The Phonemic Realisations of the Letter <Ii> and <Yy> in Educated Nigerian English Accent and its Implications for ESL Teaching and Learning[1]

Las Realizaciones Fonéticas de la Letra <Ii> y <Yy> en el Acento del Inglés Nigeriano Estándar y sus Implicaciones para la Enseñanza y Aprendizaje del Inglés como Segunda Lengua

Omowumi Bode Steve Ekundayo[2]*
University of Benin, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper examines the phonemic realisations of the letter <Ii> and <Yy> in Educated Nigerian English Accent (ENEA) as a second language. It is based on the concept of intraference. Examples were gathered from 2005 to 2013 in a national survey through interviews, participant observation and the recording of spontaneous speeches. The method of analysis is eclectic: qualitative textual analysis and description, and quantitative statistical presentation of data. Ordinal data are presented in percentile and frequency tables and charts and the linguistic texts are described, explained and compared with RP variants. The study established that educated Nigerians redeploy the various British RP realisations of the letters <i> and <y> indiscriminately to pronounce words in which the letters appear in a manner that RP and other native English accents may not pronounce them, thereby producing phonological variants. Since the variants emanate from the (un)conscious redeployment of underlying RP phonemic realisations of the letters and since they are institutionalised in ENE, the paper proposes that they be treated as variations that characterise ESL and Educated Nigerian English Accent (ENEA).

115

Key words: Intraference, letters <i>and <y>, phonemic realisations, ENEA, phonological variation.

Resumen

Este artículo examina las realizaciones fonéticas de la letra <Ii> y <Yy> en el acento del inglés nigeriano estándar como segunda lengua. Esta revisión se basa en el concepto de intraferencia. Los ejemplos fueron recopilados desde el 2005 al 2013 en una encuesta nacional a través de la aplicación de entrevistas, observación participativa, y el registro de discursos espontáneos. Se utilizó el método de análisis ecléctico: análisis textual cualitativo, descripción y presentación estadística de los datos. Los datos ordinales son presentados en tablas de frecuencia, porcentaje, gráficos y los textos lingüísticos son descritos, explicados y comparados con variantes de pronunciación recibida, RP. El estudio estableció que la población nigeriana educada reorganiza las variadas realizaciones de las letras <Ii> y <Yy> de acuerdo a la pronunciación recibida RP del inglés británico de manera indiscriminada para pronunciar palabras en las que aparecen palabras en la manera en que RP y otros acentos nativos de inglés podrían no ser pronunciados por ellos, de esa manera produciendo variantes fonológicas. Dado que las variantes provienen de la inconsciente redistribución subyacente de las realizaciones fonéticas de las letras y desde que se institucionalizaron en ENE, el artículo propone que pueden ser considerados como variaciones que caracterizan ESL y (ENEA).

Palabras clave: Intraferencia, letras <i> y <y>, realizaciones fonéticas, ENEA, variación fonológica.

Resumo

Este artigo examina as realizações fonéticas da letra <Ii> e <Yy> no sotaque do inglês nigeriano padrão como segunda língua. Esta revisão se baseia no conceito de intraferência. Os exemplos foram recopilados desde 2005 até 2013 em uma pesquisa de nacional através da aplicação de entrevistas, observação participativa, e o registro de discursos espontâneos. Utilizou-se o método de análise eclética: análise textual qualitativo, descrição e apresentação estadística dos dados. Os dados ordinais são apresentados em tabelas de frequência, porcentagem, gráficas e os textos linguísticos são descritos, explicados e comparados com variantes de pronunciação recebida, RP. O estudo estabeleceu que a população nigeriana educada reorganiza as variadas realizações das letras <Ii> e <Yy> de acordo com a pronunciação recebida RP do inglês britânico de maneira indiscriminada para pronunciar palavras nas que aparecem palavras na maneira em que RP e outros sotaques nativos de inglês poderiam não ser pronunciados por eles, dessa maneira produzindo variantes fonológicas. Dado que as variantes provêm da inconsciente redistribuição subjacente das realizações fonéticas das letras e desde que se institucionalizaram em ENE, o artigo propõe que podem ser considerados como variações que caracterizam ESL e (ENEA).

Palavras chave: Intraferência, letras <i> e <y>, realizações fonéticas, ENEA, variação fonológica.

116

Introduction

Nigerians speak English in the way they have been taught formally in school, according to the information they gather from grammar textbooks and pronunciation cues from educated speakers, standard dictionaries and naturally in the way they use their languages. For these reasons, interference features abound in Nigerian English varieties. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik (1985) say that ESL variations emanate from interference and that some of the "interference varieties are so widespread in a community and of such long standing that some believe them stable and adequate enough to be institutionalised and hence to be regarded as varieties of English in their own right…" (pp. 27-28). However, it is shown in this paper that some ESL variations emanate not from interference but from intraference, which is a lexicalised conceptualisation of such well-known terminologies as 'intralingual interference' (Richarda & Sampson, 1984, p. 6), the 'overgeneralisation of linguistic rules and items' (Selinker, 1984, p. 37) and 'the internal principle of linguistic change' (Labov, 1994, p.84). The paper examines how intraference manifests in ENEA in the articulation of letters the <i> and <y> (pronounced in the same way in RP and other native English varieties).

