

**JALINGO JOURNAL OF LINGUISTICS AND
LITERARY STUDIES
(JAJOLLS)**



Volume 8 No. 1, 2024.
ISSN: 2488-9067

**A Publication of the
Department of Languages and Linguistics
Faculty of Arts
Taraba State University, Jalingo**

JALINGO JOURNAL OF LINGUISTICS AND LITERARY STUDIES (JAJOLLS)
Volume 8 No. 1, 2024.

ISSN: 2488-9067

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Except for the purpose of research, classroom instructions and appropriately acknowledged, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means: Mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without written permission from the Copyright Owners.

Printed in Nigeria by:

MacroNet Consults & Multi-Links Limited

Suite 7, Investment Shopping Complex

Jalingo – Nigeria

+234 (0) 803 633 1942

macronetnigent@gmail.com

EDITORIAL

Every academic environment is sustained by learning through rigorous methods. Research is one and the focal point for assessment. A serious member of the academic community is measured by the quality and number of academic articles.

In spite of the desire to acquire many research reports, this edition has insisted on standards and quality. It is important to note that many articles have been rejected for not meeting our requirements.

The first and most obvious task of our journal is to provide a level playing field for researchers all over the globe in language-related disciplines, which is the vehicle for conveying knowledge. In this edition, twenty-seven (27) articles have undergone academic scrutiny from our blind reviewers.

To our esteemed contributors and readers, thought-provoking articles are expected and we are ready to publish them in the next volume.

**Professor Ali Amadi Alkali,
Editor-in-Chief,
JAJOLLS: Jalingo Journal of Linguistics and Literary Studies,
Department of Languages and Linguistics,
Taraba State University, Jalingo.**

FOR READERS

This volume of JAJOLLS (Jalingo Journal of Linguistics and Literary Studies, Volume 8, Issue 1) adheres to the guidelines of the 7th edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual for editing and formatting the featured papers. Renowned for its clear and user-friendly citation system, the APA manual also provides valuable guidance on selecting appropriate headings, tables, figures, language, tone, and reference styles, resulting in compelling, concise, and refined scholarly presentations. Furthermore, it serves as a comprehensive resource for the Editorial Board, navigating the entire scholarly writing process, from authorship ethics to research reporting and publication best practices.

JAJOLLS

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief:

Prof. Ali Ahmadi Alkali

Taraba State University, Jalingo

Associate Editor:

Prof. Surajo Ladan

Taraba State University, Jalingo

Editorial Board:

Prof. Adamu Isa Haliru

Taraba State University, Jalingo

Ass. Prof. Aboki M. Sani

Taraba State University, Jalingo

Sumayyat Ibrahim Gambo (Ph.D.)

Taraba State University, Jalingo

Editorial Secretary:

Sumayyat Ibrahim Gambo (Ph.D.)

Taraba State University, Jalingo

Editorial Advisers:

Prof. Isa Mukhtar

Bayero University, Kano

Prof. Michael P. Noku

University of Maiduguri, Borno

Prof. Balarabe Zulyadaini

University of Maiduguri, Borno

Prof. Yina Godwin

Benue State University, Makurdi

NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

The “Jalingo Journal of Linguistics and Literary Studies” (JAJOLLS) is a publication of the Department of Language and Linguistics, Taraba State University, Jalingo, Nigeria. This journal publishes reports in relation to all aspects of linguistics, literary and cultural studies.

Manuscripts Submission

Three hard copies of the article with text, charts, tables, figures, plates or any other original illustration should be sent to the editor-in-chief JAJOLLS, Taraba State University, Jalingo, Taraba State Nigeria. Submission should either be in English, French, Hausa, or Arabic languages. Articles should be typed in double line spacing with a wide margin on each side only on A4 sized paper not exceeding 15 pages including abstract with not more than 6-7 keywords. Articles are to be submitted with Five Thousand Naira (N5,000) assessment and handling charges. By submitting an article to JAJOLLS, the author(s) agree that the exclusive rights to produce and distribute the articles to the publisher.

Method of Presentation

The article should have a cover page, author(s) bio-data and abstract with the keywords. The body of the article should have an introduction, methodology/materials and methods, findings, discussion, conclusion and recommendations.

The references should either be the latest APA or MLA styles. No part of the journal may be reproduced by any process without written permission of the Department of Language and Linguistics, Taraba State University, Jalingo.

All correspondences on editorial matters should be sent to:

Sumayyat Ibrahim Gambo (Ph.D.)

