, an utterance can generate different attitudinal responses. A further finding shows that 80% of the respondents used the rising tune during communication.
Keywords: Attitudinal Function of intonation, Discourse Intonation, Intonation, Nigerian English

1. Introduction

The description of the intonation system of a particular language or dialect is particularly a difficult task. In communication, the attitude of the speaker can be indicated by the different intonations used. Listeners who may not comprehend intonation might have difficulty in understanding the speaker's intended meaning which may in turn lead to communication impediment. The issue of pronunciation and intonation among non-native speakers of English has become a growing concern among scholars. Roach (1996:184-188) opines that "unless foreign learners learn the appropriate way to use intonation in a given situation, there is a risk that they may unintentionally give

offence, for example, the learner might use an intonation suitable for expressing boredom or discontent, when, what is needed is an expression of gratitude or affection".

1.1 Review of literature

Many speakers of English have issues during communication because of the misinterpretation of the functions that intonation fills. Based on this fact, Christophersen (1979:179) sees intonation as something which is added to the utterance, whether a whole sentence or just a single word said by itself, which can give a special personal coloring or meaning.

Wilkins (1973) as cited in Pirt (1990:145), stresses that "learners" mistakes are mainly caused by the interference and transfer of the first language (L_1) intonation, and this could have dangerous social consequences. Consequently, improper use of intonation may cause miscommunication among English speakers.

Halliday, (1970:85) advices that any alternation in intonation pattern signifies changes in the semantics of the ultimate message, including the speaker's attitude and the structure of information as perceived by the listeners. Intonation plays a crucial role in delivering a person's message. By listening to a person's intonation, he/she is able to decipher the speaker's intention or attitude, such as the expression of surprise, sarcasm or finality. This study shall focus on the attitudinal function of intonation in respondents' communication.

Roach (2009:147) in discussing the functions of intonation, gives the following as the function of intonation: discourse function, grammatical function, accentual function and attitudinal function. The source is of the opinion that intonation is used to convey our intended feelings and attitude. Numerous studies on the functions of intonation for instance (Shuying&Quan, 2007; Beaken, 2009; Volskaya, 2015) suggest that misuse and misunderstandings occur mainly due to improper expression of intonation. Consequently, students play an essential role in raising the awareness of the attitudinal function of intonation, particularly in a school environment setting. In cases where students fail to acquire knowledge of intonation and its different functions, or

when they possess the knowledge, but lack conscious awareness of these attitudinal functions, intonation may be wrongly used or misinterpreted, thus leading to miscommunication. The knowledge of the attitudinal function of intonation is especially pertinent among students, as the use of different and varying intonation patterns in conveying the same message may indicate a number of different attitudes of the speaker. One of the aspects of human interaction is the fact that communication involves not only the expression of propositional content in the form of spoken words, but, also the expression of the intentions of the speaker with respect to those propositions. In the light of this problem, this research was conducted for the purpose of investigating the different ways by which various attitudes are conveyed by students in their message to listeners, and the problem of misinterpretation that may arise from inappropriately used intonation.

2. The Attitudinal Function of Intonation

As proposed by Roach (1991:184), intonation possesses a number of functions which are mainly attitudinal, grammatical and accentual as well as discoursal. This study focuses on the attitudinal function of intonation. Studies have shown that many writers have expressed the view that intonation is used to convey our feelings and attitudes; for example, the same sentence can be said in different ways, which might be labeled "angry", "happy", grateful", "bored", and so on.

Roach further explains that the form of intonation is different in different languages; and sets example of the intonation of languages such as Swedish, Italian or Hindi as can be instantly recognizable as being different from that of English. He advises that foreign learners of English need to learn English intonation. Again, unless the foreign learner learns the appropriate way to use intonation in a given situation, there is a risk that he or she may unintentionally give offence; for example, the learner might use an intonation suitable for expressing boredom in an expression of gratitude or affection (Roach 1991:184-185).

Under the attitudinal function, the attitude of speakers can be expressed by looking at the different voice qualities and pitch ranges in

their intonation (Roach 2000:145). Additionally, from Roach's view point, one of the major purposes of intonation is to convey the speaker's attitude and emotions. One would be able to recognize the speaker's feelings through their use of intonation in utterances, such as expressing joy, boredom, sarcasm, anxiety and so forth. It is therefore essential to recognize the correct tone used to indicate the speaker's feelings in order to establish a successful communication.

Atoye et al (2018:152-153), claim that intonation meaning is superimposed on lexical meanings. Through intonation, emotions and attitudes are expressed in speech. A special kind of "meaning" is thus added in our utterances. Also, the attitude of a speaker to their message content and their audience as well as the effect they intend to produce in the person(s) addressed are marked by deviant uses of the voice pitch which reflects the speaker's feeling. According to the source, these deviant uses of the pitch could be smooth as in a polite statement or harsh in a question used as a threat. Atoye et al observe that when one uses a sharp rise instead of the fall in a statement, the result is an emotionally charged question, challenging the listener to affirm or deny the statement as shown in the following examples by Atoye et al:

He came here ↑again //

When a falling tune is imposed on a "Yes/No" question, it changes to a request whose emotional overtone could span from mildness to harshness:

Won't you come ↓home //

A gentle rise sometimes takes the place of the normal fall in statements, requests and "wh" questions in friendly conversations. This marks an attitude of politeness:

a. It isn't ↗so bad //
b. Please ↗come here //
c. Why are you ↗annoyed //

The fall signals finality or definiteness while the rise conveys an attitude of encouragement or familiarity:

a. That is my ↘judgement // (finality)
b. I am absolutely ↘sure // (definiteness)
c. It won't ↗hurt // (encouraging)
d. Mum ↘/I'm ↗home // (familiarity)

The fall-rise is a marker of uncertainty or doubt.

a. She ↘↗may be right //
b. That's ↘↗possible //

The rise-fall is indicative of surprise or being impressed:

a. You were the ↗↘best //
b. Most ↗↘of them //

Ladeforged and Johnson's (2006:254) opine that intonation is used to convey a great deal of non-linguistic information about the speaker's emotional state, whether the person is calm or angry, or happy or sad. As yet, nobody knows if the pitch changes that convey this sort of information are universal. But it is apparent that speakers of many different languages have similar inflections when conveying similar emotional information. Clark et al (2007:360) observe that English intonation is a crucial part of the English language that carries important semantic, discourse and/or pragmatic functions. These functions may be "attitudinal" in the sense that they express for instance, definiteness or tentativeness, but these meanings are no more superimposed or extrinsic than other functional options such as whether to ask a question or to make a statement, or to include the word "probably" or "possibly".

Effiong, et al (2015:111-112) identify a wide range of attitudinal meaning that intonation expresses. These include excitement, boredom, surprise, friendliness and reservation, among others. The source further states that different things can be meant with the same words through the modulation of the voice. For instance, expressions like "come here", "come back" or "sit down" can be a command, a polite invitation or a threat, depending on the way the voice is modulated when uttering them.

Tench (1996:128-137) in his explanation on the attitudinal function of intonation, suggests that, instead of using a simple, plain (neutral) fall or rise, a speaker could indicate to the addressee something of their attitude about the information, for instance, "Which country has the largest population in the world"?

a. **China**

The high fall indicates "strength of feeling" in this cause a strong assertion ("of course"). A low fall would indicate "mildness".

\

b. **China (= "everyone knows that").**

In both cases, the speakers use fall tune to express their dominance (they know and say), but adds a new dimension of meaning, namely, attitude. The type of fall expresses a level of personal involvement or commitment (strong or mild) to the information being given. Similar variation occurs with rise tune. The sense of uncertainty or guessing is increased with a high pitch rise:

c. /**China**

With a low pitch rise, the speaker expresses mild deference, which will be interpreted as non-committed, or uninterested.

d. /**China**

The sense of strength/wildness is felt also in the cause of authority over people's action and in social interaction.

Examples:

I want you back by ten\ (=" By ten, do you understand", strong).

I want you back by ten / (= "As you already know", mild).

Can you be back by ten/ (="By ten, if at all possible", more tentative).

Can you be back by /ten (="not really bothered, but ten would do", non-committed).

Good \morning (formal, with extra efforts to sound that you mean it).

Good \morning (speaker's own feelings, but little of it).

Good /morning (very friendly).

Good / morning (acknowledgement of addressee but little interest).

Tench (1996) concludes that the expression of attitude might also be heard in variations of pitch before the tonic syllable (or nucleus, the tonic/nucleus has been marked by underlining so far).

Speakers exert various tone patterns in their responses to indicate their feelings towards the subject matter at hand. Roach's (2000:159) most suitable framework for analyzing the tones used for different attitudes expressed in speaker's responses are concerned with the attitudinal function of intonation. The source further puts forth five general categories of intonation with regards to the attitudinal functions listed in Table 1 below. When responding to Yes/No questions, speakers typically adopt any of these tones to indicate their emotion. By paying close attention to the tones, listeners are able to understand the speaker's true attitude. Hence, intonation functions as a tool to assist interlocutors in the understanding of speech acts.

The data was obtained through recordings of the respondents' speech production. After, the researcher played and listened to the respondent's production and then analyzed the data according to the framework with tones such as the fall, rise, level, fall-rise and rise-fall. Ten sentences were used as the topics for discussion by the researcher so as to bring out the different attitudes/emotions of each speakers' reaction through the tone of their voices. The instrument for the collection of data was an audio recorder. Secondary data was sourced from the library and other internet sources. Table 1 below presents intonation pattern according to attitudes.

Table 1: Intonation Pattern According to Attitudes

S/N	Tone	Symbol	Attitude/Emotion
1.	Level	[-]	Routine, boredom, disinterest.
2.	fall	[↘]	Finality, certainty
3.	rise	[↗]	Invitation to continue, request for information, offer to provide information, excitement.
4.	fall-rise	[↘↗]	Limited agreement, hesitation, pleading, having reservations.
5.	rise-fall	[↗↘]	Strong feelings of approval, disapproval or surprise, agitation, sarcasm, being impressed.

Table 2: Attitudinal Meanings Associated with Tones

↘	fall	Emotionally involved; surprised, excitement, irritation.
↗	rise	Emotionally involved; disbeliefs, shock urgency.
↘↗	fall-rise	A straight or negative face: uncertainty doubt, tentative.

Adapted from Crystal 1995:248.

In Table 2 above, it is important to note four things. First, it mentions not only tones and meanings, but also context. Second, by negative and positive fall Crystal (1995) refers to unhappy and happy facial expressions and the moods underlying them. Third, we should note that, there is a problem with the labels; there is an overlap between the meanings given in the first two rows of this table - it is impossible to provide definitions of surprise and excitement, which totally exclude the notions of disbelief and shock. Fourth, in noting the power of context; the fall-rise can mean "tentativeness" or its opposite- "urgency", depending on the context.

2.1 Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study aims at analyzing the ways in which students react to certain situations and their different attitudes in responding to questions, and, also in the course of discussions. By using the same speech feature, people are able to create their unique ways of communication. Thus, the broad aim of this study is to examine intonation as an attitudinal marker among students so as to:

i. ascertain the extent to which Nigerian speakers of English use English intonation to express attitude;
ii. investigate the perception of these speakers in relation to the attitudinal function that intonation carries;
iii. create awareness of this attitudinal function of intonation among Nigerian speakers of English in order to avoid misinterpretation.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Roach's (2000) conceptual framework of attitudinal function of intonation would be adopted as a guideline in the analysis of the study. According to Roach (2000:147), the major factor in expressing different attitude is a tone used and the source gave the following tone patterns as examples:

1. Fall
   - Finality, definiteness: That is the end of the \ news
     I'm absolutely \ certain
     Stop \ talking
2. Rise
   - General questions: Can you /help me
     Is it /over
   - Listing: /Red /brown /yellow or \ blue
   - "More to follow": I phoned them right a/way ('and they agreed to come')
     You must write it a/gain (and this time, get it right)
   - Encouraging: It won't /hurt
3. Fall-rise
   - Uncertainty, doubt: You V may be right
     It's V possible
   - Requesting: Can I V buy it
     Will you V lend it to me
4. Rise-fall
   - Surprise, being impressed: You were ∧ first
     ∧ All of them

2.3 Research Methodology

The study used a survey research design. It took a descriptive approach that uses the audio recorded transcripts to describe the expression of attitude by selected students on Uniuyo campus. The population of the study comprised 20 postgraduate students from the University of Uyo. The reason for choosing the postgraduate students for this study was because it is believed that they are sufficiently exposed to speaking both English and their native language fluently, irrespective of their academic discipline. A random sampling technique was adopted for the study by which (10) respondents were females and the other ten (10) were males. This criterion was pertinent as dealing with students from

different genders may offer a greater insight into how these students use different attitudinal labels in conveying their messages.

3. Data Analysis and Discussion

This chapter presents the analyses and interprets the data gathered in the conduct of the study on intonation as an attitudinal discourse marker among the University of Uyo postgraduate students. The expressions used by the respondents from the ten sentences provided by the researcher will be analyzed according to the framework with tones such as the fall, rise, level, and fall-rise that the speakers connote through their responses in the discourse, for instance, showing surprise, boredom, certainty, hesitancy, anger, uncertainty, fear, sadness, etc. These sentences will be analyzed separately showing the different reaction of these students in trying to convey their message.

Table 3: The Frequency of Respondents

Gender	Frequency
Male	10
Female	10
Total	**20**

From Table 3 above, it is clearly shown that a total of 20 respondents participated in this study ten (10) female students and then ten (10) male students.

Table 4: Results are out

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
Results are ↗out	3	surprise
Results are ↗↘ out	1	Uncertainty
Results are ↗↘ out	7	sad
Results are ↘ out	-	boredom
Results are ↗↘ out	-	Proud
Results are ↗ out	2	doubt
Results are ↗ out	5	excitement
Results are ↗ out	-	Anger
Results are ↗↘out	2	fear
Total	**20**	

From the analysis in Table 4 above, it is clearly shown that only six attitudes were recorded from the different respondents. Three (3) students showed surprise on hearing that results were out. One (1)

student was uncertain about it. Seven (7) were so sad because they didn't perform well during the exams. Five (5) were excited because they were sure of obtaining good grades. Two (2) students reacted with fear and then, two (2) with doubt. The rest expressed no attitudinal response.

Table 5: Are you happy with your Course of Study?

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
Are you happy with your course of ↘↗ study	12	Happy
Are you happy with your course of ↘ study	4	boredom
Are you happy with your course of ↗↘ study	1	Sad
Are you happy with your course of ↘↗ study	1	doubt
Are you happy with your course of ↗↘ study	2	proud
Total	**20**	

From Table 5 above, only five attitudinal labels were recorded. Twelve (12) students which received the highest number of respondents from the table above showed that they were happy with their course of study. Four (4) felt bored during the discussion. One (1) respondent was recorded as being sad and doubtful, each and then, two (2) people were proud of their course of study.

Table 6: Do You Love Your Country?

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
Do you love your ↘↗ country?	6	uncertainty
Do you love your ↘↗ country?	2	Proud
Do you love your ↗↘ country?	3	Happy
Do you love your ↘↗country?	4	Anger
Do you love your ↗↘ country?	3	sad
Do you love your ↘ country?	2	boredom
Total	**20**	

From Table 6 above, it is shown that six (6) students were uncertain if they really love their country or not. Two (2) reacted with pride, three (3) were happy, four (4) reacted angrily, three (3) were sad, and the

remaining two (2) were bored. Those who showed uncertainty were the highest in number.

Table 7: A Student of the University of Uyo Suspected to be a Cultist was found Dead

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
A student of the University of Uyo suspected to be a cultist was found ↗↘dead	10	surprise
A student of the University of Uyo suspected to be a cultist was found ↘↗ dead	2	happy
A student of the University of Uyo suspected to be a cultist was found ↗↘ dead	3	sad
A student of the University of Uyo suspected to be a cultist was found ↘↗ dead	3	fear
A student of the University of Uyo suspected to be a cultist was found ↗↘ dead	2	doubt
Total	**20**	

From Table 7 above, five attitudes were recorded. It revealed that ten (10) students were full of surprises on hearing the news of the dead cultist. Two (2) out of the 20 respondents, were happy, reason being that, they said cultist has been terrorizing students on campus. Two (2) were sad with the news, three (3) reacted with fear, and two (2) expressed doubt.

Table 8: I Think Lectures will Commence by January

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
I think lectures will commence by ↗ January	5	surprise
I think lectures will commence by ↘ January	2	sad
I think lectures will commence by ↗ January	10	happy
I think lectures will commence by ↗ January	3	uncertainty
Total	**20**	

In Table 8, four attitudinal responses were recorded. Five (5) students reacted with surprise on hearing that their lectures will commence at January. The two (2) respondents who were sad, was as a result of their being tired of school. Ten (10) respondents were very happy about returning to school and three (3) students were uncertain if lectures will truly commence by January. The highest number of responses recorded were those who reacted happily.

Table 9: Examination has been Postponed till Further Notice

Notice Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
Examination has been postponed till further ↗ notice	3	surprise
Examination has been postponed till further ↗ notice	10	happy
Examination has been postponed till further ↘ notice	3	sad
Examination has been postponed till further ↗ notice	3	angry
Examination has been postponed till further ↗ notice	1	doubt
Total	**20**	

From Table 9 above, it is observed that there are five attitudinal labels. The majority of the students were happy that examination has been postponed with ten (10) numbers of respondents. Three (3) students were surprised, three (3) sad and three (3) angry. Only one (1) respondent was recorded to be in doubt.

Table 10: The S.U.G President has got a New Car

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
The S.U.G President has got a new ↗↘car	6	surprise
The S.U.G President has got a new ↗↘car	2	happy
The S.U.G President has got a new ↗↘car	3	doubt
The S.U.G President has got a new ↗↘ car	4	proud
The S.U.G President has got a new ↘ car	3	boredom
The S.U.G President has got a new ↗↘car	2	angry
Total	**20**	

From the analysis in Table 10, six attitudes were recorded. In the sentence, six (6) respondents were surprised because the S.U.G President just began his tenure. Two (2) were happy for him, because, they were friends with the S.U.G President. Three (3) were in doubt because they don't believe the S.U.G President can get a car for himself. Four (4) respondents were very proud saying they have cars, too. Three (3) were bored and two (2) were angry.

Table 11: According to the Weather Forecast from 90.5 FM, It's Going to Rain Tomorrow

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
According to the weather forecast from 90.5 FM, it's going to rain ↗↘ tomorrow	2	surprise
According to the weather forecast from 90.5 FM, it's going to rain ↗↘ tomorrow	5	happy
According to the weather forecast from 90.5 FM, it's going to rain ↗↘ tomorrow	5	sad
According to the weather forecast from 90.5 FM, it's going to rain ↗↘ tomorrow	8	uncertain
Total	**20**	

Table 11 above revealed only four attitudinal labels conveyed by the twenty (20) respondents. Two (2) of the respondents were surprised on hearing it was going to rain the following day when they were already in the dry season. Five (5) were very happy because of the warm weather. Five (5) were sad because they have plans for the next day. And eight (8) respondents were uncertain about it.

Table 12: The Ibibio Speakers of English are more Fluent in Communication than the Igbo Speakers

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
The Ibibio speakers of English are more fluent in communication than the Igbo ↘↗speakers	5	surprise
The Ibibio speakers of English are more fluent in communication than the Igbo ↘↗speakers	5	uncertain
The Ibibio speakers of English are more fluent in communication than the Igbo ↗↘speakers	4	angry
The Ibibio speakers of English are more fluent in communication than the Igbo ↗↘ speakers	6	proud
Total	**20**	

From table 12 above, only four attitudes were recorded. Five (5) respondents were surprised on hearing it. Five (5) were not sure about that. Four (4) were angry. The angry students were suspected to be Igbos. And (6) were proud. The six respondents were believed to be Ibibio speakers.

Table 13: A Lady Committed Suicide due to a Breakup with her Boyfriend

Test Item	No. of Respondents	Attitudinal Labels
A lady committed suicide due to a breakup with her ↘↗boyfriend	4	surprise
A lady committed suicide due to a breakup with her↘↗ boyfriend	9	anger
A lady committed suicide due to a breakup with her ↗↘ boyfriend	4	pity
A lady committed suicide due to a breakup with her↘↗ boyfriend	3	doubt
Total	**20**	

In Table 13 above, it is shown that only four attitudinal labels were recorded. Four (4) reacted in surprise after hearing the news. Nine (9) respondents were very angry towards the lady for taking her own life because of a man. Four (4) respondents felt pity for the lady. Three (3) were in doubt if it really did happen.

3.1 Discussion of Findings

Findings showed that students who were surprised, happy or proud indicated this with the rise fall, fall rise tone respectively as in the following sentence: A student of the University of Uyo suspected to be a cultist was found ↗↘dead. While those who were happy made use of fall

rise tone ↗ as in the sentence, "I think lectures will commence by ↗ January." The fall tone ↘ was mostly used by respondents to indicate boredom in the following sentences: "Do you love your country and Result are out?" This finding was confirmed by Roach's (2000) assertion, where he pointed out that the expressions used by the respondents were determined based on their responses. Also, observed is that these respondents mostly used the rise tone during communication. The prominent syllables in an utterance are the carriers of any significant variation in pitch that a speaker might use. Then, at recognizable points in the utterance, the pitch level may rise, fall or be carefully kept at level.

