INTRAFERENCE PHENOMENA IN SPOKEN NIGERIAN ENGLISH

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Abstract
The English language spoken in Nigeria is most times considered different due to the interference of many mother tongues preexisting in the country. In fact, language variation is not necessarily the result of the interference of mother tongue, but the results of linguistic and extra linguistic factors within the English language. Clearly, if elements of the same language have enough linguistic substance, they can interfere with each other. Therefore, this study aims to explore the phenomena of intraference in phonology of Nigerian English. Thirty words were used in the oral interview to test teachers of nursery, primary and secondary of Nnamdi Azikiwe and Nwazor Orizu schools, Awka, Anambra State to elicit primary data for analysis. Many speeches by prominent Nigerian intellectuals were also collected and recorded spontaneously through non-participatory observation. The results showed that more than 70 percent of respondents clearly expressed or pronounced the given word. The data is presented in a simple percentage count and annotated where necessary. This thesis is based on William Labov theory of variation sociolinguistics. This paper finds inconsistencies in English phonological rules: spelling, pronunciation, phoneme redistribution and stress placement. Based on this, the researchers conclude that the changes are not to be disregarded because they are the result of the application of internal language rules, common in English and similar to output in all spoken English.

Introduction
In English phonology, there are rules that govern the organizations, patterns and distributions of sound system of a language. These rules in phonology are referred to as phonological rules (PRs). These phonological rules state those generalizations that can be made about the phonological rules as well as phonetic properties of utterances. The ways in which these rules manifest in spoken English, most times, demonstrate the inconsistencies and irregularities of English utterance and spellings. These irregularities do not only manifest in discreet segments but also in suprasegmentals like stress, intonation and others. The manifestation of these irregularities is predominant in the spoken English of Nigerians. This has been variously attributed to the concept of interference because English is learnt in Nigeria as a second language (L2). A look at interference becomes expedient here.

Though Nigerian accent is predominantly attributed to phonological interference, on the contrary, there are some variations of articulation that do not arise as a matter of mother tongue interference, but as a matter of certain existing discrepancies in phonological rules and processes of the English language. Such variations emanating from the phonological dynamics of the English language have been variously termed phonological "intraference", Ekundayo (1-10). Intraference occurs when speakers of a language exaggerate the application of a rule by using it where it originally would not be used. For instance, the sequence of 'st' as observed is not always realized or stressed together at the middle of words as in listen /lisən/, castle /kəesl/ and hustle /hʌsl/. But at word initial and final positions, for example: consist, past, manifest, boast, roast, burst and stress, step, stem, story, state, etc. both /s/ and /t/ sounds are realized, unlike at the middle where /t/ is deleted. Speakers of English in Nigeria tend to stress this sequence at all the environment. This probable exaggeration in pronunciation is called intraference. Phonological intraference is a situation where the knowledge of pronunciation of a structure or a phoneme affects or influences that of another structure or phoneme.

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This research examines intraference phenomenon as it manifests in the phonology of English in Nigerian English (NE). The essence of intraference study is to establish the dynamism in the use and application of the rules of the language. Intraference studies point out misapplication of rules or overgeneralization of rules, such that a rule may be applied in environment where it is not applicable Ekundayo (10).

In handling intraference phenomena in the phonology of English, the following basic questions are designed to guide this research work:

1. To what extent does the phonological rules intraference manifest in the phonology of English?
2. How does inconsistencies in sounds pronunciation and stress placement in English lead to the overgeneralization of phonological rules?
3. To what extent has phonological intraference contributed to distinguishing Nigerian English accent from other internationally acceptable accents?
4. What significant role has the phonological intraference played in justifying Nigerian English phonology?

This research looks at how the phenomenon of phonological intraference, in contrary to the generally agreed concept of interference, accounts for the mispronunciations of words and misplacement of stress and other phonological rules which Nigerian speakers of English manifest. It will examine how phonological intraference and dynamics of English cause the phonological rules variation and the extent to which these can be used to justify Nigerian English Phonology (NEP). It will consider how this phenomenon has contributed to distinguishing Nigerian English Phonology from other international English accents such as BRE and North American English.

