

A Study of Pronunciation Errors of First Year Students of English Education, Nasarawa State University Keffi, Nigeria

Jatau Stephen, Ph.D.¹; Shehu Ibrahim Ahmad, Ph.D.²; and Abdulrauf Fauziyat²

¹Department of Arts Education (English), Nasarawa State University, Keffi. ²Department of English, Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Corresponding author: jataustephen@nsuk.edu.ng

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Abstract

The paper examines pronunciation errors of first year students of English, Nasarawa State University Keffi, Nigeria, with the view of helping them to improve in their spoken aspect of English. A survey research design was employed to carry out the study. The population of the study comprises of 50 randomly selected first year students of English Education. Oral Production Test (OPT) was the instrument used in carrying out this study. The respondents were asked to pronounce 20 randomly selected words and their speeches were tape recorded, played and listened to ascertain their pronunciation errors and compare them with the standard pronunciation. Error Analysis is the theoretical framework employed for this study. The results show that, the consonant sounds /θ/ was substituted for /t/, /ð/ for /d/, /ʃ/ for /tʃ/, /z/ for /s/, and /v/ for /f/ in words like; 'there' /ðeə/ for /dia/, 'theme' /θi:m/ for /tim/, 'chagrin' /ʃa:ɡri/ for /tʃaɡin/, 'things' /θiŋz/ for /tiŋs/, and 'of' /ɔv/ for /ɔf/ respectively. The vowel sounds /ʌ/ was substituted for /ɔ/, /e/ for /i/, /ɜ:/ for /ɔ:/, /a:/ for /æ/ and /ə/ for /æ/. Also, words that have consonant clusters; /stj-/ and /mpts/, and words that have complex spellings system; 'ewe' /ju:/ and 'ewer' /juə/ posed pronunciation difficulties to the study population. Identifying these areas of pronunciation difficulties will assist curriculum planners, syllable compilers teachers and textbooks writers to map out these areas of pronunciation difficulties for improved pedagogy.

Keywords: Pronunciation Difficulty, Errors, Error Analysis, English Language.

Introduction

Language is purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, desires, information, by means of a system voluntary produced symbols. Language is seen as human noise that is used systematically and conventionally by speech community for the purpose of communication. That is to say every language spoken by human beings has a system and rules (grammar) which are adhered by the speech community. Every physiologically and mentally normal person acquires from childhood the ability to make use of the language as both speaker and hearer to perform his functions well in the society he/she leaves. Normally, in the case of Nigeria, people first acquired their first indigenous language (L₁) and become proficient in them before learning the second language (L₂) English at school.

The English language in Nigeria which was introduced by the European missionaries and the colonialists in the Eighteen century enjoy a pride of place among the indigenous languages in Nigeria. It is the country's official language and a Lingua franca. English is the medium of instruction in schools, a language of media, law, commerce and industries, a language of internal and external communication, a language of science and technology. Beside these functions, English is a mark of elitism, a license for the acquisition of profitable and prestigious jobs. Admission into most Nigerian tertiary institutions depends on one's performance in English.

Despite the importance accorded to English in Nigeria, most L2 learners and users of English do difficult to be accurate and fluently in their spoken English. In attempt to pronounce certain sounds and words of English (L2) that do not exist in their L1 or use in different ways; the L2 learners often transfer negatively the sounds and features of their L1 into that of English (L2) which may result in confusion, misinterpretation and intelligibility. When the L2 learners of English hear unfamiliar sounds in English, they tend to substitute the unfamiliar sound with the familiar one in their L1. This leads to pronunciation errors. For instance, the English dental stop /ð/ in 'then' /ðen/ and dental fricative /θ/ in 'three' /θri:/ which are absent in the phonemic inventory of most of our Nigerian languages were often substituted with /t/ and /d/, thereby finding difficulty to differentiate between 'then' and 'den' or between 'three' and 'tree'. Likewise, there are some English vowels that pose problem of pronunciation do to their absent in the phonemic inventory of most Nigerian languages. For instance, the vowel /ɜ:/ in 'burn' /bɜ:n/ is realized as /bɔ:n/ and /ʌ/ in 'sun' /sʌn/ is realized as /sɔn/. These certainly create confusion to the hearer and it will affect the intelligibility of what it is being communicated. That is to say; "if our language is not correct, what we said it is not what is meant, if what is said is not what is meant, then what we ought to be done remain undone" (Jatau, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Certain sounds and words of English pose pronunciation challenge to L2 learners of English. The problem stemmed with the fact that these sounds do not exist in their L1. The L2 learners of English often transfer negatively the sounds and features of their L1 into the target language (English) which may result in confusion, misinterpretation and intelligibility. or instance, the English dental stop /ð/ in 'then' /ðen/ and dental fricative /θ/ in 'three' /θri:/ which are absent in the phonemic inventory of most of our Nigerian languages were often substituted with /t/ and /d/, thereby finding difficulty to differentiate between 'then' and 'den' or between 'three' and 'tree'.

