

CHALLENGES OF TEACHING PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY IN A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

The teaching of Phonetics and Phonology in multilingual classrooms now-a-days is fraught with multifaceted challenges. These are caused by students' abhorrence for the course, their displeasures at the compulsory status assigned to it, students' attitudes towards it, lack of basic and functional laboratory facilities and other social and psychological factors affecting learners who constitute the major classroom participants. This study investigates the teething problems encountered by teachers who teach Phonetics and Phonology in tertiary institutions; it uses a private university in Ogun State, Nigeria as a case study. The population of the study comprises all students from the Departments of Languages and Mass Communication of the University in question. The study adopts a descriptive research design and an ex post facto design; it equally uses Contrastive Linguistic Analysis (CLA) and Articulatory Phonology (AP) as theoretical frameworks. Also, Participant Observation Method and Focus Group Interviews were used as instruments for data collection. Simple random technique was adopted in selecting both the target population (of 35 students from 200 level and 300 level) and the data (3 lectures) for this study. One of the major findings was that the interference of students' Mother Tongue (MT) in the pronunciation of English sounds (especially those that were not in existence in their MT) was prominent in the practical classes; and this frustrated teacher's effort in teaching the course. The researcher therefore recommends that educational stakeholders (especially the government at all levels) should provide basic laboratory facilities, motivation and training for teachers who go extra miles to teach students Phonetics and Phonology; and ensure that they understand and practice it.

Keywords: Phonetics and Phonology, teaching, multilingual classrooms, Mother Tongue, Contrastive Linguistic Analysis, Articulatory Phonology

INTRODUCTION

The Nobel profession of teaching is quite challenging in recent times. Teachers feel "overloaded, pulled in different directions" (Hargreaves and Fullan 2012: 36) and saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that students pass any course they teach irrespective of what is or what is not in place for its successful outcome. Hargreaves and Fullan also aver that "some of the problems and challenges of teaching have continued, but now they are more intense, more pervasive and more severe" (37). Teaching is a multidimensional profession carried out in both conventional and unconventional environments. It is "an art, a craft, a science, a sacred vocation and a mixture of them. It is also considered as a job, and a line of work (29). The

teaching of English courses generally is also complicated where students exhibit negative attitudes and the courses highly technical. These are (Language complexity and Students' negative attitudes) evident in the teaching of Phonetics and Phonology in many tertiary institutions in Nigeria (where other multilayered problems are equally witnessed).

Phonetics and Phonology is one of the compulsory courses in the Departments of English, Languages and Linguistics in tertiary institutions from year one to the final year in Nigeria. The course treats two mutually dependent concepts (Phonetics and Phonology) together. Many students of English show strong aversion for the course possibly because they enter the said classrooms with no prior knowledge of the sound system of the language they intend to study. Besides, the introduction of many phonological jargons (Thwarted, et al (2022) from the onset of the teaching exercise is also a problem to students (and this poses a challenge to teachers). Be as it may, a number of factors are responsible for students' negative attitudes to the teaching of Phonetics and Phonology; and these actually pose hydra-headed challenges to the teacher, who is expected to teach effectively and ensure that the students pass the course irrespective of their backgrounds, dearth and understaffed Phonetics and Phonology teachers, lack of basic linguistic facilities (functional language Laboratory, linguistic software, etc.).

The teaching (or the production of any parts of English, Hamkan 2016) of Phonetics and Phonology is highly multidimensional and multitasking especially in a multilingual classroom. Besides the broad nature of the course (which takes into consideration the major concepts of phonetics and phonology), various phonological realizations, phonemic and phonological transcriptions, students' attitudes, unfriendly environments, unavailability of basic linguistics facilities for teaching, lack of motivations, etc. are disturbing factors that constitute challenges to the teaching of this course.

Over the years, many linguistic scholars have identified the challenges of teaching the sound systems of English Language in Nigeria. Usman & Mustafa (2014) observe that MT interference, ineffective teaching methodology, shortage of relevant textbooks, lack of orientation, lack of constant practice, lack of language laboratory, lack of necessary facilities are the challenges that bedeviled the teaching of Oral English in High schools in Nigeria. Again, Fasanmi (2011) explains that the status of English language and Oral English necessitate the identification of the difficulties that learners encounter in the learning of Oral English as a Second Language environment, like Nigeria. Teachers of Phonetics and Phonology have to battle with a very poor phonological background of students and all the mentioned and unmentioned challenges; and try to quickly address them, otherwise they (teachers) will be tagged incompetent.