Conceptual Framework

Phonology, the second level of language analysis is concerned with the sound pattern of a language. It is the system of contrastive relationships among sounds that constitute the fundamental components of a language. The occurrence of sounds segments in English is not haphazard but governed by the rules of this system. There is the rule of nasalized vowels preceded by a nasal consonant, aspiration rules, vowel lengthening rule, plural realization, and derivation of English past-tense verbs. Our work will show at the end that the reason behind regional differences in spoken English is not just the interference of mother tongue, but the phonological rules intraference: applying the knowledge of a rule where it ordinarily would not be applicable. The consequence is that the phonology of Nigerian English should not be seen as a deviation or errors per-ser, but recognized as a standard form of future phonology of English spoken in this part of the world.

Spoken Nigerian English

Nigerian English (NE) is the variety of English used by educated Nigerians in Nigeria and outside Nigeria. The idiolects of NE share certain common phonological, grammatical and semantic features. Ethno-linguistic, formal education and sociolinguistic parameters are often used to categorizes NE into different varieties. Prominent among them are Brosanhan's 1958, Banjos varieties I, II, III and IV (1970, 1976) and Odumuh's (1980) and Adesanoye's written varieties I, II and III (1973).

Banjo's variety III, which is acrolect in sociolinguistic classification, is often treated as Educated Nigerian English (ENE), also called standard Nigerian English (SNE). ENE/SNE is the variety used by undergraduates and graduates of higher institutions, scholars, the intelligentsia, high ranking army officers, the bar and the bench, educated preachers, broadcasters, children from sophisticated family background, experienced junior civil servants and senior civil servants etc. The phonology of this variety is the focus of this research work.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

The primary factor driving SLA appears to be the language input that learners receive. Learners become more advanced the longer they are immersed in the language they are learning and the more time they spend intentionally reading. Stephen Krashen's input hypothesis "theories that comprehensible input alone is important for second language acquisition" (54). He makes a distinction between language acquisition and language learning claiming that acquisition is a subconscious process while learning is

a conscious one. According to this hypothesis, the acquisition process of L2 is the same as L1 acquisition. Learning, on the other hand, refers to conscious learning and analysis of the language being learned. Krashen maintains that consciously learned language rules play a limited role in language use, serving as a monitor that would check second language output for form-assuming the learner has time, sufficient knowledge, and inclination (what he called the monitor hypothesis). There is a "popular belief that second language acquisition (SLA) is strongly influenced by the learner's first language (L1). The clearest support for this belief comes from foreign accent in the second language (L2) speech of learners" Ellis (19).

Interlanguage
Selinker 1969, 1971 and 1994 popularized interlanguage. He says:

> "interlanguage' is what results from a second language learners attempted production of a target language norm(TL norm), which is different from the corresponding set of expressions a native speaker of the target language (TL) in the same context may produce"(37).

Interlanguage yields new linguistic variety, as features from a group of speakers first language community may be integrated into a dialect of the speakers' second language community Obi-Okoye (244). In this setting, the concept is enriched: an interlanguage is at once the developmental continuum of an individual learner, a microlect. This does not mean that a new English can itself be described as an interlanguage, since while an interlanguage is by definition dynamic and developmental; a New English is, potentially, a fairly stable variety, represents general usage, and is similar in these respects to an "old variety". Also the New English nevertheless clearly contains, as a major constituents elements of a fossilized macrolectal interlanguage Jowitt (53).

Selinker suggests that an investigator into the psychology of second language learning can begin by studying the above processes that lead to the knowledge behind interlanguage.

Interference
Interference is a consequence of languages in contact. It occurs when the features or elements of a native language which has been acquired right from childhood hinder the learning of the second language Anyadiegwu qtd in Obi-Okoye (85). Interference can take place at all levels of the linguistic system; in phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and even the lexicon. In second language acquisition and language contact, the term interference refers to the influence of one language (or variety) on another language in the speech of bilinguals who use both languages. It is observed that phonological interference is ignored because most users use English as their second language. It is neither possible nor necessary for any bilingual (speaking his L1 and English) to speak English as a British national. Eyisi admitted that the phonological features of our local languages have some similarities with unique differences and these differences pose articulation problems of interferences of the first language to the second language (10).