Nigerian English (NigE) is one of the leading English as a-second-language (ESL) varieties in the world at present. English is the official (but not national) language in Nigeria. However, Nigerian English is not a homogeneous entity. It is often assessed, described and categorized from the perspectives of region, linguistics, sociolinguistics and formal education. Many varieties come to the fore at the regional level; for example, Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Urhobo, Edo, etc varieties. Ethno-linguistic and phonological deviations are usually used to categorize regional varieties. Three varieties of *basilect*, *acrolect*, and *mesolect* are invariably delineated on the sociolinguistic plane. The *basilect* is the lowest variety at the base of the sociolinguistic pyramid associated with Nigerians who do not have higher formal education and wide socio-educational interaction. The *mesolect* is a variety associated with a majority of literate Nigerians who may not be so highly educated such as secondary school leavers, junior civil servants, young sales men, the rank and file of military and para-military personnel, among many others. The *acrolect*, which is the focus of this paper, is the quintessential variety of NigE at the top of the social pyramid. It is associated with highly educated Nigerians such as graduates, lecturers, writers, journalists, senior government officials, etc.

117

The typologies of Nigerian English according to educational and linguistic criteria are the most popular ones. (Brosnahan, 1958;

Adekunle, 1979; Banjo, 1970, 1996; Odumuh, 1980; Udofot, 1997). Banjo's and Odumuh's identical classifications of Varieties (V) 1, II, III and IV are the most popularly used or cited. Accordingly, V.I is the lowest type that is associated with primary school pupils and leavers and some secondary school students. This variety is characterised by egregious grammatical errors, mispronunciation and broken structures. V. II is an improvement on V.I. It is the variety that over 70% of literate and educated Nigerians use. Errors of grammar and articulation, according to the standards of RP/British English and highly educated Nigerians, are reduced in this variety. V.III is the educated variety. Like the acrolect, it is the variety associated with highly educated Nigerians which is very close to **SBE** and **RP** in syntax and pronunciation. This variety is also called Educated Nigerian English or Standard Nigerian English. It is the same as the acrolect. According to Banjo, these classifications are not clear-cut, for there are overlaps. "There can, in truth, never be any firm dividing lines" (Banjo, 1996, p.79).

Although the phonemic trends examined manifest in all the varieties, this paper concentrates on the cases in ENE. The paper is an expanded version of an integral part of a major survey of intraference variations in ENE from 2005 to 2013. It was designed to answer these questions: (i) Do educated Nigerians articulate the letters <i> and <y> differently from the way native speakers pronounce them? (ii) Are there significant cases of such differences in ENE? (iii) Why do Nigerian users of English as a second language pronounce the two letters differently from native speakers? and (iv) How do we treat the variants in the teaching and description of ESL? The paper adopted the concept of intraference to (1) demonstrate how the phonemic realisations of the letters <i> and <y> intrafere with (substitute or replace) one another, (2) present examples and patterns of the realisations and (3) propose how these features should be treated in teaching and learning English in ESL settings.

Literature Review

The concepts of interference and intraference underlie this paper. In ESL, interference and contrastive analysis (James, 1950; Weinreich, 1957) were the more popular concepts which linguists used to predict sources of errors and deviations prior to the 1960s (Akere, 2009, p. 5; Surakat, 2010, p. 102). Interference, also called negative language transfer, is a language user's habit of transferring the features, rules and meanings of his/her native language to his/her foreign or second language. It occurs at all levels of linguistic organisation, the most common being the phonological ones which manifest in phonemic

118

change/replacement and prosodic features. For example, most Nigerians pronounce <the> as /**di**/ or /**di**:/ as against RP /**ði**:/ or /**ðə**/ because the voiced dental fricative /**ð**/ and schwa /**ə**/ are not in Nigerian local languages; hence they are often replaced with the nearest alveolar stop /**d**/ and the vowels /**i**/, /**e**/ or /**a**/ for /**ə**/. According to Ekundayo (2006), interference and contrastive analysis do not examine critically HOW the rules and dynamics of the second language itself make learners produce coinages and variations, an issue which Corder (1980), Selinker (1971) Richards (1984), among others, "took up vigorously in the turn of the 1960s" and started making a strong case for intralingual interference, the overgeneralisation of linguistic features, among other terms used (p. 40).