Likewise, there are some English vowels that pose problem of pronunciation do to their absent in the phonemic inventory of most Nigerian languages. For instance, the vowel /ɜ:/ in 'burn' /bɜ:n/ is realized as /bɔ:n/ and /ʌ/ in 'sun' /sʌn/ is realized as /sɔn/. These certainly create confusion to the hearer and it will affect the intelligibility of what it is being communicated. It is in consonant to these challenges that the researcher examine the pronunciation errors of First Year Students English Education, Nasarawa State University

Keffi, Nigeria with the view of helping the study populace to improve in their spoken English.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this paper are to:

1. To identify the sounds that pose pronunciation difficulty among the first year students of English Education in Nasarawa State University Keffi, Nigeria.
2. Examine the cause(s) of the difficulty.
3. Proffer solutions with regard to the problem identified.

Research Questions

1. What are the sounds that pose pronunciation difficulty among the first year students of English Education in Nasarawa State University Keffi Nigeria?
2. What are the causes of the difficulty with regard to the realization of these English sounds?
3. What are some solutions with regard to correct realizations of these difficult English sounds?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in the sense that:

1. The study will to identify the sounds that pose pronunciation difficulty among the first year students of English Education in Nasarawa State University Keffi, Nigeria, in order to order to come up with a suitable teaching methods.
2. The study will help in providing feedback to students with regard to their pronunciation proficiency weaknesses for better performance in spoken English.
3. The study will assist the curriculum designers and textbooks writers to come up with suitable teaching materials for the study populace.

Literature Review

The following are reviews of concepts related to the topic of the paper.

Pronunciation Difficulty

Pronunciation difficulty in English is a teething problem confronting the speeches of most Nigerians and other L2 speakers of English. Most scholars and linguists unanimously concur with this fact that, most L2 speakers /learners of English do have difficulty in pronouncing some English sounds, correctly and distinctively.

Pointing at the causes of pronunciation difficulty suffered by most Nigerian speakers of English, various scholars have different views. Among them we have the views of Aboderin, et-al (2002) associate the cause of pronunciation problem to the differences between sounds of L1 (English) and L2. Bem (2009) and O'Connor (2000) attribute the cause of the problem to old age, while Onwuchekwa links the cause to the absence of some English

sounds in our L2 languages (2002)). Roach (2000), Corder (1967), Moji & Oyeleye (2005), O'Grandy (2011) associate to the "omplex nature of the English spelling system".

However, these scholars comment differently with regard to the problem associated with the complex nature of the English spelling system. Corder (ibid) for instance maintains that, 'the English spelling system is highly arbitrary and confusing', Oyeleye and Moji (ibid) assert that "the sounds of English do not correspond with the letters of alphabet". Roach posits that "the English spelling is notorious and confusing", Radford et al (2013) assert that, the English spelling system is irregular and inconsistence couple with the lack fit between sounds and letters in English, while Jatau (2012) claims that "the pronunciation of words has changed over the last hundred years while the spelling system remains the same".