Intraference
Intraference, as the reverse of interference, is the over-generalization of rules in the same language. The knowledge one has about certain rules in the same language is extended to other items that are excluded from it in the language norm. According to Ekundayo, intraference occurs when speakers of a language exaggerate the application of a rule by using it where it originally would not be used. Phonological intraference occurs when one consciously tries to observe the phonological rules but applies it wrongly as a result of words of similar structures/sounds. It is the redeployment of the phonological rules from the areas in the language where they are well established and acceptably used to new areas in the language where they are not well established and questionably used.

Phonological Variation
Phonological variation is concerned with sounds and how we pronounce words. Phonological variations show case how differences in the pronunciation of words, shows difference or variety of the same language. Phonological variation is sometimes referred to as difference in accents. For instance, it is a common knowledge that the North American English differs from the British or Irish English. This difference show cases in the pronunciation of English words in these two Englishes. Phonological

variation (differences between accents) come in a variety of forms. Some speakers might be difficult to place geographically while others who speak with broader accent might use a number of localized pronunciation features. Phonological variation might include the articulation of certain consonant or vowels. For instance, most Nigerian speakers of English do not really differentiate between short/I/ and the long /I:/vowels. Conclusively, the perception of spoken language is greatly complicated by widespread processes of phonological variation.

Theoretical Review

The work is based on the variationist sociolinguistic approach or theory as proposed by William Labov in his seminal works on variationist sociolinguistics in 1963, 1969,1972,1994,2001, and on a research titled "The Concept of Intraference in English: The Morphemic example in English as a second Language"; and Jack C. Richard's works on "Intralingual interference" as theoretical framework. The central idea of this theory (variationist sociolinguistics) holds that variation is inherent in linguistic structure. The theory avows that the way a language is spoken (or written) differs across individuals as well as the situations by the same speaker and/ or writer. Labov contends that such differences are not only normal but also necessary to language's functioning.

Literature Review

In 2017, Deddy Subandowo investigated the language interference in the students' speaking skills and the factors affecting the language interference. According to his result, the factors affecting mother tongue interference in the students' pronunciation were the environment, students' motivation and the language sound system.

In 2013, Bode Steve Ekundayo conducted a research on the lexico-semantic "intraference" in educated Nigerian English (ENE). The result discovered that educated Nigerians regularly impose meanings on some words, extend the meaning of words, weaken or reverse word meanings, and also redeploy the lexico-semantic dynamics of the language

Similarly in 2009, Awonusi's work on spelling-induced pronunciation observed that Nigerians mix-up voiced and voiceless phonemes and do devoice the final -ed past tense morpheme after voiceless consonants.

In 1997, Udofot carried out a well instructive research on the rhythm of Nigerian English which examines suprasegmental and aspect of connected speech. Findings showed that Nigerian speakers of English tend to impose the tonal features of their various native languages on English.

Nevertheless, a good review of the above examined studies and others not accounted for in this work clearly shows that none of the scholars has attempted, intraference phenomena in the phonology of Nigerian Spoken English. This challenges and stimulates the researcher to embark on this study.

Methodology

The nature of the present study places it in the domain of qualitative and descriptive design. Oral interview and speeches of some academia are gathered through non-participant observation and recording to establish the inconsistencies in the phonological rule. The areas examined include Nursery, Primary and Secondary schools of Nnamdi Azikiwe University and Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Awka. The speech events of many academia are observed and recorded. One hundred and fifty teachers were chosen to articulate or pronounce the words and one hundred and thirty were recorded and analyzed. However, a few specimen is presented here because of space constraint. To gather data for this work, thirty (30) questions are used for the oral interview. The data for this study are analyzed using the descriptive and qualitative methods. Data are presented in tables using percentage count accompanied with annotations where necessary.

Data presentation

The data are presented in tabular forms which indicate the date of data assemblage, class of respondents, field/course of study of respondents, school, population of respondents, percentage of right and wrong

response and comment. For easy of interpretation under the column school, U stands for Unizik Nursery/ Primary and secondary school and "N" stands for Nwafor Orizu Nursery /Primary and Secondary schools Awka, Anambra State.