The term *intraference* in this field is not as popular as interference. The application of the word intraference may be traced to several independent outstanding works separated by time and long distances: Barry Hale (2000), an Australian video artist, uses the term 'intraference mirror' in a non-linguistic or extra-linguistic context to denote a simple video feedback loop which he manipulates to create evolving images in real time (www.barryhale.intraferencemirrors). In linguistics, William Croft (2000, 2003) uses the term as later Ekundayo (2006, 2014). According to Croft "different elements of the same language can interfere with each other if they share enough linguistic substance," and that intraference occurs when language items are affected by different dialects, sociolinguistic variants or other structures of the same language (Croft, 2000, pp. 111-165).

Ekundayo (2006) conceptualises intraference as "the habit of transferring the rules and dynamics of a language from a section where they have been established and where they acceptably operate to another section within the language where they hitherto used not to operate. Since such a transfer is within the language, it is better tagged intraference, which is the reverse of interference" (p. 20). Ekundayo (2014) argues that intraference emanates from two major factors: psycho-sociolinguistic features, on the one hand, and linguistic dynamics, on the other. These two forces combine to influence a nonnative speaker of a language to produce phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and orthographic variants. The psycho-sociolingustic is an amalgam of two sub-factors. The first is the social knowledge, context and setting of the speakers; for when a new concept, experience, event, etc confronts nonnative speakers, and even native speakers of a language, they fall back on the dynamics, features and rules of the language and (re)deploy them to express the new experience and idea. This linguistic habit may generate a new linguistic structure, or add a new layer of meaning to an existing structure. The second sub-factor of the psycho-sociolinguistic set is the brain or mind mechanism of the users, the way the users

119

view and rearrange features of the language creatively or otherwise in their minds. Precisely, it relates to Chomsky's (1965) *competence* and *performance*. Competence refers to the underlying innate linguistic knowledge of a speaker and performance denotes the practical, actual use of language in a given situation. Intraference cases are found in performance, but they first originate from competence because the speaker has a measure of competence (knowledge) of the language, either in *restricted* or *elaborated code,* in Bernstein's (1971) terms. The social knowledge and context, as in the ESL context of this study, often influence the redeployment of the language features and rules (the linguistic factor).

The linguistic factor generates the five major types of intraference: phonological, graphological or orthographic, morphemic or morphological, morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic with many sub-divisions, which Ekundayo (2006) and (2014) surveyed in Educated Nigerian English (ENE). The phonemic realisations of the letters <i> and <y> are a small sub-set of the phonological type. In summary, Ekundayo (2006, 2014) uses intraference to round up a number of linguistic habits in (but not restricted to) a second language. it is used to conceptualise, describe and account for (i) the linguistic features of a variety which emanate from the redeployment of the internal features and rules of a language in new contexts without reference to another language, (ii) the features in a particularly variety arising from the interaction of the variety with another variety of the language; for example, Americanisms in Nigerian English are not interference but intraference features: English A (NigE) assuming the features of English B AmE (See Awonusi, 1994; Igboanusi, 2003). Take the word <advertisement> for example, which is /əd'vɜ:tɪsmənt/ in RP but /ædvər'taɪzmənt/ in AmE and /ædvæ'taɪzment/ or /ædvæ'tɪzment/ in NigE. The American variant was initially (and still is) a product of linguistic intraference because it is the redeployment of the well-known phonemic realisations of the letters <i> as /aɪ/, <er> as /ə/ and <s> as /z/ in the English language that generate(d) the American variant. These phonemes are all in English and therefore intra-. The NigE variant similar to the AmE variant may be explained as either the intraference of Americanism or simply as phonological intraference. As the intraference of Americanism, it means that the pronunciation is borrowed from AmE accent (intraference of Americanism in another variety of the same language). As phonological intraference, it means that NigE adopt(ed) the same process which AmE redeploy(ed) to produce the variant /ædvæ'taɪzment/ or /ædvæ'tɪzment/: the redeployment of /æ/ for <a> and <er>, and /z/ for <s>. All considered, most educated Nigerians do not necessarily listen to Americans before

120

they attempt to articulate words in performance. They would rather first pronounce it according to their phonological competences. Ekundayo also uses intraference to denote spelling pronunciation, the creative (re) application of language features and rules to fabricate new structures and meanings; for example *sickler* in NigE for 'SS genotype carrier or one who regularly falls ill'; *aristo babe* for 'a girl or lady who flirts and has sex with aristocrats (rich men) to earn a living or make money.' In phonology, intraference involves the reapplication and extension of segmental and suprasegmental features and rules to structures in which they do not apply in RP. The letters <i> and <y> in RP are realised phonemically as follows:

$$/ɪ/\text{-------------it, dig, graffiti, city, tidy}$$

Letters *<i, y>*,   /j/------------young, yet, joyous

$$/i:/\text{-----------machine, police}$$

$$/aɪ/\text{-----------shine, iron, cry, why.}$$

Simo Bodda (1995) shows that Nigerian and Cameroonian English varieties substitute /i/ for RP /ɪː/, /ɪ/ and /aɪ/, /a/ for RP /æ/ and /ə/, as in Nigerian <beer> /bia/, <fear>/fia/, etc for RP /bɪə/ and /fɪə/. Bobda's study covered a broad spectrum of Nigerian and Cameroonian English varieties encompassing the idiolects of the educated and uneducated (pp. 249-255). Some of the cases in his inventory do not or hardly occur in ENEA, which is the focus of this paper. ENEA, the spoken variety of 'Standard Nigerian English' (SNE) or ENE is similar to RP. Ugorji (2010) also shows how educated Nigerians reassign the phonemic realisations of letters <i> and <y> to different words in his survey of the basilect, mesolect and acrolect of Nigerian English, a situation where /ɪ/. I: or /i/ occurs in 'queen, seed, invitee, sick, sit, pill,' among other examples (p.90). Ugorji says that that /i/ and /ɪ/ are variants in the acrolect of Nigerian English. Ubong and Babatunde (2011) equally observe that "more than one phoneme may function as alternants and variants for a single RP model" (548). For example, RP /i:/ and /ɪ/ are realised in NigE as /i/, /ɪ/ and /i:/. Ugorji's inventory of the phonological features of Nigerian English takes the acrolect very close to RP, a closeness which Jowitt (retrieved 2016) also admits: "Educated, acrolectal Nigerian speakers of English have in their vowel system sounds which are to a great extent those of British RP, although there are a considerable number of variants which are also found in the relevant 'regional' basilect-mesolect" (p.11).

Ekundayo, Longe, and Teilanyo (2012) further show that NigE articulation of words like <omniscience> /ɔmni'saiens/ for RP

121

/'ɔmnisɪəns/, <dwarf> /dwa:f/ for RP /dwɔ:f/, <lettuce> /'letus/ for RP /letɪs/, <incumbent> /'inkumbent/ for RP /ɪn'kʌmbənt/, etc are the outcomes of phonological intraference, not interference (pp. 90-93). Although a number of works have treated the articulation of various phonemes in NigE, predominantly from the perspective of interference, (Jubil, 1979; Amayo, 1986; Ikara, 1986; Awonusi, 2007; Soneye, 2008; Dadzie & Awonusi, 2009; etc), none has isolated the letters <y> and <i> to determine in a nation-wide survey how educated Nigerians redeploy and redistribute the underlying RP and/or native English phonemic realisations of the letters, a gap that this paper fills. The paper documents thirty-six words in which the underlying RP phonemic realisations of the letters <i> and <y> are redeployed in patterns different from RP. As a result of phonological intraference, educated Nigerian speakers of English as a second language often mix up the phonemic realsations of the letters <i> and <y> as /ɑɪ/, /ɪ/ and /i:/ respectively.

Methodology

Research Design

The paper is a survey of the linguistic occurrence of intraference features in Nigerian ESL. It adopted an eclectic approach: the qualitative method of textual analysis and the quantitative method of statistical presentation of ordinal data in simple percentile, frequency tables and graphs. It was assumed that the phonemic realisations of letters <i> and <y> 'intrafere' with (substitute, displace) one another in the spoken English of educated Nigerians. Focus was on currency of the variants and educational status of the population as defined in context and participants below; not necessarily on age, sex and individual ranks of the educated people surveyed. The transcription used is IPA. Specifically, Daniel Jones' phonetic symbols in *Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary* (2006, inside front page), also in *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2007, inside front page) and in Awonusi (2009, p. 10, column B) were used for the RP/native English transcriptions of the cases here.

122

Context and Participants

The study was carried out in Nigeria. Educated Nigerians were surveyed from May 2005 to May 2013. Nigerians in the continuum of National Diploma (ND) minimum to Ph.D./Professor, those who have post-secondary school certificate/qualifications, civil servants and workers with many working-year experience are considered educated

in this study. Informants were between 19 and 70 years, comprising lecturers and final year students in English and Literature, Linguistics, and International Studies and Diplomacy, Mass Communication, Theatre Arts and other departments in ten government-owned universities and other schools tested the six geo-political zones of Nigeria: the South-West, the multi-lingual South-South, the South-East the North Central, North Eat and North West. The universities and institutions visited are Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Bayero University, Kano (North); University of Lagos, Lagos, Federal University of Technology, Akure (West); University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (East); University of Ilorin, Ilorin, University of Abuja, Federal Capital Territory (North-Central); University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, and the University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt (South-South). Four federal government-owned polytechnics were also surveyed. They are Federal Polytechnic, Auchi (South-South), Federal Polytechnic, Ede Osun State (West), Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State (Middle-Belt, North Central), Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna State (North) and Federal Polytechnic, Oko, Anambra State (East).

