Revue de Traduction et Langues Volume 16 Numéro 01/2017, **pp. 255-267**
Journal of Translation and Languages مجلة الترجمة واللغات
ISSN (Print): 1112-3974 **EISSN (Online): 2600-6235**

Phonetic Quantity Cue in the English of Educated Edo Nigerians as Reflection of Non- Native English

Julianah A. Akindele
Osun State University Osogbo -Nigeria
julianah.akindele@uniosun.edu.ng
0000-0001-6548-5246

To cite this paper:
Julianah, A. (2017). Phonetic Quantity Cue in the English of Educated Edo Nigerians as Reflection of Non-Native English. *Revue Traduction et Langues 16(1),* 255-267.

Received: 16/01/2017; **Accepted**: 15/05/2017, **Published:** 31/08/2017

Abstract: *Studies on Educated Edo English phonology have been on word stress and variable stress but studies on English syllabic consonants have been rare. Three hundred final-year university undergraduates were purposively sampled and two Standard English (SE) speakers served as Baselines. The aim was to examine Educated Edo English (EEE) speakers' level of conformity to syllable weight insensitivity as established phenomenon in weak forms. Each of the participants produced 20 English prepared items into a Speech Filing System (SFS), version 1.41, subjected to auditory and instrumental analysis. Auditory analysis revealed that EEE speakers' confirmed 250 (4.2%) instances of appropriate use out of expected result of 6000. Males' performance was 2% and females 2.2%. Native baselines' performance established 100% as a result of their native intuition. Instrumental analysis revealed native baselines articulation at 0.017- 0.014msc; 0.009- 0.011msc with 0.031 and 0.020msc respectively and length difference of 0.158msc and 0.138msc. Educated Edo English speakers' length difference in syllabic consonants showed weight sensitivity. Syllabic consonants which are supposed to be weakened as affirmed in SE were made more prominent, ranging between 0.502-0.899msc, with a weight difference of 0.987mscl showing preponderance use of strong forms, which is a major phonological phenomenon in SE pronunciation.*
Keywords: *Phonetic quantity cue, Stressed and unstressed syllable alternation, Educated Edo Nigerians, Standard English.*
Résumé : *Les études sur la phonologie anglaise Edo instruite ont porté sur l'accentuation des mots et l'accentuation variable, mais les études sur les consonnes syllabiques anglaises ont été rares. Trois cents étudiants universitaires de dernière année ont été échantillonnés à dessein et deux locuteurs d'anglais standard (SE) ont servi de référence. L'objectif était d'examiner le niveau de conformité des locuteurs de l'anglais edo éduqué (EEE) à l'insensibilité au poids des syllabes en tant que phénomène établi dans les formes faibles. Chacun des participants a produit 20 items préparés en anglais dans un Speech Filing System (SFS), version 1.41, soumis à une analyse auditive et instrumentale. L'analyse auditive a révélé que les locuteurs d'EEE ont confirmé 250 cas (4,2%) d'utilisation appropriée sur un résultat attendu de 6000. La performance des hommes était de 2% et celle des femmes de 2,2%. Les performances des lignes de base*

Corresponding author : Julianah A. Akindele

natives ont été établies à 100 % grâce à leur intuition native. L'analyse instrumentale a révélé l'articulation des lignes de base natives à 0,017-0,014 msc ; 0,009- 0,011 msc avec 0,031 et 0,020 msc respectivement et différence de longueur de 0,158 msc et 0,138 msc. La différence de longueur des consonnes syllabiques des anglophones Edo éduqués a montré une sensibilité au poids. Les consonnes syllabiques censées être affaiblies comme affirmé en SE ont été rendues plus importantes, allant de 0,502 à 0,899 msc, avec une différence de poids de 0,987 mscl montrant l'utilisation prépondérante des formes fortes, qui est un phénomène phonologique majeur dans la prononciation SE.
Mots clés : *Repère de quantité phonétique, alternance de syllabes accentuées et non accentuées, Nigérians Edo instruits, anglais standard.*

1. Introduction

Awonusi (2007) remarks that the linguistic situation in Nigeria is often described as complex. According to him, Nigeria is a multilingual country with languages of unequal social, official and educational statuses, and this inequality shows that linguistic hierarchy is a harsh reality. Previous investigations on Nigeria English (NigE) phonology have confirmed that NigE differs significantly from Standard English. Specifically, studies on NigE stress and rhythm (Akinjobi, 2004) have shown this marked difference. Nigerian English itself has been observed to have sub-varieties reflecting its multilingual environment. Some of these sub-varieties are Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa Englishes, which constitute the three major languages in Nigeria, have been vigorously researched (Jibril, 1982; Jowitt, 1991; Akinjobi, 2006) while others especially syllabic consonants of Educated Edo English Speakers - a minority group, have not been exhaustive in the literature.

