



A Learnt Accent as “Received” Model in an English-as-a-Second-Language Context

STEPHEN BILLY OLAJIDE
University of Ilorin, Nigeria

OLADIMEJI KASEEM OLANIYI
Federal University, Lokoja, Nigeria.

Abstract. The task of codification and elaboration of the educated varieties of Nigerian English are the ones in current contention among scholars of Nigerian English. Pronunciation issues have however been the bane of Standard English all over the world. While most non-native speakers of English have been able to cross the hurdle of learning the syntax and semantics of Standard English, a recurrent issue in academic discussions has been their inability to approximate the native-like accentual competence. In this paper we have presented submissions of scholars on Nigerian English in comparison with other regional varieties of English belonging to the inner circle. The quality of phonemes in terms of closeness or distance from the prestige, Standard British English, RP has been examined. Considering the close approximation of the phonemic inventory of the Educated Nigerian English model to that of the standard British English, we have found that very few Educated Nigerians use English language effectively. This assessment is made from the perception of how these few Nigerians (i.e. broadcasters) articulate fricatives, affricates, stops or plosives, continuants and central vowels, correctly. The Nigerian RP spoken by these very few ‘educated’ people should qualify to be referred to as a regional RP.

1. Introduction

The impulses that inform the characteristics of Nigerian English include the Syntax, Phonology, Semantics, Pragmatics, and Sociolinguistics. This study is phonological as well as sociolinguistic. The phonology will highlight the phonemic inventories that identify Nigerian English as Nigerian, while the Sociolinguistics will explain why those features identify Nigerians. On the whole, the paper will explain the link between Nigerian English phonology and its sociolinguistics.

Before we begin to trace the literature of Nigerian English from Tiffen (1974) to date; it may be pertinent we give a brief background to this study. Apart from foregrounding the features that identify Basic Nigerian English (see Jibril 1982), this paper will rename the Educated Nigerian English in a rather prestigious pedestal as a variation of the Standard British English, and not as a deviation. English has been not only an international language but second, amalgam and additional language (see Cruttenden 2008:77).

Pronunciation issues have been the bane of Standard English all over the world. While most non-native speakers of English have been able to cross the hurdle of learning the syntax and semantics of Standard English, a recurrent issue in

academic discussions has been their inability to approximate the native-like accentual competence. Thus, non-native English speakers articulate the language segmentally and suprasegmentally.

In a recent publication of Gimson's "Pronunciation of English" revised by Cruttenden (2008), a number of issues that will strengthen the course we intend to champion in this paper are highlighted below:

- that RP started as the accent of the court
- that the BBC favoured the RP
- that RP continues to be diluted
- that greater social and regional variations are now permitted within RP
- that other accents have become acceptable in broadcasting
- that the need to set up the RP as a monolithic standard has weakened
- that there are now variations within RP.

Consequent upon the factors above, the English English is observed to be giving way to Regional RPs', which include those...belonging to the expanding and outer circles and not belonging to the 'new' inner circle English English (see Kachru 1997:213). The new inner circle group includes the United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK), Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Canada has replaced South Africa in that group. The exclusion of South Africa is as a result of the loss of the inactiveness in the speech of real South Africans as opposed to the Apartheid period of white domination in the country.

The purpose of this paper is to cautiously reposition the outer circle group in a prestigious pedestal, against the stigmatized standards with which they are described. Nigeria, for instance, as the case study in this paper, belongs to the outer circle. Other nations in this group include Bangladeshi, Kenya, Pakistan, South Africa, Zambia, Ghana, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri-Lanka, Zimbabwe, India, Singapore, Uganda and Tanzania. In these countries English is spoken as a second, additional and international language (cf. Cruttenden 2008:317). The name given to the kind of English, i.e., Standard Nigerian English, is referred to as Amalgam English according to Cruttenden (ibid), and is the variety believed to be internationally acceptable and intelligible,

described by Brosnahan (1958), followed up in Banjo (1971) as variety III Nigerian English.