Again, the teaching of key concepts such are phonetics, phonology, phone, phoneme, phonotactics, phonemic and phonetic transcription, syllable, feet, intonation, tonal group, stress, rhythm, phonological processes and rules are some of the topics expected to be covered within three months. Therefore lack of sufficient time to explain these concepts is also a major challenge to teachers.

In addition, the teacher becomes emotionally disturbed when a semester's efforts that he/she puts into teaching the course become almost fruitless as a result of the students' mass failure in the course. Again, society would point accusing finger to the teacher whose students fail woefully, as a failed teacher. Right from the Departmental Board Meeting where the results Phonetics and Phonology results will be considered to the College Board Meeting, even up to Senate's consideration, the teacher will be accused of his or her incompetence to perform in his/her teaching (even by his/her colleagues). To avoid this, a lot of teachers have directly or indirectly added "unexplainable marks" for students to enable them to pass. For some who cannot do so, the society considers them as not teaching well, and this is also a great challenge.

Since every language has its phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, etc. systems, (Plank 2017), the systems in Phonetics and Phonology of English Language are the ones I consider here. An attempt to address these problems has necessitated this research that aims at identifying and addressing the challenges that accrue in the course of teaching Phonetics and Phonology in multilingual classrooms. The researcher believes that the work will be beneficial to the teachers of Phonetics and Phonology, researchers and some education stakeholders who may try to change the narratives in this regard.

PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

The term Phonetics and Phonology as used here is one of the compulsory courses studied in the Department of English, Languages and Linguistics (especially) in universities and Colleges of Education in Nigeria. Many students have shown strong aversion for the course basically, because they do not easily understand the course when they are taught (as evident in the focus group interview conducted for this work)...

Phonetics and Phonology studies the physical and mental aspects of sound systems in natural languages. It is concerned with the study of speech sounds and with the dependence of speech on sounds (Finch 2000) and their descriptions, classifications and transcriptions (Bauman-Waengler, 2009:15, Yule 2006:30, Kumar and Sreehari (2009:19 and Crystal 2008:363). In teaching Phonetics and Phonology (as a course and not as two different subfields of linguistics), it is ideal to first of all explain individual concepts to the students before its methods, theories and other relevant phonological phenomena. The interplay between phonetics and phonology is crucial in student's understanding or otherwise of the course.

The concept of Phonetics

Phonetics basically classifies speech sounds into three branches, namely, articulatory phonetics, acoustic phonetics and auditory phonetics. These correspond to the production, transmission and reception of sound (Finch, 2000). It is the science and study of the characteristics of speech and speech sounds (Rasheed); and focuses on the description of speech sounds in respect of their production, transference and distinctive features.

Phonology Defined

Phonology is defined as the mental representation and description of linguistic knowledge (Fromskin et al, 2003:273 –274); it is branch of linguistics that deals with the speech sounds of a particular language with emphasis on their production, transmission and reception (Balasubramanian 2011:57) ; it is also a selection and organization of speech sounds in a particular language (Verma&Krishnaswamy 2009: 27). Here, there is similarity in the definition of phonetics and phonology by (Finch 2000) and Balasubramanaian (2011). A teacher who defines these to the students will discover that the students may be completely confused about the differences between phonetics and phonology.

Again, the online linguistic dictionary defines phonology as a branch of linguistics (Wikipedia) that focuses on the structuring of sounds in individual languages (Anderson, 2001). It studies the abstract side of the sound of a language (Roach, 2009) and how a speech sound changes due to different factors. Phonology is the systematic study or the patterning of the sound system of a language (Henry 2014, Angagwa 2014, Nordquist 2019). It also explains why certain phonetic features are important in identifying a word (Szczegielniakn,d) in a language or languages.