Findings also revealed that intonation is very important in the expression of attitudes since no one speaks in monotone. This was confirmed by listening to the different voices of each respondent. It was also found out from the different responses that most students' react as a result of the context of the situation involved. It is worth noting that the tone contour can often spread itself out over more than one syllable or word. It is on this note that the researcher believes that the term "tone" has traditionally been used to refer to those languages which use the feature of tone to distinguish between lexical items.

The researcher observed that most of the students who took part in the study make use of intonation, inappropriately. Finally, it was also discovered that improper use of intonation can signal wrong information to the listeners, which could result in misinterpretation.

4. Summary/Conclusion

This study investigated intonation as an attitudinal discourse marker among selected postgraduate students of the University of Uyo. Intonation as seen from this study serves as a tool for effective communication, in which case, failure to make appropriate use of it jeopardizes effective communication. This can be conveyed through the listener's attitude. The tone of voice used during communication can signal several meanings to listeners. So, it is important for one to use intonation as appropriate to the context to avoid any form of misinterpretations.

It has been shown that the attitudinal intonation realized on an utterance is one of the determinants of emotions conveyed in speech. Some particular attitudes seem to be better suited for conveying some specific emotions, and, less suitable for others. It can also be deduced that as people's attitudes differ, so do their ways of reacting to certain situations, differ. Intonation is an essential feature that should not be dismissed in our attempts to achieve effective communication. Couper-Kuhlen (1986) stated that intonation plays a vital role in expressing attitudes and emotions. It has a significant contribution to the meaning making processes in communication. Hence, awareness of its role in communicative intelligibility should be highlighted in language classrooms.

From the different attitudinal responses given by the 20 respondents from the University of Uyo, it is worthy of note, that, the role of intonation as an attitudinal discourse marker is salient in ensuring success in communications. Undeniably, it adds color to the whole speaking event and provides a platform for ease of comprehension in a two-way communication situation. As stated by Roach (1991) it should not be concluded that intonation is not important for conveying attitudes. What is being claimed here is that, although, it is of great importance, the complexity of the total set of sequential and prosodic components of intonation and of paralinguistic features makes it very difficult to teach and learn.

Furthermore, we cannot dismiss the fact that attitude and intonation are vital for minimizing misinterpretation during communication. Intonation serves as a tool to assist interlocutors with communicative intelligibility. Hence, students should be provided with adequate exposure to the attitudinal function of intonation in order to avoid the problem of misinterpretation.

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End Rhymes in Nigerian Hip-Hop Music in English: Patterns and Dimensions

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Abstract

This paper examines the linguistic choices in Nigerian hip-hop music with a view to identifying the end rhyme patterns that they present, and their implications on the pronunciation of English words. Excerpts from the lyrics of hip-hop music by selected hip-hop artistes - Wizkid, Davido, Omah Lay, Cheque, Fireboy, Johnny Drille, DJ Jimmy Jatt, Olamide, Tekno, Lil Kesh, and Mayorkun - were used as the data. These were analysed based on Chomsky and Halle's (1968) generative`theory. It was discovered that words and syllables at the end of the lines in the lyrics have various phonological dimensions and patterns. There were cases of near rhymes, complete mismatch of words and forced rhyming, which could result in self-formed words or expressions. The artistes, in a bid to achieve end rhymes, sometimes resorted to switching or mixing codes. Although, hip-hop songs are popularly known for their intensive beats and rhythm, achieved through linguistic choices intended as rhymes, some of the identified patterns revealed the mispronunciations that arise from misperception.

Nigerian Hip-Hop Music, End Rhymes, Phonological Patterns, Mispronunciations

1. Introduction

Hip-hop music has become a popular trend in Nigeria, today. It enjoys a high level of acceptance among Nigerian youths. Its vibrant styles and rhythmic patterns have greatly helped in popularising this brand of music in the electronic media. This corroborates Adedeji's (2017:76) submission that 'this music genre has found itself in the forefront in many countries. The advancement in science and technology has helped greatly in facilitating the popularity that hip-hop, particularly Nigerian hip-hop, enjoys, today. Commenting on this, Olayemi (2020:301) explains that:

> This popularity is also marked by the increasing number of artistes who emerge daily on the scene and whose musical videos are displayed on television screens, you tube, and other social media platforms.

Due to the wide range of acceptability that hip-hop enjoys all over the world, and its constant use on different social media platforms, it becomes necessary to pay attention to its rhythmical patterns and the roles that lexical choices play in the achievement of these patterns.

2. Review of Literature

The Literature review comprises literary works on rhymes, Hip-Hop culture in Nigerian music and the lyrical components of the Nigerian Hip-Hop music.

2.1 Rhyme

Rhyme is a phonological device that gives aesthetic value to speech through similitude of sounds. Sharma (2018:33) conceptualises it as an organisational device – a formal and external determiner of organisation. It is a fundamental memory device in poetry. It gives poetry a special aural quality that distinguishes it from prose. In other words, rhyme is a literary tool that gives poetry the distinctive features that differentiate it from prose. The use of rhyme, therefore, gives aesthetic quality to speech or poem, thereby making it easy to commit to memory because of the aesthetic quality of the sounds and the phonetic sequence. Cuddon (1999:751) explains that rhyme has remained 'a feature of much elite poetry and continues to dominate popular verse'. This assertion gives expression to the popularity of rhyme in what he called 'elite poetry'.

It is obvious that music is one of the most popular elite poetry in recent times. The dominance of rhymes in music is much expressed in the hip-hop genre of music, where rhymes have a special place, both in the composition and in the rendition of the song. However, as explained by Wales (2001:346), rhyme is a kind of phonetic echo found in verses, more precisely, 'a phonemic matching'. Wales' opinion points to the fact that rhymes are phonetically constructed in speech or poem and serve as linker of thought such that the thought has a phonetic matching. Phonetically, rhymes are used not only to make the end or beginning of words match, but, also to maintain a certain level of progression and coherent linking of the successive thought line with the preceding one.
Herbert (2006:224) captures the thought of Wales in his description of rhymes as a 'link marker'. By this, he means that rhymes link thought to

thought, and words to words in a poetic work. Harmon (2009:449) submits that rhyme is the identity of 'terminal sound between accented syllables'. The hierarchical structure of the syllable is very important in the understanding of rhyme and its patterns. In the words of Zec (2007:161):

The syllable has a central role in phonological theory as a constituent that represents phonologically significant groupings of segments. … The syllable is also used as a descriptive tool in the traditional accounts of sound patterns, as well as patterns of poetic meter.

A syllable is the minimum unit of sound that is pronounceable in one breath. It necessarily contains a vowel or vowel-like sound known as the nucleus or peak. It may also consist of the onset which is regarded as the consonant sound(s) preceding the peak in a syllable, and/or the coda - the consonantal element subsequent to the peak. While the onset and the coda are optional, the nucleus is obligatory. The onset and the coda may contain more than one consonant sound. When this occurs, there is a consonant cluster, which means that a number of consonants co-exist at the syllable initial or final position. Usually, the onset is not considered in the description of word rhymes.

Lennard (2010:189) asserts that rhyme has prehistoric origins in rituals, celebration and memory training. It is common to use rhymes to entertain an audience by creating poetic lines with rhythmic patterns, in order to drive home the thought and meaning expressed in the poem. Therefore, the Nigerian hip-hop music, with the conventional usage of rhymes, inculcates into its lyrical formation and composition, rhymes ranging from both universal or regional sources, such that the lyrics is a blend of both local and international expressions; a pure demonstration of code-mixing and code-switching between the Artiste's mother-tongue and a foreign language. Code-switching/mixing occurs when a bilingual speaker uses two or more languages in a conversation effortlessly. Gardner-Chloros (2009:5) explains that:

> The characteristic ways in which bilinguals combine their languages in a particular community constitute a way of expressing their group identity – like a characteristic accent. Both the languages themselves and the

> sociolinguistic environment play a role in the patterns which emerge.

Code-mixing is intra-sentential, while code-switching is inter-sentential. The Nigerian hip-hop artistes employ these resources in creating rhythmical linguistic strings, which enrich their hip-hop songs.

2.2 Hip-Hop Culture

Music is perceived differently by different people in different fields. The social psychologists, Hargreaves and North (1997), define it as multidimensional. They explain that music constitutes three separate aspects. The first aspect is the sound (the physical component), the second aspect is the way an individual perceives or relates to the music (the subjective component), and the third aspect is the social meaning that is constructed within social groups, around a particular style of music.

Hip-pop is conceived as one of the contemporary music which has been widely embraced in the society. In fact, classical music has relatively been displaced by the popularity of contemporary music. The presence of global network such as the Internet has made contemporary music more accessible and popular. Pop music seems very difficult to define, thematically. Ojukwu *et.al* (2014:117) posit that pop music refers to all contemporaneous music with broad immediate and implicitly transient attractiveness, which appeals to a mass audience. People broadly admire and accept pop music, today, because of their familiarity with the idioms, symbols and slangy expressions which characterise it, many of which they need no guide to understand, because the contents emanate from the culture of which the people are familiar with. The popularity of Hip Hop music, in recent time is seen in its consistent use in pubs and night clubs, at naming, burial, and wedding ceremonies, political campaigns, birthday parties and even valedictory services in institutions. This has made it a popular genre of music garnished with street stories and existential realities.

2.3 History of Hip-Pop Culture

The last fifteen years have heralded the growth of academic literature that analyse Rap music and the culture that emerged alongside the music (Crosley, 2005). It is one of the most influential genres of

contemporary music with high degree of acceptance among youths. One of the things that distinguish hip-hop music from the classical music is that it is a musical culture on its own. Hip-hop culture consists of various elements that make up rap music. These elements can be termed the distinctive nature of hip-hop music. Hip-hop culture, which consists of rap music, *dee-jaying*, break dancing, and graffiti, has developed into one of the most influential social cultures in society, today (Adjaye, 1997). One of the things that Adjaye does not include in his description of hip-hop music is rhymes. Hip-pop music excels in the use of both regional and international rhymes in communicating the artiste's thought in a lyrical pattern. Moreover, this music brand is characterised by its own language and vocabulary. Its deviation from the normal usage of culturally known vocabularies, leading to the breeding of its own linguistic forms and peculiar meaning-conveying strategies has been one of the reasons for its high level of social recognition.

2.4 The Nigerian Afro Hip-Hop

It is an undisputable fact that one of the major cultural exports from Nigeria, today, apart from Nollywood, is its Afro hip-hop genre of music which has produced different global Grammy award winners in recent time. Hip-hop artistes who have been recipients of this award include Burna Boy and Wizkid, among others. These are ambassadors representing Nigeria's cultural identity on the national, continental and international scene (Onyeji, 2002:24). There have been a lot of mentions, awards and a great deal of recognition in Africa and on the international scene for these players, indicating the influence of the Nigerian hip-hop music genre on the global popular music scene.

The emergence and evolution of hip-hop on the Nigerian music scene, from the late 1980s, has attracted a lot of scholarly documentations. Some of these scholarly writings supported the idea that Nigerian youths should embrace the genre, back then, in order to find their own voice, tell their own stories and hopefully effect a change in the country's socio-political climate. Globalisation played an important role in exposing youths to the music, while the harsh economic conditions and unfavourable political climate from the late 1990s upwards fuelled the determination of youths to find in hip-hop, an avenue for self-expression and a voice with which to depict the realities of their time.

The Nigerian hip hop portrays a lot of peculiarities which resulted in a redefining of the Nigerian music industry and the subsequent emergence of a Nigerianised Afro hip-hop.

Afro hip-hop thrives on African ideology in its entire ramification. It projects African ideology through the use of indigenous languages and the fusing of existing traditional music style to produce a hybridised form of music. This possibility of music hybridisation is being explored to the fullest by the Nigerian hip-hop artistes and this is discussed in the next section. This amalgamation of hip-hop with other musical forms like *fuji*, *juju* and highlife creates a cross-over form which now drives the present Afro-hip hop subculture. Adedeji (2015) explains that:

> Hip hop has presented a lot of possibilities through the dynamic attitude of its players, mostly the youths that have tapped into the country's cultural heritage to create an African identity out of this music form through syncretism… (p. 799)

Prominent in the field are Olamide, Wizkid, Phyno, Reminisce, Burna Boy, Omah Lay, to mention a few. Nigerian artistes in the Diaspora also identify with this trend as portrayed in the lyrics of UK based JJC and the 419 Crew in songs like '*Gba O'* (2002) and '*Ki Lo n Sele'* (2003) and also US Based Eldee in '*Bo si Gbangba*' (2008).

2.5 Hip-hop Music in Nigeria and its Lyrical Components

Over the years, hip-hop music has thrived greatly in Nigeria. This is due to the multilingual and heterogeneous nature of the country. A lot of hip-hop brands have emerged. There is the linguistically-tied hip-hop brand (especially based on English language and the three major languages in Nigeria – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba). Also, there is the religion-based hip-hop brand, drawing materials from the two major religions in Nigeria – Christianity and Islam. The culture-bound hip-hop brand draws materials from folklore to other forms of performances by freelance artistes with no specified pattern of categorisation.

Themes perpetuated in hip-hop music are woven around lexical choices that are carefully selected to create rhythmic effects. The

lexical choices are made up of content words, such as nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives. Seemingly, the success of a hip-hop artiste and the level of acceptance of his music is largely dependent upon his ability to select words that rhyme or seem to rhyme, arrange them at strategic points in the lines of his music and attach to them, tunes which foreground the lexical choices. This suggests that language plays a very unique role in hip-hop music.

3. Purpose of the Study

The Nigerian hip-hop artistes are aware of the importance of rhyme in hip-hop music. They, therefore, adopt diverse strategies to ensure that this feature manifests in their music. This paper highlights the patterns and dimensions of end rhymes. It aims at identifying and analysing the lyrical components of hip-hop music with specific attention to the words and syllables at the end of the lines and their various rhyme patterns and dimensions. In other words, it explores the ways by which words are chosen and phonetically manipulated in the hip-hop music genre in the bid to achieve end rhymes.

4. Methods

Excerpts from the lyrics of hip-hop music of purposively sampled hip-hop artistes were used as the data. The excerpts were from the lyrics and musical videos available on you tube. A total number of thirty-one (31) excerpts from twenty-seven (27) hip-hop songs produced by eleven (11) hip-hop artistes between 2015 and 2020 were used. The study adopts Chomsky and Halle's (1968) generative`theory as the basis for the analysis of the speech sounds, highlighted. The analysis largely focused on the phonemic patterns of the lexical choices made by the artistes. Songs of popular hip-hop artistes most often played on radio and television and those also available for download on you tube were selected for use in this study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Chomsky and Halle's (1968) generative`theory has been found to be useful for this study. Generative Phonology (GP) has to do with the assigning of the correct phonetic representations to utterances, such that it reflects a native speaker's internalised grammar. It addresses phonological representations at both the underlying and the surface

levels. While the underlying level deals with the basic form of words, the surface level has to do with the form of words that is uttered and heard. Issues such as language productivity and unconscious or intuitive forms and derivations are of utmost importance in GP. In essence, the mapping of underlying representations onto phonological representations by means of phonological rules so that sound segments or their features become modified or changed is a major component of GP.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Misperceived Rhyme Forms Resulting in False or Imperfect Rhyming

There are instances in which the Nigerian hip-hop artiste manipulates sounds to make them sound the way he or she wants in a bid to achieve rhyme. Some of such instances are presented and analysed below:

Sample 1: Time is of the **essence**
…But I might need some **lessons**
'Essence' by Wizkid ft.Tems (2020)

In 'essence' and 'lessons', the vowels /e/ and /ə/ are found in the first and second syllables in each of the words, but the coda of the second syllable in the two words are different. In 'essence', the coda is /s/ while it is /z/ in 'lessons'.The artiste pronounces the consonant sound /z/ (orthographically represented as 's' in 'lessons' to mark its plural form), the same way as the /s/ in 'essence', orthographically represented as 'ce'. Therefore, 'lessons' /le.sᵊnz/ becomes pronounced as /le.sᵊns/ such that it is made to rhyme with /e.səns/. This can be attributed to the under-differentiation of the two sounds in Nigerian English (NE).

Sample 2: When we touch, how we **connect**
Whoa-whoa, whoa-whoa
Said this love, have no **regret**
Whoa-whoa, yeah-yeah
'Essence' by Wizkid ft. Tems (2020)

The sound /t/ in 'connect' and 'regret' are not articulated by the artiste. Also, the artiste completely ignores the sound /k/ in 'connect'. What is heard is /kəne/ and /rIgre/. The non-articulation of the final sound /t/ in each word seems to make the words rhyme the more.

Sample 3: Make you drink up while we **reminisce**
Say a prayer for our **enemies**
Say my love na your **remedy**
Baby girl, you mean a lot to me
'*No Stress' by Wizkid (2020)*

The words 'reminisce', 'enemies', 'remedy' are pronounced as /remInIs/, /enəmi:z/, /rem**ə**di/ indicating that they all have the sound /e/ in common. However, the consonant sound /z/ orthographically represented as 's' in 'enemies' (to mark its plural form) is pronounced by the artiste, the same way as the /s/ in 'essence', orthographically represented as 'sce'. Also, the short vowel /I/ is pronounced as the long sound - /i:/ in each of the words. The schwa sound /ə/ in 'enemies' and 'remedy' are pronounced as the short vowel /I/. This is as a result of some spelling-cued effects.

Sample 4: My baby tellin' me to pose for the **media**
I rather believe I go tour **Malaysia**
Melody sweet but you know sey man so G'd up, yeah
That's why the girls dem follow the **leader**
'Reckless' by Wizkid (2020)

'Malaysia' and 'media' have the diphthong /Iə/ in their final syllables, but in 'leader', the final syllable has the schwa sound /ə/ as its nucleus.

Sample 5: The plan na to chop **lock up**
Maggot don begin turn python ah ah

'Lock' contains the vowel sound /D/ while 'fuck' contains the sound /Λ/. This shows that they are not the same. The artiste pronounces them the same way. This kind of phonological variation is also found in the sample below:

The way she dey treat my **Fuck-up**

I no wan see **doctor**
'Confession' by OMAH LAY (2020)

Sample 6: …Ye I was **locked up**
They won't let me out but you let me out
That shit you did was **fucked up**…
Nwa Baby', Davido (2019)

Sample 7: … Do not hesitate that's why I got this confidence **thing**
Just be careful if you fly they gon' try cut off your **wings**
When I talk it's the end and that's the way of a **king**
I won't rest 'till the money make me sagging my **jeans** …
'Zoom' by Cheque (2020)

While 'things', 'wings', and 'king' rhyme because they each have the sounds /l/ and /ŋ/, the word 'jeans' has sounds /i:/ and /n/.

Sample 8: … She dey cause wahala for **area**
Someone come save me
Save me from **Delilah**
Save me from **Delilah** …
Eli by Fireboy DML (2020)

The diphthong /Iə/ is found in 'area' while the monophthong /ə/ is found in the last syllable of 'Delilah'. The artiste pronounces the two sounds as /a/. The words do not rhyme, but he adopts them because they provide for him, some form of rhythmical effect in the composition of the song.

Sample 9: For person like me to fall in love mhen it's really really **funny**
I could be shady and my ways could be **cunning**
Give me your hands let me take you on a **journey**
To accomplish my mission I had to link up with **Johnny**
'Calling' by Johnny Drille ft. Chinko (2019)

While 'funny', and 'cunning' have /Λ/ in the first syllable, 'Johnny' has /D/ while 'journey has /3:/. This shows that only 'funny' and 'cunning' have similar sound patterns in their first syllables.

The artiste uses forms not phonemically coterminous with **funny** and **cunning** to achieve rhyming effect with **johnny** and **journey**. These examples are suggestive of phoneme substitutions triggered in the songs because of the lack of those English vowels in NE, prompting the artiste to use the indigenised /ɔ/ which perceptually approximates to the English vowels used.

Sample 10: I for give up but I've been waiting for my **turn**
Mi o duro de shuttle but I've been waiting in the **sun**
You go be mother while I've been waiting for my **son**
I'm ready to fire bullet is waiting in the **gun**
Your body top notch, you gat me love **struck**
Ife mi non stop, I dey sing love **song**
'Calling' by Johnny Drille ft. Chinko (2019)

In 'sun', 'son', 'gun' and 'struck', the vowel /Λ/ is present but absent in 'turn' while /D/ is present in 'song'. The central vowel in turn is /3:/ and not /Λ/ as perceived by the artiste. Again, the intended vowel sounds are not actualised because they are not available in NE. The artiste uses the indigenised /ɔ/ to make the entire items rhyme.

Sample 11: …Say now they feeling the **beat**
…They start to talking my **gist**
…Well dem dey feel am for the **east**…
Dj Jimmy jatt Ft. Wizkid 'Feeling the Beat (2016)

The long vowel /i:/ is found in 'beat' and 'east' while the short vowel /I/ is found in 'gist'. The artiste produces the short vowel in 'gist' as the long vowel sound. This kind of production is motivated by the lack of vowel length in the artistes's first language (L_1). The analyses show cases in which selected pairs of words rhyme at some point, but the artiste wrongly produces certain sounds within the words as identical, when they are not, using resources available to him in his L_1.