Department of Languages & Linguistics

Taraba State University

P.M.B. 1167, Jalingo, Taraba State

Email: jajolls022@gmail.com

Phone: +234803132245, +2348182312149 & +2349045724091

TABLE OF CONTENT

JAJOLLS	i
Editorial	ii
For Readers	iii
Editorial Board	iv
Notes to Contributors	v
Table of Content	v-vii
Exploring the Nigerian undergraduate situational needs in ESL writing skills Anas Sa'idu Muhammad	1
The relevance of Saoty Arewà's music "Ìwà Òdaràn" in social stability and security challenges in Nigeria Sa'adu, Taofiq	18
Exploring the Frequency and Contextualization of Yoruba Indigenous Communication Practices in the Daily Life of Generation Z. Nkiruka Favour Nwantah, Grace Okpongpong, Oluwatise Odeniyi, & Nkem Janefrances Osere.	33
Analysis of predicate logical relations used in selected Nigerian newspapers: A lexico-semantic approach. Aboki, M. S. and Aliyu, B	46
A phono-pragmatic analysis of Taylor's "twinkle twinkle little star". Sunday O. A.	57
The role of English in promoting intercultural communication in Nigeria Muhammed Isa Ogbole; Saadatu Aliyu Dauda; Sarah Solomon & Niminji Edward	68
Assessment of grammatical competence and reading comprehension levels of junior secondary school (JSS3) students in Taraba State. Aliyu B. Mbiko	77
Analyse des erreurs grammaticales françaises dans les textes des produits commerciaux nigériens. Abubakar Abba Kaka	90
Le féminisme ambivalent d'aminata sow fall : Une étude de <i>la Greve Des Battu</i> Adamu, Abdullahi Muhammad & Abubakar Kabir Jino	103
Une étude comparée de l'ostentation et la corruption dans <i>Xala</i> de Sembène Ousmane et les élites Nigérianes Abubakar Ibrahim Kado; Mohammed Yusuf; & Ahmad Umar Sanda	120
Achieving literature in English objectives pedagogy in Nigerian senior secondary schools: A comparative study of Ogun and Lagos States. Idowu, Stephen Olufemi	135

Language and Law: The Role of English Language in Nigerian Legal System. Baba Amos Itari & Isaiah Aluya	145
Moral Instruction to Children: A Study of Selected Nigerian Folktales and Proverbs. Joy Odewumi, Dayo Akanmu and Ngozi Dom-Anyanwu	156
A Study of Clipping and Blending in Jukun Language Vanessa Civirter Adzer and Vakkai Azinni	168
Common Ground in Ahmed Yerima's <i>Orisa Ibeji</i> and <i>Owiwi</i> Salawu, Rashidat Omotola	178
Phonological analysis of Nigerian English: Spoken English experiences with selected speakers from the three major Nigerian languages Umar, Mudashir Ayinla	188
Lexico-Semantic Features of Nigerian English: A Study of Zaynab Alkali's " <i>The Stillborn</i> " Abba, T. M. and Abba Alkali Goni	202
Metathesis and Its Statistical Analysis in Hausa Abba Bashir Mukhtar	217
قصيدة اللامية للشيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية "دراسة أدبية تحليلية" Yahuza Hamza Abubakar	231

UMAR, Mudashir Ayinla



Department of English, School of Languages, Federal College of Education, Iwo, Osun State.

Phonological analysis of Nigerian English: Spoken English experiences with selected speakers from the three major Nigerian languages

Abstract

Phonological classifications of Nigerian English have been a subject of interest among researchers due to the unique sociolinguistic effects it produces. Based on this, the aims of this work are: to do an examination of the segmental features of Nigerian English from the three major indigenous language speakers, to do an examination of the supra-segmental features of Nigerian English from the three major indigenous language speakers and to check for the differences between Nigerian English and British English as noticed in the first-hand experiences with selected Nigerian English users. By the use of purposive sampling technique, educated speakers of the English language from the three major Nigerian languages, comprising males and females of different age limits were interviewed with two extracts. Categories of the speakers tested also varies (ranging from school certificate holders, OND/NCE holders, HND/First degree holders and Postgraduate degree holders) among the three major ethnic groups in the country (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) respectively. It was discovered at segmental phonological examination that the sound quality of Nigerian English speakers vary according to their regions; for instance, only Hausa speakers of Nigerian English have v. good grade in syllabic consonant as seen in number nine sample - **Beetle** /'bi:tl/, as they are the best Nigerian pronouncers of the syllabic consonant [tl] out of the three tribes tested. At supra-segmental level, it was found that only the intonation patterns of the Nigerian English speakers record 30% of correctness while their stress patterns and their articulation of phonological processes record 0% apeice, which nullifies division of the tone groups into foot in the data. In conclusion, despite the fact that linguistic scholars and Nigerian ethnographers have taken cognizance of the phonological as well as the sociolinguistic and grammatical states of Nigerian English, there still exists variation within variation in Nigerian English which is one of the main reasons the quest for Standard Nigerian English will continue to attract researchers into the linguistic discipline.

Key words: Nigerian English, Phonology, Segmental, Supra-segmental

Received: 27/09/2024 **Accepted:** 02/10/2024 **GSM:** +2348064042578

Corresponding Author: Umar, M. A. **Email:** umarma@fceiwo.edu.ng

Article Citation: Umar, M. A. (2024). Phonological analysis of Nigerian English: Spoken English experiences with selected speakers from the three major Nigerian languages. *Jalingo Journal of Languages and Literary Studies (JAJOLLS)*. 8 (1) pp. 188-201

Publishers: Department of Languages and Linguistics, Taraba State University, Jalingo.
ISSN: 2488-9067

Introduction

Nigerian English could be considered in terms of many features which include phonetic features, sociolinguistic features, grammatical features, lexico-semantic features, and code-mixing and code-switching among others; all these are majorly due to contact experience of Nigerian English speakers with British English which makes the phenomenon of linguistic interference unavoidable. As gathered from recent researches, our generation has witnessed an unprecedented spread of the English Language to nearly all parts of the world due to the search for a common means of communication. This spread has earlier been thought to produce homogenous English across the world. However, this has been proved wrong as it is observed that the language is affected by the mother tongue interference of its recipient users. Of course, the inter-language grammar of English that exists in different parts of the world is a load of peculiar features. (Eka, 2000; Udofot, 2007) cited in Eze and Igwenyi (2016, pp. 105-106)

The interest of this article is to describe and classify the phonetic features of Nigerian variety of English with some first-hand samples from readings and pronunciations of selected educated Nigerian English speakers among the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (the three major Nigerian languages) speakers of the English language both at segmental and suprasegmental levels. The features that operate at various levels of phonological interference between Standard British English and Nigerian languages include: reinterpretation, substitution, hypercorrection, inclusion, elimination, pronunciation, and Nigerian articulation of phonological processes among others.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

- examine the segmental features of Nigerian English from the three major indigenous language speakers;
- examine the supra-segmental features of Nigerian English from the three major indigenous language speakers; and
- identify the differences between Nigerian English and British English as noticed in the first-hand experiences with selected Nigerian English.

