

## SOCIAL AND LINGUISTIC CORRELATES OF R-LIAISON IN EDUCATED YORUBA ENGLISH

Rotimi O. **Oladipupo**

Centre for Foundation Education, Bells University of Technology, Ota, Nigeria.

*olarotimi2002@yahoo.com*

### Abstract

R-liaison, a process whereby /r/ is inserted in-between two adjacent vowels at word boundary for euphonic purpose, is claimed to rarely feature in Nigerian English (NigE henceforth). This paper, however, attempts to track the social and linguistic distribution of this feature of speech in educated Yoruba English (EYE henceforth), a sub-variety of NigE. Labov's variability concept which emphasises the possibility of structured variability in language was adopted. The data for the study were sourced from 120 educated Yoruba subjects, with a minimum of two to three years post-secondary education, evenly stratified into social variables of age (young: 16-35 and adult: 36+), gender (male and female) and socio-economic status (low and high). They all produced, into digital recording devices, eight utterance items and a short passage which contained various instances of r-liaison at word boundary. The perceptually transcribed data were analysed statistically. An appropriate use of r-liaison was allotted one mark and the total score for all participants was converted to a percentage. The scores were subjected to student's *t*-test at 0.05 significant level to test for significance between each social category. The finding confirmed the claim that r-liaison is rare in NigE, as the incidence of r-liaison found in the EYE data was abysmally low. The feature, however, correlates with the adults' speech ( $t_{(118)} = 2.270$ ;  $p = 0.025$ ). The few instances of linking /r/ found in EYE occurred, largely, in-between grammatical items, especially in phrases where the feature has somewhat been lexicalised due to long years of use. These findings, therefore, demonstrate that although r-liaison is not a predominant feature of speech in NigE, it exhibits social and linguistic patterning in EYE.

**Keywords:** R-liaison, Educated Yoruba English, Nigerian English, Social Variables, Linking /r/.

### 1. Introduction

The English language is a linguistic heritage the colonial masters bequeathed to Nigeria. Although it smacks of imperialism and should have been discarded, yet it commands a hegemonic status above other indigenous languages several years after independence. It functions as the official language and one of the national languages, the language of inter-ethnic or intra-national communication, of instruction and evaluation in educational institutions, of government and administration, commerce and industry, and of the print and the electronic media, amongst others (Ogunsiji, 2004; Awonusi, 2004a). This is against the backdrop of the linguistic plurality of the Nigerian nation and the resultant difficulty of adopting an indigenous language as the acceptable national language. However, its dominance is not without a price; it has been subjected to severe changes, reflective of the local languages and customs with which it co-habits (Akindele and Adegbite, 1999; Adegbija, 2004; Adekunle, 1979). This is what has resulted in NigE, a nativised variety of English with its sub-varieties, spoken and written in

Nigeria, which Alo (2005:16) says "...manifests the linguistic (phonological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and socio-cultural) characteristics of the Nigerian environment (social and physical)".

Yoruba English is one of the sub-varieties of NigE, identified with the Yoruba speaking people of South-Western Nigeria. The focus on this sub-variety is spurred by its many speakers, its influence on NigE in general (Atoye, 1989) and the need for a geo-tribal approach to the study of NigE as canvassed by Jibril (1982).

## 2. R-Liaison in Standard English

In the course of speaking, native speakers of English do not pronounce words with gaps but join them together in a stream of sounds. This makes it possible for them to speak quickly and fluently. One of the processes by which this is achieved is liaison, a French word meaning 'connection' or 'link'. It is defined by Crystal (2003: 269) as a "transition between sounds, where a sound is introduced at the end of a word if the following syllable has no onset". Another name Roach (2000) gives to the concept is linking, which he describes as a process by which words following each other in connected speech are linked together in special ways. According to Kenworthy (1987:136), liaison refers to the "smooth link between a final consonant in one word and an initial vowel in the next word". The following forms of liaison have been identified by scholars:

1. consonant-vowel liaison (carrying over of a word-final consonant to a word beginning with a vowel in a stressed syllable), e.g. *first of all* [fɜ:stəvɔ:l], *not at all* [nɒtətɔ:l] (Kenworthy, 1987)
2. r-liaison (linking and intrusive /r/), e.g. *far off*, [fɑ:rɒf], *idea of* [aɪdɪərəv] (Gimson, 1980; Roach, 2000; Skandera and Burleigh, 2005; Hannisdal, 2006)
3. j-liaison (after /i:/ or /ɪ/), e.g. *me and you* [mi:ənjʊ], *my own* [maɪəʊn] (Simo Bobda and Mbangwana, 1993; Katalin and Szilárd, 2006)
4. w-liaison (after /u:/ or /ʊ/), e.g. *you and me* [ju:wənmi], *allow us* [əlaʊwəs] (Simo Bobda and Mbangwana, 1993; Katalin and Szilárd, 2006)

R-liaison, otherwise called r-shandi by Wells (1982), is the focus of this paper. It encompasses the concepts of linking and intrusive /r/ which relate to the insertion of /r/ in-between two adjacent vowels at word boundary to maximise articulatory ease. Linking /r/, according to Skandera and Burleigh (2005:58), refers to 'a link between words through the articulation of a normally unarticulated word-final /r/, which is articulated only when preceded by a vowel in the same word, and followed by an initial vowel in the next word'. In r-less or non-rhotic accents (e.g. Received Pronunciation), *r* is dropped when it is followed by a consonant or a pause but pronounced when followed by a vowel. This phenomenon, known as /r/- *dropping*, dates back to the 18th century or thereabout when /r/ was dropped in RP before a consonant and in absolute final word position (Simo Bobda, 1994). However, in connected speech, when an orthographic word-final *r* or *re* is followed by another word beginning with a vowel, /r/ may be retained; that is, pronounced for the purpose of euphony (Gimson, 1980; Simo Bobda and Mbangwana, 1993; Simo-Bobda, 1994; Hannisdal, 2006), e.g. *far off* [fɑ:r ɒf], *wear out* [wɪər aʊt], *car owner* [kɑ:r əʊnə], *more and more* [mɔ:r ən mɔ:], *fire extinguisher* [faɪər ɪkstɪŋgwɪʃə], *my father and mother* [maɪ fa:ðər ən mʌðə], *the weather ought* [ðə weðər ɔ:t], *here and there* [hɪər ən ðeə], *the door opened* [ðə dɔ:r əʊpənd].

Sometimes, however, /r/ may also be used to link two contiguous vowels at word boundary, even when a final *r* is absent from the orthography of the first word. A phonetic /r/

that occurs in such unhistorical environments is referred to as intrusive /r/ (Hannisdal, 2006; Roach, 2000; Simo Bobda and Mbangwana, 1993; Gimson, 1980). Intrusive /r/, therefore, is a process whereby a non-etymological /r/ is inserted to remove a hiatus between two consecutive vowels belonging to different words (Skandera and Burleigh, 2005), e.g. *media event* [mi:diər ivent], *Anna and I* [ænər ənd aɪ], *Africa or Asia* [æfrɪkər ɔr eɪʃə], *drama and music* [dra:mər ən mju:zɪk], *law and order* [lɔ:r ənd ɔ:də], *awe-inspiring* [ɔ:r ɪnspəɪrɪŋ].

Wells (1994) claims that intrusive /r/ is an attempt to extend the linking /r/ principle to cases which are phonetically identical but differ historically and orthographically. To him, “intrusive /r/ arises essentially from the natural tendency to give identical treatment to words with identical endings” (Wells, 1982:223). He further opines that both liaison processes are very common with native RP speakers, and are regarded as important characteristic features of connected speech found in RP. However, linking /r/ is generally more frequently used, correct and acceptable in mainstream RP, while intrusive /r/ is less common and stigmatised in view of the fact that the spelling does not justify its use (Crystal, 1992). Gimson (1980), in this regard, claims that some native speakers regard intrusive /r/ as incorrect or substandard, and as such avoids its use. Rather, they employ a vowel glide or glottal stop /ʔ/ to fill vowel hiatus in connected speech, e.g. *the door opened* [ðə dɔ: əʊpənd] or [ðə dɔ: ʔəʊpənd]. However, resistance to and disapproval of intrusive /r/ by language purists notwithstanding, it “is undoubtedly widespread” (Roach 2000:144) and “very prevalent in RP” (Wells 1994: 202).