2. Defining Nigerian English as Regional RP

Diverse opinions abound on whether Nigerian Standard English exists or not. Jowitt (2008) is reported by Adegbite (2010:14) to have described the diversity of positions in terms of "left", "right" and centre in respect of the attitude of scholars to tolerance of learner errors. The left, towing the line of Kachru (1982) and represented by scholars like Adetugbo (1979a) and Odumuh (1987) who assert that a standard Nigerian English exists and has a right to exist; that it is used by educated people, and has begun to find expression in creative writing; and that it can be an expression of national identity. The "right" is reported to have towed the line of Prator (1968), who maintained the position that the distinctive usage identified in Nigerian English cannot be regarded as standard, because the standard form of a language is one that is generally both acceptable and used by the educated section of the community. The lack of standard is evident in the numerous errors observed in the usage and the lack of institutionalization, in the absence of any dictionary embodying its usage (cf. Salami 1968, Adesanoye 1973).

The "centre" position is reported to be the consensus among scholars of Nigerian English in recent times. Those who belong there hold that a standard form exists in the ontological sense in the usage of educated Nigerians, though the features are yet to be codified (see Grieve 1966, Banjo 1971, Bamgbose 1982, Jibril 1986, Adegbija 2004).

On a realistic note, the argument as to whether a standard, international, or Amalgam Nigerian English exists seems awkward at this time. Rather, efforts from scholars should be geared towards defining the demography, authorities (i.e. speakers), geography, codification norm and acceptance of Standard Nigerian English (nationally and internationally). A standard Nigerian English variety thus exists and has gained wider recognition in academic circles. That suggests why Bamgbose (1998:4) believes that its

codification and acceptability are the most important requirements.

Other scholars who are Pro-British ‘Received Pronunciation’ (RP) include Atoye (1987), Amayo (1988), while the scholars who are anti-RP include Eka (1985), Adetugbo (1987), and Dairo (1988) among others. On several occasions, the educated form of English spoken in Nigeria, especially in very formal contexts and by the national news broadcasters, have been described as the Educated Nigerian English (ENE) by Olaniyi (2010), and as Standard Nigerian English (SNE) by Jibril (1982), Eka (1985), and Jowitt (1991, 1996, 2006). The point we intend to emphasise here is that the term RP is no longer an exclusive term to refer to the Standard British English.

3. ENE as International, Amalgam Received Pronunciation

To describe ENE as a Received Pronunciation of a sort will definitely raise arguments and reactions from scholars, researchers and linguists generally. However the basis for this proposition is a cue taken from Cruttenden (2008:83ff) about the existence of Regional RPs on the one hand and the submissions from the literatures on Nigerian English from Tiffen (1974) to date. A Regional RP in the words of Cruttenden (2008:89) is an “acrolectal variety which approaches RP and can be regarded as a type of Regional “RP”. Cruttenden (2008: *ibid*) looks at some English “set within the basic framework of RP”. He identifies first six systems within the inner circle: General American, Standard Scottish English, Northern (England) English, (Broad) London English, Australian English and Caribbean English. According to Cruttenden (*ibid*) the inner circle qualifies to be described as speakers of the regional forms of RP. He goes further to exemplify some systemic differences between the British RP and the General American. According to him, GA lacks the RP diphthongs /Iə, eə, uə/ which correspond in GA to sequences of short vowel plus /r/, e.g beard, fare, dour, bird, and fur. The diphthongal examples reflect the allied distributional differences between RP and GA, namely that unlike in RP where /r/ occurs only before vowels, GA /r/ occurs only before

consonants and before pause (GA is rhotic and RP non-rhotic).

3.1 General American English (GA)

General America has no /ɹ/. Most commonly those vowels which have /ɹ/ in RP are pronounced with /a: / in GA, e.g., cod, spot, pocket, bottle. But a limited subset has /ɔ: /, e.g. across, gone, often, cough, orange, porridge, etc. The major disparities are illustrated below:

SBE	GA		
	ɒ	a:	
	a:	æ	
	ɒ	ɔ: (in context before	
a voiceless fricative	ɔ:	o:	or nasal
			followed by consonant)

Allied to the pronunciation of /r/ in preconsonantal positions there is considerable alignment of vowels before /r/, so that merry and marry may be pronounced the same. Short and sport may have /ɔ:/ and /o:/ as shown above.