In addition, some cases were elicited from the live performances of ten trained Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) newscasters and ten trained newscasters with State-owned television stations and five with three private television stations: African Independent Television (AIT), Independent Television (ITV) and Silver Bird Television (STV). Where 0 -29 of the respondents used a variant, it is tagged *isolated*, 30 to 44% is *emerging variant,* 45-49% is *free variant* 51-59% is *common*, 60-79% *widespread* and 80-100% *entrenched*.

Data Collection Instruments

Speech recording, participant observation and interview were used to gather data. The interviews and observations were mainly unstructured and conducted in both formal and informal settings such as university classes and lecture theatres, staff rooms, lecturers' offices, churches and social gatherings where the researchers either participated in or observed linguistic events. For this sub-section of the nation-wide survey, thirty-six (36) words were written in charts and flexible banners for students to pronounce or on papers for individual respondents to articulate. Before each interview, the researcher counted or established the number of informants on the spot and after the articulation of the words, those who articulated them in RP or native English accent were counted and isolated from those who pronounced them in NigE accent. The tallying and percentile counts for the words were done manually from 2005 to 2013 and then arranged in a table.

123

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Thirty-six variants are presented and annotated in the table below.

Table 1. Words with the Intraference of /aɪ/ and /ɪ/ or /i/ for the Letters <Ii> and <Yy>

S/N	Words	RP	Percentage of RP over 50,000	ENEA	Percentage of ENE over 50,000	Intraference Source	Degree of Spread
1	advertisement	əd'vɜ:tɪsmənt	2,000/4%	ædvə'taɪzment// ædvætɪzment/	30,000/60% 18,000/36%	/aɪ/ for <i>	widespread
2	annihilate	ə'naɪəleɪt	1,000/2%	ænɪ'hɪlet	49,000/98%	/aɪ/ for <i>	entrenched
3	awry	ə'raɪ	0/0%	ɔ:rɪ	50,000/100%	/ɪ/ for <y>, as in gory), worry,	entrenched
4	bigamy	'bɪɡəmɪ	500/1%	'baɪɡæmɪ 'bɪɡæmɪ	30,000/60% 19,500/39%	/baɪ/ for <bi-, by-	widespread
5	bigot	'bɪɡətə	500/1%	'baɪɡətə 'bɪɡəts	35,000/70% 14,500/29%	as bisexual, biennial, as in bipolar, etc.	widespread
6	citadel	'sɪtədəl	10,000/20%	'saɪtædel /sɪtædel	30,000/60% 10,000/20%	/aɪ/ for <i>, as in cite, rite, etc	widespread
7	dandelion	'dændɪlaɪən	24,000/48%	'dændɪlɪən	26,000/52%	/ɪ/ for <i>.	common
8	diffuse	dɪ'fju:s	5,000/10%	'daɪfju:z	45,000/90%	/aɪ/ for <di>, as in digest, digress,	entrenched
9	dissection	dɪ'sekʃən	2,000/4%	daɪ'selʃən daɪ'sekʃən	42,000/80% 8,000/16%	as in 7 above	entrenched
10	divisive	dɪ'vaɪsɪv	10,000/20%	dɪ'vɪsɪv	40,000/90%	/ɪ/ for <vi> as in visible, division	entrenched
11	divorce	dɪ'vɔ:s	3,500/7%	daɪvɔ:s	46,500/93%	same as shown above	entrenched
12	elite	eɪ'li:t or /ɪ'li:t/	3,000/6%	elaɪt	47,000/93%	/aɪ/ for <lite>, as in cite, site, rite, etc	entrenched
13	expertise	ekspɜ:'ti:z	5,000/10%	es'pətaɪz ekspæ'ti:z	15,000/30% 30,000/60%	/aɪ/ for <tise>, as in advertise, size, etc	widespread
14	famine	'fæmɪn	5,000/10%	fæ'maɪn	45,000/90%	/aɪ/ for <-ine>, as in mine, dine, sign, etc.	entrenched
15	favourite	'feɪvərɪt	7,000/14%	fevə'raɪt fevə'raɪt	30,000/60% 13,000/26%	as in elite above.	widespread
16	feminine	'femənɪn	4,000/8%	femɪ'naɪn	46,/92%	as in famine above	entrenched