Table 1: Distribution and responses of respondents

Date	Class status	Field/ Course	School	Population	Percentage wrong	Percentage right	Comment
June 2021	Graduate	English/Literature	(U)	10	82%	18%	pronunciation and articulation
July 2021	Graduate	Eng. Educ.	(N)	20	80%	20%	Both pronunciation and articulation
June 2021	Graduate	Chemistry	(U)	10	88%	12%	Pronunciation and articulation
June 2021	Graduate	Geography	(U)	10	Over 85%	15%	Pronunciation only
July 2021	Graduate	Economics	(N)	10	Over 86%	14%	Pronunciation only
July 2021	Graduate	Linguistics	(N)	10	Over 81%	19%	Pronunciation only
June 2021	Graduate	Computer	(U)	10	Over 83%	17%	Pronunciation
June 2021	Graduate	Mathematics	(U)	10	Over 90%	10%	Pronunciation
June 2021	Graduate	Mass. Comm	(U)	10	Over 80%	20%	Pronunciation
July 2021	Graduate	Physics	(N)	10	Over 90%	10%	Pronunciation
July 2021	Graduate	Biology	(N)	10	Over 85%	Above 19%	Pronunciation

Table 2 below shows the words
Table 2 below shows the words that are used to generate the responses and figures in the table 1 above and how the words were generally articulated or pronounced.

Table 2: Words given to the respondents to pronounce or articulate used in the responses of respondents.

Words	Nigerian over 70%	Influence or point of intraference	Received pronunciation
Elite	/elait/	/ai/in words like rite, kite	/eiliːt/ or /iliːt/
Granite	/grænait/	as in white, quite	/grænit/
Determine	/ditæmin/ or /diteæmain/	As in mine, wine, dine, pine	/ditɜːmin/
Famine	/fæmain/	mine, fine, sign, nine, shine etc	/fæmin/
Feminine	/feminain/	mine, fine, sign, nine, shine etc	/feminin/

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Masculine	/mæskulain/	as in line, riverine, underline etc	/mæskjəlin/
Citadel	/saitadel/	cite, site, size, wise, rise etc	/sitədel/
Diffuse	/daifjuz/	as in digestion, digress etc	/difju:z/
Expertise	/espætaiz/	as in advertise, size, wise etc	/ekspɜ:ti:z/
Divorce	/daivɔ:s/	as in force, horse etc	/divɔ:s/
Imbecile	/imbesail/	as in while, silent, site, file	/imbəsi:l/
Vineyard	/vain-yæd/	as in regularly "vine" /vain/ and yard combine	/vinj:d/

Let us now present the distribution and responses of the respondents for the data.

Table 4: The distribution and percentage of responses for the words

Date	Class status	Field/ Course	School	Population	Percentage wrong	Percentage right	Comment
June 2021	Graduate	English/Literature	(U)	10	85%	15%	pronunciation and articulation
July 2021	Graduate	Eng. Educ.	(N)	20	81%	19%	Both pronunciation and articulation
June 2021	Graduate	Chemistry	(U)	10	90%	10%	Pronunciation and articulation
June 2021	Graduate	Geography	(U)	10	Over 89%	11%	Pronunciation only
July 2021	Graduate	Economics	(N)	10	Over 88%	12%	Pronunciation only
July 2021	Graduate	Linguistics	(N)	10	Over 80%	20%	Pronunciation only
June 2021	Graduate	Computer	(U)	10	Over 88%	12%	Pronunciation
June 2021	Graduate	Mathematics	(U)	20	Over 91%	9%	Pronunciation
June 2021	Graduate	Mass. Comm	(U)	10	Over 80%	20%	Pronunciation
July 2021	Graduate	Physics	(N)	10	Over 90%	10%	Pronunciation
July 2021	Graduate	Biology	(N)	10	Over 87%	Above 13%	Pronunciation

Data analysis

Table 5: intraference elicited from Nursery/Primary and secondary school teachers

Word	Date /Location	Total No. of Respondents	Educational status	ENE Variant	Percentage % Wrong	SBE or RP	Percentage % Right
Confusion	July 2021 U	20	BA	/kɔnfuʃɔn/	85%	/kənfjuːʒən/	15%
Equation	June 2021 U	20	B.ED	/ɪkweʃɔn/	80%	/ɪkweɪʒən/	20%
Invasion	June 2021 U	10	BA	/invaːʃon/	85%	/inveiʒən/	15%
Decision	June 2021 N	20	MA/MED	/disiʃən/	87%	/disiʒen/	13%
Brochure	June 2021 N	20	M/ED	/brəutʃɔ/ /brəukiɔ/	50%	/brəuʃə/	50%
Machination	July, 2021 N	20	B.ED	/mætʃineʃən/	90%	/mækineiʃən/	10%
Shepherd	June 2021 U	20	BA	/ʃefæd/	76%	/ʃepəd/	24%