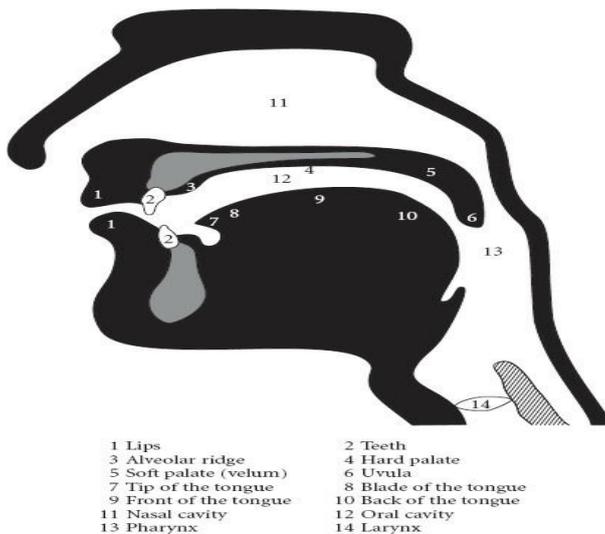
Phonology is divided into two branches, segmental Phonology and suprasegmentally phonology. The segmental phonology focuses on the “segmentation of language into sound” (Skandera and Burleigh 2011:5) based on its functions and combinations of sound while suprasegmentally phonology (also known as prosody) deals with the pronunciation features such as stress, rhythm and intonation. Crystal (2008: 365 –366) distinguishes two types of phonology namely, the diachronic phonology and the synchronic phonology; whereas the former deals with the patterns of sound change in the history of language, the later focuses on sound patterns irrespective of “process of historical change.”

Some key concepts that should constitute the course contents of English Phonetics and Phonology are segmental phonology and suprasegmentally phonology and specifically, vowels and consonants; the glides, nasal sounds, oral sounds, voiced consonants, voiceless consonants, voiceless vowels, stops, fricatives, affricates, labial, bilabial, dental, alveolar, alveo-dental, palatal, uvular, glottal, ingressive, regressive, velar, velarized consonants, palatalized consonants, aspirated consonants, front vowels, back vowels, high vowels, low vowels, mid-vowels, semi-vowels, round vowels, syllabic consonant. phonemes, phones, allophones, phonological changes and rules, vowel coalescence, vowel addition, vowel deletion, default vowel, vowel shortening, vowel lengthening, epenthesis, umlaut, homorganic nasal, nasalization, consonant deletion, consonant addition, distribution, complementary distribution, free variation, assimilations, dissimilation, insertions, minimal pairs, syllable, open syllable, closed syllable, prosodic features, stress, tempo, intonation, rhythm (Shaghi 2014, 2015:3).

The Organs of Speech

The organs of speech are parts of the body that perform both primary and secondary functions (of being used for respiration, eating and secondarily for articulation of speech sounds. These

are enveloped in three cavities namely: the Oral cavity (the mouth region), the nasal cavity (the nose region and the Pharyngeal cavity (throat region). There are major organs of speech and minor organs of speech: the major organs are the most prominent and mostly used organs, especially the ones that occupy the oral cavity. The major articular or resonant is the tongue (which is divided into six namely the tip, blade, front, middle, back and root). The picture of the organs of speech is presented below.



Source: Philip Carr 2013

The Consonants of English

The consonant sounds are produced “when the breath that flows out through the mouth is blocked by the teeth, tongue, or lips” (dictionary. Cambridge); some are partially obstructed and are called voiceless consonants while others are completely blocked and are called voiced consonants. There are nine (9) voiceless consonants in English namely: / p, t, k, f, θ, s, ʃ, ʧ, h / and 15 voiced consonants as follows: / b, d, g, v, ð, ʒ, ʤ, l, r, w, j, m, n, ŋ, z / An example of a consonant chart is presented below.

Fig 1: The Consonant Chart

Manner of Articulation	Place of Articulation							
	Bibabial	Labio-Dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d			k g	
Affricate					tʃ dʒ			
Nasal	m			n			ŋ	
Fricative		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h
Lateral Approximate				l				
Central Approximate	w				r	ɹ		

Source (Author)

Three major parameters are used in describing the consonants of English; namely, the place of articulation, manner of articulation and the state of the glottis (Amana, 2012). The examples of these are presented below.