Both linking and intrusive /r/, therefore, somewhat represent the same phenomenon phonetically. They serve the purpose of filling a hiatus (break in pronunciation between two vowels that are next to each other in consecutive syllables without an intervening consonant), so as to ease the switch from one vowel to another nearby (Katalin and Szilárd, 2006; Hannisdal, 2006; Skandera and Burleigh, 2005).

In terms of sociolinguistic patterning of r-liaison, Hannisdal (2006) claims that studies in Standard English (e.g. Stoddart et al., 1999; Mathisen, 1999; Tollfree, 1999; Trudgill, 1974; Bauer, 1984) have revealed no correlations of /r/ liaison with social variables of age, gender or class, except for Foulkes’ (1997) study of r-sandhi in Newcastle. Foulkes found linking /r/ to be more prevalent among older middle-class speakers than young working-class, but no significant difference was found between men and women. Intrusive /r/, on the other hand, was observed to be common among the lower socio-economic group.

It has also been established in the literature that the use or avoidance of r-liaison vary according to certain linguistic factors. Hannisdal (2006), again, highlights instances of such variability as:

- the quality of the preceding vowel: r-intrusion is less likely to occur after /ɑ:, ɔ:/ than after /ə/ (Cruttenden, 2001; Wells 1994a);
- the presence of another /r/ in the preceding syllable (Wells 1982; Brown, 1988), e.g. after words like *error*, *nearer*, *roar*, *straw*, *era*, etc., linking and intrusive /r/ may be avoided
- prosody and syntax:
  - linking /r/ is more likely to be omitted before a stressed syllable (Foulkes, 1997), e.g. *act your 'age*;
  - linking /r/ occurs most frequently when followed by an indefinite article or an unstressed pronoun (Bauer, 1984);
  - linking /r/ may be avoided before a clause boundary and potential pause (Jones, 1960), e.g. *He opened the door and walked in;*

- lexical factors: it is often avoided before proper names (Lewis, 1975). Linking /r/ tends to be suppressed after honorifics such as *Mr, Sir, Doctor*, etc. when a name is introduced, to avoid ambiguities and misunderstandings (*Mister Arafat*, pronounced with a linking /r/, may sound like *Mister Rarafat*).

### 3. R-Liaison in Nigerian English

Nigerian English is generally regarded as an r-less (non-rhotic) accent. This is because /r/ is normally dropped before a consonant or a pause as well as in-between two adjacent vowels at word boundary. Consequently, detailed attention has never been given to this phenomenon in NigE, except for few references made to it in passing while discussing other 'more important' features of the accent. Awonusi (2004b:216), for instance, while describing some characteristics of Nigerian English Accent (NEA), states that "NEA operates the linking /r/ rule in a manner consistent with RP in such phrases like *for a while, here and there* and *after all*. The sandhi or intrusive /r/ is however practically non-existent in NEA". According to him, the absence of intrusive /r/ is due to the fact that there is no *r* in the spelling. Simo Bobda (2007) also claims that the r-insertion rule, which is the phonological rule that explains applications of linking /r/ at word boundary in RP, does not apply in NigE, as shown by the pronunciation of words like *four o'clock* [fə ɔklɔk] and *far away* [fa ewe].

This study, therefore, attempts a more detailed investigation of this phenomenon amongst the Educated Yoruba speakers of English in Nigeria, with a view to unravelling its possible social and linguistic distribution.