Though, results from Educated Yoruba English Syllabic consonants (Akinjobi, 2009), a majority language group in Nigeria affirmed marked distinction in syllabic consonants of the group compared to Standard English; which is supposed to be the norm for pronunciation in second language (SE) context such as Nigeria. However, Akinjobi (2009) cannot be used to generalise for NE phonology; considering the fact that over 250 ethnic groups have been attested for Nigeria (Lewis et al., 2013). Hence, more phonological investigations from other sub-varieties need to be explored in order to make a concrete claim for NigE phonology. In addition, investigations from other minority group like Edo English speakers in Nigeria will allow linguists to explore areas of convergence and divergence.

This study, therefore, becomes relevant because it will help to contribute to the current debate on the need for the standardisation and codification of NigE among world Englishes. Using a geo-ethnic approach therefore, the study examines whether or not Educated Edo English syllabic consonants pattern conform to earlier description of other NE varieties and the implication for NigE description among world Englishes. The following research questions guided the study :

- Does Educated Edo English Speakers alternate between stressed and unstressed syllables in English syllabic consonants or not?
- Does any significant difference exist or not in the conformity of Edo males' and females' in the alternation of English syllabic consonants?
- Do Educated Edo English acoustic measurement of syllabic consonants conform to earlier description of other Nigerian English sub-varieties as quantity weight sensitive or not?

2. The Concept of World Englishes

Bolton (2005) noted that the term 'world Englishes' implies a range of meanings and interpretations. The concept has also been viewed as an umbrella label, which refers to a wide range of differing approaches to the description and analysis of English(es) worldwide; the 'new Englishes' found in the Caribbean and in West African and East African societies, Asian Englishes etc. Kachru (1991) categorised world Englishes into three circles model: the Inner Circle countries (the USA, the UK, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada), which are primarily places where the traditional monolingual native speakers of English are located.

The Outer Circle, which comprises countries with a history of colonialism by English-speaking countries (Singapore, Malaysia, and India, Ghana, Nigeria,), where the language has been retained to serve various institutionalized functions even after independence. English in the Outer Circle, then, typically has an official status, and is the mother tongue of many speakers, though the variety spoken often shows varying degrees of influence from contact with local languages.

The Expanding Circle countries (South Korea, Japan, and China) are the ones where English has no restricted official status and is used mainly for international communication instead of having major domestic functions (Kachru, 1985, 1986, 1991; Kachru & Nelson, 1996; Sung-Yul Park & Wee, 2008). Studies have also suggested that there were (in 2001) an estimated 375 million users of English in Inner-Circle societies, 375 million in Outer-Circle (ESL) societies, and 750-1,000 million in the Expanding (EFL) Circle (McArthur, 2006: Oxford & Jain, 2008). Below is a graphic representation of Kachru's (1991): three model cycle:

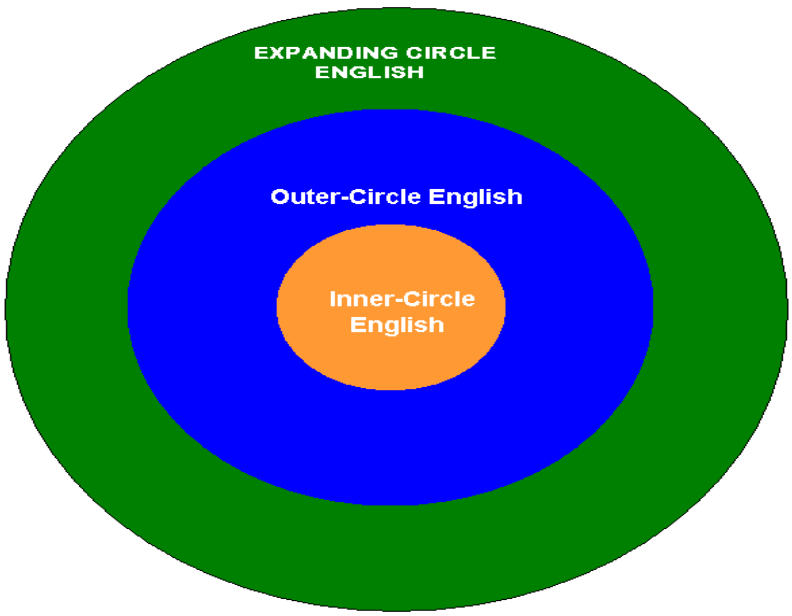
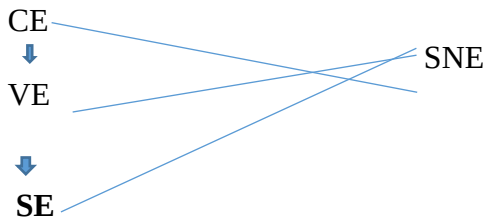


