

Ubong E. Josiah¹
Susana M. Akpan²

*1 & 2: Department of English
University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria*

Rhythm In Nigerian Spoken English: An Experiment With Akwa Ibom-English Bilinguals

This paper examines the major challenges experienced by Akwa Ibom-English bilinguals with regards to the realization of rhythm in Nigerian English. The major study area was Uyo metropolis in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Sixty (60) respondents who were considered as acrolectal English speakers/learners, drawn from three most populous ethnic groups in Akwa Ibom State (Ibibio, Anaañ and Oro), were randomly selected for the study. A production test was administered to discover informants' ability to produce correct rhythms in English. Their utterances were recorded, transcribed perceptually and analysed using the metrical theory. Excerpts from Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) and Eka (1993) were used as "control". The study revealed that the ability to realize the correct rhythm depended on the respondents' academic discipline and level of education; and that some of the problems encountered by the subjects arise from mother-tongue interference. The researchers conclude that, inadequate knowledge of the correct rhythms of the English language has resulted in distortion of meaning and low level of intelligibility between interlocutors leading to misunderstanding of utterances during social interactions. They, therefore, suggest that rhythm should be made a pedagogical component of the spoken English curriculum at all levels of education in Nigeria.

Keywords: Bilinguals, Nigerian English, Rhythm, Spoken English, Uyo metropolis

1. Introduction

The English language is one of the natural languages in the world that has gained international spread. This is so because it has penetrated different areas of the world. Historically, English language can be traced from the Indo-European family to the Teutonic tribes who invaded Britain in about the 5th Century A.D. (Eka, 2000; Jowitt, 2009). Since then, speakers of English have continued to expand and many varieties of the language have emerged due to differences in the realization of English sounds. This fact re-echoes the picture of the language painted in Josiah (2009) thus:

The language (English) could be likened to a great river that has left its source, impudently dividing into uncontrollable tributaries, meandering irresistibly as it were, into several other territories, and acquiring new identities as long as there is access.

From this excerpt, it is apparent that what obtains at present as the English language has undergone inevitable gynaecological processes (Jowitt, 1991), resulting in some linguistic chemistry: diagglossia, creolisation, piginization, polyglotism, and several other hybridized linguistic forms (see Josiah 2014, 2015). These are what form the basis of our pre-occupation in this study.

A greater population of speakers of English language in Nigeria, at present, are either bilinguals or multilinguals. They speak English language either as their first language (L_1 , not in the sense of mother tongue), or as a second language (L_2). Nigerians, who speak English language in addition to their mother tongue, can rightly be said to be bilinguals. Brann (2006, p.9) explains that the multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria makes her people bilinguals because they have to communicate in what he calls “further tongue.” Again, in his study, Preston (1989) observes that ethnic identity plays a vital role in accounting for speech variety.

Nigeria has thirty (36) states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) with different ethnic groups speaking between 400 and 513 languages and dialects (Bamgbose, 1982 cited in Eka, 2000). Akwa Ibom State is one of the 36 states in Nigeria. It is located along the coastal area of the South-South Zone or the Niger Delta belt of the country. It is also a heterogeneous state, being a subset of Nigeria. It has many languages such as Anaañ, Ekid, Ibibio, Andoni, Oro, and so on. All of these languages and others outside the state exist in Uyo metropolis. This is so because Uyo is the capital city of Akwa Ibom State. As a capital city with its metropolitan character, the same quest for speaking of English language and the prestige attached to it is pre-eminently feasible. In this research, emphasis shall be placed on the three major languages of Akwa Ibom State: Anaañ, Ibibio, and Oro. The speakers of these major Akwa Ibom languages also speak English, making them bilinguals. In fact, English language appears to be a “common language” due to its importance in communication. Yet, it should be noted that all users of English in Akwa Ibom State are not speaking the language on the same level of competence. The differences may be due to the “further tongue” argument presented in Brann (2006:9) as earlier cited. While some speak English language in such a way that listeners admire it, others break the phonological rules of the spoken aspect of it. Eka (2000, p.92) refers to the two speeches as “fluent” and “jerky” respectively. There are reasons for this. Nigerians speak certain variety of the English language, what has come to be known sociolinguistically as Nigerian English. Though other scholars have noted various varieties, we agree with Eka (2000), which classifies Nigerian English varieties into four: non-standard, basic (general), standard (or educated), and the sophisticated (or near-native).

In re-classifying the varieties of spoken Nigerian English, Udofot (2004, 2007) established three varieties. Variety one is the non-standard variety. This includes speakers of English from primary schools, some secondary school graduates, University freshmen up to second year undergraduates, holders of OND/NCE certificates and primary school teachers. Variety II is described as the standard variety. Speakers include third and final year university undergraduates, university and college lecturers, other professionals, secondary school teachers of English and holders of Higher National Diploma (HND). Variety three (described as the sophisticated variety) includes groups of Nigerian English

speakers ranging from university lecturers in English and linguistics, graduates of English language and literature, and those who lived in mother-tongue areas. These varieties are designated according to their level of education and the extent of the use of English in everyday life (Udofot, 2011).

One's ability to speak English language with a certain level of fluency could be a yardstick for deciding the variety of spoken English to which one belongs. The spoken intelligibility is mostly measured in the non-segmental features. In line with this perception, Udofot (2007, p.17) says that the "...factor that appears most influential in determining spoken Nigerian English and membership of the varieties is stress and intonation". So, in considering the phonological incompetence of speakers of Nigerian English in Uyo metropolis, our concentration is on the area of rhythm which forms the basis and subject matter of this research.