### 4. Variability Concept

Variation in language was never considered important or consequential by major linguistic schools like Saussurean theory, American and Prague School Structuralism and Chomskyan theory, in particular. These theories treated language as a strictly invariant entity and dismissed any perceived variability as unstructured and never worth studying. The emphasis of Chomskyan Transformational Generative linguistic model, for instance, is on the ideal speaker-hearer of a language. Both individual and social variation in language was considered part of performance which was outside the purview of the linguist. However, with the advent of the variability concept, championed by Labov (1963, 1966) and expounded by Dillard (1968) and Baratz (1969) amongst others, emphasis then shifted to structured variability in language.

Variability concept is built on the notion that language is inherently variable at different structural levels of Phonology, Morphology and Syntax; and that it is a generally recognised fact that no two utterances of the same word by the same speaker are ever exactly alike. The same language varies from speaker to speaker or from community to community (Milroy and Milroy, 1997). Speaker variables commonly used for this purpose are socio-economic class, age of speaker, sex (gender) of speaker, ethnic group of speaker and social network. This study is, however, restricted to the social variables of gender, age and social class.

While scholars have no issues with sex and age variables, the applicability of class variable to the Nigerian socio-cultural setting has always been in doubt. This is because the highly structured and crystallised social stratification existing in the Western world, as expounded by Labov's model, is not firmly rooted in Nigeria. Nonetheless, Nigeria is not a completely classless society. Indeed, class difference is somewhat intrinsic to the structure of any society, though at varying levels and in terms of different factors which may include economic,

cultural or political. Besides, trends in recent studies tend to avoid the complex measuring systems for class (Labov's multi-layered class structure) used in early work. Instead, 'class' is often seen as no more than a general label for the type of environment being investigated (Foulkes, 2006). It is against this backdrop that class as a social variable is applied to the Nigerian speech community in this study.

Therefore, the class structure construed in this study is socio-economic, which relates to the degree of access to education, income or wealth and occupation. These factors divide the society to the privileged and the less privileged. The more access people have to wealth or income the higher their socio-economic status and, possibly, accessibility to quality education and international exposure. The subjects of this study were thus divided into high and low socio-economic classes to reflect the haves and the have-nots of the Nigerian society. This is in view of the claim that the middle class has collapsed in Nigeria. It is believed that this will somewhat capture the type of socio-economic class stratification existing in Nigeria.

## 5. Research Questions

The study shall attempt to answer the following questions:

- (i) To what degree is r-liaison attested in the data?
- (ii) Is r-liaison socially differentiated in terms of age, gender and social class in the data?
- (iii) In which linguistic context is r-liaison prevalent in the data?

## 6. Methodology

The data for the study were sourced from 120 educated Yoruba speakers of English with a minimum of two to three years post-secondary education. The subjects, who were 60 males and 60 females, were further differentiated by age (young:16-35 and adult:36+) and socio-economic class (low and high). Each produced, into digital recording devices, eight utterance items and a short passage, containing various instances of r-liaison at word boundary, and filled a structured questionnaire.

The subjects were purposively selected according to their socio-economic statuses. The adult subjects belonging to high social class were professionals and management staff of their organisations. Some were high-ranking entrepreneurs, while others were university professors. The young subjects in the same category were students at some high-fee-paying private Universities in Western Nigeria. We discovered from the filled questionnaire that their parents belonged to the high socio-economic class and they all had travelled to Europe, America and Asia for summer on several occasions, a fact that attests to their parents' status. The low class subjects, on the other hand, were low-income junior workers, teachers, and civil servants, as well as students with low-income parents.

The following r-liaison sites were extracted from the utterances and the passage:

### Linking /r/:

1. Peter at
2. more of him
3. after a while
4. their action
5. inquire about

6. colourof
7. forall
8. thereare
9. overeat
10. power-assisted steering

**Intrusive /r/:**

11. lawand order
12. ideaof it
13. mediaevent

The perceptually transcribed data were analysed statistically. An appropriate use of r-liaison was allotted one mark and the total score for all participants was converted to a percentage. In order to test for significance between each social category, their scores were subjected to student's *t*-test at 0.05 significant level.

