



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2018; 4(10): 232-247
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 12-08-2018
Accepted: 16-09-2018

Samuel Bruce Kpeglo
(1) Research & Project Work
Coordinator, Tutor &
Professional Development
Coordinator 1 (PDC1)
Hall Counsellor – Maria
Goretti Hall
(2) Dept of Languages
St. Teresa's College of
Education, Hohoe, Ghana

The phonological differences between Anlo Ewe and spoken English: A contrastive analysis

Samuel Bruce Kpeglo

Abstract

This study explored the Behaviorists' assumption that the difficulty of learning a second language is basically the result of the interference between the mother tongue and the second language. The focus is basically to establish the phonological differences and the influence of Anlo Ewe on spoken English among Ewe graduate teachers from the Anloland. The problem identified is that the spoken English of most educated Ewes, particularly the Anlo, is laboured in phonology and there is peculiar pronunciation in the speech of most Ewe speakers' English. The study aimed at identifying the dominant sounds in the English language, both vowels and consonants that pose learning problem to the Ewe learner of English. In order to achieve this, a sample size of one hundred (100) participants was selected to respond to the instruments in this study. Purposive sampling design which is a non-probability sampling procedure was later employed to arrive at the final sample size of eighty (80). The linguistic community of the Anlo Ewe was explored to sample native Anlo graduates in the secondary schools and the training colleges. Samples of the English vocabulary items that contain the problem sounds identified were gathered and used to test pronunciation skills of the participants. The instruments included an audio tape for recording the oral pronunciation test, questionnaires for the graduate teachers and an interview. Simple percentage and frequencies were also used to tabulate the data. The study revealed that mother tongue interference on the learning and teaching of second language is one of the many causes of pronunciation differences in spoken English of most educated Anlo Ewes.

Keywords: Contrastive Analyses, Phonotactics, Anloland, idiosyncrasies, ethnolinguistic

Introduction

Background to the Study

The increasing importance of English in today's business world is widely recognized. English today has, somewhat retained its pre-eminent position as the language anybody must know if he is seeking a job in the civil and public sectors of the economy. Success in any form of education and training and in all fields of human endeavour worldwide depends largely upon the ability of the individual to understand and use English language effectively. Cruttenden, (2001:4) ^[7] defines language as "a system of conventional signals used for communication by a whole community". This pattern of conventions covers a system of significant sound units, the phonemes, the inflexion and arrangements of words and the association of meaning with words. Spada and Lightbown, (2002) ^[30] explained the functions of language in these terms: "language is the instrument by means of which man fashions his thoughts, feelings, emotions and actions, the instrument by which he influences and is influenced by others, the ultimate and deepest foundation of human society" (p.51).

It presupposes that in a multilingual society such as Ghana, it is only through a common language that people of different ethnic backgrounds can effectively interact to share ideas and express their thoughts. In Ghana, English language is the official language of government, administration and the learned professions. It is for this reason that English is one of the major subjects in Ghanaian schools.

In addition to these roles that English plays in educational, social, political, and economic sectors of nations, the English language helps educated Ghanaians to avail themselves of the advances in science, technology, research, arts and culture, the literary heritage of other countries and world events. The Ministry of Education, taking cognizance of these roles, sums up the importance of English Language in Ghana in the preamble of the English syllabus for Primary Schools thus;

Correspondence

Samuel Bruce Kpeglo
(1) Research & Project Work
Coordinator, Tutor &
Professional Development
Coordinator 1 (PDC1)
Hall Counsellor – Maria
Goretti Hall
(2) Dept of Languages
St. Teresa's College of
Education, Hohoe, Ghana

The importance of the English language in Ghana is widely recognized. It is the official language, the language of administration, of law, of business and of the learned professions.....This syllabus aims, therefore, at providing such opportunities for learning and using English as to enable pupils completing their basic education to take their proper places in society in which a knowledge of the English language is essential. It should also provide training in the use of English as a tool for higher education [CRDD, 1992; 5]

From the above, it could be said that the government attaches great importance to the study of English. This is again strongly echoed in the preface to the Senior High School Core Syllabus that states that:

Language, the very essence of our humanity, is also an important most effective tool for socialization.....Our ability to function in almost all spheres of life depends primarily on our language skills. English, the language in which this country conducts her official business, deserves to be studied both as a core subject and as an elective, (CRDD, 1990; 2).