Fig 1: Kachru's three model cycle
Source: (Oxford & Jain, 2008)

3. Nigerian English

Nigerian English has been stratified along various climes. Some varieties have been identified along regional bases while others are based on educational and social status. Along regional status, are Yoruba English, Hausa English, Igbo English, Edo English, Educated Nigerian English; Pidgin English etc. (see Jibril, 1982; Odumuh, 1993; Udofot, 2000; Akinjobi 2009).

Several investigations (grammar, lexis, semantics, discourse and phonology) in Nigerian English have established marked differences in Nigerian English from Standard English. Three types of Nigerian English (NigE) have been identified in the literature. These are Contact English (CE), Victorian English (VE) and School English (SE). School English has been observed as filled with predominant strands that have contributed to the present day Standard Nigerian English. All the three strands have been observed to contribute to Standard Nigerian English (Bamgbose, 1995). This is illustrated below in Fig 2:



CE: Contact English
VE: Victorian English
SE: School English
SNE: Standard Nigerian English

Fig. 2: Strands in Standard Nigerian English
(Bamgbose, 1995: 20)

Banjo (1971) stratifies Nigerian English using points on a cline. This was done based on the extent of mother tongue influence and approximation to world standard. Variety 1 is said to have the greatest density of mother tongue transfer, Varieties II and III as being locally acceptable and internationally intelligible but obviously with variations that differ from the standard, and Variety IV as the spoken form of those that have been exposed to English in first language settings. He therefore, recommends Varieties II and III as "endonormative models," since they are 'home-grown'. Jibril (1982) stratifies Nigerian English using a 'geo-tribal' dichotomous approach. He employed terms such as Hausa English, Southern English which he further stratifies into two as Yoruba and Igbo English (which he discusses as if they were sub-varieties of Southern English). He goes further to employ social terms such as Basic Hausa English and Sophisticated Hausa English, Southern and sophisticated Southern English, and even Southern-Influenced Hausa English. Educated Edo English as used in this investigation is viewed as a sub-variety of Educated Nigerian English (See Akindele, 2015).

4. English Syllabic Consonants and Nigerian English Phonology

Syllabic Consonant oftentimes replaces the vowel [ə] in a syllable in Standard English. They make it possible to make some short syllables shorter and simpler. A syllabic consonant may occur post vocalically, in syllable-final position, before a consonant (as in milk) and, in some environments, as a syllabic consonant as in drizzle (Oxford & Jain, 2008). A syllabic consonant may be analysed phonologically either as just the consonant, or as consisting of an underlying schwa followed by the consonant. Sometimes, a syllabic consonant behaves as the rhyme. The usual way of representing syllabic consonants relies on their functional status; since they behave like vowels, and they are found in nuclei positions of a word. They fulfill a vocalic function while still being consonants physiologically (See Cambridge English Corpus).

Some researchers (Ufomata, 1990; Akinjobi, 2009) of NigE phonology opine that a major area of deviation from Standard English usage for Nigerian speakers of English is in the realization of vowels and syllables that occur in unstressed positions. Gimson (1975:33) notes that a crucial feature of English pronunciation is that unstressed syllables tend to get weakened and have obscure qualities. Therefore /ə/ and syllabic /*l*, *I*), ɒ/ occur typically in unstressed syllables. Akinjobi (2009) further remarks that syllables that have no vowels but rather have syllabic consonants as their peaks (student /stju:dnt,/, 'apple' /æpl/, 'people /pI:pl/, and 'hospital /'hɒspItl/) are usually located at word final boundaries. This study sets to confirm the level of conformity of EEES on articulation of English syllabic consonants. Having realised that NigE has been adjured on regional barriers and diversities, therefore, claims from Educated Yoruba English (Akinjobi, 2009) cannot be exhaustive to affirm NigE phonology for syllabic consonants; hence, the consideration for Educated Edo English speakers, another regional variety of NigE.