## 7. Analyses and Findings

### 7.1 The degree of r-liaison

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage scores for r-liaison and r-suppression in the data. Altogether, there are 1,560 r-liaison sites (13 sites x 120 subjects): 1,200 of linking /r/ and 360 of intrusive /r/.

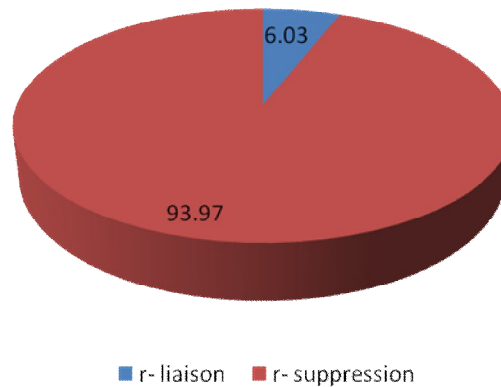
**Table 1: Frequency and percentage scores for r-liaison**

Processes	Linking /r/ e.g. [æftrə wail]			Intrusive /r/ e.g. [mi:dɪər ɪvent]			Grand Total		
	r- liaison	r- suppression	Total 10 x 120	r- liaison	r- suppression	Total 3 x 120	r- liaison	r- suppression	Total 13 x 120
Tokens	89	1111	1200	5	355	360	94	1466	1560
% Score	7.42	92.58	100	1.39	98.61	100	6.03	93.97	100

The analysis in Table 1 above reveals a very low occurrence of linking r in the EYE data. Out of the total 1,200 anticipated tokens of linking /r/, only 89 incidences, representing a negligible 7.42%, were recorded, e.g. [mɔr ɔf, aftər e wail]; whereas, there were 1111 tokens of r-suppression, constituting 92.58%, e.g. [pɪtə ət, deə əkʃən]. The rate of intrusive /r/, e.g. [aidɪər ɔf] is much lower for EYE speakers; there were just 5 instances (1.39%) and 355 (98.61%) cases of r-suppression, e.g. [mɪdɪə ɪvent]. It, thus, follows from the results that linking /r/ (with 7.42%) is more prevalent than intrusive /r/ (with 1.39%) in the data. The abysmally low occurrence of intrusive /r/ in EYE is not surprising, considering the fact that pronunciation of English words in Nigeria is, to a large extent, orthographic or spelling induced (Akinjobi, 2013); and since *r* is not

present in the orthography of the affected junctural words, one would be asking too much to expect /r/ to show up in those environments.

The table (corroborated by Fig. 1) also shows that the incidence of r-liaison is generally low in EYE. This becomes evident when linking and intrusive /r/ scores were combined. Speakers failed to use the processes significantly, scoring only 94 tokens (6.03%) in both contexts, out of a total realisation of 1,560 r-liaison sites.



**Fig. 1: Percentage (%) r-liaison and r-suppression scores for NE speakers**

## 7.2 Social correlates of r-liaison

In view of the EYE speakers' abysmal performance in r-liaison, an attempt was made to examine the possible social differentiation of this feature in the data, so as to unravel the speaker groups in whose speech the process commonly features in EYE. One after the other, the subjects were stratified according to gender (male:60; female:60), age (young:60; adult:60) and social class (low:60; high:60). Table 2, therefore, shows the mean scores of EYE speakers according to these social variables.

**Table 2: Frequency and percentage scores for r-liaison according to social factors.**

Category	Gender		Age		Class	
	Male	Female	Young	Adult	Low	High
Number	60	60	60	60	60	60
Mean	0.78	0.78	0.60	0.97	0.83	0.73