In these instances, both interference and intraference may have worked together to make them replace /ʒ/ with /ʃ/ in the exceptions given above. There is interference here because most Nigerian languages do not have the palat– alveolar fricative /ʒ/ and where it exists, it is not used in the same way or is phonologically employed as in English. So /ʃ/ is its closest alternative and is readily used to replace it. On the other hand, intraference is more at work here because many can articulate the palate – alveolar fricative /ʒ/ correctly in some words like measure /meʒə/, pleasure /pleʒə/, leisure /leʒə/, closure /kləuʒə/, erosion /irəuʒən/, fusion /fjuːʒən/ etc. Phonetics and Phonology teachers even teach and articulate it correctly in classes. Therefore, it is the over-generalization of /ʃ/ for all -tion and -soin suffixes that reinforces whatever trace of interference that may be implicated in these cases. Furthermore, the knowledge of regular pronunciation of "ph" realized as /f/ as in words like Joseph /dʒəusef/, phosphorous /fɔsfərəs/ Philip /fillip/ etc influences the pronunciation of shepherd. One always hears "the Lord is my shepherd /ʃəfæd/ instead of /ʃəpəd/.

The data above present intraference phenomena as they manifest in the phonology of English. It is by no means an extensive or comprehensive data as careful study will reveal more of these in the spoken English of Nigerians. The cases presented show high level of phonological intraference in the spoken English of Nigerians.

Findings
From table 1, It is obvious that Nigerian English speakers performed poorly both in articulation and pronunciation of words presented to them by the researcher. On the column of percentage wrong, almost all the teachers performed 70% and above poorly. This case extends to so many other words in the

pronunciation of Nigerian English speakers. The sources of these intraference phenomena are given in the tables two and three where the data was presented.

Data elicited from all the respondents as presented in table show all recorded 70% and above wrong and 20% or below right. This indicates that majority of Nigerian English speakers do not observe the exceptions to this rule: silence /e/ after certain consonants.Another source of intraference phenomena in the phonology of English is the influence of homophones and homonyms.

Intraference in stress pattern is another area where Nigerians over generalize phonological rules in the placement of stress on English words. Starting with the disyllabic nouns and verbs, we observe that Nigerian speakers often transfer stress rules. For instance, RP's in-'ter-prete /'int3:prit/ is stressed on the first syllable in NE as 'in-ter-prete /'intæprit/, fanatics – fa-'na-tic /fə'nætik/ in NE, etc. In all the instances, it is traced to intraference, not interference.
This chapter concludes by examining the role phonological intraference has played in shaping what could be called Nigerian English phonology today.

Conclusion
In this research, attempts have been directed at intraference phenomena in the phonology of English using Labov's variationist sociolinguistic theory or approach. Based on the analysis of data and the findings, the following conclusions were made. First, after analyzing the data, it is discovered that most speakers observe the phonological rules applied in a closely related word (in terms of shape or spelling) when they articulate words. The same is applicable to stress. Phonological intraference manifests in their supra-segmental features when the knowledge of stress of an individual word affects the other word. Second, the researcher concludes that intraference and not just intereference is also responsible for shaping of the phonology of Nigerian English.
Third, since the variation produced by Nigerian English speakers are mutually intelligible with international varieties such as the SBE and NAE, it is therefore concluded that issues of phonological intraference in Nigerian English (NE) should not be regarded as vulgar errors because they do not sound like SBE or NAE.

Recommendations
The researcher recommends that further intraference phenomenon analysis should be investigated in other levels and aspects of English. Further researches should be explored on the use of phrasal verbs among Nigerian English speakers to determine how the knowledge of one phrasal verb affects the usage of another closely related one. Intraference study should also be carried out on English collocations. Such study will reveal how Nigerian speakers over-generalize words that collocate.

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