Significance of the Study

This study is an attempt to add little to the existing literature on the areas of divergence between Standard British English and Nigerian English. It investigates how both segmental and supra-segmental aspects of the English language contribute immensely to what is today called Nigerian English, due to many inadequacies and incompatibilities experienced in the course of language contact between English language and Nigerian languages.

Review of Related Literature

Phonology and Nigerian English

Phonology, as one of the levels of linguistic analysis, focuses on the mental representation or knowledge of sounds and sound patterns by speakers of a language. This is because varied speakers have the same 'mental idea' of a phoneme despite the fact that they produce and hear the sound in different forms (Gut 2009, p. 7). To instantiate the foregoing, if one studies the articulation of the /p/ in *pit* with the /p/ in *spit* and in *tip* with the methods of phonetic analysis, one will discover a clear difference in their articulation and acoustic properties. For the /p/ in *pit*, there is a

short but clearly audible burst of air after the speaker opened the lips which do not occur in the /p/ in *spit*. However, for the /p/ in *tip*, speakers' lips might not even be open and there might be an accompanying stoppage of the airstream in the throat (Gut 2009, p. 8).

To clarify this, phonologists have claimed that speakers have just one mental representation of the speech sound /p/. Different notation symbols are used in order to differentiate between speech sounds that form part of the speakers' knowledge and speech sounds that are actually produced and can be measured and perceived. At the level of phonology, the slashes / / indicate that a speaker's knowledge or mental representation, while square brackets [] indicate that an actual sound is being talked about at the level of phonetics. (Gut, 2009, pp. 7-8)

Ugorji (2010) rightly notes that “imitation or mimicry which is coordinated with perception constitutes the basic strategy for learning the pronunciation of a target language.” However, the assertion does not take care of the non-student and uneducated Nigerian speakers of the English language. According to Egwuogu (2004), varieties of Nigerian English germinate from the interaction of English language with the local languages and from the different ways speakers of a second language try to approximate the sounds of the diverse languages as a result of interference from the mother tongue (MT) (p. 103).

Empirical Review

Various empirical researches have been carried out on varieties of Nigerian English. Quoting from Oladimeji (2016), it is noted that diachronically, a variety of English (that is yet to be fully described) has been identified as Nigerian. The Brosnaham (1958), Banjo (1971), and Jibril (1979, 1982, 1986) are all models primarily based on phonological data.

Nonetheless, Ugorji (2010, p. 134) in a recently developmental model-based research, has emphasized certain properties of Nigerian English to support his position on the priority of diachronic. He presents his data on aspects of the phonology of Nigerian English; such as the tendency to disfavour consonant clusters in coda positions, the substituting of inter-dentals, etc. as they may characterise some or all of the educated varieties, in particular and other varieties of English elsewhere. Furthermore, Okedara (2016) notes that pronunciation plays a major role in Nigerian English as they tend to pronounce the /θ/ and /ð/ sounds as /t/ and /d/, respectively, leading to a distinctive accent; Akindele (2015) and Adesoye (2018) observe that, sociolinguistically, individuals who speak Standard Nigerian English are often perceived as more educated and sophisticated compared to those who speak Non-Standard Nigerian English with accent discrimination; Oyeleye (2020) highlights the influence of colonialism on the phonological characteristics of Nigerian English; Okafor (2017) emphasizes the role of education in shaping phonological classifications in Nigerian English; Adebayo (2018) affirms that the media also plays a significant role in disseminating phonological classifications of Nigerian English.

Based on the foregoing, we can safely establish that Nigerian English has a robust history, as it has been supported with many analytical studies to synthesize its phonological and other levels of communicative form. This new form of English from Nigeria is day by day widely acclaimed (especially by selected educated Nigerians) due to belief that it has developed its own features which distinguish it as

an identifiable and what could be regarded as a legitimate subset of world new Englishes.

Segmental Features of Nigerian English

Some of the segmental phonological features of Nigerian English include simplification of consonant clusters, vowel harmony, syllable-timing, and tone-based intonation (Jibril, 2017, p. 201; Oyebade, 2018, p. 92). The simplification of consonant clusters is prevalent in NigE, particularly among speakers with limited English proficiency (Afolayan, 2015, p. 125). Vowel harmony, another phonological feature, is influenced by indigenous languages (Uba, 2018, p. 148). Syllable-timing, distinct from stress-timing in Standard English, characterizes Nigerian English (Jibril, 2017, p. 205). Tone-based intonation, common in indigenous languages, affects Nigerian English phonology (Oyebade, 2018, p. 95).