The implication of the two quotations above is that a mastery of the English language is a prerequisite for a successful career in the learned professions and for any educational advancement in Ghana and beyond. Very often educated people are recognized based on their English language proficiencies. Those who speak English easily and fluently, who express themselves with confidence in any social situations, have greater chances for success than do those whose words catch in their throats, whose palms sweat at the thought of speaking to people and whose minds go blank when asked questions, (Owolabi, 2000)^[23].

However, it is well known that English as used today bears the mark of all the languages and cultures with which it has been in contact. In his work, *Languages in Contact*, Weinreich (1970)^[32] estimated that more than half of the English stock of words has come from French during the last centuries. During the past two centuries, the indigenous languages of America, Asia and Africa colonies have provided particularly important crops to the English language lexis, grammar, phonology and discourse. He contended for example, that some innovations in English pronunciation may be due to the contact with languages with which it co-exists.

In the case of Ghana, the different ethnic groupings in the country with their respective sound differences continue to have an influence on the spoken English of the educated Ghanaian. The inevitability of the interference of these mother tongues on spoken English is therefore widely acknowledged in all ethnic groups in Ghana. Yankson (2001)^[34] observed that by the time a child goes to school, he has already internalized the phonological, lexical and syntactic systems of his mother tongue. In his learning of new language, he sometimes transfers, consciously or unconsciously, certain features of his mother tongue into the new language. In other words, his mother tongue system interferes with the target language system. Such is the case in spoken English of most Ghanaians.

It therefore suggests that certain learning errors in the English of most Ghanaian speakers can be traced to their respective mother tongue interference. But it is important to note that the degree of this interference depends largely on the learner's educational background at every stage of this inter-language development. Junoir High School students

are consciously aware that their mother tongue system and the English language system differ and that the English language learner cannot translate literally an idiom in his mother tongue into English. One often hears pupils and students in particular, and educated Ghanaians in general, making literal translations from their mother tongue into the English language. There are, for example, certain sounds in English, which are not found in the first language of the Ghanaian speaker. Similarly, there are sounds in the first language of the Ghanaian speaker that are not found in the English language. Therefore, where differences occur in the orthography of the two languages, they pose learning difficulties to the Ghanaian learner of English. Examples of such sounds in the English language include; /ð/ as in 'this', /ʌ/ as in 'come', /ɒ/ as in virus, /j/ as in 'shirt'. The tendency of the Ghanaian speaker in pronouncing words containing these sounds is to replace the sound with the near equivalent which exists in his first language. And so, it is very common phonetically to hear people say /dis/ instead of /ðis/, /kam/ instead of /kʌm/ among others.

The above are only few of the many errors that establish that a learner's first language may affect the speech of his second language. For quite a long time now, the language-teaching scene laboured under the assumption that all the problems of the second language learner are traceable to his first language. This assumption led to the theory of Contrastive Analysis (Lado, 1957)^[17] that was based on the assumption that "we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulties by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and the culture of the student", (p.vii).

Similarly, Stevens (1965)^[31] also shared the same sentiment and agrees that the most appropriate materials for teaching a language are those that embody a bi-lingual comparison (sometimes called contrastive analysis) of mother tongue and the target language.

It is therefore obvious that mother tongue interference on spoken English could be present in Ghana. Among the Anjlos of the southern Volta, this interference is more apparent in phonology than in all other parts of language learning. It is therefore expedient to carry out a very comprehensive research in this area to establish these phonological differences between the two languages.

Statement of the Problem

As stated earlier in the background of this study, this study is on the behaviourists theory that the difficulty of learning a second language is basically the result of interference between the learners' mother tongue and the target language (target language in this research refers to the English language). The problem identified is that the spoken English of most educated Eves, particularly the Anjlos is peculiar in phonology. Their spoken English is hardly native-like in certain English words mainly due to several factors. Considering the fact that mother tongue interference can affect pronunciation in additional languages, this study researches into the source of pronunciation differences in some spoken English of Eve speakers with a view to finding out particular sounds that cause phonological differences.

Research Questions

The research revolves around the following questions:

1. What sounds in the English language pose pronunciation problems to the Anjlo learner/speaker of English?

2. What Añlɔ speech sounds influence the Añlɔ speaker's pronunciation in English?
3. What peculiar pronunciations are realized in spoken English of the educated Añlɔs?
4. What explains why a second language speaker produces some characteristic deviations from the accepted standard?

Purpose of the Study

It is obvious that Ghanaians, and for that matter the Eves are non-native speakers of English. So there is the tendency of educated Ghanaians to pronounce certain English sounds in peculiar ways. There is also the tendency of a variety of pronunciations even by different educated Ghanaians. The purpose of this study is to identify these specific pronunciations from the Añlɔ graduate teacher, since the teacher's pronunciation influences his students' spoken English.