2. Absurd Cases of Word Formation Arising from Forced Rhyming

Neologism has become a popular feature of the Nigerian Hip-hop songs. In fact, most hip-hop artistes have gained popularity over the years by their constant creation of coinages which become popularly used as

slang over a period of time. At times, in the process of creating new words, the artiste comes up with words that seem to rhyme with an existing word, already used. Most often than not, the created words are meaningless or absurd. Below are some relevant samples:

Sample 12: She tell me say na me go be her **mentor**
I tell her say abena make she ***yenkor*** (waoh)
'Mighty Wine' by Wizkid (2020)

'Mentor' and *yen kor* in Sample 12 sound alike at some point. The sound /ɔ:/ is present in mentor' and 'yenkor', although, the artiste produces it as /ɔ/ in the two words. The word *yenkor* is strange and meaningless.In order to meet up with the trend in the hip-hop genre, the artiste is faced with the challenge of not only creating new words, but, also ensuring that they produce the rhythmical effect that characterises the hip-hop genre. In a bid to achieve rhyme, the artiste creates words which must be made to rhyme with an existing word and this influences the artiste's choices in the formation of the new words. This is what I refer to as forced rhyming.

Sample 13: …Now wey I be the first **bobo, bobo**
Say baby make we shut down London, **London**
Say no be me go bring this **pon po, pon po**
Now everybody concur, **concur**…
Mayorkun Ft Davido Bobo (2018)

'Bobo', 'London' 'pon po', and 'concur' in Sample 13 are meant to rhyme. The meaning of 'pon po' is unknown. Note that 'concur' does not, in any way, rhyme with any of the words with which it has been paired. The artiste produces/ə/ in London as /ɔ/ and pairs it with 'bobo' and 'pon po. The choice is motivated by the absence of the schwa sound /ə/ in the artiste's L_1.

Babam, oh baby girl ropom sit come
With your bumbum, baby girl **ropom pipom**
With your **dondon**
o di **dan dan**
Bumbum, baby girl **ropom pipom**
With your **dondon**
(make I ropom the **bum bum bum**)
'Mebe' by Davido ft. R2Bees (2020)

'Ripom' and 'dondon' are created by the artiste to rhyme with 'come', and 'bum bum', and the Yoruba expression 'dandan'.

Sample 15: The way you skibi skibo bobo **ski bobo**
Tibi toropotor **toh ropor**
Gimme opo po po po po po
O ye kalepo po kale po *'Eru' by Olamide (2020)*

'Ski bobo' and 'toh ropor' are created by the artiste to rhyme with the Yoruba expressions – 'o po po and ka le po'.

Sample 16: I no want to **nogede** ('de oh)
The love I get for you **semede oh** ('de oh)
I carry money, the money **f'regedeoh** ('de oh)
No break my heart like I be **Jegedeoh** (Jegede oh)
'Chimichanga' by Olamide (2020)

'Nogede', 'semede', and 'f'regede' whose meanings are unknown have been created to rhyme with the Yoruba name 'Jegede'. The meanings of these words are unknown, but, they each have the vowel /e/ that is present in 'Jegede'. The words do not seem to have any relevance, except for the fact that they sound alike, going by the way the artiste pronounces them.

Sample 17: Now God dey my **matter ter ter**
Now the boy **ata ta ta**
Devil fall **yakata**
Spray devil **ratata**
Triumphant by Olamide ft. Bella Shmurda (2020)

'Ter' 'ter' in Sample 17 and 'ata ta ta', 'yakata', and 'ratata' are grouped together as words that rhyme. However, the word 'matter' has a schwa ending, and so should 'ter', while the other words have /a:/ in them. The artiste, however, pronounces them all the same way as /a:/ such that the /ə/ in 'matter' becomes realised as /a:/. See the same pattern in Sample 18 below:

Sample 18: … Girl your body go **gagaga**
Onya me for the **kpanana**

Am feeling you **tatata**
Iwa by Tekno ft. Phyno (2018)

3. Self-Formed Derivatives Resulting from Forced Rhyming

Sample 19: You no know you be my **obsession**
This thing you do me na **tormention**
Don't you see that I am more messed up …
Confession aah aah, **confession**
Confession by Omah Lay (2020)

The need to achieve rhyme has led to the creation of the word 'tormention' by the artiste, a word which is supposedly derived from 'torment', but which cannot be found in the lexicon of the English language. This same pattern is found in Sample 20 below:

Sample 20 … My-my, my girl you bad, girl you **dirty**
… Is that designer ring on your **belly**?
Girl you Rowland on make I be your **Nelly**
Come-come to the center show like **telly**
If you're not bad don't call my **celly**
If you're not sleek, not sleek like **jelly** …
'Puna' (Freestyle) by Olamide (2018)

The word 'celly' is derived from 'cell phone'.

4. Forced Rhyming Achieved Through Code-Mixing

Code-switching is a means by which the Nigerian hip-hop artiste achieves rhymes. Every language has its peculiar phonological patterns. One marvels at how the Nigerian artistes weave the English phonological patterns around local or indigenous expressions. Here are some examples:

Sample 21 This ur body **oleku**
Kerewawa **zulezu**
Tell me what you want to do
Oya make we **rendezvous** *'Eru' by Olamide (2020)*

The vowel sound /u:/ is present in 'rendezvous'. The adoption of the Yoruba expression *o le ku* and the word 'Zulezu' being the stage name of two Nigerian artistes, is an attempt by the hip-hop musician to create rhyme.

Sample 22: Oya, baby Salaam **Alaikum** (Alaikum)
Let me into your world, **Omoladun** (Omoladun)
My love for you no get **part two** (two-two-two)
And I dey get joy when I look at **you** (you-you-you)
'Chimichanga' by Olamide (2020)

Words from three known languages have been used in this sample – Alaikum (Arabic), *Omoladun* (Yoruba) and 'part two' (English).

Sample 23: You dey shake my **dada**
You dey cut my **sandals**
You dey off my **lantern**
I use to be a **Brutal** '*You' by Omah Lay (2020)*

In the initial syllables of each of the words 'sandal', and 'lantern', there is the sound /æ/, while in the final syllables in 'sandal', 'lantern' and 'brutal', there is the schwa sound - /ə./ None of these sounds is available in the Yoruba language, meaning that the Yoruba word 'dada' does not contain any of these sounds. The artiste pronounces the schwa sound in the English words as /a:/, which seems closer to what is obtained in the Yoruba language.

Sample 24: Your love is **incomparable** ('comparable)
Make I lift your **agbelebu**
If you try to take my **boo** (If you try to take my boo)
'All the Way' by Lil Kesh (2020)

In this sample, the word 'agbelebu' does not belong to the same rhyme group with 'boo' and 'incomparable'. The sound /u:/ is present in 'boo' but absent in 'incomparable'. The artiste pronounces 'agbelebu' and 'comparable' as if they each contain the sound /u:/. This same pattern is seen in Sample 25, below, in which the Yoruba word 'mumu' is grouped with the English expressions 'zoom', 'boom', and 'soon', and in

Sample 26, in which the Yoruba expression 'kai' is grouped with the English words 'eye' and 'style', respectively.

Sample 25 … Don't like your vibe and I go zoom, zoom, **zoom**
Blowing off the roof and it go boom, boom, **boom**
Don't you ever treat me like I be **mumu**
Bad energy I zoom, zoom, **zoom**
I'll be on my way like I'll be coming **soon** …
'Zoom' by Cheque (2020)

Sample 26 … You get red **eye**
I'm a shit pump, I ain't talking 'bout no **style**
I sing and they bored and they say **kai** …
'Geng' by Mayorkun (2020)

Sample 27: Malo maa fi mi we **ogooro**
Come to **koro**
Jeka **soro**
No dey dull me baby show your **colour**
'Don't Stop' by Olamide (2015)

'Ogooro', 'koro' and 'soro' are Yoruba expressions grouped with the English word 'colour'. The vowel sounds which are /ʌ/ and /ə/ are found in the first and second syllables of 'colour'. These sounds are absent in each of the Yoruba words 'ogooro', 'koro' and 'soro'. The artiste pronounces the word 'colour' in the same way he pronounces the vowel sounds in the Yoruba expressions.

In Sample 27 below, the Yoruba word 'lapo' is grouped along with the English word 'echo' The diphthong /əʊ/in 'echo', which is not available in the artiste's L_1, is produced as the indigenised /o/,so, that it is made to rhyme with 'lapo'.

Owo plenty plenty wa **lapo**
Biko bros is getting **alert oh**
Keep it low key low key no **loud oh**
Agbani Darego
How you think a man go one **leg o**
This your beauty loud e don **echo**
O tun lo se idi bi **fedeco**
…Don't stop

'Don't Stop' by Olamide (2015)

Also, in some other parts of sample 27, The English word 'war' is made to rhyme with the Yoruba word 'wo', meaning 'wear'. The vowel /ɔ:/ in 'war' is produced as the indigenised /ɔ/ in the Yoruba word 'wo'.

Pesepese bi ti man o **war**
Bo je iro ati buba lo **wo**
I don't give a damn nah nah nah
I just wanna eat it now now now
'Don't Stop' by Olamide (2015)

See also the Igbo word 'luo' that is made to rhyme with the final syllable of the English word 'control', in the sample below.

Sample 28: Nwa nke amaka Ka anyi **luo**
Nyem your number Nyem your **control**
Nwa na atoka Ka anyi **luo**
Iji my remote Jide **control**
'Iwa' by Tekno ft. Phyno (2018)

The artiste produces the diphthong /əʊ/ in 'control' as the indigenised /o/ in 'luo', an Igbo word, which the artiste paired with the English word 'control'.

5. Other Dimensions of End Rhymes

As part of the strategies for achieving end rhyme in Nigerian hip-hop music, the expression 'o' or 'oh' is being used, in a peculiar way. It is usually added at the end of a word that the artiste pairs with a word that has been used earlier, which originally ends with, or has the sound /əʊ/ (represented orthographically as 'o'), in its final syllable. Examples of these are seen in some parts of Sample 28 above. And, this is shown below:

Owo plenty plenty wa **lapo**
Biko bros is getting **alert oh**
Keep it low key low key no **loud oh**
Agbani **Darego**
How you think a man go one **leg o**

This your beauty loud e don **echo**
O tun lo se idi bi **FEDECO**
'Don't Stop' by Olamide (2015)

'Lapo', 'Darego', 'echo', and 'FEDECO' each, ends with the letter 'o' - /əʊ/, but the words 'loud' and 'leg' do not. In order to make them rhyme with the other words, the artiste introduces the word 'oh' after 'loud' and 'o' after 'leg' as seen above and realises the vowel /əʊ/ as /o/ in NE.

Sample 29: I mo dey shine dey go, no be your **fault oh**
Pim, pim, ma lo **motor**
Everywhere good, no worry about pot **hole**
Yawon lenu like a **photo**
Chimichanga by Olamide (2020)

Although the word 'motor' has a schwa ending - /ə/, the artiste produces the schwa sound as /o/. He, therefore, groups it with the words 'hole' (which contains /əʊ/), and 'photo', which has /əʊ/ in its final syllable. The vowel /ə/ in the final syllable of 'motor', the diphthong /əʊ/ in 'hole', and in the final syllable of 'photo' are produced as /o/ in NE. The sounds /ə/ and /əʊ/ are not available in NE.

Another prominent feature of Nigerian hip-hop music is the use of two words at the end of the lines, such that the two words in a given line are assumed to rhyme with another set of two words or a single word in the preceding lines or in the lines that follow.

Sample 30 Plenty Titus plenty **Rufus**
Plenty lies and plenty **rumours**
Plenty plus and plenty **minus**
Plenty turned and plenty **kicked us**
When we started plenty **dissed us**
Plenty Judas plenty **Jesus**
Plenty by Olamide ft. Fireboy (2020)

The words 'Rufus' 'rumours', and 'minus' are grouped together as words that rhyme with 'kicked us', 'dissed us' and 'Jesus'. To achieve

this rhyme, the artiste uses two words at some point -'kicked us' and 'dissed us'. The vowel in the final syllable of each of 'Rufus' 'rumours', and 'minus' is produced the same way as the vowel in 'us' (see 'kicked us' and 'dissed us' above), and the vowel in the final syllable of 'Jesus'. The vowel /əʊ/ in 'Rufus', 'minus', 'us' (weakened form), 'Jesus' and 'rumours' (at points already indicated), are all produced as the vowel /ɔ/ in NE.

In cases where a single word is made to rhyme with two words, most often, such a word usually contains the same number of syllables as those in the two words, put together. Note the words made bold at the end of the lines below:

Sample 31: I met her on the high street, she **too sweet**
I said, "What's good?" She told me, "**You'll see**"
Said she livin' life like a **movie**
I said, come and teach me, you know I got the **school fees**
Ready or not, man dey with a **few G's**

In Sample 31, the artiste groups the expressions 'too sweet', 'you'll see', 'movie', 'school fees', 'few Gs' together as words that rhyme. In 'movie' which is just one word, there are two syllables 'Jetpack', 'text back', 'respect that' are grouped together.

So where your friends at? I'm tryna get higher got the **jetpack**
Smile on my face when she **text back**
Said she don't wanna play games, I **respect that**

Each pair of words at the end of each of the lines has two syllables except 'respect that' which contains three syllables.

'The truth', 'the goons', 'the goose', 'the roof',all belong to the same group.

No lies, man I'm tellin' you **the truth**
Everything mad when I pull up with **the goons**
Cîroc boys with ain't fuckin' with **the Goose**
Big racks, that's money out **the roof**

The words 'black hoodie', 'bankuli', 'what's goodie' and 'chat to me' also belong to the same group of words that rhyme.

> White tee, **black hoodie**
> You see the source, big swag, **bankuli**
> Speak up, who's hatin'? **What's goodie**?
> I've been the boss, Starboy **chat to me** (yeah)
> *'Longtime' by Wizkid Ft. Skepta (2020)*

In each of 'black hoodie', 'bankuli', 'what's goodie' and 'chat to me', grouped together above, there are three syllables.

Conclusion

The study reveals the various ways by which Nigerian hip-hop artistes create rhyme pairs by intentionally manipulating or modifying certain sounds in words. It explores the concepts of phonological variation in English-NE vowel system, including vowel length issues and the impact of spelling cued-pronunciations on NE usage. The patterns and dimensions presented, reflect the efforts of the selected Nigerian hip-hop artistes in a bid to achieve rhyme. The artistes rely on their perception of words in relation to how they sound, largely drawing from the available resources in their L_1. Based on their sense of judgement in this regard, they create a rhyme pattern of their own.

Also, to achieve rhyme, new words could be created or generated from existing forms. These newly generated words may be unacceptable forms or forms that are not specifically meaningful. The resort to the adoption of codes from other languages as the hip-hop artistes 'struggle' to ensure the manifestation of rhyme in their composition of the songs leads to the blending of the English language with some other Nigerian languages. To an extent, this whole process of rhyme creation seems like an 'anything goes' affair, more often than not. However, the process reveals a form of innovation or creativity that enriches the lyrical composition of the Nigerian hip-hop music.

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Intelligibility, Standardization and the Politics of English Pronunciation in Nigeria: The Stakeholders' Perspective

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Abstract
This is a qualitative, investigative, empirical research which focused on variables or factors that should determine the variety of English pronunciation that Nigeria adopts as the "Standard English Accent", among the "contending accents" within the 21st century Nigerian Educational and Sociocultural space. The positions of the Purists and Variationists were examined against the background of intelligibility, standardization and acceptability. Variationist theory and Sociophonetics provided the theoretical framework for this study. Stratified purposive sampling survey method was employed to gather data from '37' stakeholders, using educational status as a major yardstick. The results suggest that the choice of Standard English Accent to be used in Nigeria should be that which is attainable by the average Nigerian English Speaker, after proper teaching of English pronunciation by trained teachers; that which has minimal regional features; that which is intelligible nationally and internationally; and that which is documented by a recognised body, specifically for pedagogy and official use. It is concluded that such an accent exists in Nigeria, and therefore recommended that the newly formed APPN immediately embark on a harmonization of samples of such accent and scattered literature on same, and its documentation, first for pedagogy, and subsequently for official use.
Standardization, English Pronunciation in Nigeria, Intelligibility, Stakeholders Perspective

Introduction

The English Language is the most widespread language in use today. From the history and description of the English Language, it originated from England and later spread all over Great Britain and beyond Europe to America in the 17th century and then largely to other continents towards the end of the 18th century (Melchers and Shaw, 2011).

The immediate result of the spread of the English Language around the world is the evolvement of various regional standards whose speakers' view their own kind of English as being just as good as, if not better than that of Southern England. Among the developed regional varieties are Scottish English, Irish English, American English, Australian English, Canadian English, Nigerian English (NE) and so on.

With the evolution of the varieties of 'World English', Kachru (1985) described the concept as having three circles of acquisition. Namely: inner circle, outer circle and expanding circle. To him, the inner circle is made up of countries where English is spoken as a native language. Examples of such countries are: England, Australia and Canada. The Outer circle are countries which in one way or the other had been colonized by any of the inner circle members and now use the language (English) as their second language and it also functions as a lingua franca. Examples of such countries include: Ghana, Gambia, India and Nigeria. The expanding circle comprises countries that were never native speakers of the English Language nor colonized by the inner circle, but needed the language as a means of communication for foreign diplomacy, business, education, law, government, religion, etc. To them, the English Language serves as a foreign language and examples of such countries are: China, Russia, etc.

From the aforementioned, it is observed that the world's English speakers use the English Language either as a foreign or second language in a bilingual or multilingual society. Hence, it is often used as an official language in a multilingual community such as Nigeria, therefore there is a need for a Standard Nigerian English Accent.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this paper is to look at factors that should determine the variety of English pronunciation that Nigeria adopts as the Standard English accent amongst the contending accents, within the 21st century Nigerian Educational and socio-cultural space.

The research therefore seeks to achieve the following objectives:

(1) To identify the various varieties of the Spoken Nigerian English that exist; that is, Nigerian English accents;

(2) To determine the guidelines that should be adopted in identifying a Standard Nigerian English Accent; and
(3) To look at the problems of identifying, describing and accepting a Standard Nigerian English Accent (or Spoken form) for pedagogy and official purposes, particularly from the stakeholders' perspectives, as much as this is achievable.

Research Questions

The research paper is guided by the following questions:

(1) What are the various varieties of Nigerian English and their accents that we have?
(2) What are the factors or guidelines to be considered in determining the variety of English Pronunciation that should be adopted in Nigeria?
(3) What are the problems that could be encountered in determining and describing the variety of the English Pronunciation that Nigeria adopts as the acceptable Standard English Accent?

Scope of the Study

The study focused on three basic parameters for measuring Standardized language varieties: grammaticality which ensures standard usage, international intelligibility and social acceptability within the linguistic community. Stakeholders include the intelligible users of the language in the speech community- mesolectal and acrolectal speakers, according to Awonusi's (1989) classification; the teachers of the language; and students learning the language with the aim of becoming teachers of the language themselves. These stakeholders' perceptions of the language, its status, roles and functions within their speech community were sought, and provided the data for this study. It must be noted that many speakers of English in Nigeria can be classified as mesolectal speakers of English.

Significance of the Study

The existence of Nigerian English has been proven in academic literature in the past three decades. Adequate attention must be paid to the processes involved in acquisition and standardization. This paper will serve as a motivating factor for a vigorous documentation and

pedagogical transfer of the acceptable Standard Nigerian English Accent.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

It is pertinent here to review relevant literature to the study and present the theoretical framework that guides this empirical research work.

Nigerian English

Nigerian English is a variety of world English spoken in Nigeria. Nigeria as a nation has over five hundred languages and dialects (Daramola, 2018). This means that an average Nigerian is bilingual. Some Nigerians are even competent in more than two languages. Hence, the multi-lingual tendency of communities has made many Nigerians to be polyglots. In other words, since language expresses the culture of the users, a bilingual is ultimately bicultural.

Bamgbose, et al (1995) discusses the advent of the English language into Nigeria under three levels of evolution. Firstly, is the contact English which is a variety of the Nigerian English spoken in Nigeria. To him, when two people meet or come in contact, there is a necessity for communication through a language and this may necessitate within a multilingual community, a mixture of two languages in contact. Two languages have therefore developed side by side from Contact English, namely (i) Broken English and (ii) Nigerian Pidgin English.

Broken English is a variety of Nigerian English that is nearly extinct because it is stigmatized. Learned people avoid it but it can be found in the popular television play of Zebrudaya in the 80s, where the Chief mixes highly ungrammatical 'broken' English forms (Bambgbose et. al, 1995:12).

Nigerian Pidgin English is very strong in its influence; it is dynamic and important in the Nigerian context. No stigma is attached in many instances of its usage. It is very popular among the less educated people. Educated people do use it too. Books such as Onitsha Market pamphlets, portions of literature by respectable authors are also written in this variety of the Nigerian English. Adetugbo (1987:102)

believes that Nigerian Pidgin is tied to the English Language in spite of the non-English pattern of some its words. This variety plays a role that has a distinct function among speakers and operates its own system (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991).

Victorian English (V.E) is the second English language variety spoken in Nigeria, which is identified with "cosmopolitan nineteenth century Negro Lagos." (Bamgbose et. al, 1995). It was a language of the doctors, language educators and missionaries. It was a language associated with elites, full of style and circum-locution, used by the returning Brazilians, Americans, West-Indians and later Sierra-Leonians and Liberians.