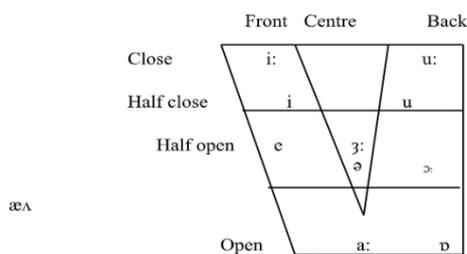
d	voiced alveolar stop
f	voiceless labiodental fricative
h	voiceless glottal fricative
k	voiceless velar stop
l	voiced alveolar lateral liquid
m	voiced bilabial nasal
n	voiced alveolar nasal
p	voiceless bilabial stop
s	voiceless alveopalatal fricative
t	voiceless alveolar stop
v	voiced labiodental fricative
w	voiced velar glide
z	voiced alveopalatal fricative
g	voiced velar stop
j	voiced palatal glide
ŋ	voiced velar nasal
dʒ	voiced palatal affricate
tʃ	voiceless palatal affricate
ʃ	voiceless palatal fricative
ʒ	voiced palatal fricative
θ	voiceless interdental fricative
ð	voiced interdental fricative
ʍ	voiceless velar glide

Source: English phonetic

The Vowel of English

The vowels of English are produced with the vibration of the vocal cords therefore making all English vowel sounds voiced. They are divided into three, the monophthongs, the diphthongs and the triphthongs (glides or moving vowels) (Amana, 2012, Adedun2012, Anyagwa, 2014). There are twelve (12) monophthongs also known as the pure vowels. Linguists use parameters such as the height of the tongue or tongue elevation (high, mid and low), backness or frontness of the vowels or position of the tongue elevation (front, central and back), the position of the lips or lip spread (spread, neutral and rounded), openness of the mouth (close, half-close, half open and open) and length of vocalization (long (5 vowels with length mark ,: and 7 short vowels) to describe English pure vowels. An example of the English monophthongs in vowel chart below.

Fig 2



Source (Author)

The front vowels are /i., i:, e , æ/, the central vowels are / ɜ:, ə , ʌ/ and the back vowels are /u:., u, ɔ:., ɒ, a:/. English vowels produced when the lips are rounded are / u, ɔ, o, ɔ/; those

articulated when the lips are not rounded are /i, ɪ, e, ε, æ, ʌ, ʌ ə/; those articulated when the lips are neutral are /ɜ:, ə, ʌ/ and those produced when the lips are spread are: /e, i, i:, ɔ, æ /

The diphthongs and triphthongs of English are vocalic sounds; they move from one vowel position to another. In the case of diphthongs, two pure vowels are combined to realize eight (8) of them; while a diphthong /ei/ is combined with one monophthong (the schwa sound, /ə/) to realise 5 triphthongs in English. The examples of diphthongs are /ei, ai, ɔi, eə, uə, iə, əu, au/ and those of triphthongs are /eɪə, aiə, ɔiə, əuə, auə/. Diphthongs are divided into two, the closing diphthongs (ai, ei, ɔi, au, uə /; (here, the tongue moves from an open position to a closed position). The centring diphthongs are (eə, uə, iə, /; they are produced when the part of the tongue moves from front or back to the centre.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

These two concepts are mutually interdependent. Both phonetics and phonology study human sound systems. Phonetics deals with the physical, descriptive aspect (necessary for the phonological analysis) while phonology focuses on the functions of sounds. Phonetics studies human (speech) sounds while phonology gives a classification of sounds within a language or in languages. In Shaghi (2014-2015)'s course outline for Phonetics and Phonology. Phonetics is considered as a “scientific description of what speech sounds exist in a language” do. It deals with the production, perception and acoustic properties of speech sounds. Both phonetics and phonology overlap and complement each other. In other words, there is a very thin line between them.

Multilingual Classrooms

Multilingual classrooms are classrooms that are made of students that use many languages. With the diversity of languages in place, there could be cases of disharmony if the teacher fails to understand the nature of heterogeneity of the classroom. Teachers should understand that “each multilingual setting is unique (Szelei, et al 2021); therefore in teaching a multilingual classroom, it is necessary that the teacher understands each learner’s peculiarity, jettison favouring a particular language at the expense of others, put on human face in dealing with the learners, explore extra resources that will enhance their teaching and encourage collaboration and teamwork. Teachers are supposed to possess critical language awareness, have the knowledge of how language is used, analysed and taught as well as aiming at transforming the “taken-for-granted norms of languages (Garcia, 2017), so that students can benefit maximally from what is being delivered in the class.

Contrastive Linguistic Approach (CLA)

This is a “general approach to the investigation of language” (Crystal 2008:112). In doing contrastive analysis, the structures of the languages contrasted should be identified. The syntactic, phonological, morphological and lexical systems of two or more languages can be contrasted. In this study, the phonology of two Nigerian languages, Igbo and Yoruba (the native language) will be contrasted with English (the target language) sounds. This affirms (Corder

1973)'s disposition that in teaching contrastive analysis, the native and target languages are involved (227).