While exploring the levels of phonological interference, Alabi (2007, p. 86) identifies six forms of phonological interference at segmental level which are: under-differentiation, hypercorrection, re-interpretation of sound, phonemic substitution, hypercorrection, epenthesis and simplification. The explanation and exemplification of each of these features are as follows:

1. Under-differentiation: This happens when two or more acoustically contrastive phonemic segments appear similar and thus confuse the speaker. For instance, /æ/ in mat, /ə/ in sister, /ɜ:/ in birth and /ɑ:/ in farm respectively may all be replaced with the cardinal vowel /ɑ/ because it is the only available sound in many Nigerian languages, the mother tongues of Nigerian English speakers.

2. Over-differentiation: This occurs where a single phoneme is pronounced in many ways by a second language speaker; whereas such single phoneme realized in multiple forms is not in any way allophonic (having the tendency to be pronounced in variant forms). Examples for this include: a typical Hausa speaker's pronunciation of 'current' as either /kʌrənt/ or /kwərənt/; Igbo speaker's pronunciation of something as either /səmɔŋ/ or /sɔmtɪŋ/ etc.

3. Re-interpretation: This phenomenon coincides with the situation whereby a totally different sequence of phoneme cues is given by a speaker in the target language. This is an error of re-ordering that always results from consonant clustering process of the English language which does not exist in virtually all Nigerian languages. Examples of this can be seen in words like: tax /tæks/ re-interpreted to task /ta:sk/; axe /æks/ re-interpreted to ask /a:sk/.

4. Substitution: Nigerian speakers tend to resort to substitution of English phonemes with their closest approximation due to differences in the phono-structural patterns of the languages. Plenty of this case is therefore abounds in Nigeria. For instance, the absence of the inter-dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ in major Nigerian languages are substituted with the alveolar plosives /t/ and /d/ (and /z/ for /ð/ from Hausa speakers), as in the words: 'thing' being realised as /tɪŋ/ instead of /θɪŋ/; 'theme' being realised as /ti:m/ instead of /θi:m/; 'father' being realised as /fada/ instead of /fa:ðə/; 'they' being realised as /deɪ/ or /zə/ (as in Hausa English) instead of /ðeɪ/ etc.

5. Hypercorrection: This arises as a result of too much sensitivity about the contrasting features of the target language and the mother tongue. This tendency might make such individual a victim of overgeneralization (he over-does it to the

extent that he loses the proper pronunciation of certain segments he is already familiar with in his mother tongue by misrepresenting them with English phonemes). Example include: zink for 'sink', yiver for 'fever', wash for 'watch'. These could be put in a sentence as follows: I thought you were *washing me when I had malaria *viver, I felt like hiding myself in the *zink.

6. **Epenthesis and Simplification:** A superfluous insertion of vowel segments in a bid to simplify the complexity of consonant clusters (a characteristic of English language that is absent in Nigerian languages) is regarded as **Epenthesis**. Examples are: organism is pronounced as */ɔganɪzɪm/ instead of /ɔ:gənɪzəm/; */rɪðɪm/ instead of /rɪðm/ etc. However, **Simplification** ensues whenever three to four English consonants are clustered; a typical Nigerian speaker reduces them to two or three as the case may be in order to allow for 'accommodation' (easier pronunciation). Instances of this are: twelfth /twelfθ/ reduced to */twefθ/ with removal of lateral /l/ phoneme; sixths /sɪksθs/ reduced to */sɪks/ with removal of voiceless inter-dental fricative /θ/ phoneme.

Other segmental phonological features peculiar to Nigerian English include insertion, the inclusion/insertion of the missing sounds in British English words in Nigerian English, (Fakoya 2006, p. 4) and Omission of consonants (elimination), which is the opposite process of insertion, for example, the word film is pronounced as /fɪm/ (Odumu1987, p. 48).

In conclusion, the segmental features of Nigerian English represent a complex interplay of linguistic influences, reflecting the diverse linguistic heritage of Nigeria and underscoring the dynamic nature of language in multilingual societies.

Supra-segmental Features of Nigerian English

This aspect has to do with stress and its duration, rhythm, intonation and tone in Nigerian spoken English.

Pitch and stress and duration

According to Adekunle (2019), Nigerian English speakers often employ pitch variations to emphasize certain words or convey nuances that may not be present in Standard British English. Furthermore, the stress patterns in Nigerian English differ from those in Standard British English, as highlighted by Okonkwo (2020). Additionally, the use of rhythm and tempo in Nigerian English sets it apart from Standard British English, as noted by Ogunleye (2018). Nigerian English speakers may speak at a faster pace and exhibit a more dynamic rhythm in their speech, influenced by the rhythmic patterns found in Nigerian music and oral traditions.

Stress refers to a combination of factors that collectively serve to define 'accent' or 'prominence' which also includes pitch, duration, and vowel quality. The duration of unstressed syllables in spoken Nigerian English is longer than that of a native speaker represented by the control. (Jowitt 1991, 1997; Udofot, 2003). This simply means that Nigerians stress very many words that are characteristically unstressed by native speakers. For example: Are you COMING TODAY pronounced as ARE YOU COMING TODAY?

In the above example, we can see the tendency to stress more syllables than a native speaker as a typical Nigerian speaker has no control over the rising and falling of his pitch; he/she as well accents each word that makes up the sentence.

Rhythm and syllable-timing

Nigerian English exhibits distinct supra-segmental features that diverge from Standard British English (SBE). These features are shaped by Nigeria's linguistic and cultural diversity. Intonation patterns in Nigerian English differ significantly from SBE. Nigerian English exhibits a more sing-songy intonation, with a rising pitch at the end of statements (Jibril, 2017, p. 205).