Thirdly, is the School English which predates today's 'Nigerian English', different from the more learned Victorian English. This was the English taught and used as a medium of instruction in a foreign environment. Also, it was the variety exposed to a minority of the users of English in Nigeria who became bilingual in English and Nigerian languages. To Adetugbo (1979a), this variety is the one that has been subjected to "nativization" and therefore can be regarded as today's Nigerian English. It has become the language of the government, education, media, law, science and technology and so on. Hence, English provides in Nigeria a ready lingua franca for communication among people of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds (Awonusi, 1989).

Classifications and Features of Nigerian English

Nigerian English, also sometimes referred to (albeit erroneously) as Standard Nigerian English, is a dialect of English spoken in Nigeria. It is based on British loanwords, and collocations have emerged from the native languages of Nigeria, which come from the need to express concepts specific to the cultures of the people. Hence, Nigerian English is used in politics, formal education, in the mass media and for other official purposes.

Bamgbose (1995) has identified three important characteristics of Nigerian English. They are "nativization", the influence of the biblical language and the importation of Americanisms. Ademola-Adeoye (2018) also identifies with Bamgbose's position.

Nativization is classified into three aspects: linguistic, pragmatic and creative. Linguistic nativization includes among others, the substitution of the Nigerian vowels and consonants for English ones; replacement of stress by tone, pluralization of some non-count nouns and introduction of culture-specific vocabulary items (Bamgbose et al, 1995:21). Pragmatic Nativization is when rules that govern Pragmatics (meaning relations in context) in English, are forced to accommodate the cultural practices and meaning relations expressible in Nigerian indigenous languages. Creative Nativization: this is seen in two ways. Firstly, expressions used to reflect Nigerian 'experiences'. Secondly, are the Nigerian native idioms which are translated into English, to reflect the world views of the speakers, within specific English speech contexts.

The influence of biblical language is exemplified in expressions such as: coming like a thief in the night, the alpha and omega, etc. (Bamgbose, 1995). The last of Bamgbose's characteristics of Standard Nigerian English is the influence of American English. That is the influence of Americanisms through electronic media exposure, travelling, pop music, increasing number of American-trained professionals in Nigeria, the appetite for American fashion and ways of life, among other American influences. (Also, Adetugbo and Awonusi, 1982 cited in Awonusi Awonusi, 1994).

Many other linguists have argued that there are many varieties of the Nigerian English. Brosnahan (1985) used education parameter to classify Nigerian English varieties. He identified four types with levels of education: pidgin -level 1, primary school -level 2, secondary school-level 3 and tertiary school -level 4. According to him, if academics will determine varieties then there must be 'undergone stages' identified with educational attainment.

Another parameter is the Regional parameter. Some linguists claimed that there are many ethnic varieties of the language. E.g. Igbo Nigerian English, Hausa Nigerian English, Yoruba Nigerian English, etc. Differences between these indigenous phonological systems are at both segmental and suprasegmental levels. At the segmental level, most Nigerian languages have between five and ten vowels and have no diphthongs. These are therefore stretched to serve the purposes of the twenty English vowels (12

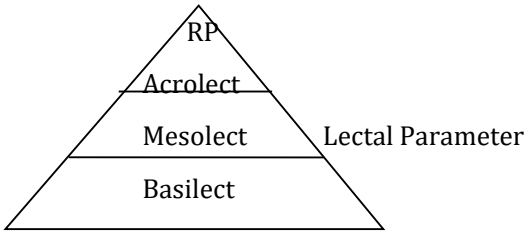
monophthongs and 8 diphthongs). At the supra-segmental level, one can identify wrong pitch and intonation patterns. English stress-timing is dropped for syllable timing in some regional dialects of Nigerian English (NE). As a result, prosodic features, like rhythmic prominence, primary stress, secondary stress, nuclear stress, are poorly used or non-existent. Problems encountered at these levels make it possible to identify sub-varieties and dialects of English in Nigeria.

Generally, some of the common features found in NE include h-dropping, devoicing, non-differentiation in the length of vowels, absence of stress or its wrong placement. All these affect the intelligibility of English speech in Nigeria.

Competence is another parameter for identifying and discussing the varieties of Nigerian English. Awonusi (1989) suggested the 'lectal' parameter. It has to do with the speaker's competence in a language. He identified three of the lectal parameters which are: basilect, mesolect and acrolect. The basis of the description is based on levels of education and international intelligibility of the speaker.

Basilect belongs to the lowest class, largely illiterates who have no ability to communicate internationally. Mesolects are the semi-illiterate, partially educated speakers and this type of variety is intra-nationally acceptable. Acrolect is the highest variety of speakers; they are well educated and internationally intelligible.

Awonusi has the RP at the apex of the diagram and the idea is that few speakers of NE, if any, can get to the peak of the pyramid, which is the RP.



Awonusi (1989)

Other factors within the Sociolinguistic parameter which Awonusi used in classifying Nigerian English are two major factors - "Social Acceptability within the nation and Internationally Intelligibility".

Thus we, have those Nigerians whose English is socially acceptable and internationally intelligible- the Acrolectal speakers; secondly, we have the speakers whose variety is socially acceptable but not internationally intelligible- the Mesolectal speakers; thirdly, are those whose English are internationally intelligible but socially unacceptable- the "RP" speakers; lastly, are those whose variety is not socially acceptable nor internationally intelligible- the Basilectal speakers.

We must recall Banjo's (1971) suggested linguistic parameter. The main difference between the sociolinguistics and the linguistics is that the sociolinguistics parameter emphasizes "Acceptability" while linguistics parameter emphasizes "form". To Banjo (op. cit.), the more distant apart a form is from the standard norm (RP) the more it stands out as a variety. He identified four of such varieties, which are:

Variety 1: This variety, the lowest, is noted for complete transfer of mother tongue features at all levels of analysis; phonology, semantics, syntax and even in lexes. Members of this variety wouldn't make much effort phonologically to say for instance /kʌm/ but rather they say /kom/.

Variety 2, to Banjo is closer to Standard British English in Syntax (Grammar) but with strongly marked phonological and lexical characteristics. Members of this group will be able to use English grammar correctly, almost like the 4thVariety's speakers. Banjo's (1974) variety 3 of Nigerian English is associated with those who have University education while his variety 4 of NE is identified with Standard British English and is internationally acceptable but not nationally acceptable; that is variety 4 is ridiculed here and so it is not for the Nigerian society (Compare with Udofot, 2020). The question is how is it that we classify the 4th variety as none-Nigerian English?

Udofot (2020) reports that Banjo's (1996) description of Nigerian English varieties is an improvement on his (1971) classification and the latter classification is closer to what obtains in Nigeria today. This reality of NE is captured in Udofot (1997, 2002, 2003, 2004) which

present various analyses of Nigerian English Accents, which Udofot consequently groups into three classes, namely: Variety I = Non Standard; Variety II – Standard Variety; Variety III = Sophisticated Variety (mainly University lecturers in English, graduates in English and the humanities). She notes that educational attainment does not determine solely to which variety a speaker belongs since some Masters' degree holders have been found to belong to Variety I.

Udofot (2003) notes that apart from the deficiencies in the area of the segmental, intonation and stress, rhythm is the most problematic and the least studied in NE. She details the various phonological and phonetic features that characterize these levels (I – III) of Nigerian English, which she sees as an endonormative variety which should be tagged **NINGLISH.**

In the same vein, Jibril (2021) classifies NE like Udofot, pointing out that there is a sophisticated variety, which is similar to Udofot's in many respects. This sophisticated variety is however identified, not necessarily with graduates of English or University lecturers, but with highly sought-after Nollywood actors and actresses, as well as many Nigerians who studied abroad. To both Udofot and Jibril, this sophisticated NE is that variety that is devoid of Nigerian MT phonological transfers, which is internationally intelligible and also nationally acceptable.

Problems that could be encountered in determining the variety of English Pronunciation in Nigeria can be summarized in the words of Omoniyi (2009):

> Perhaps it is impracticable that RP speech skills can be generally available to Nigerian learners of English as a second language. The phonological systems of various indigenous languages are different from those of English and because English is learnt as a second language, what simply takes place is an adaptation of indigenous phonological systems for English speech sounds and patterns rather than an attempt to manage two phonological systems separately (Omoniyi, 2009:18).

Also, factors to consider when standardizing Nigerian English would include the following:

1. The variety to choose must be internationally intelligibility. For example, one will not consider Awonusi's Basilect, Mesolect; neither will one consider Broshnhan's level I or II. (Pidgin, primary school varieties).
2. The variety that we must go for must not be stigmatized by some regional features.
3. The variety to choose must be socially acceptable, maybe Banjo's variety III which has phonology, syntax, semantics, lexis, as standard forms. This means that the variety chosen must be acceptable to all, nationally and internationally.
4. Another thing to be considered in choosing a standard variety is that it must have some high status and social prestige. It must be able to function as a standard variety; a variety chosen must be well known, and attainable.
5. To choose a standard variety one must consider the level of education of the speakers; that is the variety whose members (speakers) have a very high educational standard.
6. Codification of the variety and available literature are essential in choosing any standard variety.
7. The standard variety chosen must be rich enough to compete with other world varieties of the English language, as well as cater to the needs of its indigenous speakers.

Theoretical Framework

It is believed that there are many varieties as well as speakers of English in Nigeria and these speakers can be placed on a continuum with the target goal being the RP. These speakers achieve their place on the continuum through personal efforts, educational attainment and exposure to phonetic training, as they move up the continuum. This is the concept of inter-language in the field of Applied linguistics and language acquisition.

In the Nigerian multilingual context, functional parameters influence types of languages used to perform different functions. The language of education usually differs from the language of the home, language of politics, and language of social interaction. Some languages are used to

perform a particular function that is different from others hence Nigerians use indigenous languages and varieties of Nigerian English, as occasion demands.

Labov (1966, 1970, 2006) was the chief proponent of Variation theory. He believes that a given language is made up of different resources put together to form that language and language is composed of various forms or dialects. To him, all speakers of any language can talk to each other and understand each other, but no two speakers talk alike. This can be based on: (a) age (b) gender (c) state of health (d) personality (e) emotional state (f) personal idiosyncrasies, among other variables. Labov's more recent works acknowledge inputs from sociophonetics.

Thus, every speaker of a given language has his or her own idiolect or dialect The English Language can be said to contain innumerable idiolects and dialects. In other words, to identify the idiolect or variety spoken by a speaker or community, there is a need for observation and description of the differences in pronunciation, grammar, lexicon, style of speaking, geographical region, social and cultural influences, register choice, medium and subject matter.

According to Labov (1960), there are different classes of variation: regional (geographical), social and linguistic variation. Hence, variation theory is a branch of empirical linguistics that involves a combination of techniques from linguistics, sociology, anthropology and statistics. It is therefore used to scientifically investigate language use and structure as manifested in natural contexts. The variationist's view of language is characterized by accounting for the grammatical structure in connection to discourse, explaining the instability of linguistic form-function relations and investigating individual speech of members of a speech community through sociological methods. Therefore, the concept of inter-language and the variation theory provide the theoretical background for this study.

Some notable Nigerian language scholars have hitherto approached the study of languages in Nigeria from three main perspectives. They have firstly attempted to identify, classify and describe some indigenous Nigerian languages and their dialects (e.g. Yoruba – Bamgbose 1971; Adetugbo 1973). Secondly, they have argued copiously for the existence of a dialect of English referred to as Nigerian English

(Bamgbose 1971, Adetugbo 1979a, and 1979b). Thirdly, they have investigated the viability of using indigenous Nigerian languages as a medium of teaching in the Nigerian educational system (e.g. Awonuyi 1981; Fafunwa 1982). Few attempts have been made to consider the factors that should be used to determine the variety of English pronunciation that Nigeria adopts as the Standard English accent, using inter-language and variationists' approach.

Research Methodology

For this research, stratified purposive sampling method was employed to gather data from 40 stakeholders. Stakeholders include the intelligible users of the language in the speech community- mesolectal and acrolectal speakers, according to Awonusi's (1986) classification; the teachers of the language; and students learning the language with the aim of becoming teachers of the language themselves. Initially, 100 respondents were envisaged but due to Covid 19 Pandemic constraints on engaging physical contacts, obtaining properly filled electronic-responses from administered questionnaire, drastically reduced the number to 40 (out of which 3 were unreturned); thus making the sample size 37.

Respondents were strictly "stakeholders", largely educated persons with at least WASC, up to postgraduate degrees, out of which 50% were either lecturers in English or students of English Language, male and female. Thus, capturing the views of Mesolectal and Acrolectal ESL speakers, which roughly equate Banjo's Variety 3, Udofot's and Jibril's Variety 2; that variety somewhere below Jibril's and Udofot's Variety 3, which they call ''Sophisticated Nigerian English", that variety which we presumably should accept as Standard Nigerian English. Figures extracted from the responses are provided under Data Presentation and findings.

Population and Sample size

The population for this study comprises all intelligible speakers of English in Nigeria, which includes both teachers and students of English. Purposively sampled data were accessed on Nigerian English, using the concept of interlanguage in Applied Linguistics and language acquisition, together with Sociophonetics (which stems out of Variationist theory) as theoretical framework, with a focus on thirty-

seven mesolectal and acrolectal speakers of English in Lagos, Nigeria. The sample size was 37 respondents, of which about50% were either students of English at University level or lecturers in English. Two public Universities in Lagos, were selected.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire was the main research instrument. (See Appendix I). The questionnaire with open-ended questions as well as polar (Yes – No) questions sought to find out gender, age, academic qualification of respondents as well as their views on the existence of Nigerian English, its characteristics, types and the factors which should determine the variety of English Pronunciation that should be adopted as the acceptable English accent in Nigeria.

Analytical Procedure

Information provided in the questionnaires were extracted and tabulated in figures and percentages. These are reported statistically under the Data presentation: Results and Discussion of findings.

Data Presentation: Results

From the filled questionnaire, we had 37 respondents. Out of these, 20 were males, and 17 female. 17 (46%) were lecturers in English or students of English, 9 had postgraduate degrees (24%), while the remaining 11 (30%) had WASC – OND/NCE. 65% were 31 years and above while 35% were 16 - 30 years old.

For the questions on Nigerian English Accents- questions (i) – (ii) on the questionnaire, the responses shall be interpreted under discussion of findings.

The main instrument for this research was the questionnaire with open-ended questions as well as polar (Yes – No) options, which sought to find out in section A: gender, age, academic qualifications of respondents as well as their views or opinions on the following issues couched in 10 different questions, which are summarized below. Section B dealt with the following (See Appedix II for the questionnaire):

> The questionnaire attempted to ascertain whether the respondents accept that there is Nigerian English and if so, if it was a single recognized variety. It also sought to find

out which class of Nigerian English speakers are perceived to be using Standard Nigerian English and whether educational attainment, influence of native speaker environment while growing up or not, or specialist training in English phonetics and phonology influenced their competent usage of English pronunciation; therefore which variables made them **nationally** or/and **internationally intelligible** or **acceptable.** Lastly, we sought to find out which accent the respondents would want their children to acquire: strictly Nigerian accent, with or without regional traits, **or** a foreign native speaker-like accent; and whether a regulatory body should be in place to decide this standard variety for teaching, learning and general usage.

The responses to the questions 1-10 (summarized above) on Accent and Pronunciation, under Section B in the Questionnaire are presented in a table below, and the findings are discussed thereafter.

Table 1.0 Responses to Questionnaire on Nigerian English Accent

1. Is Nig. English different from 'English English'?	YES: 35	NO: 02	TOTAL: 37
2. Is Nig English, if it exists, just one variety?	YES: 30	NO: 07	TOTAL: 37
3. Nig. English can be classified: a)educationally b)regionally; c)born/lived abroad or not; d)all of a-c	a) 05 b) 08 c) 04 d) 18 No answer: 02		TOTAL: 37
4. Which speakers can be identified with **Standard Nig. English**?	a) 34 b) 02 c) 03 d) 01- None e) 01- Average. Nig. Engl	**a)with higher education; b)with regional influence; c)with Engl.**	Multiple choice answers allowed

	d),e) added.	**native accent;** d)No one; e)with average Nig. English	
5. Which speakers can be identified with **nationally and internationally intelligible** Nig. English?	a) 30 b) 02 c) 20	**a)with higher education; b)with regional influence; c)with Engl. native accent;**	Multiple choice answers allowed
6. Which speakers can be identified with **nationally and internationally acceptable** Nig. English?	a) 30 b) 02 c) 18	**a)with higher education; b)with regional influence; c)with Engl. native accent;**	Multiple choice answers allowed
7. Do Nigerians here (non-native speaker environ) use the lang. competently, without a) regional traits seen; b)educational level known; c)an accent heard?	a) Yes:29; No:06 b) Yes:27; No:08 c) Yes:22; No:14		Multiple choice answers allowed
8. Is competence in English Pronunciation achievable because: a)the teachers are	a) Yes:32; No:07 b) Yes:31; No:08 c) Yes:07; No:33		Multiple choice answers allowed

Phonology/phonetics specialists; b)teachers exhibit no regional traits; c)teachers have native speaker environment influence			
9. Which Accent would you prefer your child acquires: a) Nig. English with regional traits; b)Nig. English without regional traits; c)foreign native English accent	a) Yes:02; No:32 b) Yes:37; No:0 c) Yes:19; No:16		Multiple choice answers allowed (with preference)
10. Should there be a body in Nigeria to determine the variety of English used by Nigerian L2 speakers?	YES: 21 NO: 12 NO ANSWER: 04		TOTAL: 37

In the questionnaire, some questions allowed multiple options to be chosen, thus we had a total of 50 answers for some questions, exceeding the expected 37 responses.

Discussion of Findings

An evaluation of the results presents the following findings:

- Most respondents agreed that there is Nigerian English (35 respondents) and it is not made up of just one monolithic variety (30 respondents).
- Majority agreed that these varieties of Nigerian English can be classified according to the 3 parameters of educational attainment, regional variant and exposure to native-speaking

environment (18) while a few (5) recognized only native-speaker environment – influenced variant as that to be reckoned with as Nigerian English.

- On which category of speakers speak Standard Nigerian English, the majority claimed it is those with higher or better education (34), a minority said it is those with regional influence (2), while another minority believed it is those with native-like accent (3). One person said that any average Nigerian speaks Standard Nigerian English and another person said no one in fact speaks Standard Nigerian English.
- On which category speaks a nationally and internationally **intelligible** Nigerian English, the majority (30) said it is those with higher and better education, a minority said it is those with regional interference (2), while about 50% (20) said it is those who speak with a foreign native-like accent.
- On which category of speakers speak a nationally and internationally **acceptable** variety of Nigerian English, the majority again said it was those with higher and better education (30), a negligible few said it was those who exhibited regional interference or influence while about 50% still maintained that it was those with native-like accent and exposure (18). Many respondents gave diverse plausible reasons to support their positions.
- Asked if those without native-speaking environment exposure, that is those who grew up in Nigeria, could ever achieve Standard Nigeria English accent, without their regions being revealed in their speech or their level of education determined, we had the majority each time responding in the negative, that all these were not possible; 29 said regional interference would be noticed, 27 said educational attainment could be deduced and 22 said exposure of speaker to native-like environment or not could be revealed as they speak.
- Asked how acquisition of Standard Nigerian English could be possible in the indigenous Nigerian environment, majority (32) agreed that teachers of spoken English at all levels must be specialists in English phonetics and phonology; majority also agreed that these teachers must themselves, exhibit minimal interference features (31), and a majority also supported the

idea of these teachers having a native-like accent or exposure to the language (33).

- If they would like to choose an English Accent to be spoken by their child/ward raised in Nigeria, which would it be? All 37 respondents wanted a Nigerian English variety without regional interference, 2 would not want a native-like foreign accent.
- Lastly, 21 would want a national body to document and regulate what we speak as Standard Nigerian English for teaching and official purposes while 12 would not want this, and 4 persons had no response.

Summary and Conclusions

The results have been quite revealing. The respondents' suggestions are summarized as follows:

- Most respondents agree that there is Nigerian English which is particularly influenced by level of education, which reflects regional influence and which shows whether one has had native-speaking environment influence or not.
- Many want a Nigerian flavoured Standard English with little or no regional influences, but about 50% would love to have their wards/children speak a foreign native-like accent.
- Many believe a Standard Nigerian English which is nationally and internationally intelligible and acceptable can be acquired here in Nigeria under specified conditions.
- Many want a national body to regulate the chosen accent, primarily for pedagogical and official purposes only.

  It can be concluded that the variety of Nigerian English which will **be internationally and intra-nationally acceptable as Standard Nigerian English,** is that accent earlier identified by Udofot (2020) as NINGLISH, and which equates to Jubril's (2021) Sophisticated Nigerian English. It is the various samples of this accent used by Nigerians which must be described and documented, firstly for pedagogy and secondly, for official use by Nigerians.

> Therefore, it is recommended that the newly formed Association of Phoneticians and Phonologists of Nigeria (APPN) should immediately embark on a harmonized documentation of such recognized "acceptable accent" scattered in literature and research works on different aspects of Nigerian English, first for pedagogy and subsequently for official purposes. This would certainly be the "Sophisticated English" as captured by Udofot (2020) and Jibril (2021).

The highly educated Nigerian with little or inadequate mastery of English pronunciation, whether linguists themselves or not, **must not** dictate the accent or model to be adopted.