5. Participants

Three hundred participants (150 males and 150 females), who are native speakers of Edo, a minority language group in South West Nigeria, and who use English as a second language (L2) as confirmed through oral interview were purposively sampled. These university undergraduates were purposively sampled from a Federal and State Universities in South West Nigeria. The participants were preferred because of their length of training and exposure in the university education; as they are in their final year of university training. Also, they are assumed to have passed the hurdles of higher education screening in Nigeria, where English is made a compulsory subject to study any course in any university in Nigeria. In addition, the participants meet Banjo (1971) and Adepoju's (2017) variety II model. Hence, they are assumed to have both written and spoken proficiency. Two native base lines, who are also university undergraduates in Britain, were used as control.

6. Method

Three hundred participants were purposively sampled to produce twenty English items of final syllabic consonants. Production of each of the participants was elicited into a Speech Filing System (SFS), version 1.41 installed on 'Hp 250' computer laptop. This was played back and transcribed with the milliseconds of each of the participants

adequately tracked and cropped for analysis. Acoustic measures of each of the EEES articulation on the segmented syllables in the produced three items were entered on a table and the overall derived. Simple percentage statistical method was used to analyse the participant's production and two native base lines, baselines who served as control was tracked, using milliseconds.

- **Analysis**

Table 1: Educated Edo English Speakers' and Native Baselines alternation of stressed and unstressed syllable in English words with syllabic consonants

S/N	English Syllabic Consonants	Participants	Instances of appropriate use of syllabic consonants	% of the instances of appropriate use of syllabic consonants	Syllables/ vowels substituted
Native baseline 1			100	100%	-
Native baseline 2			100	100%	-
1.	comfortable/ˈkʌmf[tə[bl̩]/	300	15	5%	/bu/
2.	impeachable/ˌɪmˈpiːtʃə[bəl]/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
3.	endurable /ɪnˈdjuːrə[bl̩]/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
4.	approachable/əˈprəʊtʃə[bl]/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
5.	controllable /kənˈtrəʊl[əbl̩]/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
6.	referable /rɪˈfɜːrə[bl̩]/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
7.	responsible/rɪˈspɒnsə[bl̩]/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
8.	profitable /ˈprɒfɪt[ə[bl̩]/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
9.	avoidable /əˈvɔɪ[də[bl̩]/	300	15	5%	/bu/
10.	predictable//prɪˈdɪktə[bl̩/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
11.	creditable / □kredətəbə*l*/	300	17	5.7%	/bu/
12.	readable /ri:də[b*l*]/	300	14	0%	/bu/
13.	dependable /di□pendəbə[*l*]	300	12	4%	/bu/
14.	respectable /rɪ spektəbə*[l]*/	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
15.	retractable /ri □træktəbə*l*	300	15	5%	/bu/
15.	indomitable /in□dɒmətə[bə*l]/*	300	15	5%	/bu/
17.	admirable/ □ædmərə[bə*l*]\	300	10	3.3%	/bu/
18.	amicable /□æmikə[b*l*]/	300	17	5.7%	/bu/
19.	agreeable /ə□gri:ə[bəl]/	300	15	5%	/bu/
20.	amiable □eimiə[bə*l]*/	300	15	5%	/bu/
Total		**6000**	**250**	**4.2%**	

Table 1.1 illustrates the performance of Educated Edo English Speakers and native baselines in the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllable in English words with syllabic consonants. Out of six thousand over all expected instances of occurrence of alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in English words with syllabic consonants, EEES performance on tested items revealed 4.2% alternations while the native baselines alternated stressed and unstressed syllable in 100% instances. The performances of EEES and the native baselines are further represented graphically overleaf:

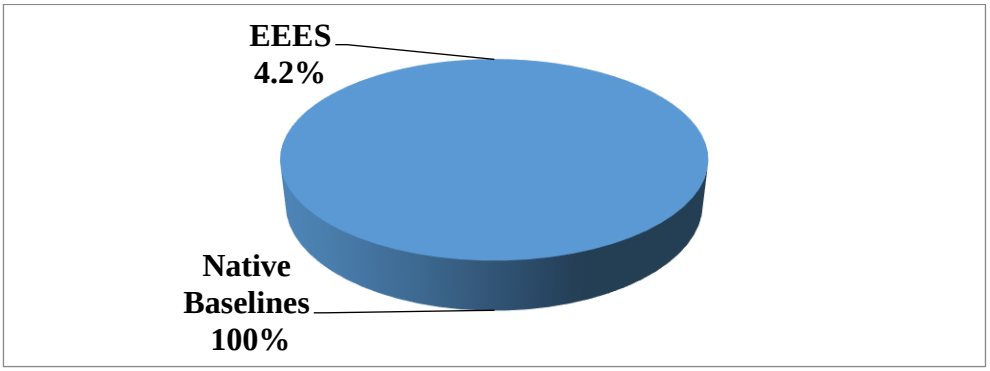


Fig.1.1: Educated Edo English Speakers' and Native Baselines' alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in English words with syllabic consonants