Ayodele, et-al (2000) & Finegan maintain that "there is not correspondence between spelling and pronunciation", Cruttenden (2001) and O'Grandy (2011) assert that the "English orthography is very ambiguous. Finegan (ibid) observes that the same letters in different words are pronounced differently. Consider the pronunciations of the following words of which are represented in part by the letters [ough] in the words; 'cough', 'tough', 'bough', 'though', 'thorough' below:

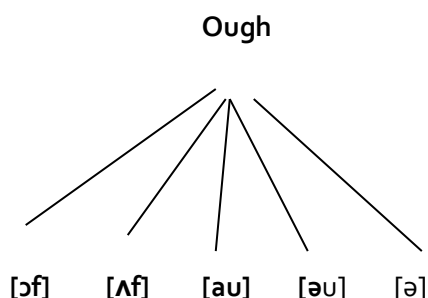


Figure 1. Showing words with '-ough' letters but have different sounds.

The researcher agrees with the above views and submits that, some English language words are some –how 'mischievously spelt'. Sometime same sound is spelled using different letters or sometimes same letters can stand for different sounds, sometimes single sound is spelled by a combination of letters and sometimes single letter represent more than one sound. For instance, 'there/ their', 'bear/ bare', 'to/ two /too' are pronounced alike. Also, the underlined letters in the words; sea, senile, seize, scene, siege, ceiling, cadre, juicy, glossy and sexy which have different spellings but have same sounds /si:/, this calls for spelling reform to ease pronunciation difficulties suffered by most L2 learners of English.

Some scholars have tried to proffer solutions to the general pronunciation problem suffered by most L2 speakers of English. Roach (ibid) suggests that L2 speakers of English should think of pronunciation in terms of phonemes rather than letters, Cruttenden (ibid) suggests that pronunciation should be taught at the early age to minimize the neuropsychological problem of pronunciation that mostly affects adult learners of English (ibid). Corder (ibid) advises that the L2 speakers of English should first of all master the English sound system before learning the approximate production in words and utterances. Oyeleye and Moji

(ibid) suggest that L2 speakers of English should concentrate on how the sounds are pronounced rather than focusing on the spelling and make concerted efforts to master the correct pronunciations of the English sounds so as to ensure the intelligibility of the message communicated and O'Grady (ibid) and Finegan (ibid) call for spelling reform.

The researcher agrees with above views and suggestions, but submits that the greatest challenges of language acquisition and learning stems from the sharp differences that exist between one's first language and the target (English). L2 learners of English should learn to pronounce, perceive, sounds and words of English correctly and distinctively in order to achieve mutual intelligibility during communication.

Error

Spit Corder was the first to point out and discuss the importance of errors learners make in the course of their learning second language (L2). Soon after the analysis of the learner's errors took a prominent place in Applied Linguistics. Corder cited in Brown (2000) maintains that, learners' errors are significant because they provide the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies the learner is employing in the discovery of language.

The term 'error', has been defined variously by different linguist and scholars. Among them, we have the definition given by Corder (1967) defines errors as a form of in learners' language that is inaccurate, and it is different from the form used by the competent speakers of the language. Brown (2000) defines linguistics errors as "a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learners". It is important to note that these definitions above seem to stress that, error is the systematic deviations arising from the incomplete learning or reflecting the interlanguage competence of learners. The occurrence of errors doesn't only indicate that the learner has not learned something yet, but it gives the teacher the idea of whether the teaching methods applied were not effective or they need to be changed.

Attempts have been made by linguists, error analysts and scholars to differentiate between "errors and mistakes" among them we have view of Corder (ibid) maintains that mistakes are of no significance to the process of language learning, but error has. Chomsky (1967) maintains that errors are thought as indication of an incomplete learning and that the speaker or hearer has not yet accumulated satisfied language which can enable them to avoid linguistics misuse. Relating 'competence' and 'performance' Chomsky (ibid) asserts that, the competence of speaker is judge by the means of errors that concern in the amount of linguistic data he or she has been exposed to. 'Performance' on the other hand is the actual use of language, and does not represent the language knowledge of the speaker.

Brown (2000) posits that, errors result from the learners' lack of proper grammatical knowledge, while mistakes are seen as failure to utilize a known system correctly. Brown calls these mistakes "performance errors" and mistakes are inevitable to both native and second language learners. Jatau (2012) sees errors part of learner's inter-language, and the learner does not generally consider them as errors. They are errors only from the

prospective of teachers and others who are aware of those learners have departed from a language norm.