3.2 Scottish English (SE)

In Scottish English (SSE), there are three dialects: Gaelic, Scots and Scottish English. Cruttenden (2008:85) reports that old English spread into the south and east of Scotland at much the same time as it spreads through England and has continued in use as present day Scots. The major differences in phonemes between the SBE and SSE are listed below

SBE	SSE		
		a:	æ
		u:	ʊ
		ɔ:	ɒ
		Iə	x
		Eə	x
		ʊə	x
		əʊ	o:

SSE has no /Iə, eə, uə/ because like GA, it is rhotic, where beard, fare, an dour are pronounced as /bi:rd/, /feir/as /fe:ɹ/ and /du:r/ as /dy: ɹ/. The SSE also shares similar features with GA but today, rhoticity in SSE is declining drastically (Cruttenden *ibid*).

3.3 London English (LE)

Cockney is said to be the basilectal speech of London (see Cruttenden 2008:86). Unlike GA and Standard Scottish English, Cockney is as much a class dialect as a regional one. In its broadest form, the dialect of Cockney includes a considerable vocabulary of its own, including rhyming slang. But the characteristics of Cockney pronunciation are spread more widely through the working class of London than is its vocabulary. The London pronunciation thus differs from the SBE in the following instances.

SBE	London English
Same as SBE	All vowel phonemes
	i:
əI	u:
əʊ	ɔ:
ɔʊ/ɔwə	eI
aI	aI
ɑI	əʊ
æʊ	aʊ
a:	

Examples are found in words such as late, /leIt/, light, /la:t/, load, /l æʊd /, and loud, /la:d/.

SBE	CarbE
	eI
	aI
	əʊ
	Iə
	eə
	ʊə
	aI
	ɑI
	aʊ
	i: clear - /kli:/
	ɛ: fare /fɛ:/
	ɔ: sure /su:ə/

The front short vowels are all closer than RP. The distance between /æ, e, I/ being reduced.

	ə	æ
	Iə	eə /eæ /e.g. 'bear' - /beæ /
old forms of	ɔə	ɔæ /sure / - /ʃɔæ/
consonants	θ	t
	ð	d

Caribbean English vowel system is like that of RP rather than that of General American. Like in Nigerian English, /ə/ is absent in Caribbean English. The vowel is being replaced by /æ/ in words such as father -

3.4 Australian English

Similar differences in pronunciation of phonemes exist in RPs, such as Australian English (AUSE). Cruttenden (2008: 85) records that there is little regional variation in AUSE. The variations, according to him, are largely correlated with social class, and they range from a broad accent all the way up to Regional RP. AUSE shares many features with basilectal London English but with particular combination of other features which identify it. The use of identity here presupposes that articulatory traits can identify a dialect and his speakers. Few differences between the SBE and the Australian English are listed below:

SBE	AUSE
	ɑI
a:	æ
ɑ:	i:
u:	əI
əI	

3.5 Caribbean English

The last Regional RP to be discussed in this paper is the Caribbean English. In most Caribbean islands (Jamaica, Trinidad (including Tobago) and Barbados, together with Guyana), English is spoken as first language (Cruttenden 2008:89). The identifying features of the two RPs are listed below:

/fa:væ/, ‘woman’-/womæn/, and so on. Among consonants, the most obvious characteristics are the absence of / θ, ð / replaced by /t,d/ as in ‘thin’, ‘then’ as /tin, den/.

From the stories which we have told so far about inner circle Englishes apart from SBE, it may be clear that no single variety of English is superior to other varieties. We shall however comparatively exemplify the vowel and consonant systems of Educated Nigerian English in order that we may have a basis to conclude in this paper that Educated Nigerian English is a regional RP

3.6 Nigerian English

Researchers have investigated into most of the interference features from the native languages in Nigeria and have described what they referred to as coalesce phonemes. These phonemes have traits of L1 sounds transferred into English. The consonants of ENE and SBE are juxtaposed in the table below.