The graphic above further reveals the native baselines alternations of stressed and unstressed syllables in English syllabic words at 100%. For the EEES however, only a neglible percent could alternate stress appropriately on the English syllabic consonants, bringing their performance to 4.2%.

Table 2: Educated Edo English Males and Females alternation of stressed and unstressed syllable in English words with syllabic consonants

S/N	English Syllabic Consonants	Participants		Instances of appropriate use of syllabic consonants				Syllables/ vowels /substituted	
1.	comfortable/ˈkʌmf[tə[bl̩]/	150	150	8	5.3	7	4.6	/bu/	/bu/
2.	impeachable/ˌɪmˈpiːtʃə[bəl]/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/
3.	endurable /ɪnˈdjuːrə[bl̩]/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/
4.	approachable/əˈprəʊtʃə[bl̩]/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/
5.	controllable/kənˈtrəʊl[əbl̩]/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/
6.	referable /rɪˈfɜːrə[bl̩]/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/

7.	responsible/rɪˈspɒnsə[bl̩]/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/
8.	profitable /ˈprɒfɪt[ə[bl̩]/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/
9.	avoidable /əˈvɔɪ[də[bl̩]/	150	150	8	5.3	7	4.6	/bu/	/bu/
10.	predictable//prɪˈdɪktə[bl̩/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/
11.	creditable / kredətəbə*l*/	150	150	8	5.3	9	6	/bu/	/bu/
12.	readable /ri:də[b*l*]/	150	150	7	4.7	7	4.6	/bu/	/bu/
13.	dependable /di pendəbə[*l*]	150	150	6	4	6	4	/bu/	/bu/
14.	respectable /rI spektəbə*[l]*/	150	150	5	3.3	5	3.3	/bu/	/bu/
15.	retractable /ri træktəbə*l*	150	150	8	5.3	7	4.6	/bu/	/bu/
15.	indomitable /in dɒmətə[bə*l]/*	150	150	8	5.3	7	4.6	/bu/	/bu/
17.	admirable/ ædmərə[bə*l*]\	150	150	4	2.7	6	4	/bu/	/bu/
18.	amicable /æmikə[b*l*]/	150	150	8	5.3	9	6	/bu/	/bu/
19.	agreeable /ə gri:ə[bəl]/	150	150	5	3.3	10	6.7	/bu/	/bu/
20	amiable eimiə[bə*l]*/	150	150	5	3.3	10	6.7	/bu/	/bu/
Total		3000	3000	120	2%	130	2.2%		

Table 2.2 shows that Educated Edo English Speakers' (males and females) could not alternate between unstressed syllables of the English words with syllabic consonants appropriately. Instead, all stressed and unstressed syllables of the English words with syllabic consonants were produced with nearly same prominence. The statistical analysis of the female participants was 2.2% in the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables of the English words with syllabic consonants while of the males had 2%; which is not in conformity with the Standard English form.

Table 3: **Educated Edo English Speakers and Native Baselines duration in English syllabic consonants**