Empirical Studies

Elvie and Sophia (2021) examined the students' pronunciation difficulties on segmental phonemes of vowels and consonants in words. It used a descriptive method to describe the phenomenon of interest where 134 respondents answered the Personal Profile and performed the Oral Test conducted by the researcher and her co-raters. It utilized the mean and mean percentages to determine the respondents' profiles regarding L1 and L2 spoken and ethnic groups. Meanwhile, the number of errors recorded by the three raters in producing the sound determined the pronunciation difficulties of the respondents. Results showed that [ɛ] was difficult to produce in words among the vowel sounds, particularly to Kamayo, Maranao, and Chavacano, upon reaching at least 50% of errors. Among the consonant sounds, the respondents' production of [ʒ] was difficult. With the findings of the study, it is recommended that students be provided with varied interactive activities and authentic speech drills to improve their communicative competence.

Gambhir (2021) investigates the Challenges Faced by Bachelor Level Students While Speaking English. This is an empirical qualitative study in which the researcher adopted a questionnaire and semi-structured interview to collect data from 15 undergraduate level students studying at the University. The collected data were grouped and analyzed in terms of two broad categories: Difficulties and causes with four/four subcategories of the broad themes. The study explored mainly: personal, social, environmental, and linguistic problems for speaking difficulties and teacher and teaching, course content, overuse of mother tongue, poor schooling, and classroom culture as the causal factors of speaking deficiency. The study suggested creating a favorable environment, maximizing learner autonomy, changing teaching practices, revising courses, and conducting speaking activities time and again.

Theoretical Framework

Error Analysis (EA) Approach

Error Analysis, a branch of applied linguistics developed by Pit Corder in 1960s to refer to the analysis of errors made by second and foreign language learners. It is process to observe, analyze and classify the deviation of the rules of the language. Speaking concerning the emergence of EA, Richards et al (2002)) assert that EA was developed as a branch of linguistic in the 1960's and it came to light to argue that mother tongue (L1) was not the main and the only source of errors committed by learners. Commenting about the aim of E.A, Richards et al (ibid) point that the EA helps to identify the strategies used in both teaching and learning, identify the causes of the learner's errors, investigating the motives behind committing such errors, and the attempt to eradicate them, obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as it will serve as an aid to teaching or in the preparation of the teaching materials. Errors committed by L2 foreign language learners

are inevitable in language learning. Though making an error, and hearing the correct form from the teacher, it will help the learners to develop their skills. So, errors and their analyses are important for both the learners and the teachers.

Corder (1967) defines errors as a form of in learners' language that is inaccurate, and it is different from the form used by the competent speakers of the language. Brown (2000) defines linguistic errors as "a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learners".

Thus, Crystal (2001), defines EA as a technique for identifying, classifying, systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produce by someone learning the foreign language. Corder (ibid) defines EA as a method use to document the errors that appear in learner's language, determine whether those errors that are systematic, and if (possible) explain what causes them. Richards, et al (ibid), define EA as an activity to reveal errors committed by students both in writing and in speaking. They maintain that, Error Analysis studies errors made by L2 and the foreign language learners. Brown (2000) sees EA as the processes to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the L2 and then to reveal the systems operated by the learner.

Richards and Schmidt (2002) also define EA as the study and analysis of the errors made by second language learners. According to them, EA may be carried out in order to:

- (a) Identify strategies which learners use in language learning.
- (b) Identify the causes of learners' errors.
- (c) Obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as an aid to teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design employed in this paper was descriptive survey approach which help to examine the phonological analysis of errors on the realization of English CCs system by Koro Ashe speakers of English in Nasarawa State University with the hope of helping the study populace to improve in their spoken English.

Population

The population of this study consists of one hundred and fifty (150) first year undergraduate students of English Education, Nasarawa State University Keffi, and Nigeria.

Sampling Technique

Out of first year undergraduate students of English Education, Nasarawa State University. Fifty (50) were randomly selected to carry out the investigation.

Instrument of Data Collection

The instrument used in collecting data for this investigation was Oral Production Test (OPT), an instrument developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS) was an instrument used in collecting the primary data from the subjects.