Table 1. A Comparison of the SNE, NE and SBE consonant Phonemes

SBE	Jim		Emi		Om		Jom		Adm		Awm		Um		Psnecc**	
	B	v/a	b	v/a	b	v/a	B	v/a	b	v/a	b	v/a	b	v/a	b	v/a
p	P	F	p	f,ph	p	f	ph	f	ph	-	p	-	-	-	p	Ph
b	B	V	b	b	b		B	v	b	-	b	-	-	-	b	V
t	T	-	t	t,th	t	th	T	-	th	-	t	-	-	T	t	Th
d	D	-	d	d,d	d		D	-	d	-	d	-	-	-	d	
k	K	-	k	k,kh	k	kh	K	-	kh	-	k	-	-	-	k	Kh
g	g	-	g	-	g	-	g	-	g	-	g	-	-	-	g	
f	F	-	f	-	f	-	F	p	f	-	f	-	-	-	f	P
v	V	F	v	v,f	v	-	v	f	v	f	v	-	v	F	v	F
θ	Θ	t,d,s	θ	θ,t	θ	t,s	t,s	s	θ	t,s	t	Θ	t	t,s	t	s,θ
ð	Ð	t,d,z	ð	t,ðo	ð	d,z	t,d	z	ð	d,z	d,t	Ð	d	d,z	d	z,ð
s	S	-	s	s,z	s	-	s	-	s	-	s	Z	-	-	s	
z	Z	S	z	z,s	z	-	z	s	z	s	z	S	z	S	z	S
ʃ	f	ʒ	f	-	f	-	f	s	f	f,s	f	-	f	S	f	S
ʒ	ʒ	dʒ	ʒ	ʒ,ʃ	ʒ	-	ʒ	z,d,f,s	ʒ	-	x	ʒ	-	-	ʒ	s,ʃ
h	H		h	-	h	-	x	-	x	-	h		-	-	h	
ʃ	ʃ	f	ʃ		ʃ		ʃ	f	ʃ	f	ʃ	f	ʃ	f	ʃ	f
dʒ	dʒ	J	dʒ	dʒ,ʃ	dʒ	-	dʒ	j,z	dʒ	-	dʒ	-	-	J	dʒ	J
m	M		m	-	m	-	m	-	m	-	m	-	-	-	m	
n	N	ŋ,m	n	-	n	-	n	-	n	-	n	-	-	-	n	
ŋ	ŋ	N	ŋ	ŋ,g,n	ŋ	-	ŋ	n,ng	ŋ	-	ŋ	ŋ,g,n,nk	-	-	ŋ	ng,nk
l	L	L	l	-	l	-	l	l	l	-	l	l	-	-	l	L
r	R	R	r	-	r	-	r	-	r	-	r	-	-	-	r	R
j	J	J	j	-	j	-	j	-	j	-	j	-	-	-	j	J
w	W	W	w	w	w	-	w	w	w	-	w	-	-	-	w	W

SBE	P	B	t	d	k	g	f	v	θ	ð	S	z	ʃ	ʒ	ʃ	dʒ	m	n	ŋ	l	r	W	j
SNE	P	B	t	d	k	g	f	v	θ	ð	S	z	ʃ	ʒ	ʃ	dʒ	m	n	ŋ	l	r	W	j
NE	P	B	t	d	k	g	f	f,p	t	d	S	ʒ	ʒ	ʃ	ʒ	dʒ	m	n	n,m	l	r	W	J

(see Christopherson (1956), Eka (1985:134), Jibril (1982:78), Eka and Udofot (1996); Udofot (2004) among others).