	/ˈkʌm ftə [bl̩]/				/ɪmˈpiːtʃə[bəl]/					/əˈprəʊtʃə[bl̩]/				
Syllable	1st	2nd	3rd	Length Difference	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	length difference	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Length difference
NB 1	0.071	0.011	0.007	0.075	0.019	0.061	0.012	0.017	0.075	0.006	0.071	0.007	0. 009	0.065
NB 1	0.077	0.014	0.009	0.082	0.021	0.066	0.010	0.014	0.083	0.008	0. 077	0.009	0. 011	0.073
Total	**0.148**	**0.025**	***0.016**	***1.57**	**0.040**	**0.127**	**0.022**	***0.031**	***0.158**	**0.014**	**0.148**	**0.016**	***0.020**	***0.138**
EEES 1	0.208	0.302	**0.690**	0.018	0.282	0.289	0.291	**0.869**	0.007	0.219	0.219	0.229	**0.700**	0.033
EEES 2	0.445	0.440	**0.899**	0.014	0.226	0.231	0.233	**0.731**	0.041	0.213	0.231	0.231	**0.785**	0.011
EEES 3	0.470	0.472	**0.990**	0.048	0.229	0.229	0.252	**0.729**	0.019	0.229	0.229	0.232	**0.672**	0.018
EEES 4	0.351	0.355	**0.750**	0.044	0.202	0.213	0.263	**0.699**	0.021	0.283	0.277	0.263	**0.851**	0.028
EEES 5	0.420	0.428	**0.910**	0.062	0.212	0.217	0.219	**0.674**	0.026	0.270	0.290	0.274	**0.821**	0.013
EEES 6	0.369	0.356	**0.756**	0.031	0.219	0.223	0.214	**0.684**	0.028	0.244	0.254	0.249	**0.769**	0.022
EEES 7	0.345	0.349	**0.778**	0.084	0.216	0.224	0.224	**0.672**	0.008	0.224	0.226	0.228	**0.687**	0.009
EEES 8	0.354	0.365	**0.785**	0.066	0.207	0.223	0.223	**0.691**	0.038	0.212	0.223	0.223	**0.654**	0.004
EEES 10	0.207	0.314	**0.567**	0.046	0.215	0.224	0.224	**0.672**	0.009	0.224	0.229	0.282	**0.707**	0.028
EEES 11	0.341	0.352	**0.652**	0.041	0.242	0.255	0.275	**0.785**	0.013	0.175	0.175	0.175	**0.541**	0.016
EES 12	0.315	0.325	**0.695**	0.055	0.233	0.257	0.276	**0.799**	0.033	0.226	0.276	0.376	**0.915**	0.037
EEES 13	0.368	0.378	**0..804**	0.058	0.207	0.216	0.286	**0.756**	0.047	0.246	0.296	0.296	**0.887**	0.049
EEES 14	0.381	0.398	**0.790**	0.011	0.248	0.221	0.241	**0.721**	0.011	0.221	0.227	0.321	**0.781**	0.012
EEES 15	0.225	0.370	**0.670**	0.075	0. 217	0.257	0.260	**0.757**	0.023	0.257	0.275	0.277	**0.825**	0.016

EEES 16	0.232	0.278	**0.578**	0.025	0.210	0.234	0.254	**0.746**	0.039	0.224	0.244	0.244	**0.723**	0.011
EEES 17	0.228	0.321	**0.598**	0.049	0.231	0.237	0.259	**0.731**	0.004	0.231	0.263	0.339	**0.861**	0.028
EEES 18	0.310	0.363	**0.733**	0.057	0.234	0.238	0.241	**0.728**	0.015	0.258	0.250	0.215	**0.710**	0.013
EEES 19	0.317	0.384	**0.784**	0.083	0.216	0.220	0.279	**0.740**	0.025	0.209	0.220	0.210	**0.617**	0.022
EEES 20	0.338	0.351	**0.751**	0.062	0.215	0.200	0.270	**0.700**	0.015	0.200	0. 210	0.221	**0.658**	0.027
Total MSC	6.466	7.381	**14.682**	**0.987**	4.465	4.624	5.01	**15.229**	**0.544**	4.591	4.83	5.101	**14.806**	**0.413**

Table 3 reveals the lenth patterns of twenty EEES sampled participants and two native English speakers who served as control in the articulation of 3 selected test items with syllabic consonants. Native baselines production affirmed elsaticity in length. The alternation between stressed and unstressed syllables revealed differences in length - [b*l***]** of ˈkʌm ftə [bl̩] measured 0.007-0.009msc (0.16) showing weakening and length difference of 1.57msc. The same applies for /ɪmˈpiːtʃə[bəl]/ and /əˈprəʊtʃə[bl̩]/. The native baselines articulation measured 0.017- 0.014msc; 0.009- 0.011msc with 0.031 and 0.020msc respectively and length difference of 0.158msc and 0.138msc. EEES, length difference between stressed and unstressed syllables as tracked showed inelasticity. Syllabic consonants which are supposed to be weakened as affirmed in SE were made more prominent, ranging between 0.502-0.899msc and with a weight difference of 0.987msc. For /ɪmˈpiːtʃə[bəl]/ and /əˈprəʊtʃə[bl̩]/, 0.674msc-0.869msc (15.229msc) and 0.617msc-0.915msc (14.806msc) was measured for EEES participants respectively.

7. Results and Discussion

The performance of Educated Edo English Speakers and native baselines in the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in English words with syllabic consonants showed marked differnce. Out of six thousand over all expected instances of occurrence of alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in English words with syllabic consonants, EEES performance on tested items revealed 4.2% alternations while the native baselines alternated stressed and unstressed syllable in 100% instances.