2. Research Methodology

The Stratified Random Sampling technique (SRS) was the method used in this research. The subjects of the study were sixty (60) respondents who are variety three (standard) Nigerian English speakers selected from Anaañ, Ibibio and Oro extraction living in Uyo metropolis. Their utterances were audio-taped and transcribed perceptually. Sentence samples were based on Quirk and Greenbaum's *A University Grammar of English* and Eka's *Phonological Foundations*. The basis for drawing sample texts from these sources is that they contain the standard variety of British English which served as the control. Again, these sources already indicate the proper place of rhythm and the samples were selected to remove the research from amateur and sub-standard analysis of English rhythm. The two sources have been widely referenced and as such become good authorities in which this research work could be essentially anchored.

3.0 Theoretical Framework

Phonology as we know is a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the systematic study of sounds of particular languages. According to Hirst and Cristo (1998, p.74), "one of the basic aims of phonological theory is to attempt to explain how and why languages differ from one another phonetically". It does this by establishing limited parameters which can combine in various ways to generate the appropriate range of phonetic variability. Therefore, since a theory is said to be a rule, pattern, mode, or a particular way in which an investigation is carried out and applied to a particular work (Hornby, 2005, p.1483), this paper adopts metrical phonology for its theoretical thrust.

Metrical theory began with the study of prosodic features, especially stress. It further expanded to the study of phonological features in a broader sense. Such study considered hierarchies in the study of phonology. The theory came into the lime light in Liberman and Prince's (1977) publication. The work uses the traditional verse, "scansion" which pictures the "pattern-grid" style and, therefore, "metrical" was adopted as a theory. Metrical theory deals with a relative prominence of sound within a syllable. It established

that there are strong (S) and weak (W) sounds within a syllable. According to Udoh (2011, p.47)

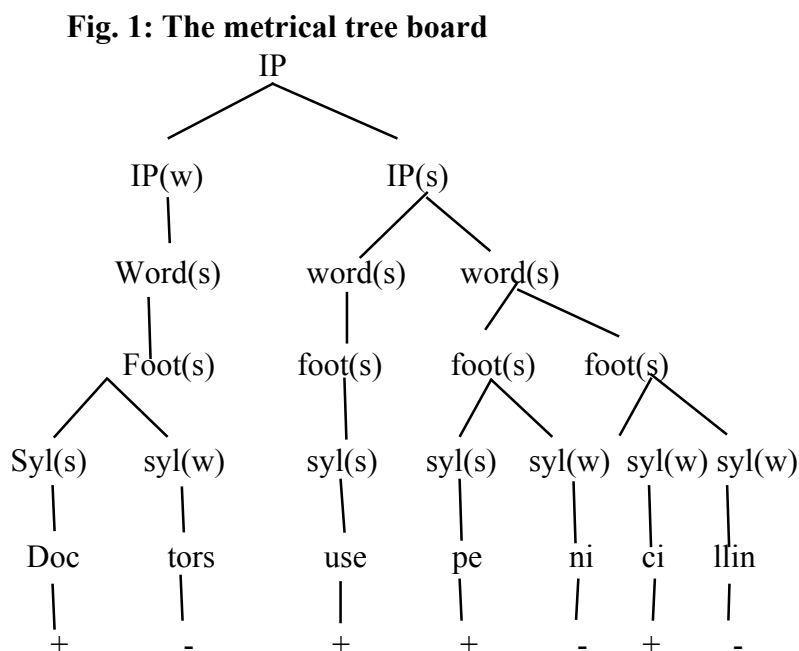
The theory assures that stress is fundamentally a study of the relative prominence of syllables and higher level units such as the foot, and the most important characteristic determining stress pattern is alternating prominence (rhythm) and sensitivity to syllable weight.

Metrical theory is classified into two groups: the metrical tree (the aboreal) and metrical grid.

3.1 *The metrical tree*

This theory considers the prominence of a word over other words in a sentence. Words are described as nodes in this theory. One node may be strong (S) while another is weak (W). Depending on the aim of the speaker, a weak/strong node can be switched over another node within a sentence. Metrical tree method can be used in both the broad and narrow focus. The broad focus can be used in a structure such as; “who teaches in the university?” In this case, the strong node will be on “who”. But in the narrow focus parameter, the structure could be “that lecturer teaches what course?” where the strong node is on “course”.

This method is not suitable in this work because it does not examine the internal structure of sounds to reveal the pitch of each sound. It only examines the relationship between one word and another. This could be discussed as a syntactic phonology. It could be generated as illustrated in Figure 1 with the sentence: “Doctors use penicillin”:



Here, the most prominent syllable in a phrase is the one that does not have any weak nodes above it. This syllable is called the Designated Terminal Element (DTE). In Figure 1 above, the syllable “-ci-” is the DTE.

3.2 *The grid method*

The metrical grid theory deals with “beats of utterances and weights through its multi-layered representation” (Udoh, 2011, p.47). It studies both the beats and internal structure of syllables and resolves the issue of stress-clash where two stressed syllables come close to each other. This stress clash can be resolved by the rhythm rule which reverses the strong-weak relations for some pair of sister nodes, as long as such a reversal does not put a designated terminal element of an intonational phrase under any stress directly under a strong node.

My mother tongue is English
 My mo ther tongue is Eng lish
 L H L HL L H LH
 (Udofot 2011, p.69)

For this work, we are adopting the grid formalism method because it deals with the beat of utterances in the production of sound systems within a syllable structure of a given language. It is suitable for the study of interference situation between L_1 and L_2 . Though there is argument by scholars as to the suitability of using this theory in rhythm and intonation, Udoh (2011, p.48) defends that “... metrical phonology is directly relevant to rhythm and intonation in stress system, for it accounts adequately for both stress-timing and full-vowel-timing (and) can therefore be used on any rhythm based on stress...” Also, while using this approach, Contrastive Analysis shall be made between the standard pattern of rhythm and intonation with that realized by our respondents. This is where our case will be established.