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Sociophonetic Analysis of Monophthongisation among Selected Final Year University Students of English in Nigeria

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Abstract
The study examined how Nigerian final year university students of English realize English diphthongs and the level of difficulty of each diphthong to the students. This is with a view to examining the influences of social factors such as gender and ethnicity on the articulation of English diphthongs. The study employed both primary and secondary data. The primary data consist of question items that elicited response from 15 sentences that were scripted with targeted sounds, as read aloud test. Sixty (60) final year university students from the Department of English of two universities made up the participants of the study. The study draws its theoretical insight from Social Differentiation theory of Trudgill (1979). This is relevant to this study because it accounts for the nature of the correlation between phonological variables and social variables.The results revealed that both male and female monophthongised and realized English diphthongs differently from the RP patterns and there are differences in the male and female articulations of English diphthongs. The study also revealed that /əu/ and /ʊə/ are the most difficult diphthongs for the respondents. There are differences in the articulation of English diphthongs among the ethnic groups, investigated.
Key Words: Monophthongisation, Diphthong, ESL Phonology, gender, ethnicity

Introduction

The English language in Nigeria is a second language and language of contact. Before the advent of the English language in Nigeria, there were over 450 indigenous languages in use (Ekpe,2010; Dyrenko and Fuchs, 2018) in various degrees, for various purposes and by different people. Many factors led to the incursion of the English language in Nigeria at different times. Some of them include trading, slavery, colonization and missionary activities (Ekpe, 2010). The abolition of slave trade that greeted the missionary activities gave impetus to the growth of English in Nigeria. Awonusi, (2004) reports that, some of the Nigerian slaves that were set free, particularly the Yorubas, returned and settled in Lagos and Abeokuta, and they freely used the English language in their new settlements. More than anything else, English has

gained a very firm footing in Nigeria, because of its unifying role. Nigeria, being a heterogeneous society, (Dyrenko and Fuchs, 2018), needed the presence of a neutral language to play official roles and the English language passed the test, hence, its adoption. Among the heritages of the colonial masters, English seems to be the most valuable.

Hence, this study aims to carry out a sociophonetic analysis of the articulation of English diphthongs among Nigerian final year students of English, with a view to examining the effects of gender on the articulation of diphthongs and the effects ethnicity has on the articulation of diphthongs among university students.

1.1 Review of Literature

New Englishes refers to the varieties of English that have developed mainly as a result of the colonization of Asia and Africa. 'New Englishes' have evolved into many varieties and served a full range of purposes with their own characteristics in regards to pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary or idiom and discourse style (Jenkins, 2003).

A variety of 'New world Englishes' (Jenkins, 2003) or "Postcolonial Englishes" (Dyrenko and Fuchs, 2018; Schneider, 2007) known as Nigerian English has been recognised for its distinctive features especially its phonological features (Soneye& Gut, 2011; Ugorji, 2010, Gut 2008; Jowitt, 2007; Adegbija, 2004; Adesanoye, 2004; Awonusi 2004; Udofot 2003; Eka 1996; Banjo 1995; Adetugbo, 1993; Jibril 1986). Just like other Asian and African countries that got English through colonialisation, the variety of English that evolved in Nigeria is serving a full range of purposes, with its own characteristics in regards to pronunciation, syntax, lexico-semantics and discourse style; (Dyrenko and Fuchs, 2018; Jenkins, 2003). The interaction of the English language with numerous indigenous languages, upon its arrival in Nigeria, gave birth to a 'locally- based English identity' (Ekpe 2010:19). The variety of English received from the British has undergone, and is still undergoing changes since its presence in Nigeria. The process that birthed the new variety of English in Nigeria is described by scholars as 'glocalisation', 'nativisation' (Ekpe 2006:1);

'indigenisation' (Dyrenko and Fuchs, 2018:2563)or 'domestication' (Adegbija 2004:20).

Nigerian English is that variety of English (which differs from that of the native speakers) used by Nigerians to communicate across socio-cultural boundaries. Of the varieties of English in Nigeria, educated Nigerian English is set to be the standard. This variety still tries to keep certain endonormative and exonormative rules, (Ekpe, 2010; Dyrenko and Fuchs, 2018) in order to maintain international communication and intelligibility in cross-cultural communication, without necessarily sounding like a native speaker. Ekpe (2010:49-50) submits that Nigerian English is different from the native speakers' English and other Englishes in terms of its use of some culture-specific transformations as well as its non-observance of certain global and surface structure constraints. Since language cannot be divorced from culture, (Ekpe, 2010), but be responsible to the culture of its users (Adeniran, 1987), Nigerian English is a product of its own general social context (Akere, 1987), and not a connotation of inferiority (Adetugbo, 1984).

Quite a number of factors aided the retention of English language in Nigeria after the colonial period. It has become the language of education; National Policy on Education (NPE) has adopted it as the language of instruction in upper secondary, and also a medium of instruction for teaching Mathematics and Science, across board. The growth of Christianity with European missionaries is another factor.

Above all, English has been entrenched into all areas of human endeavour – media, law and order, administration, commerce/trade. It has become a prerequisite for a white-collar job. The English language is compulsory for students' placement into secondary schools and also mandatory for gaining admission into tertiary institutions. The prestige associated with the English language is much, and this gave rise to the positive attitude accrued to it by Nigerians, at the expense of the indigenous languages. These roles did not only lead to the retention of the English language in Nigeria but also accounted for its unprecedented growth.

Comparing vowel inventories of major indigenous languages in Nigeria; the articulation of diphthongs is obviously alien to Nigerian learners of English. One of the processes of phonologically domesticating, glocalising or nativising the English language in Nigeria is monophthongisation. Monophthongisation is identified as one of the phonological features of Nigerian English (Ekpe 2010), and it is evident in the speech of English as Second Language (ESL) learners in Nigeria, since its advent. Dyrenko and Fuchs (2018) observe that the model of pronunciation taught in Nigerian schools is the Received Pronunciation (RP). One would therefore expect changes in this respect, considering the level of education of these speakers (because RP is the standard taught is Nigerian schools), available online tutorials and other resources, interaction with native speakers on social media, availability of films from native speakers, foreign documentaries, near-native television and radio broadcasting, availability of foreign television channels, acculturation and many more. This study is concerned with the effect of the level of education of the speakers, including the gender and the ethnicity of these speakers on the articulation of the English diphthongs.

Of all the features of Nigerian English, its phonological features are more than other features of the levels of language. Form the classifications of Nigerian English (Banjo, 1969; Awonusi, 1987), it is observed that among the highly educated Nigerians, the phonological features of their English is different from the native speakers'; though their structures are almost the same. Distinctive features of Nigerian English are more prominent at the level of phonology (Adetugbo, 1993).

Udofot, (2004) in her study on *Varieties of spoken Nigerian English,* investigated the general features of spoken English in Nigeria, and found out that the level of education is a major factor for classifying spoken Nigerian English. Oyebola, & Yu, Li (2019) conclude that education has narrowed the gap between the native-like voiceless dental fricative articulation. Their study shows that [θ] has already become an intricate part of the Educated Nigerian English phonology. Ethnic affiliation has significant effects on the pronunciation of the

educated Nigerian speakers of English (Oyebola et al 2019; Akande & Akinwale, 2006; Gut, 2004; Udofot, 2004)

Phonologically, Nigerian English is different from other world Englishes, especially the standard British English in many respects, beginning from sound segments (consonant and vowel).There are noticeable differences in their stress and intonation. Akande (2009) observes that most Yoruba speakers of English naturally tend to pronounce certain English sounds differently from the Received Pronunciation. These differences are, however, systematic and predictable.

Monophthongisation is one of the features of Nigerian English. Monophthongisation is the reduction of a diphthong to a monophthong. It is a gradual natural assimilatory phenomenon caused by the total conflation of the diphthong's elements (Alcorac 2013). Monophthongisation is a phonological process in which the glide of a diphthong is either weakened or is completely unarticulated. This results in vowel lengthening of the only vowel realized, out of the two (Thomas, 2001; Fridland, 2003). Monophthongisation is mostly common in open syllables or when a diphthong comes before voiced consonants (Fridland 2003; Labov, Ash, &Boberg 2006). Monophthongisation occurs as a result of language-internal variables and speakers' social variables. Sociolinguistic variables like age, gender and city-type,account for the monophthongisation of diphthongs. Fridland (2003) observes that monophthongisation is more frequent among male speakers than female speakers; although no significant difference was observed by Labov, Ash; and Boberg (2006) in their study.

Scholars agree that monophthongisation of diphthong is less frequent among younger speakers (Thomas, 1997; Fridland 2003 and Labov, Ash, and Boberg 2006). There is also a convergence opinion by scholars on the effect of city-type on monophthongisation of diphthong. Thomas (1997); and Labov, Ash, & Boberg (2006) submit that monophthongisation of diphthong is more frequent among speakers in smaller cities, than the speakers from large metropolitan areas or urban areas.

Labov, Ash and Boberg (2006), in their study on monophthongisation of diphthongs in some southern cities, note that, whereas gender is not a significant variable in the articulation of diphthongs, age and city-type are. In another vein, Meghan (2012) in a study on [ay] monophthongisation finds out that phonological environment, among other variables, influences the articulation of diphthongs of English. The results further show that gender and age are both significant in the articulation of diphthongs. His study, however is limited to Deer Park in Texas. The study disagrees with Labov, Ash and Boberg (2006) on gender as a variable in terms of its effect on the articulation of diphthongs.

Mousa (2015) in a comparative study on the acquisition of the closing diphthongs /əʊ/ and /eɪ/ by Arab speakers of English and Jamaican Creole, submits that the speakers of Jamaican Creole and Arab learners of English substitute /əʊ/ and /eɪ/ with /o/ and /e/, respectively. His study is limited to Jamaican Creole speakers and Arab learners of English.

Theoretical Framework

The study draws its theoretical insight from social differentiation theory propounded by Trudgill in 1971 in his PhD thesis but first published in 1974. The theory holds that, though there are similarities in the varieties of language spoken by speakers in a speech community, certain social factors account for their disparities. The theory draws heavily from sociological linguistics, and generative phonology and its particular concern is the phonological aspects of English, as it is spoken in a speech community. It is valuable to phonological research because it helps to obtain new and accurate linguistic data and it serves as a linguistic theory.

The theory of social differentiation allows for the phonemic description of differences in the pronunciation occasioned by each of the social factors phonologically. The theory believes that different social factors such as class, sex, ethnicity and age have pronunciation variables that differentiate one group from another (Trudgill 1971:169). It is used to identify the similarities and disparities among speakers of the same

language but of varied backgrounds. This allows this study to distinguish a speaker from one ethnic affiliation from others.

The theory talks about *diasystem* which consists of a set of abstract underlying phonological elements and rules common to all speakers of a variety, and a set of social factors that differentiate their pronunciations. Diasystem was set up in order to describe correctly all the possibilities inherent in a particular speech variety. One of the chief aims of social differentiation theory is to investigate the co-variation of phonological and sociological variables. It is designed to account for social factors that are responsible for phonological differences among the speakers of the same variety of a (target) language. The present study seeks to investigate the co-variation of phonological variables (English diphthongs) and sociological variables (gender and ethnicity), hence the need for this theory.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to carry out a sociophonetic analysis of articulation of English diphthongs among Nigerian final year students of English. The study specifically:

i. examined the effects of gender on the articulation of diphthongs;
ii. examined the effects that ethnicity has on the articulation of diphthongs among university students; and
iii. investigated the level of difficulty of each diphthong to Nigerian English university students.

Research Questions

1. How do Nigerian final year university students of English articulate English diphthongs?
2. Are there differences in the articulation of diphthongs by males and females university final year students of English?
3. What are the possible ethno-linguistic variations of articulation of English diphthongs among final year university student of English?
4. Which of the diphthongs are more difficult for Nigerian speakers of English to articulate?

Research Methodology

The study employed a mixed approach. Questionnaire was used to elicit bio data responses from the participants, while read aloud test designed with the targeted sounds carefully scripted in 12 sentences were also used. Three words were used to test each of the eight diphthongs giving a total of 24 words. The participants were recorded and the recordings were transcribed based on the researcher's perceptual judgment. Purposive random sampling technique was employed to select 30 final year students of English. The participants were selected from Obafemi Awolowo Univerity, Ile-Ife, and the University of Abuja. The selection was based on gender with Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa ethnic affiliations. In all, a total of 60 participants -15 males and 15 females - from each institution formed the population for this study.

Findings and Discussion

Research question 1: *How do Nigerian final year university students of English articulate English diphthongs?*

Table 1 Summary of Diphthong Articulations by Nigerian Final Year University Students of English

S/N0		Diphthong	%	Monophthong	%
1	/əʊ/	13	3.6	347	95.3
2	/aɪ/	282	78.3	78	21.6
3	/eɪ/	63	17.5	297	82.5
4	/aʊ/	247	68,6	113	31.3
5	/eə/	278	77.2	82	22.7
6	/ɪə/	285	79.1	75	20.8
7	/ɔɪ/	360	100	-	-
8	/ʊə/	18	5	342	95
Total		1,546	53.6	1,334	46.3

The Nigerian final year university students of English are part of educated speakers of English in Nigeria. They have been trained as English language experts within the context of Nigerian educational system, in a way that they should be able to compete favourably with their counterparts across the world. The results show that Nigerian

final year university students of English articulate English diphthongs/əʊ/ as monophthong. Out of the 360 total tokens on, only 13 which is 3.6 % were articulated as diphthongs, while 247 representing 96.3% were realized as monophthong. The results also showed that Nigerian final year university students of English, monophthongise the English diphthongs/eɪ/. Only 63 tokens representing 17.5% were articulated as diphthong, while 297 representing 82.5% were articulated as monophthong. The results also show Nigerian final year university students of English in the selected schools monophthongise English diphthongs /ʊə/ 255 tokens representing 70.8% of the 360 tokens were monophthongised, while 105 tokens were not.

However, all other English diphthongs were articulated as diphthongs by the Nigerian final year university students of English; though with the pronunciation of many of them being different from the RP. For instance, 282 representing 78.3% tokens of diphthong /aɪ/were articulated as diphthong, while only 78 were articulated as monophthongs; another 247 tokens of English diphthong /aʊ/ were realized as diphthong by the Nigerian final year university students of English; 278 tokens of English diphthongs were not monophthongised by the Nigerian final year university students of English. In summary, the results show that Nigerian final year university students of Englishdo not monothongise /aɪ, eə, ɪə, ɔɪ, aʊ/, while they monophthongise /əʊ, eɪ, ʊə/. Nigerian final year university students of English articulate /əʊ/; /eɪ/and /ʊə/ as monophthongs while /aɪ/, /aʊ/, /eə/, /ɪə/ and /ɔɪ/ as diphthongs. From 2,880 incidents, 1,546 representing 53.6% were realised as diphthongs,while 1,3346 representing 46.3% were realised as monophthong. The implication of this is that Nigerian final year university students of English do not monophthongise all the eight diphthongs of English.

Research question 2*:* Are there significant differences in the articulation of English diphthongs by the male and the female Nigerian university final year students of English?

Table 2 Summary of Diphthong Articulations by Male and Female Students

		Male	%	Female	%	Total
1	/əʊ/	4	30.7	9	69.2	13
2	/aɪ/	135	47.8	147	52.1	282
3	/eɪ/	26	41.1	37	58.3	63
4	/aʊ/	106	42.9	141	57	247
5	/eə/	21	35.5	38	64.4	59
6	/ɪə/	40	36.3	70	63.6	110
7	/ɔɪ/	180	50	180	50	360
8	/ʊə/	8	44.4	10	55.5	18
Total		520	45	632	54.9	1,152

Both the male and the female students produced English diphthong /ɔɪ/ appropriately and in the same way; this shows in their percentage of 50 each. Generally, the female students produced all other tokens better that their male counterparts. There are differences in the articulation of English diphthongs among the male and the female Nigerian final year university students of English. In all, the females have approximately 55% of the total correct English diphthong articulation, while the males have 45%. This is in line with Fridland (2003) that the females articulate English diphthongs better than their male counterparts; although the study agrees with Labov, Ash and Boberg (2006). This is in line with Trudgill (1979), that gender is one of the social factors responsible for pronunciation similarities and differences.

Research Question 3: What are the possible ethno-phonological variations of articulation of English diphthongs among final year Nigerian university students of English?

Table 3 Summary of possible ethno variations of articulation of English diphthongs among final year Nigerian university students of English

		Hausa	%	Yoruba	%	Igbo	%	Total
1	/əʊ/	2	15.3	7	53.8	4	30.7	13
2	/aɪ/	87	30.8	104	36.8	91	32.2	282
3	/eɪ/	20	37.7	26	49.0	17	32.0	63
4	/aʊ/	80	32.3	94	38.0	73	29.5	247
5	/eə/	17	28.8	28	47.4	14	23.7	59
6	/ɪə/	36	32.7	43	39.0	31	28.1	110
7	/ɔɪ/	120	33.3	120	33.3	120	33.3	360
8	/ʊə/	4	22.2	8	44.4	6	33.3	18
Total		366		430		356		1,152

The English language as spoken in Nigeria is polarised along ethnic axis. Scholars have identified varieties of Nigerian English as Yoruba English, Hausa English and Igbo English (Jowitt, 1991). The results showed that there are ethno-variations in the articulation of English diphthongs among Nigerian final year university students of English. The Yoruba students articulated the English diphthongs better than the Hausa and Igbo students. The Yoruba students had a total of 430 tokens pronounced, correctly; this was followed by Hausa with 366 and Igbo with 356. It was observed that more of Hausa and Yoruba students articulate /ɪə/ and /eə/ as /ɪa/ while Igbo articulate the sounds as /ɜː/. Also, /ʊə/ was articulated by Yoruba students as /ɪɒ/, and /ɔː/, while Hausa students articulated the sound more as /ɪʊ/, the Igbo participants articulated the sound more as /ɔː/. Of all the three major tribes (Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa) that formed the subjects for this study, Igbo had the least correct articulation of /eɪ/. This is in line with Onyekachi and Ugwu (2018) submission that the Igbo speakers of English monophthongise diphthong /eɪ/.

All of them produced diphthong /ɔɪ/the same way. As much as the findings of scholars on the effect of ethnic affiliation on the spoken English of the educated Nigerians is significant (Oyebola et al 2019; Akande and Akinwale, 2006; Gut, 2004; Udofot, 2004), this study finds that in the articulation of English diphthongs, there are ethno-variations. All the respondents from the three tribes sampled monophthongise almost the same diphthongs and mispronounce similar ones. The study, in line with social differentiation theory, found that there are both similarities (occasioned by the similar social factors) and disparities (different social factors) in the articulation of English diphthongs by respondents from different ethnic groups.

Research Question 4: Which of the diphthongs are more difficult for Nigerian speakers of English to articulate?

Table 4: Level of Difficulties of English Diphthongs among Nigerian University Students

No of Tokens	Target Sound	Correct Pronunciation	%	Incorrect pronunciation	%	Rank Ordering According to Level of Difficulty
360	/əʊ/	13	3.6	347	98.4	1
360	/ʊə/	18	5	342	95	2
360	/eə/	59	16.4	301	83.6	3
360	/eɪ/	63	14.7	297	85.3	4
360	/ɪə/	110	30.6	250	69.4	5
360	/aʊ/	247	68.6	113	31.4	6
360	/aɪ/	282	78.3	78	21.7	7
360	/ɔɪ/	360	100	0	0	8
Total		1,152		1,728		2,880

Table 4 above showed that of all the eight English diphthongs, /əʊ/ seemed to be the most difficult for the Nigerian final year university students of English. Only 13 out of 360 tokens were articulated,

correctly. This is followed by /ʊə/ with 18 correct articulations; /eɪ/ follows with a total of 53, while /eə/ came next with 68. The results showed that /ɔɪ/ was the easiest English diphthong to articulate by the students, because they got all the 360, correctly. This is followed by /aɪ/ with 282, /aʊ/ had 247, while /ɪə/ had 110. This corroborates the findings of scholars on the articulation of diphthongs by Yoruba speakers of English that some diphthongs such as /ʊə/, /eɪ/, /eə/, /ɪə/are more difficult for Yoruba speakers of English than others (Akande 2009; Olajie and Olaniyi 2013).

Conclusion

The study reveals that both the male and the female monophthongised and realized English diphthongs different from RP. However, it was observed that male respondents monophthongised more than their female counterparts. There are differences in the articulation of English diphthongs among Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba students investigated. The Igbos monophthongised than Hausa and Yoruba. /əʊ/ and /ʊə/ are the most difficult diphthongs for the Nigerian final year university students of English to articulate. It is therefore recommended that attention should be given to the difficult diphthongs during classroom interaction. Drawing inference from social differentiation theory, the study concludes that all the respondents investigated were distinctive speakers of the same variety of English called the Nigerian English which is different phonologically from the Standard British English. It also lends credence to the existence of Yoruba English, Hausa English and Igbo English through its findings on the articulation of English diphthongs.