The study also seeks to identify sounds in the English language that pose learning problem to the Eve speaker of English so that classroom teachers are informed about the explicable reasons why the learning of a second language produces some characteristic deviations from the accepted standard.

Significance of the Study

The study will add to the existing knowledge of contrastive analysis of Ewe and English and also provide an official document to policy makers and curriculum developers in designing teaching learning materials for second language learners. The study will also inform the Ghanaian society on the causes of the difference in spoken English of the Añlɔ graduate.

Delimitation

The focus of this study is in the area of phonology with regard to the spoken English of some educated Añlɔs. The scope of the topic is to establish the phonological differences and the influence of Añlɔ Eve on spoken English among Eve graduate teachers. Only educated Añlɔ graduates were used for this study. This is because the study is focused on contrastive analysis of Añlɔ Eve and the English language. The linguistic community of the Añlɔ Eve was explored to sample out typical Añlɔ graduates in the secondary schools and colleges of education. Even though the linguistic community of these people is heterogeneous, most of them were sourced from the Añlɔland, particularly in the second cycle schools in the area.

Literature Review

Phonology

Cruttenden, (2001:6) ^[7] explains the term, phonology as "how sounds function in a systemic way in a particular language". According to him, the traditional approach to phonology is through phonemics, which analyses the stream of speech into a sequence of contrastive segments, 'contrastive' here meaning contrasting with other segments which might change the meaning. The phonemic approach to phonology is not the only type of phonological theory but it is the most accessible to those with no training in linguistic theory.

According to Akpanglo-Nartey (2002) ^[1], phonology involves the ability to extract regularities from the various physical sounds uttered by the different speakers of a

language. It involves the ability to establish the set of rules that guides the changes that take place in these sounds when they occur with other sounds in different positions.

Roach (2000) ^[29] also shared the same view and explained that phonology studies how sounds are organized and used in natural languages and that the phonological system of a language includes the rules which specify how sounds interact with each other in a language as well as an inventory of sounds and their features. Roach emphasized that phonology analyses the sound patterns of a language by determining which phonetic sounds are significant and explaining how these sounds are interpreted by the native speaker. He concluded that phonology is the basis for further work in morphology, syntax, discourse and orthography design. At one extreme, phonology is concerned with anatomy and physiology-the organs of speech and how individuals learn to use them. At another extreme, phonology shades into socio-linguistics as it considers social attitudes to features of sound such as accent and intonation. And part of the subject is concerned with finding objective standard ways of recording speech, and representing this symbolically.

The above explanations of the term are very useful to this study in establishing and determining which English sounds are significant to the Eve speaker and explaining how these sounds are interpreted by the native speaker.

First Language and Second Language Acquisition

According to Cruttenden, (2001) ^[7], a person's mother tongue is the first language that is acquired at the early stages of language development, rather than a language learnt at school or as an adult. The mother tongue of an individual refers to the native language or immediate language with which the individual is born.

A second language on the other hand, refers to a target language that the person is learning or intends to learn. It therefore suggests that before the second language (L2) learner begins to learn his language, he has already established, consciously or unconsciously, the rules of grammar and phonology of his mother tongue (L1) in the mind. These rules will serve as a platform for him to begin his second language learning. Ever since the inception of inquiries into second language acquisition there has been great controversy among many linguists as to the role the existing language (L₁) plays in the learning of second language.

Cohen (1990) ^[5] considers the learning of a language as accepting a culture and therefore, in some degree, a personal identity. To him, the significance of the cultural aspect of language for a learning process comes partly through the fact that a learner's attitude strongly influences his learning. This assertion is agreed upon because the way one thinks and expresses his thought is influenced by culture. Language is the expression of culture; thus, one cannot acquire fluency in language without acquiring one's understanding of the culture, which that language expresses. Reid, (1995) ^[27] continued the argument on the topic of second language learning by stating that some aspects of learning change with age. To them age makes an important difference in learners. The intellectual powers of the adolescent or adult is superior in many ways to those of a child of three. Children's memory span is limited to a few words or syllables at first, but it increases rapidly during the school years. Ability to memorize verbal materials, and

pronounce words correctly including nonsense syllables as well as connected discourse, also improve with age. On the other hand, it is obvious that adult's techniques and the capacities are not necessary to learn a language. A child learns one language and learns it well between 18 months and four years. In fact there is evidence that the brain of a child has capacities for language learning that do not exist in that of an adult.