The RP phonemes listed in table 1 above and their corresponding sounds in Nigerian English are observable in the speech of Nigerians who have acquired considerable level of education, exposure, motivation and training in English language (see Eka 1985:10-11). To further buttress our point, the table below presents different models of the RP phonemes and their alternatives in NE

	CM	EKM	ɔ	JIM	EMI	OM	JOM	EUM	UM	BM	EM2	AWM	ADM	BOM	PSNEM						
		B*	V/A	B	V/A	B	V/A	B	V/A	B	V/A	B	V/A	B	B	*					
i:	I	i	-	i:	I	i:	i:,i	i:	i	i	i	i	i	I	i:,I	I	i	i			
I	I	i	I	I	i	I	i	I	I	i	I	I	I	X	i	i					
e	ε	e:	-	ε	e:	e	-	e	ε:,i,ə												
æ	A	æ	-	A	æ,e:εa	a,æ	a	æ	a	a:	a	a	a	a	æ	A	Æ	X	a	a	
a:	A	a	-	a:	ə	a:	a:,a	a:	a	a	a:	a	a	a	a:	A	-	A	a	a,a:,a'	
ɒ	ɔ	ɒ	-	ɔ	ə:,ə	ɒ	ɒ,ʌ	ɒ,o	ʌ	ɔ,ɒ	o,a	ɔ	x	ɔ	ɒ	ɔ	ɒ	X	ɔ	ɔ,D:,ɔ:	
ɔ:	ɔ	ɔ:	-	ɔ	ɔ:	ɒ:	ɒ:	ɒ:		ɔ	o.o:	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ'	ɔ'	ɒ,ɔ	ɔ,u	ɔ	ɔ	
ʊ	U	u	,ʊw	U	Ω	u	u,ʊ	u	u,ʊ	u,ʊ	u:	u	x	u	ʌ	ʊ	ʊ,u	ʊ,u	X	u	u
u:	U	u	-	U	u:,w	u:	u:,u	u:	u'	u,u	u:	u	u	u	u'	u:	u:	-	U	u	u,u:
ʌ	X	ʌ	-	X	-	ε:,ɒ	-	x	ɒ	a,ɔ	u	ɔ	ɔ,ə	ɔ	ɒ	ʌ	ɒ,ɔ	ʌ	ɔ	ɔ	a,ɔ,ɒ
ʒ:	X	ɒ	-	X	-	ə	ε:,e	ε:,e	ʒ:	a:,ɔ	e,a	ε:	x	ɔ:,e	ʒ'	ʒ:	ε	-	e,ɒ,ε	-	ε:,ɔ,e,ε

Table 2. Researchers models of the consonants in SBE and alternatives in NE (Ubong 2009:159)

ə	X	a	-	X	-	eI	ə	ə	ä,v:	a,e	ɔ,o	a	a,e	a	ä	ə	ɒ,ɔ	ə	ɒ,e,ε,ɔ	a,ε,i,ɔ,u	a,ə,e,ɔ
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Table 3. Researchers models of Monophthongs and their Alternatives in Nigerian English (see Ubong 2009:160)

(RP)	CM	JIM	EM1	OM	JOM	EUM	BM	EM2	AWM	ADM	BOM	U	EKM	PSNE									
		B*	V/A	B	V/A	B	V/A	B	V/A	B	V/A	B	V/A	B	B	V/A	D*						
ei	x	x	ei,e	ei	e:,ei	ei	e:,	e,e	ai	x	-	-	e	x	ei	ei	e	-	e	x	-	e,e:	
ai	ai	ai	-	ai		ai	ai	ai		ai	-	ai	ai	-	ai	ai	-	ai	ai	-	ai	-	ai
ɔi	ɔi	ɔi	-	ɔi		ɔi		ɔi	ɔi	ɔi	-	ɔi	ɔi	-	ɔi	ɔi	-	x	ɔi	-	ɔi,ɔI		
əu	x	x	Eu	ou	o:,əu	au		au		au	-	au	ao	o	ɔ	x	x	-	x	x	-	o,ou	
au	au	au	-	au		au		au		au	-	au	au	ao	-	x	au	-	x	au	-	au,ao	
iə	ia	iə	-	iə	ia,ɪə	iə	:,iə,i	ia	ea,εa,	ie	-	ie,ia	iə	-	ia	ia	-	x	Iə	-	Ie,ia,iə		
εə	ia	εə	e:	eI	ε:,εə	x	εə,e:	Iə		ε:	-	e:	x	-	x	εə	ae	ɔ	x	x	εə	e:,ε:,εə	
uə	ua	uə	-	uə	uə,ua	uə	uə,ua	uə	ua,oa	uə,ua	ɔ:	uə	ua,uə		ɔ	uə	ɔ,u,ɒ,u	ɔ	x	uə,ɔə	uə,ua,uə		