The performance of male and female speakers in r-liaison (as portrayed in Table 2) shows no difference between the two speaker groups. They both had the same mean score of 0.78. Expectedly, the student's *t*-test analysis used to determine the level of significance did not reveal any significant difference between the mean scores of the two genders ( $t_{(118)} = 0.000$ ;  $p = 1.000$ ). On the contrary, there was a disparity between the young and the adult speakers' mean scores. Adult speakers performed better with a mean score of 0.97 against 0.60 of young speakers. This was confirmed by the student's *t*-test result ( $t_{(118)} = 2.270$ ;  $p = 0.025$ ). A comparison of both social classes also suggests that r-liaison is more predominant amongst the low class than the high class group. They scored 0.83 and 0.73 respectively. However, the student's *t*-test reports no significant difference between the two social classes ( $t_{(118)} = 0.607$ ;  $p = 0.545$ ). This implies that r-liaison is not differentiated by social class in EYE.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that /r/ liaison is not socially differentiated in EYE in terms of gender and social class; whereas, it correlates with the adults' speech.

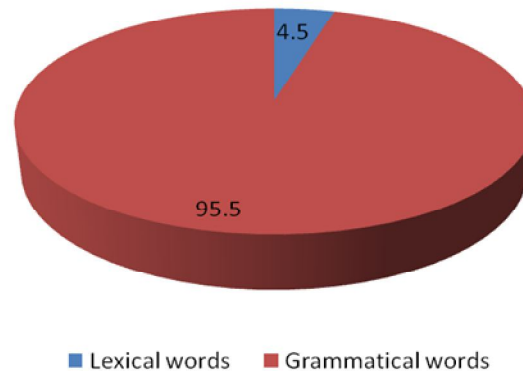
### 7.3 Linguistic correlates of r-liaison

In view of the linguistic variation claimed to exist in r-liaison in the literature, we endeavoured to examine whether such can be found in EYE. Therefore, the linguistic factors that constrained the use of linking /r/ in the data were investigated. Intrusive /r/ was excluded because the tokens of usage found in the data were not substantial enough. Following this, It was discovered that linking /r/ occurred more frequently between short grammatical words, e.g. *there are, more of, after a while*, etc., and rarely between lexical words like *over eat, power assisted*; or a combination of lexical and grammatical words, e.g. *Peter at, inquire about, their action and colour of* (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Linking /r/ distribution according to the linguistic environment.**

	Lexical words	Grammatical words	Total
Process	Linking /r/	Linking /r/	
Tokens of occurrence	4	85	89
% Score	4.5	95.5	100





**Fig. 2: Percentage linking /r/ scores for lexical and grammatical words.**

As shown in Table 3 (corroborated by Fig. 2) above, only four instances, representing 4.5%, of the realised linking /r/ variant occurred when both or one of the adjacent words were lexical words; while 85, that is, 95.5% cases were recorded when /r/ appeared between two grammatical categories. Specifically, over 95% cases of the realised /r/ variant occurred in-between function words. This implies that the few instances of linking /r/ found in EYE occurred, largely, in-between grammatical items. This, however, is not categorical, as it was found that linking /r/ was used only in such grammatical phrases as *there are*, *more of you* and *after a while*, where it has somewhat been lexicalised due to long years of use. This, not surprisingly, could not be replicated in other environments, such as *for all*, *inquire about*, *their action*, *colour of*, etc., when required.

## 8. Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of this study was to unravel possible social and linguistic correlates of r-liaison in educated Yoruba English. The finding confirmed the claim that r-liaison is rare in Nigerian English, as the incidence of r-liaison found in the EYE (a sub-variety of NigE) data was abysmally low. A number of factors account for the low usage of /r/ liaison in the data. First, using /r/ liaison across word boundary requires the two adjacent words, e.g. *colour* and *of*, to be linked with each other. This, however, is an arduous task for most Nigerian speakers of English who, like many L2 speakers of English, normally keep orthographic words separate in connected speech and thereby pronounce every sound as distinct as possible (Simo Bobda, 1994; Bamgbose, 2004).