124

17	granite	/ˈgrænɪt/	0/	/ˈgrænaɪt	50,000/100%	As in elite.	entrenched
18	hibiscus	/hɪbɪskəs/	0/0%	/haɪbɪskɔs/	50,000/100%	/aɪ/ for <hi-> as in high, hide	entrenched
19	hymen	/ˈhaɪmen/	14,000/28%	/ˈhɪmen/	36,000/72%	/aɪ/ for <y>	widespread
20	hypocrite	/hɪpəkrɪt/	18,000/36%	/hɪpokraɪt/	32,000/64%	As in elite.	widespread
21	hysterical	/hɪˈsterɪkəl/	9,000/18%	/haɪˈsterɪkæl/	41,000/82%	as in hyper, hyphen, tyre, dye, cry et	entrenched
22	imbecile	/ɪmbeˈsɪːl/	2,000/4%	/ɪmˈbesaɪl/	48,000/96%	regular /aɪ/ for letter <i> as in wile, reconcile.	entrenched
23	INEC			/aɪnek/ /nek/	26,000/47.5% 24,000/52.5%	regular /aɪ/ and /ɪ/ for letter <i>.	variant common
24	itinerary	/aɪˈtinerərɪ/	23,000/46%	/ɪtɪˈnerærɪ/	27,000/54%	as in it, into.	common variant
25	liberate	/ˈlɪbreɪt/	26,300/52.6	/laɪˈbret/	24,700/47.4%	/aɪ/ for <i>	common variant
26	masculine	/ˈmæskjulɪn/	17,000/34%	/ˈmæskulaɪn/	33,000/66%	as in line, riverine, etc	widespread
27	recitative	/resɪtəˈtɪːv/	0/0%	/resaɪˈtetɪv/ /rɪˈsaɪtetɪv/	23,000/46% 27,000/54%	as in consultative, repetitive,	variant common
28	Regina	/rɪˈdʒaɪna/ /rɪˈdʒiːnə/	0/0%	/ˈredʒɪnæ/	50,000/100%	/ɪ/ as Tina, Angelina, Paulina.	entrenched
29	saline	/ˈsælɪn/	5,000/10%	/sælaɪn/	45,000/90%	s in line, fine	entrenched
30	Sophia	/ˈsəufaɪ, səufiˈə/	0/0%	/ˈsofɪə/	50,000/100%	as in soldier, Mafia, etc	entrenched
31	sychophant	/sɪkəfənt/	7,000/14	/saɪkofænt/ /sɪkofænt/	35,000/70% 8,000/16%	cycle, psyche	widespread
32	tyrannical	/tɪˈrænɪkl/	12,000/24%	/taɪˈrænɪkæl	38,000/76%	/aɪ/ for <i>	widespread
33	tyranny	/ˈtɪrənɪ/	3,500/7%	/taɪrænɪ/ /trænɪ/	25,000/50% 21,500/43%	/aɪ/ for <y>	widespread variant
34	vagina	/vəˈdʒaɪna/	15,000/30%	/vædʒɪnæ/	35,000/70%	/ɪ/ for /aɪ/	widespread
35	vineyard	/ˈvɪnjæd/ /vɪnjæd/	0/0%	/ˈvaɪn ˈjæd/	50,000/100%	regular "vine" /vaɪn/ and "yard"	entrenched
36	twilight	/ˈtwaɪlaɪt/	16,000/32%	/twɪlaɪt/	34,000/68%	As in twins, twist, etc.	entrenched

125

Table 2. Frequency distribution Table for Table 2

S/N	Range	Degree of Spread	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
1	80-100%	entrenched	17	42.5%	3.5
2	60-79%	widespread	13	32.5%	1.53
3	50-59%	common	05	12.5%	17.5
4	40-49%	variant	05	12.5%	0
5	30-39%	emerging	0	0%	0
	Total		n=40	100%	22.53

Note that the frequency table has 40 words instead of the 36 in table 1. The reason is that several words generated variants and common pronunciations at the same time. The graph below shows the degree of spread for each type.
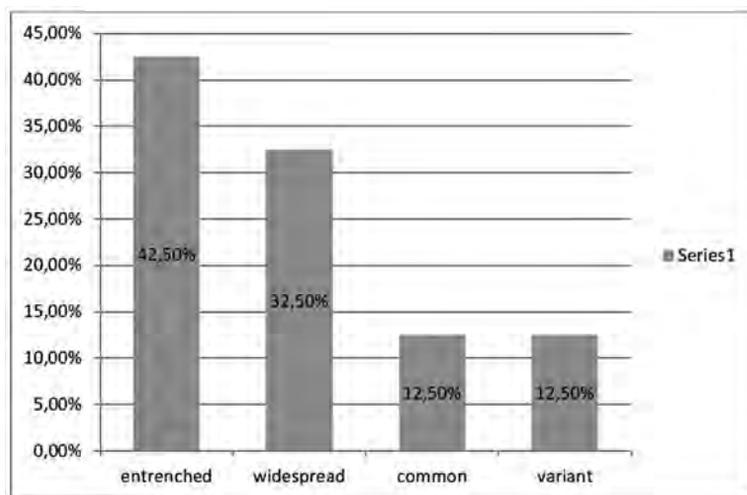