According to Udofot (2022, p. 8), “Rhythm is the most problematic and the least investigated aspect of Nigerian English”. It builds the foundation of the study of stress in connected speech, but that of spoken Nigerian English has not been much studied. Therefore, Udofot made it the core of her research for the first time in 1997 (Jowitt 2019, p. 68). Adetugbo’s (1977) description of rhythm in Nigerian English as syllable-timed is upheld by many Nigerian phonologists because of the influence of the syllable-timing of Nigerian languages.

However, readings from Udofot (2022, p. 8) revealed that (Eka 1993) rejects the syllable-timing description and goes further to describe the rhythm of the educated variety of Spoken Nigerian English as “in-elastic timed” because of a tendency to have more prominent syllables than the native speaker. As a matter of resolution, Jowitt (2019) points out that a more qualified view is in effect developed by Udofot (2002, 2003) as she submits:

She shows that in Nigerian English, as in RP, peaks of prominence occur in connected speech, but that the weak syllables of RP speech are in Nigerian English made stronger, without being made as strong as the 'strong' ones: thus there is a tendency towards stress timing (p. 68).

Intonation and tone in Nigerian English

Intonation is termed the rising and falling of the voice when we speak, which is used to describe variations of pitch in speech while tone is the pitch or stress inflection used when speaking, which alter the meaning or interpretation of words. To Gut (2009, p. 106), “The pitch of a speaker's voice changes across intonation phrases; the linguistic use of such pitch movements is called intonation.... When producing speech, speakers can combine intonation phrases into longer utterances by means of intonational phrasing and by intonation.”

Tone-based distinctions, characteristic of Nigerian languages, influence Nigerian English intonation (Oloidi, 2018, p. 185). High and low tones replace SBE's pitch accents, creating distinct melodic patterns. Nigerian English also exhibits unique stress patterns. Unstressed syllables are often reduced, but not to the same extent as in SBE (Afolayan, 2015, p. 123). This affects word-level rhythm and emphasis. The use of pitch and intonation to convey meaning differs between Nigerian English and SBE. In Nigerian English, pitch can indicate emphasis, contrast, or irony (Oyebade, 2018, p. 92). SBE relies more on stress and vowel quality.

As provided by Udofot (2022, p. 10), a consensus of views as to the principal features of Nigerian English intonation is as follows:

- The great majority of tones used by Nigerians are unidirectional or simple (are either falls or rises).
- Bidirectional tones are rarely used; the one that is mostly used is the fall-rise.

- The tones of Nigerian English speech have grammatical functions, but not attitudinal ones.
- A falling tune is used for statements, wh-questions, and commands; a rising tune for yes-no questions. - The level tone is hardly ever used.

On Nigerian tone in spoken English, proposals have been made to treat Nigerian English as a tone language with tone on every syllable since tone, as the melody of Spoken Nigerian English, reflects the prosodic structure of the speakers' native language in a way that stressed syllables are associated with a high tone and unstressed syllables with a low tone (Wells, 1982; Gut, 2002). An instance of this is that the preposition **from** and the auxiliary **was** get stressed in the utterances of some of Nigerian speakers but these words are not spoken with high tones.

Methodology

This research is a qualitative and quantitative work based on the two appendices used to test the segmental and supra-segmental features of Nigerian speakers. Educated speakers of the English language from the three major Nigerian languages, comprising male and females of different age limit are interviewed with two extracts. Categories of the speakers tested also varies (ranging from school certificate holders, OND/NCE holders, HND/First degree holders and Postgraduate degree holders) among the three major ethnic groups in the country (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) respectively. All the respondents were selected from Ilorin, the capital city of Kwara State because it has different categories of speakers of the three major indigenous languages across all levels of its schools. The research spans a month (two weeks for data collection, one week for data examination and one week for data analysis).

The first extract comprises selected words from Jones (2006); they are used to study the segmental features of Nigerian English like articulation of monophthongs and diphthongs, and articulation of voiced and voiceless consonants within words. The researcher listened to all the records multiple times to do his assessment of their phonological properties. The assessment is based on four grades, each with a specific score: Very Good (4), Good (3), fair (2) and Poor (1) respectively. "Excellent" is excluded from the grades because rarely can we have a non-native speaker of the English language with such level of proficiency. The second extract is a short passage reading used to acoustically study the supra-segmental features of Nigerian English such as stress placement on words and chunks, Nigerian speakers intonation patterns and articulation of phonological processes in connected speech. One of the following tables and summarises the performance level of each category of the educated speakers tested at segmental level while the other one reveals each of the ethnic group compatibility with Standard British English at segmental phonological level respectively.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Prosodic Phonological framework under which both segmental and supra-segmental phonological features are given attention.