Method of Data Collection

In this case, appointments were made with each of the participants to collect their responses. The Oral Production Test (OPT) was administered to the fifty (50) randomly selected first year students of English Education. The subjects were asked to pronounce twenty (20) selected words in which in their oral speeches were taped-recorded, listen several times, transcribed and later compared with the Standard Pronunciation to ascertain errors.

Technique for Data Analysis

In order to ensure effective analysis of the data collected from the field of study, the data collected were played several times, listened, transcribed and tabulated in order to ascertain their errors. Also, the researcher used simple percentage as the technique to analyze and interpret the result of this investigation. The formulae adopted is as follow:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{F \times 100}{N}$$

Data Analysis

Table 4. 1: Students' Oral Production Tests

S/N	Words	IPA	Deviation	No of students pass & percentages	No of students fail & percentages
1.	Come	/kʌm/	/kom/	10 (20%)	40 (80%)
2.	Ewe	/ju:/	/i:u/	0 (0%)	50 (100%)
3.	Listen	/lisn/	/listin/	10 (20%)	40 (80%)
4.	Bombing	/bɒmiŋ/	bombi ŋ	20 (40%)	30 (60%)

The result of the findings in the table above shows that 20% of the respondents were able to pronounce word 'come' correctly, while the remaining 80% of them couldn't. As for the word 'ewe' 100% of the respondents couldn't pronounce the word correctly, hence, none pronounce the word correctly. 20% of the respondents pronounced the word 'listen' correctly, while 80% of they could not. For the word 'bombing' only 40% got the pronunciation of the word correctly, while the remaining 60% could not.

From this finding, one could observe that in the word 'come' /kʌm/ the vowel /ʌ/ was substituted for /ɔ/, for the word 'ewe' /ju:/, the /j/ was substituted for /i/. Talking about the word 'listen' /lisn/, the silent 't' was pronounced. For the word 'bombing' /bɒmiŋ/ the silence 'b' was pronounced.

Table 4.2: Students' Oral Production Tests

S/N	Words	IPA	Deviation	No of students pass & percentages	No of students fail & percentages
5.	Wanted	/wæntid/	/wænted/	5 (10%)	45 (90%)
6.	There	/ ðeə/	/dea/	10 (20%)	40 (80%)
7.	Theme	/ θi:m/	/tim/	5 (10%)	45 (90%)
8.	Stew	/stju:/	/stu:/	10 (20%)	40 (80%)

The result of the findings in the table above indicates that, 5% of the respondents were able to pronounce word 'Wanted' /wæntid/ correctly, while the remaining 90% of them could not. As for the word 'there' / ðeə/, 10% of the respondents pronounce the word correctly, while 40% of the respondents could not. For the word 'theme' / θi:m/, 10% of the respondent pronounced the word correctly, while 90% of they could not. For the word 'stew' /stju:/, only 20% of the respondents got the pronunciation of the word correctly, while the remaining 80% could not. From these findings, one could observe that in the word 'Wanted' /wæntid/ the vowel /i/ was substituted for /e/, for the word, 'there' / ðeə/, the consonant sound /ð/ was substituted for /d/. Talking about the word, 'theme' / θi:m/ the consonant /θ/ was substituted for /t. For the word 'stew' /stju:/, the /j/ silence to ease the production.

Table 4.3: Students' Oral Production Tests

S/N	Words	IPA	Deviation	No of students pass & percentages	No of students fail & percentages
9.	Prompts	/prɒmpts/	/prɒmt/	5 (10%)	45 (90%)
10	Things	/θɪŋz/	/tɪŋs/	5 (10%)	45 (90%)
11	Our	/auə/	/awa/	10 (20%)	40 (80%)
12	Right	/rait/	/rait/	45(90%)	5 (10%)

The result of the findings in the table above indicates that, 10% of the respondents were able to pronounce word 'Prompts' /prɒmpts/ correctly, while the remaining 90% of them could not. As for the word 'things' /θɪŋz/ 10% of the respondents pronounced the word correctly, while 90% of the respondents could not. For the word 'our' /auə/, 20% of the respondents pronounced the word correctly, while 80% of they could not. For the word 'right' /rait/ 90% of the respondents got the pronunciation of the word correctly, while the remaining 10% could not.