126

Figure 1. Summary bar graph for the variants examined

As shown in the tables and chart, the cases examined are largely widespread and entrenched in ENE. Some variants are absolutely institutionalised so much that none of the Nigerians surveyed here pronounced them in the RP way. These are variant numbers 3, 17, 18, 26, 27, 29 and 34 in the table. There are others which have very low

scores for RP such as variant numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, etc. In ENEA the letters <i> and <y> are articulated as /i/ and /ɪ/ where RP uses /ɑɪ/ as in *awry, advertisement, annihilate, divisive*, etc, and as /ɑɪ/ in ENEA where RP uses /ɪ/ or /i:/ as in *diffuse, divorce, elite, bigots,* etc. The substitution of /i/,/ɪ/ for /ɑɪ/ and vice versa is not occasioned by phonological interference but by phonological intraference, i.e. the replacement of one phoneme for another in the same language, not from outside it. A good example of the redeployment of the phonemic realisations of letter <i> is in the acronym 'INEC' ('Independent National Electoral Commission,' number 23 in the table), which does not exist in **SBE** and other native English varieties. The acronym has two popular variants arising from the redeployment of /ɑɪ/, /i/ and/or /ɪ/, two underlying phonemic realisations of the letter <i>. Educated Nigerians pronounce it as either /ɑɪnek/ or /ɪnek/. Many of the respondents, being educated Nigerians pronounced the words in the RP accent, which accounted for the percentage of RP in the third column.

Conclusions

The paper examined the phonemic realisations of letters the <i> and <y>. Thirty-six examples were presented to demonstrate the patterns of the pronunciation of letter <i> and <y> in ENEA. The results and presentation reveal clear differences between the RP and ENEA variants of the phonemic realisations of the letters <i> and <y>. The 36 examples here are by no means exhaustive of all the cases in ENEA. Intraference and interference, teaching habits and institutionalised deviant forms facilitate the use and spread of these features in ESL. The variants have implications for the study, description and teaching of ESL.

Teachers and grammarians of ENE often treat as errors most of the features of NigE that do not conform to RP, yet the local variants keep flourishing. Ugorji (2010) also draws attention to the emergence of nativised varieties which suffer from pedagogic confusion in which the RP is in principle desired and proposed but not targeted or well-taught because teachers cannot reach it and are not competent in it. So, no matter how hard they try, they find it difficult or impossible to achieve total native English mastery of the language dynamics and they keep spreading the entrenched nonnative patterns unconsciously. Meanwhile the nativized varieties have not also been codified and standardized for effective authoritative teaching and learning. Ugorji (2010) describes the situation as 'pedagogic anarchy' (p.26).

127

Against this backdrop, it is here proposed that those that have become widespread, entrenched or institutionalised should be treated as veritable ESL and ENEA variations. This does not prevent those who prefer the RP variants from using them. All considered, intraference plays a huge role in differentiating between BrE and AmE articulation of many words. Even in native English, intraference has influenced the emergence of the free phonemic variants of <i>; for example, <anti> is either AmE /ˈæntaɪ/ or BrE /ˈæntɪ/, either /ˈdɪrekt/ or /ˈdaɪrekt/ for <direct>, and /ˈfɪnæns/ or /ˈfaɪnæns/ for <finance>, etc.

In terms of teaching, these features may be regarded as institutionalised variations which characterise ESL/ENEA and should be taught alongside the RP variants. This option or position is the most sociolinguistically expedient for pedagogy and effective communication and the description of the features of ESL. For examination purpose, particularly at the secondary school level where examiners use Nigerian examples as deviations or errors and RP variants as the correct forms, students should be told that where the two variants appear in a question, the RP variant should be picked as the answer since that is the one the examiners intend as the answer. However, efforts should be expedited to reorient Nigerian examination bodies to change their prescriptive and judgmental attitude to entrenched Nigerian variants. Nigeria's endonormic standard should equally be codified, as the Nigeria English Studies Association and ICE (International Corpus of English) Nigerian Project are undertaking at present. The 'anarchy' that Ugorji described may remain till Standard Nigerian English becomes so firmly rooted even at those examination levels that examiners will no longer see the entrenched Nigerian variants as errors for examination questions. The reality on the ground here is that differences exist between examination English and real life performance English. Fortunately, however, some standard dictionaries and glossaries of the features of Nigerian ESL have been published recently, for example, the 2014 *A Dictionary of Nigerian English* compiled by the *Nigerian English Studies Association* (NESA) which turned *English Studies Association of Nigeria* (ESAN) in September 2015.

128

References

Adekunle, M. (1979). Non-random variation in Nigerian English. (27-42). In Ebo Ubahakwe (Ed.). *Varieties and functions of Nigerian English.* Ibadan: African University Press.

Akere, F. (2009). The English language in Nigeria: The sociolinguistic dynamics of decolonisation and globalisation. (2-17). In W. Adegbite & B. Olajide. (Eds.). *Re-inventing the English language in Nigeria in the context of globalisation and decolonisation.* Refereed proceedings of the 23rd annual conference of the Nigerian English Studies Association (NESA) held at the University of Ilorin, Ilorin Kwara State, Nigeria from October 31- 4th November 2006. Lagos: Olivetree Publishers.