Abstract Articulatory Phonology

Articulatory Phonology (AP) is a linguistic theory that was originated by Catherine Browman (an American linguist and speech scientist) in 1986. (Wikipedia). It provides specific accounts of phonological patterning. It identifies the discrepancies between phonetics and phonology and aims at unifying them as “low-and high- dimensional description of a single system.” (Wikipedia). Browman and Goldstein observe that in AP basic units of phonological contrasts are gestures which are equally abstract characteristics of articulatory events. According to Hall (2020), it serves as both the control units for speech movements, and as units of contrast for distinguishing lexical items.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research that adopts an ex post facto design; variables investigated were not manipulated. Randomly selected recorded speech sounds from lecture notes on ENG 103: Practical Spoken English, ENG 203: Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology 1, ENG 204: Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology II and ENG 302: The Phonology of English, selected statements from Focus Group Interview (FGI) that comprised about 8 to 10 students (mainly from 200 and 300 levels) from Mountain Top University, Ogun State, and interactions with students were presented and analysed using Articulatory Phonology and Contrastive Linguistic Analysis. Phonetics and Phonology classes comprised students from all parts of Nigeria but mainly from Yoruba and Igbo extractions; so, data for analysis were drawn from practical sessions conducted by the author during the teaching of the courses in question. Over 200 students from the Department of Languages and Mass Communication constituted our population; our sample population consisted of 37 students (mainly from Igbo and Yoruba tribes) from the Department of Languages of Mountain Top University in Ogun State, Nigeria. Irrespective of the geographical locations of students, many of them are bilinguals (not only do they understand one indigenous language and English, but some understand more than one Nigerian language); hence, the multilingual classroom setting and its attendant challenges.

RESULTS

Data collected from Phonetics and Phonology classrooms' practical classes are presented in Groups labelled Practical sections A to C; and excerpts from Focus Group Interview and the author's interactions with the students (which are subsumed in the Focus Group Interview's statements) constitute major parts of data presentation and analysis. The Igbo and Yoruba students articulated different phonological varieties of each word in all Practical sections; but the author randomly selected one variety for each word, and did transcription based on the selected variety produced by these students. Data presentation (DP1) and Analysis (DA1) are divided into two: Data Presentation 1 (a) and (b) and Data Analysis 1 (a) and (b). DP1 was collected from the author's lecture materials used for Practical Sessions during the teaching of Practical Spoken English and Continuous Assessment (CA) exercises. Also, DP2 were

gathered from Focus Group interview (FGI) conducted by the researcher and one research assistant who monitored the Focus Group interview. In analysing data from FGI, abbreviations and numbers are used. For example, IntV stands for Interviewer while IntVee stands for interviewees.

DP1

Practical Section A

Table 1

S/ N	Word	Transcription	Students' Production	
			Igbo	Yoruba
1.	Contraction	/kən'trækʃ(ə)n/	/kontradition/	/kontradision/
2.	Discussion	/dɪ'skʌʃ(ə)n/	/diskosion/	/dikosion/
3.	Conventional	/kən'venʃ(ə)n(ə)l/	/kontrovasial/	/kontroversial/
4.	Practical	/'præktɪk(ə)l/	/'praktikal/	/'pratical/
5.	Intonation	/ɪntə'neɪʃ(ə)n/	/intonetion /	/intonesion/
6.	Communication	/kəmju:nɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/	/komunikation /	/komunicacion/
7.	Interaction	/ɪntər'ækʃ(ə)n/	/ɪntaraction/	/ɪntarackcion/
8.	Individualization	/,ɪndɪvɪdʒuəlaɪ'zeɪʃn/ /	/,ɪndɪvɪdʒuəlaɪzation /	/,ɪndɪvɪdʒuəlaɪzacion/
9.	Characterisations	/kæræktəraɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/	/kæratarazation /	/kærakterisacion/
10.	Presentation	/prez(ə)n'teɪʃ(ə)n/	/prezentation /	/prezentacion/

Analysis of Table 1

There exists a sharp phonological contrast in the pronunciation of words in the three languages as shown on Table 1. The words from items 1 to 10 are wrongly pronounced by Nigerian students represented by both the Igbo and Yoruba extractions. The word, /kən'trækʃ(ə)n/ as pronounced by students, shows a replacement of schwa sound for /o/, the absence of a voiceless velar sound /k/ and a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative, /ʃ/ ; and its replacement with /t/ and /s/ respectively. In Item 2, /dɪ'skʌʃ(ə)n/, there is the disappearance of the central vowel /ʌ/ and a replacement of /ʃ/ with /t/ and /c/. This replacement is observed repeatedly from every word that contains /ʃ/ in all items above.