Rivers (1964) [28] stated that teaching methods rest on the careful scientific analysis of the contrasts between the learner's language and the target language and that the learning of one thing may influence the later learning of something else. Interactions between the effects of old and new learning can be both facilitating and interfering and it is difficult to state many general ways under what conditions transfer of training will be positive or negative or zero. He continued that the degree of interaction between materials learned at different times depends partly upon how well each is learned. If the first learning is carried to a high degree of perfection, it will interfere much less with later similar materials being learned, perhaps, because a well-learned material is better discriminated by the subject. When two sets of materials to be learned are quite different or are easily discriminated by the learner, there is relatively little interaction; that is learning one has little effect upon learning the other. If they are similar in such a way that the learning of one serves as partial learning of the other, there may be facilitation or positive transfer.

This assertion by Rivers (1964) [28] on language acquisition is still tenable because the already existing knowledge has an influence over the one being learnt. Evidence can be seen in learning of new sounds like /θ/, /ð/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɔ/, /ɜ/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /ʒ/, which are non-existent in Eve.

Again Akpanglo-Nartey (2002) [1] stated that the younger one starts to learn a second language, the better chances one has to develop a native-like pronunciation. He called this "Native Pronunciation Condition". This is in accordance with the view that children learn a language at early stage better than the adult does. A child learns a language well between 18 months and 4 years of age. With this, there is a period of primary language acquisition beginning at about 15 months and continuing until puberty. During this period, the brain of a child or adolescent has developed sufficiently for language learning to begin. Akpanglo-Nartey (2002) [1] summarized second language acquisition in three assumptions:

1. The closer two languages are to each other genetically and typologically, the quicker a speaker of one will learn the other". This assumption means that when two languages are closer to each other, learning becomes much easier. For instance a child, whose parents are ethnically different, is likely to learn both languages- from the father and the mother. Moreover, when a child finds himself in a place or society which shares a border with another society, he/she is in better position to learn and understand the other language because of its closeness.
2. When two languages share the same feature learning is facilitated. His second assumption suggests that if a feature is common in both languages, learning those languages becomes easier. For example, if sounds like /u/ and /i/ are in both L₁ and L₂, the child will find it easier to learn L₂ based on existing knowledge of it in L₁.

3. Differences between two languages interfere when speakers set out to learn the other. This view of his is in line with Rivers (1964) [28], which says that learning of one thing may influence the later learning of another. If languages share no common features, learning the other one becomes difficult. Mutual intelligibility is absent since there are differences in the two languages.

According to Pit-Corder, (1977) [24], there are roughly three stages in learning a second language (L2). These are: the pre-systematic stage, systematic stage and the post-systematic stage. The pre-systematic stage, he explains, is the stage where the learner is hardly aware that the second language (L2) has a system. The learner is, as it were, merely groping in the dark. He makes errors most of the time. He may, by chance, make a well-formed sentence but he cannot say why he has made any particular error or any well-formed sentence, and so cannot correct his errors.

The systematic stage, Pit-Corder explained, is the stage where the learner is aware that the L2 has a system. If he makes errors, he can explain what he is trying to say but cannot correct his errors. At this stage, rules of grammar and phonology of the language are still not known.

The post-systematic stage, according to Pit-Corder is the stage where the learner is able to correct his own errors and also say what is wrong with a deviant utterance. The learner at this stage can fully establish the rules of grammar and phonology of the language that he is learning.

Contrastive Sounds and Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive sounds refer to a set of sounds in language that distinguish meaning. These sometimes, are called phonemes. In order to determine the phonemes of a language, Akpanglo-Nartey (2002) [1] stated that "we need to put together a set of words having different meanings and varying by only one sound apiece". The words 'pad' [pæd] and 'bad' [bæd], for example, are two different words because while one can say 'I have a bad headache', *I have a pad headache' is not acceptable. By the same token, 'I write on a pad' is acceptable while *I write on a bad' is not. Since the only difference between the two words is the initial consonants /p/ and /b/, the two sounds are contrastive units in the English language. In other words, /p/ and /b/ are phonemes of English. Other words can be analysed, for example fad [fæd] and sad [sæd], to establish other contrastive sounds of the language. Pairs of words such as pad/bad, fad/sad used to establish the phonemes of a language are minimal pairs.