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Optimality Theory and Coda Cluster Adaptation in Nigerian English

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Abstract
This paper investigated how Yoruba speakers of Nigerian English (NE) resolve coda clusters, the adaptation strategies adopted, and the constraints operative on them. Unlike English, the Yoruba language operates an open syllable structure. The simple random sampling (SRS) technique was used to select fifty 300 level students of Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Oto/Ijanikin who engaged in a reading test of 10 sentences with complex coda in order to determine the nature of deletion, directionality and what determines the selection of the optimal candidate forms. The results were presented in tableaux and charts. The study was annalised within the theoretical framework of Optimality Theory. The findings show that although acquisition of codas generally constitutes problems to L2 speakers of English in Nigeria, their inability to acquire cluster cannot always be blamed on L1 interference. The study equally discovered that the most productive cluster resolution process in Nigerian English is deletion. The findings further showed that to arrive at the optimal output form, the constraint which requires segments to be simple (***COMP)** ranks before both the constraint which prefers more sonorous of adjacent sounds (**SON),** and that which requires input to be fully mapped into output **(MAX).** Conversely, **MAX** ranks below the constraint which requires laryngeal correspondence (**LAR)**.
Keywords: Obstruents, coda, cluster, Optimality Theory, Nigerian English

Introduction

Learning a second language (L2) after one has already acquired a first language (L1) as an adult is a herculean task, with no guarantee of success with native-speaker's competence, especially in phonology. Put differently, whereas acquisition of L2 syntax can be problematic for a bilingual, the acquisition of phonetics and phonology are more so (Okoro, 2004), especially at post-pubertal acquisition stage. Dadzie (2004) observes that "by puberty, … the child would so consolidate his personality and submission to alien norms that language learning centres of the brain would have lost their plasticity, resulting in a greater effort in the acquisition of a second language" (p.148).

This is especially so with syllable clusters, either initially as the onset or as the coda. Specifically, the study is concerned with what happens when syllables with variable plural and past tense allomorphs are added to English words whose roots have the feature ±COMP, where ± represents variability of feature, and COMP represents complexity segments, syllable-finally. These appear to constitute one of the main areas of phonological deviations in Nigerian English Accent (NEA) from Standard British English (SBE) pronunciation (Adetugbo, 2004). This study investigates the resolution or adaptation strategies of such complex codas in Nigerian English.

Literature Review

Cross-linguistically, codas are a test case of difficulty to L2 learners of English, even those whose languages allow coda. Zimmermann (2015) reported the case of Sierra Miwok, a Penutian language spoken in the Northern, Southern, and Central of Mariposa Country in the Sierra Navada, California, USA. Although Southern Sierra Miwok (SSM) is a CVC language, complex coda is disallowed. Also in Yowhlumme (Yawelmani), complex codas are barred through several processes including vowel reduction, epenthesis, syncope and apocope (Losa, 2018). In her study on Spanish-English learners phonological practices, Jesney (2014) found that among the highly ranked constraints for cluster repairs in the acquisition of English by Spanish speakers are three highly ranked ones like NO-CODA, disallowing codas from surfacing; MAX-C barring complex consonants, and DEP-V requiring syllables to be open. All three constraints were motivated to achieve simplex or open syllables, in which case DEP-V ranks highest. She found that in the totality of cases investigated, deletion and epenthesis are more productive. Codas are repaired through deletion and epenthesis in 50.68% and 49.32 % of cases respectively. This present paper confirms these findings.

English is an exoglossic language in Nigeria, co-existing with over 400 languages, making the country the most multilingual nation in Africa (Adegbija, 2004). The syllable structure of English and these myriads of languages are not co-terminus.

There have been many articles adumbrating the cluster problem of speakers of English in Nigeria. Tiffen (1974) observed that Nigerian

languages such as Yoruba and Hausa operate different syllable structures. Whereas CV and V Syllable structures are attested in Yoruba; Hausa operates both CV and CVC sparingly. Like Jibril (1982), Jowitt (1991) pointedly said that "Nigerian learners tend to rely on MT models…to treat English as a syllable-timed tonal language. Consonant clusters tend to be simplified into CVCV…structures". Jowitt thus identified two of the many phonological problems of L2 speakers of English in Nigeria to be prosodic and segmental. Scholars, such as Eka, (1987), Adetugbo (1993), Atolagbe (2000), Akinjobi (2009), and Low, (2015) claim that whereas coda posits a problem to L2 learners of English in Nigeria, complex clusters, both onset and codas are more difficult to learn. In all, seven different phonological processes identified to explain coda resolution, are deletion, epenthesis, consonant reduction, elimination, inclusion ad separation (Jibril, 1982; Eka, 1987;Akinjobi, 2009;Low, 2015;Usman, 2015). On deletion Jibril (1982) explains that since coda deletion is weaker than onset deletion, the former is more regular. No formalisation of findings is done

Therefore, with respect to the acquisition of complex edges of English syllables, there is an agreement that they are a test case of acquisition challenge for bilingual learners of English in Nigeria. This paper investigated how Nigerian English (NE) speakers resolve coda clusters, the adaptation strategies adopted, and the constraints operative on them. The study has three objectives. First, it sets out to determine how complex clusters are resolved by L2 learners of English in Nigeria. Second, it intends to identify what constraints are motivated to resolve the problem. Finally, it will demonstrate how optimal candidates for output forms are determined.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is Optimality Theory (OT, hereafter). OT is a constraint-based theory. It argues that differences in languages and differences in different realizations of the same phonological phenomenon are a consequence of differences in constraint-ranking (Archangeli, 1999; Prince and Smolensky, 2004; Prince and Smolensky, 2004; Kager, 2004; McCarthy, 2007; McCarthy, 2002). Bolaji (2019, p. 62) explains that "OT is often called constraint-based analysis because it relies solely on constraint ranking to arrive at the right output forms". In reality, unlike its predecessor, Generative

Phonology, OT does away with rules. Hence, McCarthy (2007) suspects that OT would be on the list of top five phonological theories of this century.

OT disprefers rule-based phonology. According to OT, rules are descriptively inadequate, deficient, and are prone to misrepresentations and confusion. Crucially, OT is descriptive not prescriptive (Osifeso, 2020). It encourages freedom of analysis; any possible candidate is free to participate in the competition. With OT, constraint violability is enforced at all times for all candidates; only optimal output forms are selected.

Methodology

The simple random sampling (SRS) technique was used to select fifty 300 level students of Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Oto/Ijanikin as participants. They were selected to engage in a reading test of 10 sentences with complex coda in order to determine the nature of deletion, directionality and what determines the selection of the optimal candidate forms. The results were presented in tableaux and charts. The study was annalised within the theoretical framework of Optimality Theory. The findings show that while codas generally do constitute problems for speakers of English in Nigeria.

Findings and Discussions

Table 1: Frequency Table

Type	**Frequency**	**%**	**Deletion rate**
C	13	65 **%**	not attested
CC	10	50**%**	More frequent
CCC	5	25**%**	Most frequent

Table (1) indicates the segments with more frequency of deletion. More syllables with a single consonant (C) coda were found in the study.

However, unlike it was the case in the C1 of CC and CCC codas, no deletion of segment was attested in a C-only coda. Syllables with CC codas were less frequent with deletion observed at either C1 or C2; syllables with CCC coda were the least frequent, with deletions at all three loci – C1, C2, and C3. Therefore, in terms of deletion, syllables with CC clusters have less deletion rate than those with CCC, while a C1-only suffered no deletion, according to the findings of this study. Table 2 presents the degree of difficulty of acquisition of the three types of coda consonants.

Table 2: Degree of difficulty of coda acquisition 57.61; 42.39

Structure	**C1**	**%**	**C2**	**%**	**C3**	%
C	**No deletion**					
CC	**Less frequent**	11.1	**More frequent**	29.41		
CCC	**Less frequent**	11.3	**More frequent**	17.1	**Most frequent**	31.1
		Less problematic	**More problematic**		**Most problematic**	

According to Table 2, no deletion was attested in C-only coda. According to the table, Whereas C1 was deleted in a CC syllable coda at 11.1% ; more deletion was observed at C2 at 29.41%. In CCC structure, the weight of deletion fell most on C3 coda at 31.1%. In all, the deletion rates of C2 in CC and CCC syllable codas were minimally different at 29.41% and 17.1% frequencies. Therefore, the most frequently deleted consonant segment was C3 at 31.1%. From Table 2 the following observations were made:

i. In a CCC coda, C3 is more prone to deletion;
ii. In a CC coda, C1 has less deletion rate; C2 is more deleted;
iii. In both CC and CCC clusters, C2 deletion rate is roughly the same;
iv. C1 has less deletion rate in both CC and CCC codas; it is retained in C-only coda, to avoid un-intelligible open syllables.

At a first glance at the data, it appears that the most deletion-driven force was prominence or sonority. However, a closer look at what constitutes sonority obviates any confusion. Sonority relates to

prominence of a sound in relation to another sound in a syllable. Scholars have been fairly consistent on sonority hierarchical membership. Cruttenden (2014, p.48) lists 7 members with open vowels being more sonorous and plosives being least sonorous. Awonusi, Ademola-Adeoye, & Adedeji (2015) have a scale of 10 members, the most sonorous are low vowels; the least sonorous are voiceless stops. Wayland (2019) have a scale of 12 members with identical most sonorous and least sonorous as Awonusi et al, except that her scale includes glides, voiced affricates, and voiceless affricates which are missing from the former. Therefore, prominence and sonority can, and indeed are part of the factors, but they are by no means the only factors.

Thus, it appears that in addition to prominent-sonority condition, certain other phonological processes are at play with the L2 speakers under investigation. We propose three. First is voicing assimilation. Second is devoicing. Third is gradual voicing reduction. Each is briefly considered hereunder.

i. *Voicing Assimilation*. As a phonological process, assimilation occurs when a phonological segment assumes the feature of a neighboring segment. Such feature may be place assimilation, manner assimilation or laryngeal assimilation. Some of the data analysed here seems to favour voicing assimilation more. In a two consonant coda, when consonants sharing the same place and manner features in SBE are neighbours, the ultimate consonant is deleted, while the penultimate is retained. However, in a three consonant coda, the initial and ultimate consonants assimilate with the peak, while the penultimate dissimilates, or only the initial consonant is retained. This is the case with clusters such as:

   a. [ks] → [k] **Six**/sɪks/ →/sɪks/,/siːk/; **Speaks** /spiːks/→/spiːk/

   b. [ps] → [p] **Keeps** /k iːps/→/k iːps/,/k iːp/; **Flasks**/flɑːsks/ →/flɑːs/,/flɑːsk/

   c. [mpt] → [mpd]/ [m] **Jumped** /dʒʌmpt/ → /dʒɔːmp/, /dʒɔːm

ii. *Devoicing*. A sound is said to be devoiced if it previously has the feature +voice. In the data for this study, it was discovered that when

two voiced sounds are neighbours, the first has this feature maintained, the second is reduced or deleted. This is the case with

a. [z] → [s] **Tries**/traɪz/ → /traɪs/; **Kettles** /ˈketlz/→/ˈketus/

b. [d] → [Ø] **Midst** /mɪdst/ → /mɪst/

c. [l] → [Ø] **Milk** /mɪlk/ → /mɪk/; **Kettles** /ˈketlz/→/ˈketus/

iii. The third and final case is *gradual voicing/reduction*. This takes place when a CCC cluster occurs. The voicing of C1 is strengthened because it is closest to the peak. C2 has its voicing reduced. C3 is so reduced in prominence that it suffers deletion as in:

a. [kst] → [ks] **Edicts** /ˈiːdɪkts/ →/ediːts/, ediːt/

b. [nts]- → [nt] **pants** /pænts/ → /pænt/

c. [mpt] → [mp] **Jumped** /dʒʌmpt/→ dʒɔːmpd/, /dʒɔːm/

Of course, this is not a watertight feature submission as shown in some of the data.

Therefore, the decision is that the coda clusters which constitute the most difficult level of acquisition are C2, followed by C1.

OT Analysis

In this section of the study, an attempt is made to analyse the findings of this study within OT. For this study, the following constraints were ranked.

- ***COMP:** Complex segments is dispreferred (Kager, 2004)
- **DEP-C:** non-vocalic segment insertion is disallowed (McCarthy, 2007)
- **LAR:** input must have corresponding laryngeal features (Brown, 2016)
- **SON:** More sonorous sound is preferred (Gouskova, 2001)
- **MAX:** input must be fully mapped into output (Kager, 2004)

The rankings of the constraints are done in the tableaux below. Note that a pointing finger indicates the winner, a star indicates violation of a constraint, an exclamation mark indicates fatal violation, and a star with an exclamation mark indicates most gratuitous violation.

Tableau 1: Speaks

speaks /spi:ks/		***COMP**	**DEP-C**	**LAR**	**MAX**
a.	☞/spi:k/				
b.	/spi:kz/	!	*!	*	*
c.	/spi:ksz/	*!!	*!	*	
d.	/spi:ks/	*!			

***COMP, DEP-C >> LAR>> MAX**

In tableau 1, candidates (b-d) lose out in the competition because each violate the highest ranked constraint, COMP which forbids complex segments from surfacing. Thus, (b) and (c) lose out for containing such complex segments such as [kz] and [ksz]. Candidate (c) violates *COMP more gratuitously for containing not just a cluster of two consonants, but three. Candidate (a) emerges the optimal candidate because it satisfies COMP. This is irrespective of whether the first or last segment is deleted. Since the speaker produces closed rather than open syllable as required by his native language which operates (C)V and bar either a CC or a CVC, it will be incorrect to blame his incompetence on mother tongue interference as is often mentioned in literature. It is a case of gradual language acquisition. This becomes clearer in tableau 2.

Tableau 2: Streamed

Streamed /stri:md/		**SON**	***COMP**	**DEP-C**	**MAX**
a.	☞/stri:m/	*	*!		*
b.	/stiri:md/	*!	!		*
c.	/tri:mt/	*!	!	*	*
d.	/siri:mud/	*!	!		*

SON, *COMP>>DEP-C>> LAR>> MAX

Tableau (2) enforces the same issue but it is enforced this time by the highest ranked constraint **SON** which requires that more sonorous

sound is preferred over less sonorous one. Thus, deletion this time is enforced to satisfy SON. It seems then that sonority or prominence and assimilation drive deletion. The [m] of the [md] sequence is preferred over [d]. This is because nasals are more sonorous than stops. In fact voiceless stop is the least sonorous of sounds with a sonorous value of 1% (Awonusi, Ademola-Adeoye & Adedeji, 2015; Wayland, 2019). Thus, prominence or sonority plays a crucial role in L2 phonological acquisition.

From these findings, we discovered that codas generally constitute problem areas to speakers of English in Nigeria Since the language of focus of this study, Yoruba operates an open syllable structure, inability to acquire cluster cannot be blamed on L1 interference. We equally found that the most productive cluster resolution process in Nigerian English is deletion.

From OT analysis, the findings of this study showed that the optimal candidate did not violate the highest ranked constraint in each case, an indication that language use and acquisition is systematic. We can see that the result of this finding is quite interesting, for it explains the process of cluster acquisition in Nigerian English to the fact that despite the long years English has stayed with us, our level of acquisition of cluster is still emerging. This partly explains why there has yet to be a clearly defined standard Nigerian English Accent. Our findings agree with those of other scholars like Jibril (1982), Adetugbo, (2003), Low, (2015), and Jowitt (2020) that the most handy cluster resolution process is deletion.

According to the findings of this study, deletion in L2 English such as the one discussed here is enforced by a number of phonological constraints which border on language acquisition stage. It was found that whereas coda is attested a complex coda of CC is preferred over a CCC coda in heavy coda syllables. In the same way, no-complexity is enforced in a CC syllable coda. When a CC coda is allowed in a multi-consonant syllable coda, sonority value wins out. This means that a more sonorous segment is preserved over a less sonorous one. Deletion of important segments in a coda by L2 speakers really affect the melody of their speech, results in mispronunciation,

misinterpretation, and it is often offensive to the native speakers of English.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that coda cluster is problematic to Nigerian speakers of English. They employ a number of strategies to resolve the issue. If the cluster is not complex, it may be left unharmed; otherwise, one or more of the elements is deleted. The motivation for either deletion or retention of segments is triggered by obedience to the dictates of two highly ranked constraints in Nigerian English, namely faithfulness constraints represented by *COMP and markedness constraint represented by SON. The main findings of the study are as follows:

i. In a segment with complex onset, the complexity of the coda seems to be reduced;

ii. In the absence of complex onset influencing deletion, complex coda beyond C1 is prone to deletion of one of the segments;

iii. In a coda with successive voicing segments, one is deleted according to its sonority value in relation to its adjacent peripheral segment(s);

iv. It is proposed that whichever process is involved, the goal is simplicity in pronunciation (Awonusi, 2004).

This study concludes that cluster resolution in NE is a competition between faithfulness and markedness constraints, and it is often a case of constraint re-ranking and demotion of highly ranked constraints in British Standard English, and even in the acrolectal variety of Nigerian English.

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The Spread of American English in Lagos State

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Abstract
Considering the development of the new Englishes across the world, the impact of American English has been acknowledged in different countries, especially Nigeria. Though scholars have worked on Americanisms in Nigerian English, there is dearth of literature on the impact of its spoken form on Nigerian broadcasters who are models to the general Nigerian people. Therefore, this study identified and described the features of American English pronunciations in selected radio stations. Data was collected from the radio stations using a digital recorder. The data collected was analysed using the principles of auditory phonetics. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) had been carried out on the speech data. Sociophonological theory of Honey formed the framework for the phonological analysis. The study discovered the existence of American English pronunciation across the four radio stations studied and that it is used by some broadcasters in certain private radio stations in Nigeria. Mostly the female broadcasters showed preference for the use of ♦/t/ flapping and rhotic /r/ which are originally features of American English pronunciation. Nigeria info FM (99.3) had the highest occurrence of these consonant variables with the standard deviation of 6.6 for / t/ flapping and 4.24 for rhotic /r/.❒ The study concluded that Nigerian American Variety of English is an evolving variety of English.

Introduction

Communication is rated to be one of humanity's greatest inventions. Human activities either revolves around it, are shaped or defined by it. During the early days as historically documented, media activities or long distance communication depended largely on the regular means of transportation which included ship and pack-animals. Messages where conventionally delivered through these methods and the process was considered cumbersome.

Beginning from the era of the print media in at about 1439 in Germany up to the present evolutionary period of webcasting, the media has innovatively transformed and shaped human culture. An aspect of human culture in which the media has played pivotal role and contributed to its resourcefulness, is language. From the British Broadcasting Services (BBC) to other media outfits, the reference point

for measuring standard and ideal in language has been mainly these media houses. Renowned linguists and scholars like Robert Bridges, George Bernard Shaw and Daniel Jones had served on an advisory committee of the BBC on giving guidance on matters of appropriateness in pronunciation at one time or the other (Crystal, 2010a). Similar committees cut across many cultures and geographic regions. The aims of such committees are usually to ensure that what is viewed as ideal in these regions and languages are imitated by various broadcasting houses for pedagogical reasons and also because of the idealistic and oracular position of the media. For instance, the committee for BBC in 2007 gave pronunciation advice on the name Barack Obama; this was achieved by using the bearer's personal preference (Crystal 2010:57).

Lagos State is one of the oldest States in Nigeria. Lagos State was created in the Western Part of Nigeria in 1967. Lagos was the capital of Nigeria and was and still is the economic nerve centre of the Country. It is still the largest commercial city in Africa. As earlier mentioned, Lagos played host to the colonial masters and many of the early missionaries' schools where established in Lagos.

The commercial, economic and political significance of Lagos State has impacted on its linguistic nature. In particular, the commercial attributes of Lagos have also expanded its demographic composition to include many foreigners of various nationalities. In Victoria Island, Lekki and Ikota for example, all in Eti Osa Local government area of Lagos State, there are many foreign embassies, oil companies, technology companies as well as new generation banks' headquarters. These commercial institutions attract many foreign nationals who work and live here. Also, various private nursery and primary schools with British and American curricula, providing services for these foreign nationals and Nigerians alike that prefer these services, are on the increase.

The economic, political and technological might of Britain and America has given their varieties of English a wide reach. To maintain the purity of their language, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Voice of America (VOA) among other western media outfits stream and broadcast programmes aimed at teaching the various aspects that are unique either to their language varieties or to their language in particular.

Broadcast English is as important as the broadcasters themselves. This is so because 'you can only give what you have'. Broadcast English is that variety of English often heard on national radio and television as well as on private radio and television. It is the English used by broadcasters. Broadcasters are professionals who are mostly trained to work with the radio or television houses. One of the available options for some of these broadcasters is that they are either trained in American schools or attracted to the American way of life Mufwene (2010:57). Secondly, with the popularity of satellite TV, these presenters cannot help, but gradually shift towards watching foreign programmes. Among Nigerian scholars, there is an evolving Nigerian English which needs to be standardised. However, one of the tasks for this study is to enquire into the extent to which the various radio stations in Lagos are received among Nigerian audience. This study is also concerned with identifying people's perception of the various pronunciations used in the radio media houses in Lagos from a linguistic and social point of view.

Review of Literature

American English: A Brief Description

America was colonised by Britain and the territory (or group of territories) did not gain its independence until 1776. This fact left the Americans with a new language known as English. In their effort to develop a national ideology, Americans were not just satisfied in inheriting a language from those who colonized them, they fought to gain not just physical freedom but also linguistic freedom.