TRIPHTHONG

aiə	X	x	X	x	x	x	X	x	aja	x		aja	x	x	x	X	x		awa	x	x	x
auə	X	x	X	x	x	x	X	x	awa	x		awa	x	x	x	X	x	x	aja	x	x	x
ɔIə	X	x	X	x	x	x	X	x	x	x		x	x	x	X	x	x	X	x	x	x	x
əuə	X	x	X	x	x	x	X	x	x	x		x	x	x	X	x	x	X	x	x	x	x

Table 4. Researchers models of Diphthongs and Triphthongs and their Alternatives in Nigerian English

(see Ubong 2009:161)

Note:

- British English (RP)
 - JOM- Jowitt’s (1991)
 - EKM- Ekong’s (1978)
 - JIM- Jibril’s (1982)
 - EM1-Eka’s (1985)
 - EUM-Eka & Udofot’s (1996)
 - OM-Odumuh’s (1987)
 - CM-Christopherson’s (1954)
 - UM-Udofot’s (2004)
 - BM-Banjo’s (1995)
 - Em2-Eka’s (2004)
 - AWM-Awonusi’s (2004)
 - ADM-Adetugbo’s (2004)
 - BOM-Boda’s (1995)
 - BAM- Bamgbose’s (1995)
 - PSNEM**-Possible Standard Nigerian English Monophthongs PSNEC**- Possible Standard Nigerian English Consonants PSNED**- Possible Standard Nigerian English Diphthongs
 - x- No equivalent phoneme
 - B- Basic phonemes in ENE
 - V/A- Variants or Alternants
- *- All phonetic entries represented on the table are understood to be enclosed in square brackets [], while the phonemes of SBE are expected to be enclosed in slanting lines //. We have attempted in this study to show the prevalent monophthongs and diphthongs of Nigerian English, in the three tables above (Bobda, 1995; Banjo, 1996; Udofot 2004).

From the foregoing illustrations, we can begin to assess the distance or closeness between Nigerian English and the Standard British English.

4. Nigerian English approximation to Standard British English

The approach to be employed in this section is implicational. In other words, we shall explain how the phonological features of Nigerian varieties of English on the one hand are noticed in the speech of Educated Nigerian Speakers of English before explaining how close or distant in terms of approximation to RP, ENE is. Educated Nigerian varieties of English differ only in the major points of divergence. These divergent features are to be considered as the regional variants of the Standard British English and not deviant forms (see Cruttenden 2008:75). The table below further explains the differences between the regional varieties.

Table 5: Prototype Educated Nigerian English phonemes

Typology	Convergence	Divergence	Coalescence
Hausa	All R.P. Phonemes	/f/, /p/, /θ/, /ð/, /v/, /əʊ/, /ɜ:/	Diphthongs starting or ending in the short, mid central vowel /ə/. /θ/-/t/, /ð/-/d/, /ɜ/- /ʒ/, /j/- /u/, /h/- /silence/,etc. Vowel intrusion in cases of consonant clusters, i.e., pipul for pi:pl, edukeIʃən for /edjokeIʃn/, etc. All long vowels rendered in their reduced quality, e.g., /a:/ - /a/, /v/- /əʊ/ overlap in words such as ‘holy’, /həʊli/ for /həʊlI/, etc. Mid vowels /ə/, /ʌ/ and /ɜ:/ are rendered /e/, /a/, /ɔ/ in differing word contexts While vocalic systems are reduced but for tense vowels they are lengthened in ENE and vice versa.
Igbo	All R.P. Phonemes	/eI/, /Iə/, /eə/, /oə/, /l, r/	
Yoruba	All R.P. Phonemes	/f, v/, /ʃn/, /ʒn/, /ɜ:/, /ə/, /ð/, /θ/, /və/, and other diphthongs	