Base on the findings above, one could observe that in the word 'Prompts' /prɒmpts/ the consonant /s/ was deleted for easy production. For the word, 'things' /θɪŋz/ the dental fricative sound /θ/ was substituted for /t/, and the consonant /z/ was also substituted for /s/ respectively. Talking about the word, 'our' / auə / the consonant /w/ was inserted to dismantle the triphthong. For the word 'right' /rait /, the respondents do not have difficulty in the production.

Table 4.4: Students' Oral Production Tests

S/N	Words	IPA	Deviation	No of students pass & percentages	No of students fail & percentages
13	Of	/ɔv/	/ɔf	5 (10%)	45 (90%)
14	Whistle	/wisl/	/wistul/	10 (20%)	40 (80%)
15	Turn	/tɜ:n/	/tɔ:n/ & /ten/	5 (10%)	45 (90%)
16	Months	/mʌnθs/	/mɔnts/	5 (10%)	45 (90%)

The result of the findings in the table above indicates that, 10% of the respondents were able to pronounce word 'of' /ɔv/ correctly, while the remaining 90% of them could not. As for the word 'whistle' / wisl/, 20% of the respondents pronounce the word correctly, while 80% of the respondents could not. For the word 'turn' / tɜ:n/, 10% of the respondent pronounced the word correctly, while 90% of they could not. For the word 'months' /mʌnθs/, only 10% of the respondents got the pronunciation of the word correctly, while the remaining 80% could not.

Base on the findings above, one could observe that the word 'of' /ɔv/, the consonant /v/ was substituted for /f/. For the word, 'whistle' / wisl/, the consonant sound /t/ was inserted. Talking about the word, word 'turn' / tɜ:n/, the vowel / ɜ:/ was substituted for /ɔ:/, and for the word 'months' /mʌnθs/, the dental fricative /θ/ was silence to ease the production due to the three consonant clusters.

Table 4.5: Students' Oral Production Tests

S/N	Words	IPA	Deviation	No of students pass & percentages	No of students fail & percentages
17	Honesty	/ɔnəsti/	/hɔnəsti/	10 (20%)	40 (80%)
18	Chaff	/tʃa:f/	/tʃæf/	5 (10%)	45 (90%)
19	Chagrin	/ʃa:gri/	/tʃa:grin/	0 (0%)	50 (100)
20	Principal	/prinsəpl/	/prinsipæl/	5 (10%)	45 (90%)

The result of the findings in the table above indicates that, 20% of the respondents were able to pronounce word 'honesty' / ɔnəsti/ correctly, while the remaining 80% of them could not. As for the word 'chaff' /tʃa:f/ 10% of the respondents pronounced the word correctly, while 90% of the respondents could not. For the word 'chagrin' /ʃa:gri/, 100% of the respondents could not pronounced the word correctly, while none of them pronounced it correctly. For the word 'principal' prinsəpl/, 10% of the respondents pronounce the word correctly, while the remaining 90% could not.

Base on the findings above, one could observe that the word 'honesty' /ɔnəsti/, the consonant /h/ was inserted for easy production. For the word, 'chaff' /tʃa:f/, the vowel sound /a:/ was substituted for /æ/, Talking about the word, 'chagrin' /ʃa:gri/, the consonant /ʃ/ was

substituted for /tʃ/. The word 'principal' prinsəpl/, the respondents substituted the schwa /ə/ its /i/ and the vowel /æ/ is inserted to neutralize the clusters /-pl/.

Discussion of the Findings

The result in table one shows that, the word 'come' /kʌm/ the vowel /ʌ/ which is grossly absent in the phonemic inventory of most Nigerian languages was substituted for the nearest one /ɔ/, for the word 'ewe' /ju:/, which has the same pronunciation with 'you' /ju:/, the /j/ was substituted for /i/ or /eu/. Talking about the word 'listen' /lisn/, the silence letter 't' was pronounced, while the word 'bombing' /bɒmɪŋ/ the silence letter 'b' was also pronounced. Most of the errors made here was as a result the complex nature of English language spelling system

The finding in table two shows that, the word 'wanted' /wæntɪd/ the vowel /i/ in the second syllable was substituted for /e/, for the word 'there' /ðeə/, the consonant sound /ð/ was substituted for /d/ due to the absence of the dental stop consonant sound /ð/ in the phonemic inventory of Nigerian languages. The word, 'theme' /θi:m/ the dental fricative /θ/ which is mostly absent in the phonemic inventory most Nigerian languages was substituted for the nearest equivalent /t/ in their L1. While the word 'stew' /stju:/, the /j/ in the consonant clusters /-stj/ is deleted to to ease the production.