4. Review of Related Literature

A number of scholars have written on Nigerian English specifically in the area of sounds. This suggests that there is a great deal of contact with English language as regards phonetics and phonology. However, the pre-occupation of this study is mainly on phonology, especially in the area of supra-segmental or prosodic features such as rhythm. Related literature will be reviewed on relevant areas like supra-segmental phonology and other features such as intonation and accentuation.

4.1 *Literature on Supra-segmental phonology*

Supra-segmental features, according to Eka (1996, p.1), could be defined as “...those aspects of the sound system of the English language which cannot be demarcated with

specific units within the primes of analysis and description”. By this position, it is easy for one to have less passion towards the supra-segmental features. The inability to “demarcate easily”, parts of supra-segmental features ignite Udofot’s (2002, p.14) assertion that: “...non segmental features are the most problematic areas for Nigerian speakers” Some scholars refer to the supra-segmental features as prosody (Akinjobi, 2004). Atoye (2003, p.38) considers prosodies as “...an integral part of the utterance.” He emphasizes that there are no successful utterances without prosodies. This source refers to prosodies as “the melodic features of sentence.” The study maintains that the meaning of any utterance is not only inherent in consonants and vowels but in a way those vowels and consonants are uttered. It is the nature of the utterance that adds greater and clearer meaning to vowels and consonants so uttered.

In an attempt to further explain supra-segmental features, Ufot (2007) categorizes the features as: “...syllables, stress, pitch (intonation)...” Eka (2000) lists accentuation, intonation, and rhythm as the major features. The latter source also discusses “stress” as “accentuation” whereas Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) note the main features of supra-segmental phonology to be stress, rhythm, and intonation. It stands reasonable, then, to state that pitch is a sub-unit of stress (because pitch has to do with the extent to which a sound is high or low) and stress cannot be isolated without syllable structure. These three sub-units put together are technically described as accentuation. Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) subsume pitch under stress and pay less attention to syllable. From the foregoing, this work can then deduce and state that the major features of the supra-segmental phonology include rhythm, intonation, and accentuation. Other features like tone, pitch, timing, foot, and many others are all subsumed under these three features of prosody.

4.2. *Review of English Prosodic Features: Rhythm, Intonation, and Accentuation*

4.2.1 *Rhythm*

Rhythm is the musical, melodious sound movement created within a group of words. Eka (1996) says that the combination of accentuation and intonation results in rhythm in an utterance. The rising and falling intonation helps to complement the meaning expressed in an utterance. Rhythm helps to indicate questions, question tags, enumerations, among others. Eka (1996, p.125) asserts that “poor rhythmic patterning almost certainly results in poor information distribution and hence difficult in understanding the message communicated.” Understanding the time pattern between two rhythmic movements, Quirk and Greenbaum (1973, pp.453-454) opine that “the natural rhythm of English, when unaffected by other factors such as hesitation, which may slow down the speaker, or excitement, which may speed him up, provides roughly equal intervals of time between the stresses.” This time-syllable pattern, Udofot (2007, p.22) argues, is not realised by Nigerian English speakers as the native speakers do and so:

...the proliferation of prominent syllables in the speech of
Nigerians of varied socio-economic and educational

backgrounds ... puts this situation down to a tendency to speak both long and short vowels with equal duration. ... rhythm of spoken Nigerian English sounds more like the pulsations of an African drum, heard as rhythmic but hardly varying its tempo.

The problem and situation described above in Udofot (2007) explicates the reasons for the distortion of meaning between a speaker and a hearer.

4.2.2 Review on Intonation

Intonation has to do with the rise or fall in voice quality. It encompasses pitch. Pitch is described by Ufot (2009, p.63) as "...the relative height or depth indicated in the level of voice as speech is made." In examining Nigerian English, Udofot (2007, p.23) notes that most Nigerian languages are tonal, which means "...that the voice rises and falls on words (not sentences) or words of sentence status." The source continues that "... much attitudinal meaning conveyed by intonation in English is lost." Intonation also carries grammatical meaning in English. The tone used to express a statement of fact is different from a polite or rude request, gratitude, and so on. This mood of an individual speaker influences the tone used in an utterance. Eka (1993, p.83) argues that since it is not possible to have general agreement on people's emotion, intonation could then be described as "...largely idiosyncratic, conventional to a group and generally variable from one individual to the other." The individual idiosyncrasy as asserted by Eka (1996) may be largely selected based on the educational level of the speaker which influences the variety of Nigerian English spoken: non- standard, basic, standard/educated, and sophisticated/near native.

4.2.3 Review on Accentuation

Accentuation is the act of giving emphasis or prominence to one syllable structure than the other(s). Eka (2009, p.91) posits that "accentuation is concerned with the totality of energy a speaker exerts in the realisation of a syllable." Accentuation takes into account stress, pitch, and time duration. Stress shows the extent of loudness by a speaker as heard by the hearer. Scholars of Nigerian spoken English have argued that the speakers of non-standard and basic varieties of Nigerian English have "no fixed accentual pattern" (Eka, 2000, p.91), while accentuation ranges from innovation to educated or near native realization. It should be noted that the accent of individual speaker indicates his/her level of education, spoken language intelligibility, and the variety of spoken Nigerian English used.