The features that mark ENE are the various *shibboleths*. The shibboleths (i.e. the problematic phonemes in terms of articulation) in ENE identify Nigerian varieties of English. Two categories of phonemes present themselves as ‘convergence’ and ‘divergence’ in the Standard English inventory. Where Nigerians experience no difficulty in attaining the almost target language proficiency in English, it is described as a case of ‘convergence’. On the other hand, where they experience difficulty or produce affected forms of the L2, it is described as a case of ‘divergence’.

The ethnic variables that identify Nigerian English do so because they (the variables) can be called ‘stereotypes’. A small number of sociolinguistic markers rise as a result of constant and habitual use to become *stereotypes* (cf. Giglioli 1972:292). Thus, phonemic markers of identity such as /z/, the voiced alveolar fricative instead of /θ/, the voiceless interdental fricative, /f, v/, voiceless and voiced labiodental fricatives instead of the /p, b/, voiceless and voiced bilabial plosive phonemes that identify Educated Hausas when they speak few words of English are *stereotypes* of their ‘back lashing’.

Whereas the Hausas have difficulty in articulating those fricatives mentioned above, the Yorubas do not, but have their own difficult sounds that mark them sociolinguistically as *stereotypes*. Such include the articulation of the voiceless glottal fricative, /h/ and the misplacement of /f/ for /v/ and /s/ for /ʃ/ in speech contexts. The Igbos are identified when they produce /e/, the mid short front vowel instead of /eI/, a diphthong and /l/ the voiced alveolar liquid, instead of /r/, the post alveolar frictionless continuant consonant. The different ethnic variables in Nigerian English, described by Giglioli (1972) as sociolinguistic variables have risen to overt consciousness among Nigerians and linguists, and so have not only earned NE a *stereotype* non-native World English but has remained the means of ethnic identification in speech.

5. Implication for a Phono-Sociolinguistic Study

Some phonological areas of convergence and divergence would seem to have been revealed as points of cognitive strength and weaknesses among Nigerians in the course of attempting to approximate the native-like standard of English, phonologically. To forestall reactions such as would inquire to know what aspect of phonology we have focused in this research; it may be necessary to clarify that this study is segmental with partial exclusion of allophones or diaphones. Moreover, the study is not intended to theoretically investigate, allophonic variations, assimilatory processes, stress or intonation assignment, vowel weakening or lengthening, spirantization or other possible fertile grounds that are begging for research in the phonology of Nigerian English. We have simply carried out a Sociolinguistic study of the phonological variations that exist in Educated Spoken Nigerian English.

Sociolinguistic studies however have revealed that linguistic and social variables co-occur. The pattern of variation is neither fixed nor universal. But, it is a product of the nature of social organizations in the Nigerian society, under study; the manner in which the relevant language is acquired and the historical as well as other contextual variables of its diffusion and use. Our methodology has been to examine L2 performance and competence of ‘Educated’ Nigerians in formal settings. Our choice was to ensure consistency in style, so that duplication of styles will not affect our results in the study.

6. Recommendation and Conclusion

For pedagogical reasons however, the cultural context of the pupils or students must be taken into account in teaching Nigerian students a model of English pronunciation. A teacher of English must identify the areas of divergence or cognitively impelled deficiency peculiar to the ethnic groups of his pupils, so as to comparatively make them see the L1 and L2 forms. The teacher would assist the students to learn by identifying and producing the correct R.P forms, since international intelligibility is the target.

A teacher of English in the twenty first century must perfect the four language skills – writing and speaking, as well as listening and reading - before being certified to practise. This will enable such a teacher to teach the subject effectively using the necessary computer software to demonstrate his complete literacy. The standard learnt (educated) English (ENE) is the model accent that may be used to help Nigerian learners of English become effective speakers of the language.

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