Scholars like Noah Webster had this nationalist outlook and fought to entrench same in the American mentality and mind-set. Apart from Webster's dictionary which has documented the American English over the years, other dictionaries have been `compiled specifically with the sole aim of documenting American English one of such being the Dictionary of American Regional English (DARE) published by Harvard University Press and authored by Ferderic Cassidy. Roach also contributes to this study and affirms the popularity that the American English model is enjoying around the world. Roach also describes what this type of American English is called. The scholar writes that:

> In many parts of the world, the fundamental choice for many learners of English is whether to learn an American or a British pronunciation, though this is by no means true everywhere. (Roach, 2009:163).

It is opined by some scholars that majority of American speakers of English have an accent termed as General American (GA) ; this accent is mostly heard on international radio and television networks. Another name for this accent is Network English.
Cruttenden (2008) has also written about American English and has described it as follows:

> General American (GA) can thus be regarded as that form of American which does not have marked regional characteristics (and is in this way comparable to RP) and is sometimes referred to as 'Network English' (just as RP, not entirely justifiably nowadays, is sometimes referred to as 'BBC English'). It is the standard model for the pronunciation of English as an L2 in parts of Asia (e.g. the Phillipines) and part of Latin America (e.g. Mexico) (Cruttenden, 2008:84).

Flapping in English
In many areas in United States, the American /t/, when not the initial consonant in a word, is pronounced closer to a /d/ or sounding like a /d/, and in some cases can disappear altogether. Thus *latter* and *butter* sounds more like *ladder* and *budder*, and words like *twenty* and *dentist* can sound like *twenny* and *Dennis*.

Scholars like Cruttenden (2008), McMahon (2008) and Roach (2009) are of the view that Americans pronounce /t/ as /d/ perhaps because to pronounce the frequent /r/ at the end of words ending in -er it is easier to say -der than -ter.

Roach observes that The pronunciation of t is very different in American English when it occurs at the end of a stressed syllable and in front of an unstressed vowel. In a word like 'betting', which in BBC pronunciation is pronounced with a t♦ that is plosive and slightly aspirated, American speakers usually have what is called a "flapped t❒" in which the tip of

the tongue makes very brief contact with the alveolar ridge, a sound similar to the r sound in Spanish and many other languages. This is sometimes called "voiced t", it is usually represented with the symbol t̬. There are many other differences between American and British pronunciation, many of them the subject of comic debates such as "You say tomato (təmeɪtəu) and I say tomato (təmɑːtəu) (Roach, 2009:164). Wells (1982:248) indicates that /t/ voicing is the first distinctively American Phonetic innovation likely to spread in time to all accents of English". Silby (2008) confirms this development of /t/ flapping among New Zealanders'.

Rhoticity in English

Researchers are of the view that the most noticeable difference among accents of English is in whether or not they have r-coloured vowels. In many forms of American English, rhotacization occurs when vowels are followed by [r], as in *beard, bared, bard, board ,poor, tire, hour.* Accents that permit some form of [r] after a vowel are said to be rhotic. The rhotacization of the vowel is often not so evident at the beginning of the vowel, and something of quality of the individual vowel remains (Ladefoged, 2006:92). But in *sir, herd, fur* the whole vowel is rhotacized". Insofar as the quality of this vowel can be described in terms of the features high-low and front-back, it appears to be a mid-central vowel such as [ɜ] with added rhotacization.

The most important difference between GA and BBC is the distribution of the 🖒r🖒 phoneme, GA being a rhotic (i.e. 🖒r🖒 occurs in all positions, including before consonants and at the end of utterances). Thus where BBC pronounces 'car' as 🖒kɑː🖒 and 'cart' as 🖒kɑːt🖒 , GA has 🖒kɑːr🖒 and 🖒kɑːrt🖒. Long vowels and diphthongs that are written with 'r' in the spelling are pronounced in GA as simple vowels followed by r". (Roach, 2009:163-164).

These variations in the realization of 🖒r🖒 in BBC and GA pronunciation are also confirmed by other scholars (see for instance McMahon (2009) as being a frequent occurrence in these English pronunciations. 🖒r🖒 is a feature which can be found in America and in Britain. Holmes is of the opinion that these variations also indicate class variation.

A certain distinguishing feature between British and General American English is the concept of rhotic accent and non-rhotic accent. These two main accent types, indicates that a rhotic is when a /r/ is pronounced in all position'' unlike a non rhotic accent where only the pre-vocalic /r/s is pronounced (Roach, 2009). MacMahon (2006: 371-372) however writes:

> The distribution of /r/ is a matter of phonology: those accents Which permit only prevocalic /r/ (e.g. many accents of English, Australian English and South African English) are NON-RHOTIC. The others, which permit pre-vocalic, pre-consonantal, and pre-pausal /r/, are RHOTIC. The term RHOTIC, is however, used in a different sense, as a cover term for any type of 'r' sound".

From the above it is obvious Rhotic and non-rhotic are not strictly meant for describing RP and GA. Also rhotic could indicate the usage of any type of sound in any language variety.

Soneye (2007) indicates that much features of American English are beginning to influence Nigerian speakers of English. The source goes further to document the pronunciation difference between AE and BE from a phonological perspective (Soneye, 2007:70-74).

1.2. Purpose of Study

Though British English, specifically Received Pronunciation, (RP) is the model for spoken English teaching and learning in Nigeria, the impact of American English has been acknowledged in Nigeria. Though scholars have worked on Americanisms in Nigerian English, there is dearth of literature on the impact of its spoken form on Nigerian broadcasters who are models to the general Nigerian people. Therefore, this study identified and described the features of American English pronunciations in selected radio stations.

Awonusi (1997) is a significant investigation of Americanism in Nigerian English but the scholar does not focus on only pronunciation as he covers other linguistic areas. The study is probably not exhaustive as far as Americanism and pronunciation is concerned: there is still room for more empirical knowledge to be discovered.

Certain dictionaries of English lately have relied on the language of broadcasting for their compilation (Roach, Setter and Esling; 2011) and reasons for such reliability of this form of language is that, it cuts across and is acceptable among people of all social classes.

Studies like those of Nicolaides (2012) and Udomisor (2013) have shown that the media in Nigeria is used for educational purposes which include pronunciation lessons. It follows from this that the public or the audience would, by default, mostly rely on the accent of broadcasters and this advances another cases for the research into broadcast English. These issues are some and probably the reasons why Americanism as well as broadcast English should be given enormous attention by scholars.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

Research Design

Using the purposive method of data collection, the study obtained raw data through recordings. The recorded data were collected from four radio stations within Lagos metropolis namely: 92.3 Inspiration FM, 96.9 Cool FM, 98.1 Smooth FM and 99.3 Nigeria Info FM. Also, 40 broadcastings of about 20 minutes each from these radio stations were listened to and recorded for analysis.

Sociophonology has its roots in Sociolinguistics and Phonology but is unique in its approach. One outstanding work in sociolinguistics that has explored and combined the tools of sociolinguistics and Phonology is Labov (2006). According to the Honey (1997):

> While the sociolinguist studies all aspects of language variation, sociophonology is that aspect of the discipline which studies only those differences of pronunciation which are perceived as socially significant. These are differences which are unlikely to be part of the idiolect of only one speaker, but rather they are shared by groups of speakers, and may or may not coexist with other features of a regional or social dialect in its spoken form, such as distinctive grammatical forms, lexis, and idiom.

> "Pronunciation" is used here as a broad term which in this context includes other features such as intonation and "articulatory set" (Honey, 1997:92).

Honey (1997) is believed to have coined the term sociophonology and used it for the first time and distinguished the term from sociolinguistics and indeed other forms of linguistic studies. To the scholar, a sociophonological study would focus only on those pronunciations that are socially significant. This kind of study therefore shows features of the pronunciation or accent studied or investigated. Honey also makes it important to note that this study may identify features that are related to other accents be it a regional accent or a social dialect. For instance in this study, the target is to identify pronunciations of Americanism in radio stations which entails that these pronunciation features may relate to the American dialect of English.

Analysis, Findings and Discussion

Presentation and Analysis

In the study, focus was given to two variables that are uniquely characteristic of American English. These two variables are ⧫⊙ flapping and rhoticicity❒ which are two features of American English pronunciation which are different from the British and the Nigerian models of English.

In this section data analysis presented show results of the sociophonological analysis done perceptually; statistical analysis of the sociophonological data is also presented.

Sociophonological Analysis

Table 3.1: Perceptual Analysis of /t/ flapping and rhotic /t/ in 92.3 FM

Recordings of Approximately 20 minutes each	♦⊙ flapping	Rhotic ❒
1st	0	0
2nd	0	0
3rd	2	1
4th	0	0
5th	0	0
6th	0	0
7th	3	2
8th	3	1
9th	7	5
10th	3	2
Total=	**18**	**11**

In Table 3.1 above, the perceptual analysis result of 92.3 FM is presented. It was observed that ♦⊙ flapping occurred in the data recorded at 3rd, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th recordings, it seemed more consistent in the 9th recording. It is obvious that this broadcaster appears to be seemly relatively consistent in the use of flapping unlike the other broadcasters in the other recordings who seem to be in the process of trying to catch up with this style of pronunciation.

In Table 3.1 rhotic usage was also observed in 92.3FM in the 3rd, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th recordings. The recording which showed relative consistency in the use of rhotic again is the 9th recording.

The participants who did not use the dependent variables (/t/ flapping and rhotic /r/) showed either consistent use of British model of pronunciation, the standard Nigerian English or the regionally coloured variation of Nigerian English pronunciation.

Table 3.2: Perceptual Analysis of ♦/t/ flapping and rhotic /r/ in 96.9 FM

Recordings of Approximately 20 minutes	◆⊙ flapping	Rhotic ❒
1st	2	1
2nd	0	0
3rd	0	3
4th	0	0
5th	0	0
6th	3	2
7th	1	0
8th	0	0
9th	1	0
10th	6	7
Total=	**13**	**13**

Table 3.2 above shows results of the perceptual sociophonological analysis flapping and rhotic carried out in recordings from 96.9 FM. Apart from the 10th recording, the other recordings did not show significant usage of ♦/t/ flapping and rhotic /r/.❒

In 96.9 FM, the broadcasters mostly speak British English or what some scholars call standard Nigerian English. Also very few of the broadcasters in this station showed features of Nigerian regional English phonemes. Furthermore, they also used AmE, NE and Nigerian Pidgin English freely. It was also observed that some words were pronounced with BrE accent and were also pronounced with AmE by the same broadcasters or NE accent as the case may be.

Table 3.3: Perceptual Analysis of ♦/t/ flapping and rhotic /r/ in 98.1 FM

Recordings of Approximately 20 minutes	♦⊙ flapping	Rhotic ❒
1st	16	7
2nd	1	0
3rd	0	0
4th	0	0
5th	1	0
6th	4	3
7th	0	0
8th	0	0
9th	0	0
10th	0	0
Total=	**22**	**10**

Table 3.3 shows the results for the sociophonological perceptual analysis for the recorded data for 98.1FM. The use of ♦/t/⊙flapping and rhotic /r/❒ was significantly rare in this radio station apart from the case of one participant or broadcaster who was consistent in his usage of these pronunciation features during his presentations.

Table 3.4: Perceptual Analysis of ♦/t/⊙ flapping and rhotic /r/❒ in 99.3 FM

Recordings of Approximately 20 minutes	♦⊙ flapping	Rhotic ❒
1st	1	0
2nd	1	0
3rd	0	0
4th	0	0
5th	0	0
6th	0	0
7th	0	0
8th	14	9
9th	2	0
10th	18	11
Total=	**36**	**20**

In Tables 3.4, a particular female broadcaster was very consistent with her usage of the American variations investigated in this study. However certain data also showed her using the BrE or NE variants in some cases.

Analysis of Variance/ Statistical Analysis

Table 3.5: Descriptive statistics of ♦/t/ flapping

Stations	**Mean**	**Standard deviation**
92.3	1.8	2.30
96.9	1.3	1.94
98.1	2.2	5.00
99.3	3.6	6.63
Total	2.2	4.33

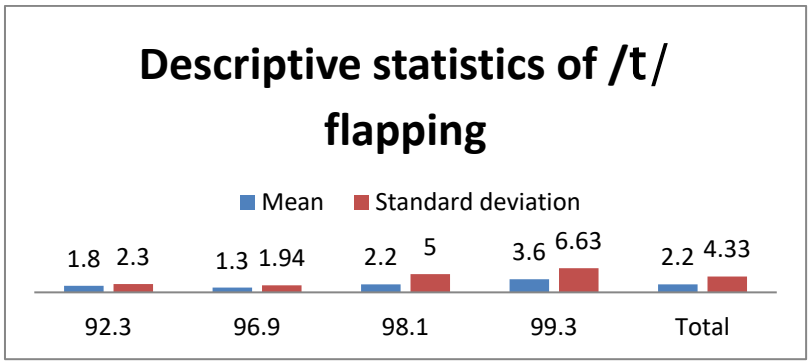

Table 3.5 above shows the descriptive statistics of the ♦/t/⊙flapping across the stations. The mean /t/♦flapping for 92.3 FM radio station was 1.8 and the standard deviation was 2.30. The mean recording for 96.9 FM radio station was 1.3 and the standard deviation was 1.94. For 98.1 FM radio station, the mean was 2.2 and the standard deviation was 5.00. The highest statistical recording was observed in the data collected from 99.3 FM radio station which recorded a mean of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 6.63. The overall mean /t/ flapping was 2.2 and standard deviation was 4.33. Furthermore, 99.3FM radio station had the highest mean /t/♦flapping (3.6) as earlier mentioned, while 96.9 FM radio station had the lowest mean ♦/t/ flapping (1.3). Also, 96.9 FM radio station had the lowest standard deviation. This implies that /t./ flapping occurred on the average 1.3 times throughout the ten recordings of approximately 20minutes each in 96.9 FM radio station. 96.9 FM appears to account for the lowest occurrence of ♦/t/⊙ flapping across the four radio stations investigated. The implication of this is that broadcasters in 99.3FM radio station are more likely to use the American model of English than other broadcasters in other radio stations. It also indicates that because of the affiliation that this radio station has with CNN, the broadcasters pick up the American model of English easily.

Another implication of this analysis is that broadcasters in 96.9 FM have or prefer either the British accent or the Nigerian accent more than the American accent of English.

Table 3.6: Analysis of variance showing /t/ flapping difference of mean

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	p-value
Between groups	29.28	3	9.7	0.50	0.68
Within groups	70.37	36	19.5		
Total	2.22	39	18.7		

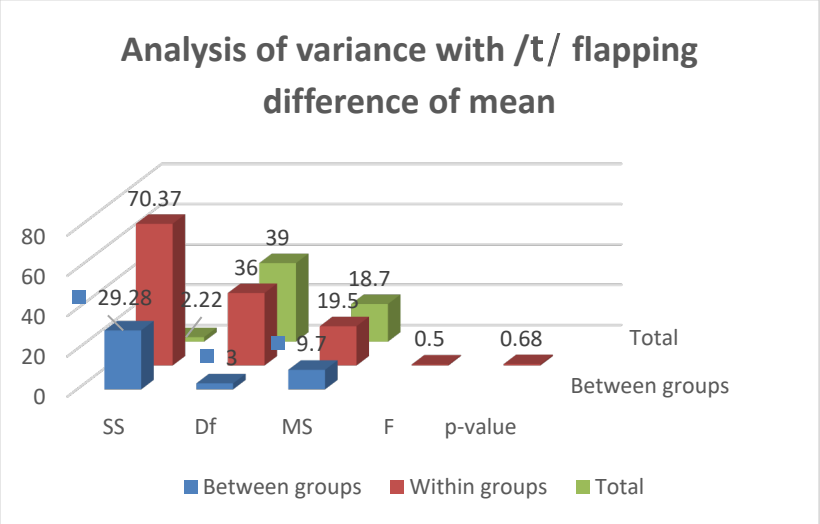

Table 3.6 presents the results of the further analysis using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). This analysis was performed to examine whether differences exist in the occurrence of ♦/t/⊙flapping across the radio stations. The results revealed that there was no significant difference in the occurrence of /t/ flapping across the radio stations (F=0.50, p-value>0.05). In other words, the number of times that /t/ flapping occurred in 99.3 FM was statistically different from other stations and vice versa.

Table 3.7: Descriptive statistics of Rhoticity

Stations	Mean	Standard deviation
92.3	1.1	1.60
96.9	1.3	2.27
98.1	1	2.31
99.3	2	4.24
Total	1.35	2.70

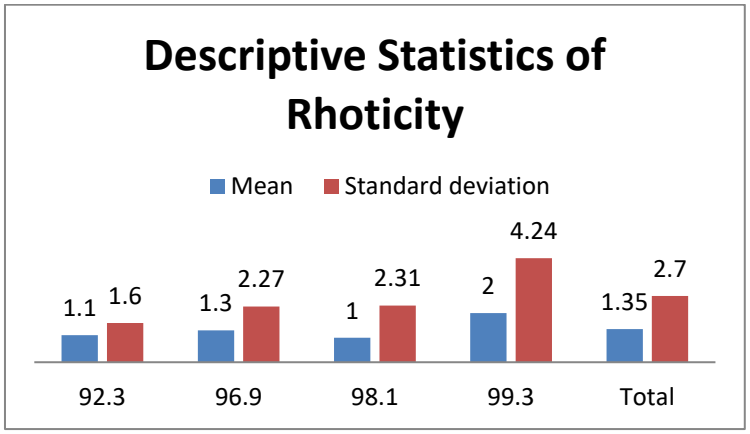

Table 3.7 presents the summary of the rhoticity descriptive statistics. The results revealed that 92.3 FM radio station had 1.1 occurrence of rhoticity with the standard deviation of 1.60. 96.9 FM radio station had 1.3 occurrence of rhoticity with the standard deviation of 2.27. 98.1FM radio station had only 1 occurrence of rhoticity with the standard deviation of 2.31. 99.3 FM radio station had 2 rhoticity with the standard deviation 4.24. It is noticeable that 99.3 FM radio station had the highest rhoticity (2) with the standard deviation of 4.24. Also, 92.3FM radio station had the lowest standard deviation (1.6). This indicated that occurrence of rhoticity in 92.3 FM radio station clustered, which simply indicates that the mean is similar to standard deviation results.

As far as American accent usage is concerned across the radio stations investigated, 99.3 FM has shown consistency and lead in American English usage. From the analyses of rhoticity across the radio stations,

99.3 FM had the highest rhoticity usage while 92.3 FM had the lowest occurrence of rhoticity.

Table 3.8: Analysis of Variance with mean difference in rhoticity

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	p-value
Between groups	6.1	3	2.03	0.26	0.85
Within groups	279	36	7.31		
Total	285.1	39	7.31		

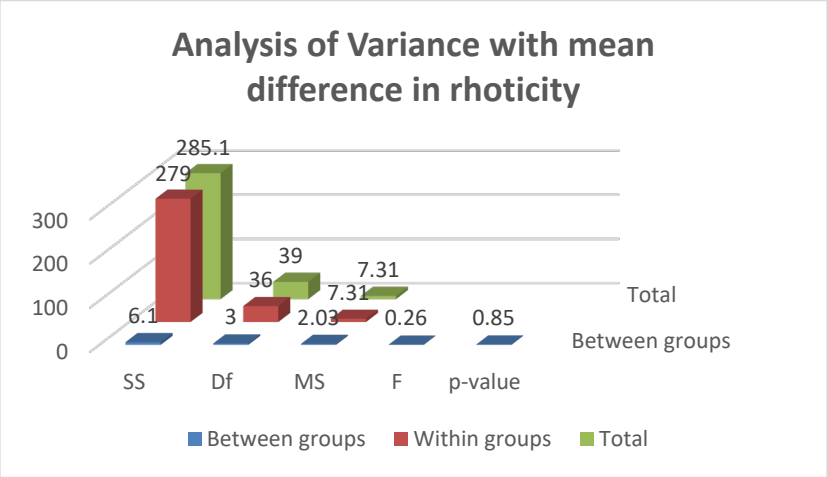

Table 3.8 presents the summary of the further analysis using oneway analysis of variance (ANOVA). This analysis was performed to investigate whether differences exist in the occurrence of rhoticity in all the selected radio stations. The results however showed that there was no significant difference in the rhoticity in all the radio stations (F=0.26, p-value>0.05). The results revealed that rhoticity occur the same way in all the radio stations.

The female participants or broadcasters also showed more preference and usage of British accent of English than the male participants.
On the overall usage of Nigerian phonemes, it was one incidence of a female broadcaster whose programme is also streamed to the UK,

Canada and American and also received by audience from these parts of the world.

Conclusion

Across the four radio stations studied, Americanism has featured significantly with flapping and rhoticity recurring. From the results of the analysis of this study, it is possible to conclude that like the African American English which is a well investigated variety of English, Nigerian American English is also evolving with features of Nigerian languages, Nigerian English and American English.

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Tonal Variation in the Pronunciation of Igbo Words and Standardization: Implication for Pedagogy

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Abstract
Igbo is a tone Language; hence, the pronunciation of the Igbo words reveals a pitch of the voice which would either be high, down stepped or low tone. As much as tone is distinctive in Igbo, we have prevalent evidence of words with same meaning, same spelling but different pronunciation, in other words, 'tones in free variation'. It is observed that the Igbo speakers, having been exposed to words of such category, tend to use them pervasively to the point that the standard form becomes either: controversial, compromised or even lost to what seems to be the dialectal form. This has an implication in the Igbo language pedagogy; especially, as it relates to the teaching of Igbo tones and pronunciation. In my course of teaching 'tone' in the Igbo language, argument in some instance crop up in the class amongst students and lecturer as to the standard tone mark of such words. Participant observation alongside 666 SIL Africa Area Word List 1 serves as instrument for data collection. Participants representing some dialects of the Igbo language are engaged for the study. Data collected and collated present a list of such words whose standard form of pronunciation might be compromised. Based on the analyses made which are anchored on some linguistic facts, the study presents a possible status of such words with their tone in free variation. If the state of these words are not considered and given appropriate attention, it would have a serious implication for the teaching of the standard form of tone and pronunciation of the Igbo word.
Key Words: Tone, variation, pronunciation, standardization, pedagogy.