Amayo, A. M. (1986). Teaching English pronunciation in Nigeria for international intelligibility. (314-336). In S. Unoh. (Ed.), *Use of English for communication: The Nigerian experience*. Ibadan: Spectrum.

Awonusi, V. O. (1994). The Americanisation of Nigerian English. *World Englishes 13*(1), 75-82.

Awonusi, V. O. (2007). *Good spoken English and national development.* Inaugural address. University of Lagos.

Awonusi, S. (2009). *Coping with English pronunciation.* Lagos: Sam Iroanusi.

Berntein, B. (1971). *Class, codes and control: Theoretical studies towards a sociology of language.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Banjo, A. (1970). The English language and the Nigerian environment. *Journal of Nigeria English Studies Association (JNESA)*, *4*(1), 51-60.

Banjo, A. (1996). *Making a virtue of necessity: An overview of the English language in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.

Bobda, A.S. (1995). The phonologies of Nigerian English and Cameroon English. In A. Bamgbose, A. Banjo, & A. Thomas. (Eds.). *New Englishes: A West African perspective.* (248-268). Ibadan: Mosuro.

Brosnahan, L. F. (1958). English in southern Nigeria. *Journal of English Studies, 39*, 77-110.

Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Corder, S. P. (1980). *Error analysis and interlanguage.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

129

Croft, W. (2000). *Explaining language change: An evolutionary approach.* Harlow, Essex: Longman.

Croft, W. (2003). The relevance of evolutionary model in historical linguistics. In O. Nergaard Thomsen. (Ed.), *Competing models of linguistic change: Evolution and beyond* (pp. 1-40). London: John Benjamin Publishers.

Crystal, D. 2009. *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics.* 6th ed. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ekundayo, B. S. (2006). *The concept of 'intraference' in English: The morphemic examples in Nigerian English as second language.* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.

Ekundayo, B. S. (2014). *Intraference in Educated Nigerian English* (ENE). (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.

Ekundayo, B. S., Longe, V. U, and Teilanyo, D. I. (2012). The redeployment of English phonological rules as 'intrafernce." *Journal of the Nigerian English Studies Association (JNESA), 15*(1), 77-100

Dadzie, ABK & Awonus,S. (2009). *Nigerian English influences and characteristics.* New ed. Lagos: Sam Iroanusi.

Hale, B. (2000). *Intraference mirror.* Retrieved from www.barryhale. intraferencemirrors May 2012.

Igboanusi, H. (2003). Knowledge, use and attitude towards Americanisms in Nigerian English. *World Englishes, 22*(4), 599-604.

Jubril, M. (1979). Regional variation in Nigerian spoken Evglish (43-53). In Ebo Ubahakwe. (Ed.). *Varieties and functions of English in Nigeria*. Ibadan: African University Press.

Ikara, B. (1986). Some linguistic and socio-cultural variables in Nigerian variety of English.. In S. Unoh, (Ed.). *Use of English in communication: The Nigeria experience* (pp. 39-59). Ibadan: Spectrum.

Jowitt, D. (2016). Nigerian received pronunciation. Retrieved from https://cuvillier.de/uploads/preview/public_file/9172/Leseprobe.pdf

Labov, W. (1994). Principle of linguistic change. Vol.I, internal factors. Oxford: Blackwell. *Longman dictionary of contemporary English.* (2007). Edinburgh: Pearson.

130

Odumuh, A. O. (1980). *The syntax and semantics of Nigerian English.* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.

Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. London: Longman.

Richards, J. C., & Sampson, G. (1984). The study of learner English. In J. C. Richards J.C. (Ed.), *Perspectives on second language acquisition* (pp. 13-18). London: Longman.

Selinker, L. (1984). Interlanguage. In J. C. Richards J.C. (Ed.), *Perspectives on second language acquisition* (pp. 1-54). London: Longman.

Soneye, T. (2008). CH digraph in English: Patterns and proposition for ESL pedagogy. *Papers in English Linguistics 9*, 9-20.

Surakat, T. Y. (2010). Categorising varieties of Nigerian English: A socio-psycholinguistic perspective. *Journal of Nigerian English Studies Association (JNESA)*, *13*(2), 97-110.

Ubong. E. J & Babatunde S. T. (2011). Standard Nigerian English phonemes: The crisis of modelling and harmonization. *World Englishes, 30*(4), 533-550.

Udofot, I. (1997). *The rhythm of Nigerian English.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria.

Ugorji, C. U. C. 2010. *Nigerian English phonology*. Lagos: Chinedum Publishers.

Author

***Omowumi Bode Steve Ekundayo** teaches English Grammar and Writing in the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria. He holds a BA Ed, MA, and PhD in English and Literature. He has published many articles in many local and international journals. His areas of interest and research are Phonology, Syntax, Semiotics, Semantics, Stylistics, Discourse Analysis and Creative Writing.

131