Second, the speech feature is not encouraged by the syllable-timed rhythm of NigE, where each syllable tends to occur at regular time intervals; unlike Standard British English whose isochronous rhythm requires all the unstressed syllables to be pronounced swiftly, taking the same amount of time as the single stressed syllable. Finally, the level of awareness of this feature is very poor in Nigeria. It is not a sound feature heard so often except, sometimes, in the media from newscasters, presenters and announcers who try as much as possible to approximate to the native English speech in order to appeal to their international audience. Besides, few NigE speakers who are possibly aware of it tend to avoid it in casual speech, as much as possible,

because it makes them sound foreign and affected and often elicits a negative attitude from people.

However, investigation into the social differentiation of r-liaison reveals that the feature correlates with the adults' speech in EYE: adult speakers used r-liaison significantly more than young speakers. Gender and class correlations were, however, not established. The age correlation suggests, therefore, a diachronic shift in the awareness of r-liaison in EYE; linking /r/, in particular, is probably being phased out from the accent of the young due to a lack of exposure to it both in school and in the community, in view of the earlier assertion that it is not a sound feature heard so often in Nigeria.

The linguistic consideration of r-liaison shows that the few instances of linking /r/ found in EYE occurred, largely, in-between grammatical items, especially in phrases where the feature has somewhat been lexicalised due to long years of use. This explains the claim made by Awonusi (2004b:216) that "NEA operates the linking /r/ rule in a manner consistent with RP in such phrases like *for a while, here and there* and *after all*". This finding is also consistent with what Hannisdal (2006) found out in RP that linking /r/ occurs most frequently between short, often grammatical, words, e.g. *there are, here is, where a, your own*, etc.

This study, therefore, affirms that r-liaison, though not a predominant feature of speech in NigE, exhibits social and linguistic patterning in EYE.

## References

- Adegbija, E. (2004) The Domestication of English in Nigeria. In Awonusi, V. and Babalola, E. (Eds.) *The domestication of English in Nigeria*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- Adekunle, (1979) Non-random Variation in Nigerian English. In Ubahakwe, E. (Ed.) *Varieties and Functions of English in Nigeria*. Ibadan: African University Press.
- Akindele and Adegbite, (1999) *The Sociology and Politics of English in Nigeria: An Introduction*. Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press Ltd.
- Akinjobi, A. A. (2013) Spelling Cued Mispronunciation in Nigerian English. In Atoye, R. (Ed.) *Papers in English and Linguistics*. Ile-ife: Linguistic Association of Nigeria, pp.18-30.
- Alo, M. 2005. Revisiting Issues in English Use and Usage in Nigeria: Implications for the EGL Classroom. *Journal of the Nigeria English Studies Association*, 11:1, 114-130.
- Atoye, R.O. 1989. Progressive Word Stress in Nigerian English. *ODU: A Journal of West African Studies*, 35, 39-52.
- Awonusi, V. (2004a) Cycles of Linguistic History: The Development of English in Nigeria. In Dadzie, A. and Awonusi, V. (Eds.) *Nigerian English: Influences and Characteristics*. Lagos: Concept Publication, pp.46-66.
- Awonusi, V. (2004b) Some Characteristics of Nigerian English Phonology. In Dadzie, A. and Awonusi, V. (Eds.) *Nigerian English: Influences and Characteristics*. Lagos: Concept Publication, pp.203-241.