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Analysis and Discussion One: Examination of segmental features of Nigerian English

S/N	Standard British Pronunciation of sampled words	Sound quality of eight (8) HAUSA English speakers and their educational qualifications				Sound quality of eight (8) IGBO English speakers and their educational qualifications				Sound quality of eight (8) YORUBA English speakers and their educational qualifications			
		SCHOOL CERT	NCE/OND	DEGREE/HND	POST GRAD.	SCHOOL CERT	NCE/OND	DEGREE/HND	POST GRAD.	SCHOOL CERT	NCE/OND	DEGREE/HND	POST GRAD.
1	<u>Women</u> /wɪmɪn/	Fair	fair	Good	Good	Poor	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
2	<u>Bird</u> /bɜ:d/	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair	fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
3	<u>Python</u> /'paɪθn/	Poor	poor	Fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair
4	<u>Sardine</u> /,sa:'di:n/	Fair	fair	Fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	poor	Poor	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
5	<u>Rose</u> /rəʊz/	Good	good	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	good	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
6	<u>Example</u> /ɪg'zɑ:mpəl/	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair	fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
7	<u>Flower</u> /'flaʊə/	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
8	<u>Shark</u> /ʃɑ:k/	Fair	fair	Good	Good	Good	Good	good	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
9	<u>Beetle</u> /'bi:tl/	Good	good	v. good	v. good	Poor	Poor	fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair

10	Antelope /'æntələʊp/	Fair	fair	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	good	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
11	Termite /'tɜ:mait/	Fair	fair	Fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
12	Principal /'prɪnsəpl/	Good	good	Good	Good	Poor	Poor	fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair
13	Foster /'fɒstə/	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	poor	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Good
14	Abroad /ə'brɔ:d/	Fair	fair	Fair	Fair	fair	Fair	fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
15	Investor /ɪn'vestə/	Fair	fair	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	good	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
16	Study /'stʌdi/	Fair	fair	Fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
17	Father /'fa:ðə/	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair	fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
18	Genre /'ʒɛnrə/	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
19	Prestige /pre'sti:ʒ/	Fair	fair	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	good	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
20	Coverage /'kʌvɪdʒ/	fair	fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	good	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Good

Table 1: Discussion table for Segmental features examination

Based on the above table, here are the percentages of segmental correctness per ethnic: Hausa English Speakers = 27.5%; Igbo English Speakers = 17.5%; Yoruba English Speakers = 25%.

The emboldened part(s) of each transcription is/are the basis/es upon which the eight (8) respondents from each of the three major Nigerian ethnic groups are tested. After the four categories of educated of English speakers are tested, the above level of their performance shows their spoken English prowess and how, according to time and educational exposure, they improve in their pronunciation of certain monophthongs, diphthongs and consonant phonemes of the English language. It was discovered that sound quality of Nigerian English speaker vary according to their regions while they are similar in some ways like insertion and deletion of vowels regardless of their and

level of education. However, it was discovered that only Hausa speakers of Nigerian English have v. good grade in syllabic consonant as seen in number nine sample - *Beetle* /'bi:tɪl/, as they are the best Nigerian pronouncers of the syllabic consonant [tɪ] out of the three tribes tested.

Analysis and Discussion Two: Examination of suprasegmental features of Nigerian English

↗

Although at first, (1) *HE WAS grateful FOR HIS escape* //hi: *wɔs *gretful *fɔ *his eskeɪp//; his situation was a dreadful one. He was wet, (2) *HE HAD NO dry clothes TO change INTO AND nothing TO eat OR drink* //*hɪ hæd nəu draɪ *klaʊθs *tɔn tʃeɪdʒ *ɪntəʊ *ænd *nɔθɪm *təʊ i:t ɔ: drɪŋk//. He saw no future before himself but that of dying of hunger or being eaten by wild animals. He had no weapon either to hunt or kill to get food, or to defend himself against any other creature that might wish to kill him for its food. (3) *HE HAD nothing BUT A knife, A tobacco pipe, AND A little tobacco IN A box* //*hɪ hæd *nɔθɪm *bʊt *eɪ naɪf *eɪ *təʊbækəʊ paɪp *ænd *eɪ *lɪtəl *təʊbækəʊ ɪn *eɪ bɒks//. These were his only possessions, and he was in such great despair that (4) *FOR A while HE ran about like A madman* //*fɔ *eɪ wʌɪl hi: ræn *əbaʊt laɪk *eɪ mædmæn//. As night drew near, he began to consider what would be his fate if there were any fierce and hungry wild animals in that country, (5) *FOR night IS THE time when THEY always come OUT looking FOR THEIR prey* //*fɔ naɪt *ɪs *ðɪ taɪm wen ðeɪ *ɔlwɛɪs *kɔm aʊt lʊkɪŋ *fɔ *ðɪə preɪ//.

The only plan that came to his mind was to climb up into a thick, bushy tree, where he resolved to sit all night. (6) *THE next day, HE'D consider what death HE SHOULD die* //*dɪ *nɛst deɪ *hɪ *wʊd *kɔnsɪdə wɔt deθ hɪ ju:d * *daɪ//, for he saw no possibility of life. (7) *HE walked A short way inland* //hi: *wɔlkd *eɪ *ʃɔt weɪ ɪnlænd//, to see if he could find any fresh water to drink, which he did, to his great joy. (8) *Having drunk AND put A little tobacco IN HIS mouth TO prevent hunger* //*hævɪŋ *drɔŋk *ænd put *eɪ *lɪtəl *təʊbækəʊ ɪn *hɪs maʊθ *tu prɪvent *hʌŋgə//, he went to the tree, climbed up into it, and tried to place himself in such a position that he might not fall if he should sleep. He cut a short tick tree for his defense and then settled himself. (9) *Quite tired OUT BY THE events OF THE day* //kwɑɪt *tʌɪəd aʊt baɪ *ðɪ ɪvents *ɔf *dɪ deɪ//, he fell fast asleep, and (10) *HE slept MORE comfortably THAN many COULD HAVE done.* //hi: slept mɔ: kɔxmɔfətəɪbɪ ɔæn menɪ *kʊld hæv dɔn//