4.2.4 Literature on supra-segmental features in Nigerian English

Some linguists have taken time to undertake researches on supra-segmental features in order to discover the challenges faced by Nigerian English users regarding realization of such features (cf Eka, 1985, 2000; Udofot, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2011; Jowitt, 1991, 2000). Just as Udofot (2002, p. 21) puts it, “rhythm is the most problematic and the least investigated aspect of Nigerian English”. These scholars have also attempted to proffer possible solutions to these challenges. Udofot (2011), for instance, studied “the Rhythm of Standard Nigerian English” where the speeches of twenty Nigerians adjudged to speak standard Nigerian English were studied. In those speeches, stress pattern of sentences were analyzed and the submission was that, the pattern of English stress is not stress-timed. To Udofot (2011, p.76), “...Nigerian English is neither syllable-timed nor stress-timed...”. The work concludes that since Standard Nigerian English is described as stress-timed, “...the tone-timed description can be used to describe the speech rhythm of the standard Nigerian accent of English....”

Udo (2011) is on “Linguistic Rhythm and Elasticity”. The work dwells on unit analysis and timing pattern in a constituent rhythm beats. The work concentrates on the foot beat of Annang language and establishes that, “the Annang foot is made up of two syllables.” She concludes that: “...the Annang foot is therefore determined by the moraic structure of the syllables” (p.57). The work also points out that there is a strong link between linguistic rhythm, elasticity and the foot beat. It adopts a metrical analysis and comparison of English words with local words like Annang. The relevance of the work to our study is that it gives an analysis, though on the surface, of sentence in terms of stress and rhythm.

It should be noted also that Atoye (2003, p.45) analyses the nature of prosodic features with special attention to phonematic and prosodic aspects. The work submits that prosodic features “...have domains which are units of utterance that are longer than minimal segment...”. However, the weakness of this work is that other supra-segmental features are not given prominence, and there are not much samples to analyse the position of the scholar.

From the foregoing, this work focuses attention on rhythm in Nigerian English with special attention on speakers of such regional English within Uyo metropolis. Broad consideration of the features of supra-segmental phonology reveals rhythm, intonation and accentuation as its major features.

5 Rhythm in Nigerian English: The case of Akwa Ibom-English Bilinguals

The questionnaire used for this study was made up of eight (8) questions which were given out to sixty (60) respondents for both response and recording. Ten (10) respondents declined from recording while five (5) recordings out of the remaining fifty (50) were not clear enough for analysis. These five unclear recordings have been identified against respondents so affected by asterisks. The responses are tabulated in tables. Eleven tables are presented below. These tables are presented in two sections. Section one comprises socio-cultural grouping of respondents while section two is on rhythm and then the table representing the total number of sentences read by the respondents. For section two, eight

(8) sentences were presented for reading. In all, a total of forty-five respondents were used for analysis. Each table in section two has a “control” for comparison with the “Experimental Group (EG)”.

5.1 *Socio-cultural Grouping of Respondents*

The table below reflects the three major ethnic groups which were used for this research. They are Ibibio, Anaañ and Oro. It contains respondent’s age-range, sex, educational qualification, occupation, languages spoken and fluency respectively. The respondents used in this research are based on Eka’s (2000, p.87) Variety III speakers of standard Nigerian English. The table also shows that these respondents are either bilinguals or multi-linguals.

		Number of respondents according to tribes			
S/no	Variable	Ibibio	Anaañ	Oro	Total
1.	Age range				
	20-25	13	7	-	20
	26-30	5	3	2	10
	31-35	1	2	4	7
	36-above	2	2	4	8
2.	Sex				
	Male	6	7	7	20
	Female	15	7	3	25
3.	Educational qualification				
	Final year undergraduates	15	7	1	23
	Graduates	3	5	3	6
	Masters	1	2	5	8
	PhDs	2	-	1	3
4.	Occupation				
	Student	15	5	1	21
	Self-employed	2	2	2	6
	Working- class	4	7	7	18
5.	Number of languages spoken				
	One	-	-	-	-
	Two	11	10	-	21
	More	10	4	10	24
6.	Ability to speak English fluently				
	Yes	21	13	10	44
	No	-	-	-	1

7.	Ability to speak local language				
	Ibibio	20	0	-	20
	Anaan	-	14	-	14
	Oro	-	-	10	10
	Others	1	-	-	1
8.	Second language				
	Ibibio	4	-	-	4
	Anaan	1	3	-	4
	Oro	-	2	-	2
	English	16	9	10	35

Table I: Socio-cultural Groupings of Respondents

5.2 Notation

There is a special notation used at the end of the last table in this section for understanding. Thus: (H) indicates “High” while (L) indicates “Low”. This research recognises the fact that some words have high-low tunes while some have low-high tunes therefore, in this study, the authors choose to maintain high (H) for High-low (HL) and low (L) for Low-high (LH) tunes.

5.3 *The Rhythm of Nigerian English: An Analysis of the Performance of Akwa Ibom-English Bilinguals*

Eight (8) tables are presented in this study to reflect eight (8) sentences that were administered to the respondents. The tables show that some speakers of these sentences could not realise the rhythmic pattern of this utterances properly. The major points of rhythm in these sentences are still problematic to some speakers.

6. Summary of Respondents’ Performance on Rhythm

The table below shows the level of performance in realising the correct rhythm among the three tribes studies. Each respondent is matched against his/her language and syllabic realisation are made available. It shows that many speakers were able to realise the rhythm in “he told his...” as well as that of the two syllables in the “mother”. Using metrical theory the sentence is analysed thus:

He told his mother:

He told his mo ther
L H L H L

It should be noted that the formula above is maintained in all analysis. For this reason, only the result of the data shall be presented on the tables.