The result in table three shows that, the word 'Prompts' /prɒmpts/ the consonant cluster /-s/ is deleted to be realized as /prɒmt/, while the word 'things' /θɪŋz/ the dental fricative /θ/ was substituted for /t/, the word 'our' /auə/ the consonant /w/ was incited to break the trip thongs while the schwa /ə/ is being substituted for /a/ respectively. The errors committed are an intralingua errors (overproduction and simplification) and Interlingua errors or interference errors which have to do with the respondents transferring the linguistic knowledge of their L1 to that of L2 (English).

The result in table four shows that, the word 'of' /ɔv/ the consonant /v/ was substituted for /f/ due to the complex nature of English spelling system. For the word 'whistle' /wɪsl/ the consonant /t/ and /u/ is incited to be realized as /wɪstul/, thus neutralizing the consonant cluster /-sl/. For the word 'turn' /tɜ:n/, the vowel /ɜ:/ was substituted for /ɔ:/, because the long vowel /ɜ: is grossly absent in phonemic inventory of most Nigerian languages. For the word 'months' /mʌnθs/, the dental fricative /θ/ in the consonant cluster of /-nθs/ was deleted to simplify the production

The findings in table five show that, the word 'honesty' /ɒnəsti/, the consonant /h/ was inserted to simplify its production, while the word, 'chaff' /tʃa:f/, the vowel sound /a:/ was substituted for /æ/, the word, 'chagrin' /ʃa:gri/, the consonant /ʃ/ was substituted for /tʃ/. The word 'principal' prinsəpl/, the respondents substituted the schwa /ə/ its /i/ and the vowel /æ/ is inserted to neutralize the clusters /-pl/.

The errors committed by the subjects above consist of both intralingua errors (overproduction and simplification) and Interlingua errors or interference errors which have to do with the respondents transferring the linguistic knowledge of their L1 to that of L2 (English) and because of the complex nature of English language spelling system.

Conclusion

A close look of the errors committed by the first year students English Education Nasarawa state University Keffi, Nigeria consist of both intralingua errors (overproduction, overgeneralization and simplification) and Interlingua errors or interference errors which have to do with the respondents transferring the linguistic knowledge of their L1 to that of L2 (English) unconsciously. Other errors made by the study populace were due to the complex nature of English language spelling system. The importance of errors EA cannot be overemphasized; to the learner, errors are devices indicate the learning is taking place or in progress. It tells the teacher about the progress made by the L2 learner while learning the target language and consequently what remain for him to learn. It also provides the researcher with evidence of how language is learned or acquired and the strategies the learner employed in discovering the language.

Recommendations

Bases on the outcome and the conclusion of this paper, the researcher recommends that:

- In teaching pronunciation, emphasis should be on sound that are found in our L1 such as the consonant sounds /θ/ was substituted for /t/, /ð/ for /d/, /ʃ/ for /tʃ/, /z/ for /s/, and /v/ for /f/ in words like; 'there' /ðeə/ for /dia/, 'theme' /θi:m/ for /tim/, 'chagrin' /ʃa:ɡri/ for /tʃagin/, 'things' /θiŋz/ for /tiŋs/, and 'of' /ɔv/ for /ɔf/ respectively. The vowel sounds /ʌ/ was substituted for /ɔ/, /e/ for /i/, /ɜ:/ for /ɔ:/, /a:/ for /æ/ and /ə/ for /æ/.
- Pronunciation should be taught earlier in nursery or primary schools to minimize the pronunciation problem that affects adults.
- Minimal pairs technique could be employed while teaching the Target sounds

Suggestion for Further Study

In carrying further research in pronunciation errors, emphasis should be supra segmental features (such as stress, intonation and connected speech) as opposed to segmental features.

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