Adapted from: Daniel Defoe's 'Robinson Crusoe'

Number of analysed data	Stress pattern of 24 Nigerian English speakers (from both genders of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba)	Intonation pattern of 24 Nigerian English speakers (from both genders of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba)	Articulation of phonological process(es) by 24 Nigerian English speakers (from both genders)
Sample 1	All function words wrongly accentuated	Wrong (Statement with rising tune)	Vowel length reduction of 'he' to /hɪ/ not observed
Sample 2	All function words wrongly accentuated	Correct (statement with falling tune)	Intrusive (linking) 'r' in //ɪntəʊrænd// not observed
Sample 3	All function words wrongly accentuated	Wrong (items listing with falling tune)	aspiration in /paɪp/ and syllabic /l/ in /lɪt/ not observed
Sample 4	All function words wrongly accentuated	Wrong (Statement with rising tune)	Linking 'r' in /fəreɪ/ not observed
Sample 5	All function words wrongly accentuated	Wrong (Statement with rising tune)	Assimilation in /naɪtɪz/ and intrusive 'r' in /ðeɪrɔlweɪz/ not observed
Sample 6	All function words wrongly accentuated	Wrong (Statement with rising tune)	Assimilation of 'he'd' /hɪd/ and 'should I' /ʃʊdaɪ/ not observed
Sample 7	All function words wrongly accentuated	Correct (statement with falling tune)	Assimilation of /t/ in /wɔ:kt/ and linking 'r' in /weɪrɪnlænd/ not observed
Sample 8	All function words wrongly accentuated	Wrong (incomplete statement with falling tune)	Assimilation of 'and' to /n/ and tapping of /lɪt/ not observed
Sample 9	All function words wrongly accentuated	Wrong (incomplete statement with falling tune)	Assimilation of /kwɑɪtɑɪəd/ and silent realization of /əv ðə/ not observed
Sample 10	All function words wrongly accentuated	Correct (statement with falling tune)	Length reduction of 'he' to /hɪ/ and 'more' to /mɔ/ not observed

Table 2: Discussion table for supra-segmental features examination

Based on the above table, here are the percentages of supra-segmental correctness of the three ethnic groups: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba English Speakers' stress pattern = 0%; Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba English Speakers' intonation pattern = 30%; Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba English Speakers' articulation of phonological processes = 0%

The italicized parts of the passage are the points of emphasis in the supra-segmental analysis. In the transcribed parts, the asterisked words show various forms

of phonological variation of typical Nigerian speakers as different from the standard British English phonological processes. Instances of wrong pronunciation and incorrect articulation of many words are indicated with asterisks. Examples of wrong stress placement are shown with capitalized words in the chunks before their transcriptions, while wrong application of intonation patterns are indicated with downward and upward arrows. The transcription does not contain division of tone group into foot because Nigerian version of English doesn't cater for it appropriately. The table above is a presentation of the performance level of Nigerian English speakers in supra-segmental aspect of the English language.

Conclusion

It is crystal clear from the review of the works of many Nigerian linguists so far, and the first-hand interaction with selected educated categories of the three major Nigerian ethnic groups that Nigerian English has a different phonological dimension from the Standard British English version. This is due to the observation that various degrees of segmental and supra-segmental levels of English phonological variation continue to obtain among the speakers of the three major languages considered because of the differences in phonological operation of their first languages (mother tongues) and the English language. In a nut shell, the outcome of this examination of educated Nigerian speakers from the three ethnic groups has shown that Nigerian English is far from earning the same level of recognition as Standard Nigerian English, due to the very low performance of the speakers at both segmental and supra-segmental levels.

References

- Adebayo, T. (2018). The portrayal of Nigerian accents in Nollywood movies. *Journal of African Cinema*, 10(2), 145-162.
- Adesoye, T. (2018). Accent discrimination in Nigeria: Perceptions and attitudes. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 22(4), 511-527.
- Adekunle, A. (2019). Intonation patterns in Nigerian English. *Journal of Nigerian Linguistics*, 14(2), 78-91.
- Afolayan, L. (2018). Phonological variations in Nigerian English consonants. *Nigerian Journal of Linguistics*, 23(1), 67-78.
- Akindele, F. (2015). Social implications of speech variation in Nigerian English. *Journal of Nigerian Linguistics*, 8(1), 33-48.
- Akinjobi, O. S. & Umoh, G. I. (2022). Varieties of the English language in Nigeria: The socio-linguistic implication on communication. *International Journal of Arts, Languages, Linguistics and Literary Studies (JOLLS)*. [Http://www.jolls.com.ng](http://www.jolls.com.ng) Vol. 11 (2).
- Alabi, T. A. (2007) Language contact: The Nigerian experience with English. In O. Obafemi, G. A. Ajadi & V. A. Alabib (Eds.). *Critical perspectives on English language and literature*. University of Ilorin Press.
- Banjo, A. (1971). Towards a definition of standard Nigerian English. In *Acts du se congress de la societe linguistique de l'Afrique*. Occidental Abidjan.
- Brosnaham, L. F. (1958). English in southern Nigerian English studies. *English Journal of Cultural Studies, Ethnicity and African Development*. 2 (3). pp.219- 230.
- Eka, D. (2000). *Issues in Nigerian English usage*. Scholars Press Nig. Ltd.
- Egwuogu, C. E. (2004). A phonological analysis of Igbo tones. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*, 25(1), 33-52. doi: 10.1163/157006403323149310
- Eze, K. U. & Igwenyi, E. E. (2016). The varieties and features of Nigerian English today. *Awka Journal of Linguistics and Languages (AJILL)* 10. pp. 105-122.
- Fakoya, A. A. (2006). *Nigerian English: Morpholectal classification*. Lagos.
- Gut, U. (2002). *Nigerian English – a typical West African language?* Proceedings of TAPS, Bielefeld, 56-67.
- Jibril, M. (1982). *Phonological variation in Nigerian English*. PhD dissertation. University of Lancaster.
- Jibril, M. (1986). Sociolinguistic variation in Nigerian English. *English worldwide*. 7 pp. 47 – 75.
- Jones, D. (2006). *Cambridge English pronouncing dictionary*. R. Peter; J. Hartman; J. Setter (Eds.) 6th edition. Cambridge University Press.
- Jibril, A. M. (2017). Phonological variation in Nigerian English: A study of vowel harmony. *Journal of Phonetics*, 63, 201-214. doi: 10.1016/j.wocn.2017.05.001.
- Jibril, A. M. (2017). Phonological variation in Nigerian English: A study of vowel harmony. *Journal of Phonetics*, 63, 201-214. doi10.1016/j.wocn.2017.05.001
- Jowitt, D. (1991). *Nigerian English usage: An introduction*. Longman.
- Jowitt, D. (1997). *Nigerian English*. DE GRUYTER.
- Odumu, A. E. (1987). *Nigerian English*. Ahmadu Bello Universities Press.