Respondent Control	Tribe	He	told	his	mo	ther
		L	H	L	H	L
1	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L
2	*					
3	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
4	Oro	L	H	L	L	L
5	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	H
6	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
7	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L
8	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
9	Ibibio	H	H	H	H	L
10	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L
11	*					
12	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
13	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
14	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
15	*					
16	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
17	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
18	*					
19	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
20	Anaan	L	H	H	H	L
21	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
22	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
23	Ibibio	H	H	H	H	L
24	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
25	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
26	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
27	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
28	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
29	Anaan	L	H	L	L	H
30	*					
31	Anaan	L	H	L	L	H
32	Oro	L	H	L	H	L
33	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
34	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
35	Oro	L	H	L	L	H
36	Anaan	L	H	L	L	H
37	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
38	Oro	L	H	L	H	L
39	Oro	L	H	L	H	L
40	Oro	L	H	L	H	L
41	Oro	L	H	L	L	H
42	Oro	L	H	H	L	H
43	Oro	L	H	L	H	L
44	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
45	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
46	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	H
47	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L
48	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L
49	Oro	L	H	L	L	H
50	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	H

Table II: Rhythm in: “He told his mother.”

For the phrase “he told his ...”, the respondents recorded 93.3%, 100% and 91.3% respectively. But in “mother”, thirty-two (32) respondents were able to realise the rhythm in the first syllable, “mo” in agreement with the control representing 71.1 % while thirteen (13) representing 28.9% had it wrong. In the second syllable, “ther”, 35 respondents (or 77.8%) realized the correct rhythm while 10 of them representing 22.2% realized it wrongly. This performance shows that although the rhythm in Standard English can hardly be predicted in L2 situations, they sometimes can equally be achieved effortlessly based on the level of education of the speaker or learner involved.

5.4 *Data on Rhythm in: “He sent it to his mother.”*

The table below indicates syllabic performance in rhythm within the sentence: “He sent it to his mother”. Here, too, like the table above, “mother” did not pose difficulties to the respondents.

Respondent	Tribe	He	sent	it	to	his	Mo	ther
Control		L	H	L	L	L	H	L
1	Anaan	H	H	L	H	H	H	L
2	*							
3	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
4	Oro	L	L	L	L	H	H	H
5	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
6	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
7	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	L	L
8	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
9	Ibibio	H	H	L	L	H	H	L
10	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	L	L
11	*							
12	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
13	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
14	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
15	*							
16	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
17	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
18	*							
19	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
20	Anaan	H	H	L	L	L	H	L
21	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
22	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
23	Ibibio	H	H	L	L	L	H	L
24	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
25	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
26	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
27	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
28	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
29	Anaan	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
30	*							
31	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	L	H
32	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
33	Anaaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L

34	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
35	Oro	L	H	L	H	L	H	L
36	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	L	H
37	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
38	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
39	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
40	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
41	Oro	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
42	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	L	H
43	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
44	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
45	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
46	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	L	H
47	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
48	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
49	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	L	H
50	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L

Table III: Rhythm in: “He sent it to his mother.”

Attention was also paid on the rhythm in “mother”. It was discovered that most speakers were able to realise rhythm in many of the words”. In the word ‘mother’, for instance, a greater number, thirty five (35) were able to realise it while ten (10) respondents could not. Thirty-five (35) respondents realising the sound represents 77.8% while ten (10) respondents failed. This represents 22.2%. The above analysis indicates that some speakers could not realise the correct rhythm in the word ‘sent’ and in the syllable ‘-ther’- in “mother.”

5.5 Data on Rhythm in: “That’s the address he sent the letter to.”

This sentence was measured in the table below. Performance indicates that the beginning “that’s” could not be given its proper prominence.

Respondent	Tribe	That’s	the	a	ddress	he	sent	the	le	tter	to
Control		L	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
1	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	L
2	*										
3	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L
4	Oro	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H
5	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
6	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L
7	Ibibio	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
8	Ibibio	L	L	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
9	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L	L
10	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
11	*										
12	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L
13	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L
14	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
15	*										

16	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
17	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
18	*										
19	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
20	Anaan	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L
21	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
22	Anaan	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
23	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
24	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L
25	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
26	Ibibio	H	H	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
27	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L	L
28	Anaan	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
29	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L
30	*										
31	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
32	Oro	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
33	Anaaan	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
34	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L
35	Oro	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	L
36	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
37	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
38	Oro	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H	L
39	Oro	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
40	Oro	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L
41	Oro	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
42	Oro	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
43	Oro	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
44	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
45	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L	L
46	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L
47	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L
48	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L
49	Oro	H	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
50	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L	L

Table IV: Rhythm in: “That’s the address he sent the letter to.”

It was observed that forty (40) respondents were not able to realise “that’s” as low while only five (5) were able to realise it. This means that 88.9% failed in the rhythm of “that’s” while only 11% could do it right. In the same sentence, twenty-four (24) respondents were not able to realise “address” correctly. Only twenty-one (21) were able, so these represent 53.3% and 46.7% respectively. Both percentages show that, those who could not realise the rhythm in “that’s” and “address” are greater than those who could.

5.6 Data on Rhythm in: “She was looking happy tonight.”

The rhythm of the table below was measured on “she was looking...” in the sentence “she was looking happy tonight”. The table reflect that “she was looking ...” was point of problem.