1. Introduction

Tone is a core phenomenon in the Igbo language with prevalent evidence of words with same meaning, same spelling but different pronunciation, in other words, 'tone in free variation'. It is observed that the Igbo speakers, having been exposed to words of such category, tend to use them pervasively to the extent of shrouding the standard form. This is detrimental to pedagogy. Emerging arguments amongst students and

lecturers as to the standard tone mark of some words with tone in free variation necessitated this study.

Emenanjo (2015 p.133-134) opines that one important, significant and interesting feature of lexical and grammatical tones in Igbo is that, by and large, they are regular, systematic and, systemic across all Igbo dialects. According to him, while inflectional affixes as marked by auxiliaries, nomino-verbals, inflectional affixes and tonal morphemes, may have different morphemes, lexemes and, sometimes, tone patterns, typical noun phrases (like the associative and the specific), clauses (like the relative and embedded noun and adverbial clauses), and verb forms (like the stative, factative, perfective and serial constructions) have identical if not same tonal patterns which cut across Igbo dialects.

1.1 Literature Review

This study in its attempt to establish the possible status of tones in free variation would review some basic concepts like stardardization, tone, tone and phonemes in contrast and in free variation. In addition to these, Emenanjo (2015) classification of the Igbo tones and more would also be reviewed.

1.1.1 Standardization

The standard language is basically an ideal, a mode of expression that we seek when we wish to communicate beyond our immediate community. However, standard language exists both in the spoken and written forms. According to Stadler (1983, as cited in Ramlan, 2018), 'standardization represents an attempt to curtail, minimize if not eliminate the high degree of variability obtainable in language by picking (although not arbitrarily) one of the existing varieties to be elevated to the status of standard'. For Wardhaugh (2006), 'standardization process attempts either to reduce or eliminate diversity and variety'. However, such diversity and variety would, in some sense, be natural to all languages, promising the vitality, an enablement to adapt to the change. Some features of standardized language according to Ramlan (2018) revolve around:

> grammar (the rules in a language for changing the form of words and joining them into sentences); spelling (the act of forming words correctly from individual letters); word (a

> single unit of language which means something and can be spoken or written); pronunciation (the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is pronounced); and system of writing (the ways in which books, kinds of letters and the other forms of scientific writing are written down) (p.31).

Four advantages of language standardization have been noted by Wardhaugh (2006). In the first place, it allows the language to serve as a model in a speech community as a generally agreed upon code for mutual communication. It also unifies the members of a community. It can be employed to reflect and symbolize some kind of identity, and can also attract prestige to speakers. Very importantly, it will make the language easier to teach in the school system. Since pronunciation (the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is pronounced) is one of the features of standardization, the standard form of tone in any tone language needs not be compromised.

1.1.2 Tone

Tone is the pitch variations used in a specific way on syllables or words of languages for meaning distinctions. It is a suprasegmental feature (Trask, 1996; Huddleston, 1995).

"In well over half of the languages of the world, it is possible to change the meaning of a word simply by changing the pitch level at which it is spoken. Languages that allow this are known as tone languages and the distinctive pitch levels are known as tone or tonemes" (Crystal 1997:174).

According to Emenanjo (2015), Igbo is typologically, a terraced level tone language. Mbah and Mbah (2000) classified Igbo as a register tone. Igbo has two basic tones: the high [ˊ] and the low [ˋ] tones and a grammatical tone: the down step [-] (Emenanjo 2015, Iloene 2007, Mbah and Mbah (2000).

1.1.2.1 Tonal Variation in the Igbo Language

Tonal differences or variation may affect either the vocabulary or the grammar of a language. In other words, tone plays both lexical and grammatical functions in the Igbo language. Lexically, tone is used for

differentiating between lexical items or words which otherwise are identical. It is on account of the lexical function of tone that we find many minimal pairs, triplets and some quadruplets in Igbo (Emenanjo 1978).

A minimal pair is a set of two words that differ in only one sound segment that occurs in the same environment and the difference is able to bring about a difference in the meaning of two words that would have been the same. A minimal set on the other hand comprises a set of more than two words. It can range from three to four, five words (triplets, quadruplets etc.).

1.1.2.2 Tone in Contrast

In the Igbo language, sound segments (phonemes) as well as tones (tonemes) can bring about change in the meaning of identical words. Minimal pairs and minimal sets are usually used to illustrate contrast. In the Igbo language for instance, minimal pairs and minimal sets exist in two levels or tiers: segmental level, and the tonal level. Minimal pairs or sets based on segments have identical tones on the pairs or sets, while the difference that would result in meaning change is seen on the sound segments in similar environment. The following examples are given to illustrate the phonemes and the tones in contrast:

Example A: Minimal Pairs/Sets based on Segments

Note that the difference must be in the sound segments of same environment of each of the pairs or sets. In other words, two or more words that would have been the same differ in one sound segment in same environment. This would result in difference in the meaning.

(1)íkè‘buttocks (2)ókè‘boundary’ (3)éwú‘goat’ (4)ọ́gụ̀‘hoe’ (5)íré ‘tongue’
ídè ‘flood’ ógè ‘time’ égwú ‘dance’ ọ́gọ̀ ‘in-law’ író ‘enemity’

(6) ọ́bọ̀ ‘vengeance’ (7) ákpụ́ ‘cassava’ (8) ọ̀tọ́ ‘nudity’ (9) ḿbè ‘tortoise’
ọ́yọ̀ ‘bunch’ ánụ́ ‘meat’ ọ̀sá ‘squirrel’ ḿbọ̀ ‘hard work’
ọ́gọ̀ ‘in-law’ ákwụ́ ‘palm fruit’ ọ̀kpọ́ ‘boxing’ ḿbà ‘no’

While the difference is seen in the segments at the medial positions as in examples: 1-3, 6-7, and the final positions as in examples: 4-5, 8-9, there is identical tonal patterns in each pairs and sets

Example B: Minimal Pairs/Sets based on Tone

Here, the change in meaning is based on the difference in the tonal patterns in each pair or set. In other words, minimal pairs or sets based on tones have identical segments in each pair or set while the difference that would result in the meaning change is seen on the tones of the words in each pair or set.

(10) éké 'phython' (11) ọ́gụ̀ 'hoe' (12) ákwà'clothes' (13) ákà'bead' (14) égbé 'kite'
èké 'market day' ọ̀gụ̀ 'fight' àkwà'bed' áká'hand' égbè 'gun'

(15) íbú 'load' (16) íké 'strength' (17) íchí 'tribal mark' (18) ísí 'head'
íbù 'fatness' íkè 'buttocks' íchì 'to shade' ísì 'odour'
íbū 'to carry' íkē 'to tie' íchī 'to coronate' ísī 'to cook'

In examples '10 -18' while the sound segments are same, the difference is seen in the tones of the segments at the initial position of each pairs as seen in examples '10-12' and final position as in examples'12-13'.

For the minimal sets in the Igbo language, a set of three is the most common and this must have initial high tone as seen in examples '15-18'.

The examples 1-18 as cited above are partly drawn from Mbah and Mbah (2000), Iloene (2007), Emenanjo (2015). However, a large chunk of the examples stems from the researcher's intuitive knowledge as a native speaker.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

There are few words in the Igbo language that vary in their inherent tones and in their usage in associative or sentence construction. However, their pattern of variance is consistent in either case. Such words would probably be assumed to have a dialectal form and a standard form. Most times in my interaction with the students, argument on which form is dialectal and which is standard becomes an issue of concern. Judging from this standpoint, tone in free variation in the Igbo language would be considered; then, based on some linguistic facts, a standard form of the compromised words and their tonal pattern would be posited.

2. Methods

Participant observation alongside 666 SIL Africa Area Word List 1 serves as instrument for data collection. Participants representing some dialects of the Igbo language are engaged for the study. Data collected and collated present a list of such words whose standard form of pronunciation might be compromised. The data reflect Igbo words and are represented with the Igbo orthography. For the purpose of this work, all syllables in each word are tone marked.

3. Findings and Discussions

3.1 Tone in Free Variation

Phoneme in free variation is usually familiar and a common area of discourse in Igbo phonology. When this is the case, it is always easy and incontrovertible to predict the standard and the dialectal forms. Consider the following phonemes in free variation. While examples 1(i) - 5(i) represent the standard form, examples 1(ii) - 5(ii) represent the Onitsha Igbo and examples 1(iii) - 5(iii) represent the Ekwulobia Igbo

Example I: Phonemes in Free Variation

'afternoon'	'market'	'plate'	'house'	'snail'
(1)i. éhìhìè	(2)i. áhḭ́á	(3)i. éféré	(4)i. ụ́lọ̀	(5)i éjùlè
ii. éfìfìè	ii. áfḭ́á	ii. áféré	ii. úlò	ii.éjùnè
iii. éphìphìè	iii. áphḭá	iii. éphéré	iii. únò	iii.ńjìne

As much as we have this phonemic variance in each word, the standard form as in '(1) i – (5) i' is not controversial; also, the tonal patterns are maintained in both the dialectal (1) ii, iii – (5) ii, iii' and standard forms '(1)i – (5)i'. This situation is rightly observed in Emenanjo (2015, p131-134) that "one important, significant and interesting feature of lexical and grammatical tones in Igbo is that, by and large, they are regular, systematic and, systemic across all Igbo dialects".

Tones in free variation can therefore be seen as a situation where tonemes are used minimally, yet without meaning distinction. Regarding tone in free variation in the Igbo language, the following examples are prevalent and are of interest. Minimal pairs based on tones would be

used for illustration; albeit, contrast is not achieved here, rather, tones are said to be in free variation.

Example II: Tone in Free Variation

(6)'mouth'	(7)'tooth'	(8)'king'	(9)'money'	(10)'sand'	(11)'bee'	(12) 'stream'
(a) ɔ́nṵ̄	(a) ézē	(a) ígwē	(a) égō	(a) ájā	(a) án̄ṵ̄	(a) íyī
(b) ɔ́nṵ́	(b) ézé	(b) ígwé	(b) égó	(b) ájá	(b) án̄ṵ́	(b) íyí

(13)'beauty'	(14)'up'	(15) 'twenty'	(16) 'book/school'	(17) 'oil'	(18) 'ant'	(19) 'water'
(a) m̀mā	(a) élū	(a) ọ́gū̀	(a) ákwụ́kwọ̀	(a) m̀mánū̀	(a) ágbị́sị̀	(a) m̀mírī
(b) m̀má	(b) élú	(b) ọ́gṵ́	(b) ákwụ́kwọ́	(b) m̀mánṵ́	(b) àgbị́sị̀	(b) m̀mírí

(20) 'broom'	(21) 'night'	(22) 'afternoon'	(23) 'apple'
(a) ázị́zà	(a) ányàsị̀	(a) éhìhìè	(a) ụ́dárà
(b) àzị́zà	(b) ànyásị̀	(b) èhíhìè	(b) ụ̀dárà

From the given examples, the variation existing is seen in mostly disyllabic words; and usually between the high tone and the down stepped tone, a pattern consistent in all the given examples as in: examples '6 – 19'. For examples '20 – 23', which are mostly trisyllabic words, the tonal variation is between the low and the high tones. While the sound segments are same for each of the pairs, the variation is on the tone of the words, yet without meaning distinction. We can therefore say that these tones are in free variation.

Whereas, the standard form of the phonemes in free variation, as in 'Example I: 1-5', are not controversial, the standard form of each of these pairs of words in 'Examples I: 6-19', as it relates to their tones, is questionable, a situation that calls for attention. An attempt to resolve this controversy is made in the sections that follow.

3.2 On the Standard Form of Igbo Tones in Free Variation

Using Emenanjo's (2015) classification of the Igbo tones as a yardstick, we shall be considering the standard form of these Igbo tones in free variation. Emenanjo (2015, p.114-116) has classified Igbo tones into tone classes and tone groups. According to him, the disyllabic nouns in accordance with their inherent tone patterns fall into five tone classes:

Tone Class I: HH
II: LH
III: HL

IV: LL
V: HS

In accordance with their tonal behaviour in the associative construction among others in the grammar, he further classified these five tone classes of disyllabic nouns into two groups: Tone Group A (T.G.A) nouns-made of Tone Classes: I (HH) and II (LH) and the monosyllabic nouns. Tone Group B (T.G.B) nouns-made of Tone Class III (HL), Tone Class IV (LL) and Tone Class V (HS). Some characteristics of these tone group 'A' and 'B' disyllabic nouns as listed by Emenanjo would aid this analysis.

Characteristics of Tone Group A (Tone Class I: HH, and Tone Class II: LH)

(i) retain their tones as the first noun of the associative construction
(ii) change their tones as the second noun of the associative construction
(iii) change their tones when they come immediately after the verb in certain verbal constructions or verb forms like the imperative, affirmative, perfective affirmative, etc.

Characteristics of Tone Group B (Tone Class III: HL, Class IV: LL and Class V: HS)

(i) retain their tones as the second noun of the associative consideration
(ii) change their tones as the first noun of the associative construction under certain conditions
(iii) retain their tones when they come immediately after the verbs in certain verbal constructions or verb forms like the imperatives, etc.

Having stated the above, we shall measure the tones in free variation as seen in 'Example II'

3.3. Measuring the Status of the Igbo Tones in Free Variation

T.G.A (HH) - retain their tones as the first noun of the associative construction

T.G.B (HS) - change their tones as the first noun of the associative construction under certain conditions (if the first noun ends in a step tone and the second noun begins with any tone, the step tone is raised to a high while the initial tone changes or retains its tones depending on the inherent tone pattern of the word with which it is used)

Example III: Tone in Associative Construction

	'mouth'	'goat' 'goat's mouth'
(24) (a)	ɔ́nṵ̄	ɔ́nṵ̄ + éwú → ɔ́nṵ + éwū
(b)	ɔ́nṵ	ɔ́nṵ + éwú → ɔ́nṵ + éwū
	'tooth'	'lion' 'lion's tooth'
(25) (a)	ézē	ézē + ágṵ̄ → ézé + ágṵ̄
(b)	ézé	ézé + ágṵ̄ → ézé + ágṵ̄
	'stream'	'town' 'Oba stream'
(26) (a)	íyī	íyī + Ò̲bà → íyí + Ò̲bà
(b)	íyí	íyí + Ò̲bà → íyi + Ò̲bà

T.G.A (HH) - change their tones as the second noun of the associative construction

T.G.B (HS) - retain their tones as the second noun of the associative construction

While it is true that words in associative constructions or sentences may not retain their inherent tones, it has been observed that in the Igbo language, nouns at the complement or object position of a sentence (statement or question) especially in the present and past forms, usually maintain or retain their inherent tones. This being a fact, gives a clue to the standard form of Igbo tones in free variation.

Example IV: Inherent Tone Patterns of T.G.A and T.G.B disyllabic nouns in typical standard forms of sentences in Igbo

Consider the following T.G.A and T.G.B disyllabic nouns and how their inherent tones pattern in clear or typical standard forms of sentences in Igbo

T.G.A High High (HH)		
Inherent tone		
(27) égwú:	Ọ́ gbàrà égwú	'He/She danced'
'dance'	Ọ̀ gbàrà égwú	'He/She danced?'
(28) ńrí	Há sìrì ńrí	'They cooked'
'food'	Hà sìrì ńrí	'They cooked?'
(29) ọ́rụ́	Ị́ gàrà ọ́rụ́	'You went to work'
'work'	Ị̀ gàrà ọ́rụ́	'You went to work?'
T.G.A Low High (L H)		
(30) àkwá	Ó yìrì àkwá	'It laid egg'
'egg'	Ò yìrì àkwá	'It laid egg?'

(31) ìgbé	Ọ́ zụ̀rụ̀ ìgbé	He/She bought a box
'box'	Ọ́ zụ̀rụ̀ ìgbé	He/She bought a box?'
T.G.B High Low (H L)		
(32) ụ́lọ̀	Há nwèrè ụ́lọ̀	'They have a house'
'house'	Hà nwèrè ụ́lọ̀	'They have a house?'
(33) égbè	Há zòrò égbè	'They hid a gun'
'gun'	Hà zòrò égbè	'They hid a gun?'
T.G.B Low Low (L L)		
(34) àlà	Ị̀ rèrè àlà	'You sold a land'
'land'	Ị̀ rèrè àlà	'You sold a land?'
(35) àjà	Há chụ̀rụ̀ àjà	'They made a sacrifice'
'sacrifice'	Hà chụ̀rụ̀ àjà	'They made a sacrifice?'
T.G.B High Step (H S)		
(36) ágū	Há gbùrù ágū	'They killed tiger'
'tiger'	Hà gbùrù ágū	'They killed tiger?'

Notice that T.G.A and T.G.B Tone groups especially of disyllabic nouns in the Igbo language retain their inherent tones at the complement or object position of a sentence (statement or question) especially in the present and past forms. Having seen in 'examples 27 - 36', the existing tone pattern that runs in the standard Igbo form, let us then weigh the T.G.A (Tone Class I: HH) and T.G.B (Tone Class V: HS) in free variation as listed in 'Example IV'.

3.4 Standard Form for T.G.A (HH) and T.G.A (HS) in Free Variation

Example V: Standard Form for T.G.A (HH) and T.G.A (HS) in Free Variation

(37a) ọ́nụ̄ 'mouth'	Ha mechiri ọ́nụ̄ Ha mechiri ọ́nụ̄	(37b) ọ́nụ́	*Ha mechiri ọ́nụ́ *Ha mechiri ọ́nụ́	They closed their 'mouth' They closed their mouth?'
(38a) égō 'money'	Ha nyere m égō Ha nyere m égō	(38b) égó	*Ha nyere m égó *Ha nyere m égó	They gave me money' They gave me money?'
(39a) élū 'up'	Ọ́ rị̀rị̀ élū Ọ̀ rị̀rị̀ élū	(39b) élú	*Ọ́ rị̀rị̀ élú *Ọ̀ rị̀rị̀ élú	He/she climbed' He/ She climed?'
(40a) ḿmā 'beauty'	Ànyí màrà ḿmā Ànyì màrà ḿmā	(40b) ḿmá	*Ànyí màrà ḿmá *Ànyì màrà ḿmá	'We are beautiful' 'We are beautiful?'
(41a) ḿmírī 'water'	Ọ́ ṅụ̀rụ̀ ḿmírī Ọ̀ ṅụ̀rụ̀ ḿmírī	(41b) ḿmírí	*Ọ́ ṅụ̀rụ̀ ḿmírí * Ọ̀ ṅụ̀rụ̀ ḿmírí	'He/She drank water' 'He/She drank water?'
(42a) ézē 'tooth'	Ị́ zụ̀rụ̀ ọ́gwụ̀ ézē Ị̀ zụ̀rụ̀ ọ́gwụ̀ ézē	(42b) ézé	*Ị́ zụ̀rụ̀ ọ́gwụ̀ ézé *Ị̀ zụ̀rụ̀ ọ́gwụ̀ ézé	'You bought tooth medicine' 'You bought tooth medicine?'
(43a) ájā 'sand'	Há bùtèrè ájā Hà bùtèrè ájā	(43b) ájá	* Há bùtèrè ájá *Hà bùtèrè ájá	'They bought sand' 'They bought sand?'

The above examples show that while the T.G.B. (Tone Class V: HS) following the existing tone pattern of the typical standard form of the

Igbo sentences (statement and question) results to accepted speech pattern in standard Igbo, the T.G.A. (Tone Class I: HH) following the existing tone pattern of the typical standard form resulted to a speech pattern not accepted as standard but obviously viewed as dialectal. This being the case, we can conclusively say that the T.G.B. Tone class V: HS in free variation with T.G.A. Tone class I: HH stands out as the standard form when these two classes of tone are seen in free variation especially in disyllabic words.

4. Conclusion

Since the standard form of any language is not based on mere opinion or choice but rather on linguistic facts, it became necessary that these Igbo tones in free variation be subjected to critical analysis with reference to their pattern of operation in typical standard Igbo words.

Having done that and analysis carried out, it was observed that T.G.A and T.G.B Tone groups especially of disyllabic nouns in the Igbo language retain their inherent tones at the complement or object position of a sentence (statement or question) especially in the present and past forms.

Subjecting the T.G.A Tone class I: HH and T.G.B Tone Class II: HS to the said test, it was observed that the former, retaining its inherent tone in such position, failed the test. If it failed the test, it can only be regarded as a typical dialectal speech pattern and not a standard form. In other words, the T.G.B. Tone Class V: HS emerged as the standard form of these tones in free variation since retaining its inherent tone in such position, yielded a non-controversial standard form.

4.1 Implication for Pedagogy

The knowledge of these linguistic facts can aid the teaching and the analysis of tone in the Igbo language. It would also have such emerging arguments arrested in the course of teaching or interaction in classes or any Igbo speech setting.

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