- Bamgbose, A. (2004) Problems of Standardisation and Nigerian English Phonology. In Dadzie, A. and Awonusi, V. (Eds.) *Nigerian English: Influences and Characteristics*. Lagos: Concept Publication, pp.179-199.
- Baratz, J.C. (1969) A Bi-dialectal Task for Determining Language Proficiency in Economically Disadvantaged Negro children. *Child Development* 40:3, 889-901.
- Bauer, L. (1984) Linking /r/ in RP. Some Facts. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 14, 74-79.
- Brown, A. (1988) Linking, Intrusive and Rhotic /r/ in Pronunciation Models. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 18, 144-151.
- Cruttenden, A. (2001) *Gimson's Pronunciation of English*. 6th ed. London: Arnold.
- Crystal, D. (1992) The Changing English language – Fiction and Fact. In Pütz, M. (Ed.) *Thirty Years of Linguistic Evolution: Studies in Honour of René Dirven on Occasion of his 60th Birthday*. Philadelphia: Benjamins, pp.119-130.
- Crystal, D. (2003) *English as a Global Language*. 2nd ed. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Dillard, J.L. (1968) Non Standard Negro Dialect: Convergence or Divergence? *The Florida FL Reporter* 6:2, 9-12.
- Foulkes, P. (1997) English [r]-sandhi – a sociolinguistic perspective. *Histoire, Epistémologie, Language* 19: 1, 73-96.
- Foulkes, P. (2006) Phonological variation: a global perspective. *Handbook of English Linguistics*. B. Aarts and A.M.S. McMahon. Eds. Oxford: Blackwell. 625-669.
- Gimson, A.C. (1980) *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*. 3rd ed. London: Edward Arnold.
- Hannisdal, B.R. (2006) Variability and Change in Received Pronunciation: A Study of Six Phonological Variables in the Speech of Television Newsreaders. PhD. Thesis. Department of English. University of Bergen. Retrieved August 20, 2010, from <https://www.bora.uib.no/bitstream/1956/2335/1/Dr.Avh.Bente.Hannisdal.pdf>.
- Jibril, M. (1982) Phonological Variation in Nigerian English. PhD. Thesis. University of Lancaster.
- Jones, D. (1960) *An Outline of English Phonetics*. 9th ed. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons.
- Katalin, B. B. and Szilárd, S. (2006) *The Pronunciation of English*. Budapest, Múzeum: Bölcsész Konzorcium.

- Kenworthy, J. (1987) *Teaching English Pronunciation*. London: Longman.
- Labov, W. (1963) The Social Motivation of a Sound Change. *Word* 19, 273–309.
- Labov, W. (1966) *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, D.C.: Centre for Applied Linguistics DC: Cent. Appl. Ling.
- Lewis, J.W. (1975) Linking /r/ in the General British Pronunciation of English. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 5, 37-42.
- Mathisen, A.G. (1999) Sandwell, West Midlands: Ambiguous Perspectives on Gender Patterns and Models of Change. In Foulkes, P. and Docherty, G.J. (Eds.) pp.107-123.
- Milroy, J. and Milroy, L. (1997) Varieties and Variation. In Coulmas, F. (Ed.) *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp.47-64.
- Ogunsiji, A. (2004) Status, Features and Functions of English in Nigeria and their Implications for EL2 Teaching/Learning. In Oyeleye, A. (Ed.) *Language and Discourse in Society*. Ibadan: Hope Publications.
- Roach, P. (2000) *English Phonetics and Phonology: A Practical Course*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Simo Bobda, A. (2007) Some Segmental Rules in Nigerian English Phonology. *English World-Wide* 28:4, 279-310.
- Simo Bobda, A. and Mbangwana, P. (1993) *An Introduction to Spoken English*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- Skandera, P. and Burleigh, P. (2005) *A manual of English phonetics and phonology*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.

## Appendix

### Semi-Spontaneous Speech Data

- 1) I've met Peter at the station
- 2) There are ten boys
- 3) I want more of Him
- 4) I met him after a while
- 5) Their action is wrong
- 6) They maintain law and order
- 7) Know what? I don't have an Idea of it.
- 8) I was at a media event

**Passage**

- A. Good morning. I'd like to inquire about the advertised car
- B. Yes, we have the car here. Its features will amaze you
- A. Is the information about it valid?
- B. Yes, of course. It is equipped with power-assisted steering, which I suppose, is the most important piece of information that you need
- A. Well, obviously, but...do you think it is really ice blue with darker blue inside?
- B. Oh... yes, this is the exact colour of the car.
- A. All right, then. Can I arrange a test drive for tomorrow?
- B. Yes, you can have it tomorrow... It'll cost you ten pounds in case you don't buy it
- A. Ten pounds!! Could you rather make it five pounds?
- B. Sorry, madam, we have a fixed price for all customers.
- A. Well...in that case, I'll be there tomorrow. Goodbye.
- B. Goodbye and God bless you.