Respondent Control	Tribe	She L	was L	loo H	king L	hap H	py L	to L	night H
1	Anaan	H	L	H	H	L	L	L	H
2	*								
3	Ibibio	H	H	H	H	H	L	L	L
4	Oro	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
5	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
6	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
7	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
8	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	L
9	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
10	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
11	*								
12	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
13	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
14	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
15	*								
16	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
17	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
18	*								
19	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
20	Anaan	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
21	Anaan	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
22	Anaan	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
23	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
24	Anaan	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
25	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
26	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
27	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
28	Anaan	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
29	Anaan	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
30	*								
31	Anaan	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
32	Oro	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	H
33	Anaan	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
34	Anaan	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
35	Oro	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
36	Anaan	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
37	Anaan	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
38	Oro	H	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
39	Oro	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
40	Oro	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	H
41	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	H
42	Oro	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
43	Oro	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
44	Anaan	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
45	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
46	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
47	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
48	Anaan	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	H
49	Oro	L	L	L	H	H	L	L	H

50 Ibibio L L H L H L L H

Table V: Rhythm in: “She was looking happy tonight”

In the above utterance, three words gave the respondents tough time: “she was looking ...”. Out of forty-five (45) respondents, only eleven (11) respondents got it right. This represents 24.4%. It was shocking to realise that thirty-four (34) respondents representing 75.6% could not realise the correct rhythm. This poses a great problem to speakers of educated Nigerian English within Uyo metropolis.

5.7 Data on Rhythm in “John wrote a letter in English”

“John wrote a letter in English” was given its proper rhythmic utterance by many respondents. However, some of the respondents had difficulty realizing the correct rhythm for the word ‘wrote’ in the sentence.

Respondent	Tribe	John	wrote	a	le	tter	in	Eng	lish
Control		H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
1	Anaan	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
2	*								
3	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	H	L	H	L
4	Oro	L	L	L	H	L	L	H	L
5	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
6	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	H	L	L
7	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
8	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
9	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	L	H	L
10	Ibibio	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
11	*								
12	Ibibio	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
13	Ibibio	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
14	Ibibio	H	H	H	L	L	L	H	L
15	*								
16	Ibibio	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
17	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	L
18	*								
19	Ibibio	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
20	Anaan	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	L
21	Anaan	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	L
22	Anaan	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
23	Ibibio	H	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
24	Anaan	H	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
25	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
26	Ibibio	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
27	Ibibio	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
28	Anaan	H	H	L	L	H	L	H	L
29	Anaan	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
30	*								
31	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L	L	H	L

32	Oro	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
33	Anaaan	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
34	Anaan	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
35	Oro	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
36	Anaan	H	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
37	Anaan	H	H	L	L	H	L	H	L
38	Oro	H	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
39	Oro	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
40	Oro	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
41	Oro	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
42	Oro	H	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
43	Oro	H	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
44	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
45	Ibibio	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
46	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
47	Ibibio	H	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
48	Anaan	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
49	Oro	H	H	L	H	L	L	H	L
50	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	L	H	L

Table VI: Rhythm in “John wrote a letter in English”

In the above sentence, the word “wrote” was examined. Analysis indicates that thirty-seven (37) respondents representing 74% were able to indicate the correct rhythm in “wrote” during their utterance while eight (8) respondents representing 16% could not realize it correctly. This shows that a greater number had no problems realizing the correct rhythm. However, five (5) of the recordings (i.e. 10%) were not clear enough for analysis and are signified by the empty spaces starred in the table.

5.8 Data on Rhythm in “I think it was an excellent affair”

Many speakers could not utter “excellent” in most sentences involving rhythm. This is reflected in the table below. Just like in other sentences, “excellent” gave respondents difficulty.

Respondent	Tribe	I	thin	it	was	an	ex	ce	llent	a	ffair
Control		L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
1	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	H	L	L
2	*										
3	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
4	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	H	L	H
5	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
6	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
7	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
8	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
9	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
10	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
11	*										

12	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
13	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
14	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
15	*										
16	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	H	L	H
17	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
18	*										
19	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
20	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
21	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
22	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
23	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
24	Anaan	H	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
25	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
26	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
27	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
28	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
29	Anaan	L	H	L	H	H	H	H	H	L	L
30	*										
31	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	H	L	H
32	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	H	L	H
33	Anaaa n	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	H	L	H
34	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	L	L	H
35	Oro	L	H	L	H	L	H	H	L	L	H
36	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L	H	H	L	L	H
37	Anaan	L	H	L	H	L	H	H	H	L	H
38	Oro	L	H	L	H	L	H	H	H	L	H
39	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	L	L	H
40	Oro	L	H	L	H	L	H	H	H	L	H
41	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	H	L	H
42	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	L	L	H
43	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	H	L	H
44	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	L	L	H
45	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
46	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
47	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
48	Anaan	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	L	L	H
49	Oro	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	H	L	H
50	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	H	H	H	L	H

Table VII: Rhythm in “I think it was an excellent affair”

Twenty-one (21) out of forty-five realized the correct rhythm in “excellent”. This represents 46.7% while twenty-four (24) representing 53.3% were unable to do so. It could be observed that those who could not realise the needed rhythm are still many. For the word “affair”, the first syllable, “a” has a low (L) tune while the second, “ffair”, maintains a high (H) tune. This shows that, for the word ‘affair’, majority of the respondents realized the rhythm correctly while a paltry number of respondents got it wrong. Observably, many adjectives in the Lower Cross Sub-family of languages are characteristically tonal and

usually end with a high tone (cf Essien, 1990). This may have accounted for the realization of the correct rhythm in the final syllable “ffair”.

5.9 Data on Rhythm in “Mary can go to school, can’t she?”

Two items were measured in the table below. The words “go” and “school”. The table reveal that many could not give their proper rhythmic prominence.