The 100% performance of the native baselines who served as control was expected beacause as native speakers, they have the intutition and this could account for their excelent performance.

This further re-confirms Akinjobi's (2009) claims that Nigerian English speakers do not weaken vowels in syllabic consonants as affirmed in Standard English form. Educated Edo English Speakers non-conformity in the articulation of syllabic consonants could be a result of the fact that stress alternation is not a phonological feature in Edo language. Also, majority of the participants came in contact with English in the classroom. This was discovered through oral interview. Hence, Nigerians generally have a tendency of making all syllablles prominent in a word. Apart, Edo language itself is a tone language while English is stress timed language.

Educated Edo English Speakers' (males and females) could not alternate between unstressed syllables of the English words with syllabic consonants appropriately. Instead, all stressed and unstressed syllables of the English words with syllabic consonants were produced with same weight relatively. The statistical analysis of the female participants was 2.2% in the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables of the English words with syllabic consonants while that of males was 2%; which is not in conformity with the Standard English form.

Lenth patterns of twenty EEES and two native English speakers who served as control in the articulation of 3 selected test items with syllabic consosnats showed that native baselines production affirmed lenth elsaticity. The alternation between stressed and unstressed syllables revealed differences in length - [b*l***]** of ˈkʌm ftə [bl̩] measured 0.007-0.009msc (0.16) showing weakening and length difference of 1.57msc. The same applies for [bəl] of /ɪmˈpiːtʃə[bəl]/ and /əˈprəʊtʃə[bl̩]/.

The native baselines articulation measured 0.017- 0.014msc; 0.009- 0.011msc with 0.031 and 0.020msc respectively and length difference of 0.158msc and 0.138msc. EEES, length difference between stressed and unstressed syllables as tracked showed inelasticity. Syllabic consonants [bəl] that are supposed to be made less prominent as affirmed in SE were made more prominent, ranging between 0.502-0.899msc and with a weight difference of 0.987msc. For [bəl] of /ɪmˈpiːtʃə[bəl]/ and /əˈprəʊtʃə[bl̩]/, 0.674msc-0.869msc (15. 229msc) and 0.617msc-0.915msc (14. 806msc) was adequately tracked for EEES particpants respectively, revealing lenth articliutaion of [b*l*] of the three tested items of Engish syllabic consonants.

8. Conclusion

Statistical and acoustic measures of Educated Edo English Speakers English syllabic consonants show non conformity to Standard English form. The participants like other ESL users could not alternate between stressed and unstressed syllables of English syllabic consonants. They as well rendered all the syllables of the English syllabic words quantitatively, especially the syllabic consonants, which is as a result of the affirmed tendency of the progressive stress pattern on English words (Atoye, 2005 & Akindele, 2011).

The acoustic measures of the participants further affirm the quantity weight factor of EEES alternation. This phonological phenomenon confirms the non-conformity of EEES English syllabic consonant to SE form. It was obviously perceived and noticed that EEES inserted vowel /u/ between the syllabic consonant ([bu] for [bəl) during the syllable articulation. This could also account for the sensitive weight factor on the syllabic consonants.

The native baseline observed the rule as expected in SE, by weakening the syllabic consonants. Though, a few cases of vowel substitution for the syllabic consonants were articulated by EEES but the percentage was insignificant (4.2%). In these few instances however, the vowels inserted were often strong and quantitative [bul]. The control is found neither to have inserted a vowel between the syllabic consonant and the preceding sound nor substitute a vowel for the syllabic consonant.

Results re-confirm Akinjobi (2009) and Ilolo's (2013) claim for Educated Yoruba and Isoko Englishes, sub varieties of NigE. This could therefore, account for one of the

major factors responsible for the intelligibility problem encountered when Nigerians communicate with native English speakers. However, researchers, linguists, language experts, curriculum planners, applied linguists etc should note that majority of Nigerians do not weaken syllabic consonants and do not alternate between stressed and unstressed syllables of syllabic consonants.

Since this phonological phenomenon was discovered for Educated Edo English speakers, another sub variety of NigE, it shows variation of world Englishes, an outer cycle form of English; which is a transfer of the environmental norms on the language use.

References

[1] Adepoju, O. (2017). Phrasal stress in English as a Second Language. BA Project. Department of Languages and Linguistics. Osun State University, Osogobo, Nigeria. X-110.