- Ogunleye, F. (2018). Rhythmic variations in Nigerian English discourse. *African Linguistic Studies*, 32(1), 45-58.
- Oladimeji, O. (2016). A variationist approach to Nigerian English phonology. *World Journal of English Language*. 6 (3). pp. 42-53. doi:10.5430/wjel.v6n3p42. URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v6n3p42>
- Oloidi, O. O. (2018). Language contact and phonological variation in Nigerian Pidgin. *Journal of Language Contact*, 11(1), 183-202. doi: 10.1163/19552629-0110100911(1), 183-202. doi: 10.1163/19552629-01101009
- Okafor, C. (2017). The role of education in shaping phonological classifications in Nigerian English. *Language and Education*, 25(2), 189-204.
- Okedara, B. (2016). Phonological variations in Nigerian English: A sociolinguistic perspective. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*, 18(3), 321-336.
- Oyebode, O. A. (2018). Tonal phonology of Yoruba: A constraint-based approach. *Journal of West African Languages*, 45(1), 1-18.
- Oyeleye, O. (2020). Colonial influences on the phonological characteristics of Nigerian English. *Studies in World Englishes*, 12(4), 459-475.
- Uba, C. N. (2018). Vowel harmony in Igbo: An optimality-theoretic approach. *Journal of Phonetics*, 66, 145-158. doi: 10.1016/j.wocn.2017.12.003
- Udofot, I. (2003). Stress and rhythm in the Nigerian accent of English: a preliminary investigation. *English Worldwide*. 24 (2). pp. 201-220.
- Udofot, I. (2007). *English and the Nigeria situation: Trends and imperatives*. 18th University of Uyo Inaugural Lecture. University of Uyo Press Ltd. 5 – 15.
- Udofot, I. (2022). Phonetics and phonology of Nigerian English. *AKSU Journal of English*. 4 (1). pp. 1-16.
- Ugorji, C. U. C. (2010). An articulatory-perceptual approach to the teaching of pronunciation to L2 Learners. *Journal of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria*. 13 (1), pp. 193-209.
- Wells, J. C. (1982). *Accents of English*. Cambridge University Press.

Appendix 1: Sampled Words for Segmental Features Examination

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. Women | 2. Bird |
| 3. Python | 4. Sardine |
| 5. Rose | 6. Example |
| 7. Flower | 8. Shark |
| 9. Beetle | 10. Antelope |
| 11. Termite | 12. Principal |
| 13. Foster | 14. Abroad |
| 15. Investor | 16. Study |
| 17. Father | 18. Genre |
| 19. Prestige | 20. Coverage |

Appendix 2: Compression Passage Reading for Suprasegmental Features Examination

Although at first, he was grateful for his escape; his situation was a dreadful one. He was wet, he had no dry clothes to change into, and nothing to eat or drink. He saw no future before himself but that of dying of hunger or being eaten by wild animals. He had no weapon either to hunt or kill to get food, or to defend himself against any

other creature that might wish to kill him for its food. He had nothing but a knife, a tobacco pipe, and a little tobacco in a box. These were his only possessions, and he was in such great despair that for a while he ran about like a madman. As night drew near, he began to consider what would be his fate if there were any fierce and hungry wild animals in that country, for night is the time when they always come out looking for their prey.

The only plan that came to his mind was to climb up into a thick, bushy tree, where he resolved to sit all night. The next day, he would consider what death he should die, for he saw no possibility of life. He walked a short way inland, to see if he could find any fresh water to drink, which he did, to his great joy. Having drunk, and put a little tobacco in his mouth to prevent hunger, he went to the tree, climbed up into it, and tried to place himself in such a position that he might not fall if he should sleep. He cut a short tick tree for his defense and then settled himself. Quite tired out by the events of the day, he fell fast asleep, and slept more comfortably than many could have done.

Adapted from: Daniel Defoe's 'Robinson Crusoe'