Items 1 to 10 show a replacement of schwa sound /ə/ with /o/ in /kən'venʃ(ə)n(ə)l/; the same is applicable to all words that contain it (as in /'præktɪk(ə)l/, /ɪntə'neɪʃ(ə)n/, /kəmju:nɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/, /kæræktəraɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/ and /prez(ə)n'teɪʃ(ə)n/. Again, there is no existence of the centring diphthong /ei/, as shown in its replacement in /ɪntə'neɪʃ(ə)n/, /kəmju:nɪ'keɪʃ(ə)n/, /kæræktəraɪ'zeɪʃ(ə)n/ and /prez(ə)n'teɪʃ(ə)n/. This informs its substitution with /a/ and /i/ as found in Items 5, 6, 8 to 10. The deletion, substitution and disappearance of sound are potential challenges to teachers who find it frustrating to teach students who are unable to articulate what he/she articulates, and expects the students to do so. The class therefore becomes unnecessarily prolonged and boring as the students too will be tired learning continuously what they are unable to produce.

Practical section B

Table 2

S/N	Word	Transcription	Students' Production	
			Igbo	Yoruba
1.	Vignette	/vi:njet/ or /vɪ'njet/ (vinyat)	/viget/	/viniti/
2.	Culture	/'kʌltʃə/	/'ko;ltʃo/	/'kolitu/
3.	Picturesque	/pɪktʃə'resk/	/pɪkuresk/	/pɪkturiski/
4.	Picaresque	/,pɪkə'resk/	/,pɪkə'resk/	/,pɪkə'resk
5.	Vogue	/vəʊg/	/voʊk/	/volki/
6.	Psyche	/'saɪki/	/'sark/	/'sarki/
7.	Chocolate	/'tʃɒk(ə)lət/	/'chokolet/	/'chokoleti/
8.	Mechanism	/'mek(ə)nɪz(ə)m/	/'mekanısım/	/'maikanısım/
9.	Doctorial	/'dɒkt(ə)r(ə)l/	/'dɒktoral /	/'dɒktorali/
10.	Restaurant	/'rɛst(ə)rɒnt/	/'restorant/	/'restoranti/

Analysis of Practical section B

From Table 2 above, there are differences in the pronunciation of the words from the lexical Items 1 to. The students seem not to be familiar with some words and as such both the Igbo and Yoruba students provided the one available in their languages. In articulating the word, /vɪ'njet/ the Igbo students replaced the palatal sound /j/ with a velar sound /g/ while the Yoruba students replaced theirs with alveolar nasal /n/ and add the front vowel, /i/. This is to show that a learner of English must look for similar sounds to replace the one absent in his or her mother tongue (MT). In Item 2, retroflex (r) in /'kʌltʃə/ is replaced with /o/ and /u/. In addition, there is no voiceless affricate /tʃ/ in Yoruba, so they do not bother to add it all (rather they replace it with /s/); but the Igbos do, because they have it in their MT in words like Chineke, Chidima, Chisom, etc. So, the articulation of the words /'tʃɒk(ə)lət/, /pɪktʃə'resk/ for instance, become a problem to most Yoruba speakers of English language. Even the Igbos who have the equivalent sound in their MT still find it difficult to pronounce the words correctly as evident on Table 2. Also there is the absence of schwa sound /ə/ in both languages; hence its exclusion in all words that contain them by the Nigerian speakers of English language.