[2] Akindele, J.A. (2015). Duration as a Determining Factor in Educated Edo English Rhythm Description. PhD Thesis. Department of English University of Ibadan. Xv+ 175.

[3] Akinjobi, A. A. (2004). A Phonological Investigation of Vowel Weakening and Unstressed Syllable Obscuration in Educated Yoruba English. PhD. Thesis. Dept. of Linguistics. University of Ibadan. Xxiv+300.

[4] Akinjobi A.A. 2006. Vowel reduction and suffixation in Nigeria: An analysis of the educated usage of speakers of Yoruba English. *English Today*, 22(1) : 10-17.

[5] Akinjobi, A.A. (2009). English syllabic consonants and quantity factor in educated Yoruba Nigerian English. *African Research Review*, 3(2) : 45-55.

[6] Atoye, R.O. (2005). *Deviant word stress in Nigerian English: its implications for Nigerian's English oral literacy.* Paper presented at the 22nd Annual Conference of Nigeria English studies Association (NESA), September 7-10, 2005. Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

[7] Awonusi, S. (2007). *Good spoken English and national development: Socio-phonology in the service of men.* Inaugural Lecture Presented at the University of Lagos.

[8] Bamgbose, A. (1995). English in the Nigerian environment. In (A. Bamgbose, A. Banjo & A. Thomas, eds) *New Englishes: A West African Perspective,* pp. 9-26. Ibadan : Mosuro Publishers.

[9] Banjo, A. (1971). Towards a definition of standard Nigerian spoken English. *Annales de L'Universite d'Abijan Serie* H. (Linguistique) Fasciculeh or Serie, Abidjan : University of Abidjan, 24-28.

[10] Bolton, K. (2005). Where WE stands: Approaches, issues and debate in World Englishes. *World Englishes,* 24(1): 69–83.

[11] Gimson, A.C. (1975). *A Practical Course of English Pronunciation: A Perceptual Approach.* London *:* Edward Arnold.

[12] Ilolo, I. (2013). Vowel Reduction in Isoko English. PhD. Thesis**.** Dept. of English. University of Ibadan. xxiv+300pp.

[13] Jibril, M. (1982). Phonological Variation in Nigerian English, Ph. D Thesis. University of Lancaster.

[14] Jowitt, D. (1991). *Nigerian English Usage**:** An Introduction*. Ibadan: Longman.

[15] Kachru, B. (1985). Standards, Codification, and Sociolinguistic Realism: The English Language in the Outer Circle. In (R. Quirk & H. G. Widdowson, eds) *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures.* pp. 11–30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[16] Kachru, B. (1986). *The Alchemy of English: The Spread, Functions and Models of Non-native Englishes.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press

[17] Kachru, B. (1991). Liberation Linguistics and the Quirk Concern. *English Today,* 25: 3–13.

[18] Kachru, B. (1996). Norms, models and identities. *The Language Teacher Online* 20: 10.

[19] Kachru, B. (2005). *Asian Englishes: Beyond the Canon*. Hong Kong University Press.

[20] Kachru, B. (2008). The first step: The Smith paradigm for intelligibility in world Englishes. *World Englishes* 27 (3/4) : 293-296.

[21] Kachru, B. & C. Nelson. 1996. World Englishes. In (S. McKay & N. Hornberger, eds), *Sociolinguistics in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

[22] Lewis, M. P., Simons, F. G., & Fennig, C. D. (eds). (2013). *Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Seventeenth Edition. Online.* http://www.ethnologue.com *(Accessed October 12, 2021).*

[23] McArthur, T. (2006). Twenty years on Tom McArthur. A 1980s interview re-visited, and up-dated. *English Today,* 22(2):62-64.

[24] Odumuh, A E. (I993). *Sociolinguistics and Nigerian English*. Ibadan: SamBookman

[25] Oxford, R. & Jain, R. (2008). *World Englishes and Varieties of English***.** Online. https://vdocument.in/world-englishes-and-varieties-of-english-56916c309ab44.html (Accessed March 25, 2009).

[26] Sung-Yul Park, J. & Wee, L. (2009). The Three Circles Redux: A Market–Theoretic Perspective on World Englishes. *Applied Linguistics,* 30(3): 389–406.

[27] Udofot, I. (2000). The Rhythm of Educated Spoken Nigerian English. *Journal of Nigerian English and Literature (JONEL),* 1:11-32.

[28] Ufomata, T. (1990). Thoughts in Spoken Nigerian English. *Journal of Nigeria English Studies Association (JNESA),* 10(2): 13-20.