Respondent	Tribe	Ma	ry	can	go	to	school,	can't	she?
Control		H	L	L	H	L	H	H	L
1	Anaan	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
2	*								
3	Ibibio	H	L	H	H	H	L	L	H
4	Oro	H	L	L	L	L	L	H	L
5	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
6	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
7	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	L	L	H
8	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	L	H	H
9	Ibibio	L	L	H	H	L	L	H	L
10	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	L	H	H
11	*								
12	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	L	H	L
13	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
14	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L
15	*								
16	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	H	L	H	L
17	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	L	H	L
18	*								
19	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	L	H	L
20	Anaan	H	L	H	H	L	H	H	L
21	Anaan	H	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
22	Anaan	H	L	H	H	H	H	H	L
23	Ibibio	H	L	H	H	L	L	H	H
24	Anaan	H	L	H	H	H	H	H	L
25	Ibibio	H	L	H	H	H	L	H	L
26	Ibibio	H	L	H	H	H	L	H	L
27	Ibibio	L	L	L	H	H	L	H	L
28	Anaan	H	L	H	H	L	L	H	L
29	Anaan	H	L	H	H	L	L	H	L
30	*								
31	Anaan	H	L	H	H	H	L	H	L
32	Oro	L	H	H	L	L	H	H	L
33	Anaan	H	L	L	L	L	H	H	L
34	Anaan	H	L	H	H	H	L	H	L
35	Oro	H	L	H	H	H	L	H	L
36	Anaan	H	L	H	H	H	L	H	L
37	Anaan	H	L	H	H	H	L	H	L
38	Oro	H	L	L	H	H	H	H	L
39	Oro	H	L	L	H	H	H	H	L
40	Oro	L	H	L	H	L	L	H	L

41	Oro	H	L	H	H	L	H	H	L
42	Oro	H	L	L	L	L	L	H	L
43	Oro	H	L	L	H	L	L	H	L
44	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
45	Ibibio	H	L	L	L	L	H	H	L
46	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	H	H	L
47	Ibibio	L	H	L	H	L	L	H	H
48	Anaan	H	L	L	H	L	L	H	L
49	Oro	H	L	L	L	L	H	H	L
50	Ibibio	H	L	L	H	L	L	H	L

Table VIII: Rhythm in “Mary can go to school, can’t she?”

In the above illustration, the word “go” was identified as posing problem to the speakers. The analysis indicates that twenty-nine respondents representing 64.4% were able to realise the correct rhythm while sixteen respondents making 35.6% had difficulties. In the case of “school”, thirty-four (34) respondents which represent 75.6% could not realise the rhythm while 11 respondents representing 24.4% had no difficulties. Thus, while the rhythm in the word “go” posed some problems, majority of the respondents had no difficulty realizing the correct rhythm in the word “school”. From this analysis, it is rational to conclude that level of education alone is not proportionally correlative with appropriate rhythm in English as a second language since mother-tongue interference is a major and stronger source of influence to speakers from different sociolinguistic backgrounds.

5.10 Data on Rhythm in “Did you talk with Alice at the club?”

This table contains an interrogative sentence performance. Many fail to begin the question with “high” tone. Therefore, the term “did you” is High (H) and followed by Low (L) tune. Many fail to indicate this.

Respondent	Tribe	Did	you	talk	with	A	lice	at	the	club?
Control		L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
1	Anaan	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
2	*									
3	Ibibio	H	H	H	L	H	H	H	H	H
4	Oro	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
5	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	H
6	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
7	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
8	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
9	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
10	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
11	*									
12	Ibibio	L	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
13	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
14	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
	*									

16	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
17	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
18	*									
19	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
20	Anaan	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
21	Anaan	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
22	Anaan	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
23	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
24	Anaan	L	L	H	L	L	L	L	L	H
25	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
26	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
27	Ibibio	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
28	Anaan	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
29	Anaan	H	L	H	L	H	H	L	L	H
30	*									
31	Anaan	H	L	L	L	L	H	L	L	H
32	Oro	L	H	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
33	Anaan	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
34	Anaan	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
35	Oro	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
36	Anaan	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
37	Anaan	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
38	Oro	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	L
39	Oro	H	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
40	Oro	H	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
41	Oro	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
42	Oro	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
43	Oro	H	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
44	Anaan	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	L
45	Ibibio	L	L	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
46	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
47	Ibibio	L	H	H	L	H	L	L	L	H
48	Anaan	L	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	H
49	Oro	H	L	L	L	H	L	L	L	H
50	Ibibio	L	H	L	L	H	L	L	L	H

Table IX: Rhythm in “Did you talk with Alice at the club?”

Key: L = Low
H = High

In the question above, the point of observation was “Did you....” The Analysis reveals that thirty-one respondents representing 68.9% were able to realise the correct rhythm while fourteen respondents representing 31.1% could not . This shows that a greater number were able to realize the correct rhythm.

6.1 Summary of analyses of data

Based on all the data presented above, we observe that the rhythm in Educated Nigerian Spoken English are realised differently by speakers representing Variety III which we used for the study. It is noticed that some speakers do not realise rhythms correctly despite their academic attainment. This could be dependent on their academic discipline or may be accounted for from the point of view of mother tongue interference. Another reason is that they are not scholars of English Language. These speakers tend to transfer the tonal traits of their native languages into English pronunciations. Only few were able to realise those sounds correctly. The data shown in section above confirm that there are different rhythmic realisations in sentences. Some had it right but some could not. Details of the respondents' performances are discussed in the tables below.