Practical section C

Table 3

S/N	Word	Transcription	Students' Production	
			Igbo	Yoruba
1.	Memoir	/'memwɑ:/	/'memə/	/'meməo/
2.	Portfolio	/pɔ:t'fəʊliəʊ/	/pɔt'folio/	/pɔt'folio/
3.	Distaff	/'dɪstɑ:f/	/'dɪstɑv/	/'dɪstɑ:fu/
4.	Legend	/'ledʒ(ə)nd/	/'legen/	/'leegen/
5.	Didactic	/dɪ'dæktɪk/	/dai'daktɪc/	/dai'da:kti/
6.	Renaissance	/'rɪ'neɪs(ə)ns/	/'rɪ'neson/	/'rɪ'neson/
7.	Sanctuary	/'sæŋ(k)tʃʊəri/	/'santuali/	/'santʊari/
8.	Nervous	/'nɜ:vəs/	/'ne:vos/	/'nə:vos/
9.	Paradigm	/'pærədɑɪm/	/'paradam/	/'paredam/
10.	Aphrodite	/,æfrə'daɪtɪ/	/,æfro'dait/	/,æfrodaitɪ/

Data Analysis of Table 3

The students here find it difficult to articulate the correct pronunciation as found on Table 3 above. The sound /ɔ/ and /o/ are substituted for /wɑ:/ in the word /mɛmwɑ:/. /əʊ/ is replaced for /o/ in /pɔ:t'fəʊlɪəʊ/; /v/ for /f/ is /dɪstɑ:f/ and addition of /u/ by some Yoruba speakers; ' /e. ee / for /g/ for 'dʒ/ in /'lɛdʒ(ə)nd/; /ʌ/ for /a/ in /dʌr'daktɪk/; e for ei in rɪ'neɪs(ə)ns/ /n/ for /ŋ/ /, and omission of /k/ and /j/ in /rɪ'neɪs(ə)ns/. The schwa sound /ə/ is elided in words such as ('nə:vəs/ 'pærədʌɪm/ and 'æfrə'dæɪtɪ/) instead, /o/ is used in Items 8 to 10 on Table 3

Data Presentation 2 (a): Excerpt from Focus Group Interview 1

IntV 1: Which aspects of Phonetics and Phonology do you understand?

IntVee 2: Very few/ none.

IntV 3: Can you differentiate phonetics from phonology?

IntVee 4: Jay

IntVee 5: Okay; go ahead

IntVee 6: Phonetics studies speech sounds in small units; Phonology has to do with the structuring of the raw materials of speech presented by phonetics.

IntV7: What then is the difference between Phonetics and Phonology?

Data Analysis of 2(a)

Responding to question IntV1 in DP1 (2a), some students understand few aspects of Phonetics and Phonology while some do not understand any. This is caused by their inability to get the background knowledge of this course right from their secondary schools as indicated in IntVee7. In the course of interactions with the students, the IntV discovered that the students were unable to actually differentiate between phonetics and phonology as indicated in IntVee 6 and the response of this in IntV7.

Data Presentation 2(b): Excerpt from Focus Group Interview 2

IntV: 1: Does it mean that the way teachers teach/ methods applied by teachers are wrong?

IntVee 2: We won't say so; but the elementary aspects of the course should be taught first

IntV 3: Why

IntVee 4: Many students don't understand the aspect of Test of Oral of the English language subject in their secondary schools.

IntVee 5: Students admire models that speak well; but they don't like the course

IntV 6: Why?

IntVee-7: The stress pattern/ transcription, and many other aspects are very confusing and difficult.

IntVee 8: We find it difficult to understand all the theories and many concepts in Phonetics and Phonology.

Data Analysis 2(b):

Here, the IntV attempted to find out whether or not the teaching methods that teachers use are the causes of students' dislike and other negative attitudes displayed during teaching. The responses of the students from the IntVee 2 and 4 show that rather than the teaching methods, students lack of understanding of Test of Oral in secondary schools, and confusing multi-concepts of the course are the major reasons for their dispositions.

Data Presentation 3: Excerpt from Focus Group Interview

IntV1: What then is responsible for the mass failure recorded in examinations on Phonetics and Phonology?

IntVee 2: Some students perform poorly because most of them don't like any courses that involve details

IntV 3: Can you mention other factors

IntVee 4: Negative attitude such as lateness to class

IntVee 5: Students' refusal to pay close attention to what the teacher teaches

IntVee 6: Many don't buy pronunciation dictionary, use it nor make it their friend.

Data Analysis 3

The IntV in seeking to know the factors responsible for students' failure in Phonetics and Phonology's continuous assessments and examinations. The feedback from IntVee 2 to 6 is that students do not like any course that is detailed, their negative attitudes, refusal to pay attention to what the teachers teach and lack of pronunciation dictionary (and use) are the factors that inform students' failure. Attitudes indeed are major determinant of students' success or failure depending on the exhibition of either positive or negative attitudes (Gardner 2011).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study reveal that the teaching of Phonetics and Phonology is very challenging to teachers due to lack of Nigerian English students' rich linguistic background knowledge of English phonetic and phonological systems. Similarly, the analysis of the data from the practical sections reveals that absence of schwa sound, diphthongs, voiceless palatal affricate, voiceless palatal fricative and voiced velar nasal makes it difficult for many Nigerian English students to pronounce words that actually contain them properly. There is non-existence of schwa sound in Nigerian indigenous languages; this is contrary to British English in which its majority words contain schwa sound. As a result of lack of this sound, many students of English in Nigeria use substitutes (such as o, e and a) .Thus, therefore making their articulation of many words that contain it improper. In addition, many students replace

diphthongs with monophthongs, voiceless labio-dental fricatives for its voiced equivalent, velar nasal for alveolar nasal. They also omit any inter-lexical palatal sounds. Massive replacements or omission of sounds for more convenient ones by students constitute draconic challenges to the teachers who may labour to ensure that the students get the right sound but at the end of the day, (when they are being assessed), mass failure is recorded; and when their phonetic and phonology competence and performance are tested, they fail woefully.

In addition, students' negative attitudes toward the teaching and learning of the subject, strong aversion for the course, refusal to buy and use phonetic dictionary are also factors that make the teaching of Phonetics and Phonology challenging to teachers.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The primary objective of teaching is to ensure that fundamental changes are brought about, recorded and exhibited by the learners; and to do these is the teacher. Ayeni (2011) observes that teaching is a process that involves discovering desirable changes in the learner in order to achieve specific outcomes. Where the teacher labours unabatedly to achieve these results but the reverse is the case, teaching becomes extremely uninteresting and challenging. Unfortunately, the society looks and points accusing fingers at them as failures if the students do not perform well.

The teaching of Phonetics and Phonology, has been a major challenge to teachers of this course. Our analysis revealed that the teacher, teacher's methods and teaching materials, teaching environments, understanding of the learners and many other aids to teaching are not the major factors responsible for the challenges teachers of this course encounter. The challenges are rather hydra-headed and some of these are caused by the existence of several topics to be covered within limited time, uncountable confusing jargons to be taught to students who enter the class with little or no knowledge of the sound system of the course, innumerable phonological and phonetic jargons and many other conflicting topics and unpredictable and negative attitudes of many students towards the course. What then is the way forward? Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) maintain that if we "do the same kind of things day-in-day out, year after year, eventually they start to rub off on" (29) us. Therefore there is need for an urgent paradigm shift from the conservative stereotypic way of teaching Phonetics and Phonology to a more dynamic creative manner, and a redirection and reorientation of students on their present disposition with a view to expecting their acceptable standpoint on the course.

This study therefore recommends that there should be a re-visitation to the course contents of Phonetics and Phonology. The lecturers in charge of this course should restructure the contents of the course, the curriculum planners, syllabi developers and other stakeholders should do everything possible to change the overburdened phonetics and phonology's curricula. There should be an inclusion of a phonetics and phonology preparatory section meant for 100 level students (for first and second semesters) to learn only the sound systems of English side by side with their native/indigenous languages (so as to identify and establish their similarities and differences). They should as well be taught consistently about the differences between the written language and the spoken language. Few topics should be included in the course

contents to enable the sincere teaching of this course. Extra-lectures should be given to weak students and those who have no prior knowledge of Phonetics and Phonology and teachers should be motivated by financial support for this. Complete-involvement method of students in teaching while the teacher adopts a supervisory approach should be adopted when students might have mastered the rudiments of Phonetics and Phonology.

Another basic attention should be paid to the students' overwhelming negative attitudes towards this course. Every teacher should think of making Phonetics and Phonology class interesting, exciting and creative. Students can be asked to draw the sound systems of English, and pay specific attention to the IPA symbols for a month with its equivalent in the student's MTs. They should be motivated even when they have got the drawings or any aspect of the course wrong. Language laboratories should be functional in all our institutions and available for use at all times. It should not only be put in place for accreditation purposes. Some of these phonetic and phonemic symbols can as well be used in songs and students apply the laboratory facilities to learn the sounds through songs. Laboratory attendants who are experts in speech articulation, remedy and improvement should also be employed to assist lecturers in operating the laboratories; by so doing, the challenges of teaching Phonetics and Phonology may be reduced or eradicated.

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