Sentence	Control	Ibibio Number of respondents (21)				Anaan Number of respondents (14)				Oro Number of respondents (10)			
		NA	%	NNA	%	NA	%	NNA	%	NA	%	NNA	%
S1	H,L	13	61.9	8	38.1	10	71.4	4	29.6	6	60	4	40
S2	H,L	16	76.2	5	23.8	11	78.6	3	21.4	6	60	4	40
S3	L	3	14.3	18	85.7	1	7.1	13	92.9	0	0	10	100
S4	L,L,H,L	5	35.7	16	64.3	3	21.4	11	78.6	4	60	6	60
S5	L	5	35.7	16	64.3	1	7.1	13	92.9	1	10	9	90
S6	H,L,L	9	42.9	12	57.1	4	28.6	10	71.4	0	0	10	100
S7	H,L	10	47.6	11	52.4	8	57.1	6	42.9	3	30	7	70
S8	H,L	16	76.2	5	23.3	8	57.1	6	42.9	3	30	7	70

Table XI: Sentences Represented in Rhythm

Key: S1- 8 = Sentence 1- 8
 NA = Number Able
 NNA = Numbers Not Able
 %A = Percentage Able
 %NA = Percentage Not Able

S	First	Second	Third
S1	Anaan = 71.4	Ibibio = 61.9	Oro = 60
S2	Anaan = 78.6	Ibibio = 76.2	Oro = 60
S3	Ibibio = 14.3	Anaan = 7.1	Oro = 0
S4	Oro = 40	Ibibio = 35.7	Anaan = 21.4
S5	Ibibio = 35.7	Oro = 10	Anaan = 7.1
S6	Ibibio = 42.9	Anaan = 28.6	Oro = 0
S7	Anaan = 57.1	Ibibio = 47.6	Oro = 30
S8	Ibibio = 76.2	Anaan = 57.1	Oro = 30

Table XII: Comparative Performance in Rhythm

Tribes	1st	2nd	3rd
Ibibio:	4	4	0
Anaan:	3	3	2
Oro:	1	1	6

6.2 Summary for the number of times and positions taken

A careful study of the analytical table and summary above presented one major fact. It reflects the fact that among the three major tribes in Akwa Ibom State speaking Educated Nigerian English, the Ibibio people do realise rhythm better than others. They are closely followed by Anaan tribe. The Oro people indicate a very low performance.

7. Summary of Findings

So far, this research has discussed English language as one of the natural languages in the world that has gained international spread and recognition. In Nigeria, a greater population of English speakers are either bilingual or multilingual. This is so because of the multi-ethnic nature of the country. Ethnic identity is one cause of variety of speech in Nigeria and, indeed, Akwa Ibom State. Some native speakers of Ibibio, Anaan, and Oro among others realise English sounds and other stretches of utterance wrongly in terms of rhythm.

So many scholars have worked on some of the supra-segmental features. These features deal with sounds articulation in stress, rhythm and intonation. This has been one area that scholars have feared to tread. Those who treat them have admitted that they are areas that are a bit problematic. This research work was intended to measure the ability of speakers of educated Nigerian English within Uyo metropolis in realising rhythm in their various utterances.

Out of the eight sentences analysed for rhythm, only five (5) sentences were realised correctly representing 62.5% of respondents. The remaining three (3) sentences representing 37.5% were scored wrongly by majority of the respondents. If there were no problems in rhythm, the percentage realising those sentences correctly would have been higher. But this is not so. This research reveals that many speakers of standard Nigerian English within Uyo metropolis, despite their educational level, could not realise correct rhythm in their utterances. This result is corroborated by Udofot (1997, 2004, 2007, 2011). In particular, Udofot (2004, 2007) had admitted that a secondary school graduate may be found to speak Standard Nigerian English owing to his sociolinguistic background, whereas an educated Nigerian (sometimes including an academic Professor) may be heard speaking non-standard English owing to the interference from the speaker's mother tongue which characterizes his spoken performance. The problem could be traceable to the tonal nature of respondents' first language or "mother tongue" (L1 influences or local interference). Local interference could be caused by spelling orthography, where the phonemes that occur in many Nigerian languages do not all occur in English or their acoustic and articulatory characteristics are different. Therefore, the presence of some

sounds found in English but absent in most Nigerian languages were found to interfere with the learners' English expressions. It could also be dependent on their field of disciplines.

In this study, it has been observed that rhythm is one of the factors that appear most influential in determining spoken Nigerian English because it helps one to know exactly what the speaker means. It should be noted that one's ability to speak English language with a certain level of fluency could be a yardstick for deciding the variety of spoken English that one belongs. Intelligibility could be measured if the realisation of rhythm is accurate as when they are spoken out. We also observed that among the three major ethnic groups in Akwa Ibom State, Ibibio tends to realise rhythm better than the other two tribes.

8 Conclusion

It is a statement of fact that English occupies a prestigious position in the educational, social, political and economic sectors of Nigeria. And from all indications, the status and role of English in the Nigerian linguistic environment will most likely remain so for a very long time to come. Therefore, any factor that will improve effective teaching and learning of Spoken English in an L2 environment like Nigeria, as suggested below, should be encouraged to ensure effective use of English globally.

9 Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations would be appropriate for further studies:

- (a) It would be necessary to develop more practical methods of training and re training English teachers involved in teaching rhythm in non-native environments through well-organized conferences and workshops.
- (b) Electronic software on rhythm that could be easily accessible to English learners in L2 environments (just as other phonetic analytical software like Praat, Signalyze, Speech Filing System, etc) need to be improved to accommodate pedagogical exercises on rhythm for learners of English as a second language.
- (c) More researches on the adoption of metrical phonology for analysis of rhythm should be experimented with other tonal and agglutinative languages so as to discover areas of difficulties in learning the rhythm of Standard English.
- (d) Online pedagogical materials on the learning of English prosody should be made available at all levels of education for L2 English learners.
- (e) More researches on English rhythm should be championed in New Englishes for such as World Englishes' conferences and journals, and other journal publications like English Worldwide, English Today, among others.

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Contact information:

Ubong Ekerete Josiah¹ & Susana Monday Akpan²
1&2 - University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria
Department of English
University of Uyo, P.M.B. 1017,
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria
ubojos@yahoo.com; ubongjosiah@gmail.edu.ng