For some kinds of study, perhaps a language investigation into the phonological development of young children or regional variations in accent, an illustration is possible in these contrastive sounds. That in cases where any one of these contrastive sounds, say /p/ and /b/ is not available in the speaker's mother tongue, the tendency is to replace it with its near-equivalent. Therefore, a second language learner is likely to orally produce 'I have a pad headache', if the sound /b/ is absent in the mother tongue- an utterance which may sound strange in the ears of the native speaker.

Yankson, (2001) [34] suggested that there are two main approaches to the study of learner's errors in second language acquisition. These are error analysis and contrastive analysis. For the purpose of this research, the focus will be on contrastive analysis in the bid to find out the problem sounds of the two languages- English and Eve. Contrastive analysis, as defined by Yankson, is "the method

of comparing two or more language systems in order to find out areas of similarities and areas of differences” (p.13). The contrastive analysis hypothesis is based on the assumption that the learning difficulties of a second language learner are basically the result of the interference between his L1 system and the system of L2. Contrastive analysts therefore believe that by mapping out the linguistic differences between the two languages, that is the learner’s language and the target language, learning problems can be more effectively and specifically defined to enable the teacher to lay adequate emphasis on the problem areas. In this sense, Yankson asserted that contrastive analysis will be used by the classroom teacher to predict potential errors of the second language learner and apply appropriate therapeutic measures to address the problem. Contrastive analysis is thus, prognostic.

This assertion by Yankson (2001) ^[34] is in support to Politzer and Staubach (1961) ^[25] that:

...by comparing the linguistic analysis of the native language of the learner with that of the language to be studied, we highlight the major difficulties encountered by the learner. This comparison enables us to construct teaching and testing materials quite systematically and to give due emphasis to the points of real difficulty (p.21).

Learning to acquire the pronunciation habits of a foreign language involves a large number of new skills, especially recognition skills. In order to hear the foreign language accurately enough to imitate it, the foreign learner must respond to a whole new sound system. Hearing correctly is not always easy, and the learner is handicapped not only by his lack of control of the new language structure, but by his lack of knowledge of the new language in general.

According to Lado (1957) ^[17], the second language learner has been conditioned by the mother tongue sound system to regard as relevant only the sound features of his mother tongue. He has developed what Lado (1957) ^[17] called “perception blind spot”. The second language learner will therefore disregard the distinctive sound features of the target language which are not in the mother tongue. According to Lado (1957) ^[17], the second language learner needs to be systematically de-conditioned to enable him/her to perceive auditorily the phonological structure of the new language. He also said that the teacher who has made comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students will know better what real problems are and can provide strategies for teaching them. In other words, the ability of a teacher to make in-depth comparison of the foreign language with the mother tongue enables the students to know the problem on the ground so that the teacher prepares adequately for teaching them.

Again, Ferguson (1965) ^[12] suggested that a careful and thorough contrastive analysis of two languages is usually an excellent basis for the preparation of instructional materials, the planning of courses and the development of actual classroom technique. In short, there would not be any influence of L₁ on the learning of L₂ if the classroom teacher is versatile in analyzing the two language systems, and if he stands a better chance of preparing appropriate instructional materials and the appropriate pedagogical skills of teaching the language.

Furthermore, advocates of this theory believe that the phonological domain is an area where learned first language and second language interact. It has also been postulated that the L₂ elements that are similar to those in the L₁

repertoire will be replaced by those elements in the early stages. However, L₂ sounds which do not exist in the L₁, will follow their own course of development, and in much the same way as sounds develop in the native language.

The Eve Language (Evegbe)

Eve is a tonal language. It is a language in which changes in pitch cause the meaning of a word to be altered altogether. This language is one of the Kwa languages of West Africa. It is spoken from the Eastern bank of the Volta River to the Western boundary of Nigeria, from the coast up to between the Greenwich Meridian and Longitude 3 degrees east. It is therefore, an international language used in Ghana, the Republic of Togo, Benin and Nigeria. (Anyidoho, 1990) ^[2].

Anyidoho identified four main dialects of the Eve language, namely:

- The Anɔ dialect, used mainly in the southern and coastal parts of the Volta Region of Ghana.
 - The Tongu dialect, used mainly along the banks of the Volta Lake spanning from the south to the mid-Volta.
 - Evedome dialect, used in not only the central and northern sectors of the Eveland (Eve speaking areas) in the Volta Region of Ghana but also in the Republic of Togo.
 - The Anexɔ dialect, used in the southern part of the Republic of Togo and Benin
- There is also a considerable number of Eve speakers as on the western banks of the Volta as well. In fact part of the Volta Region lies along the western banks

According to Anyidoho (1990) ^[2], the population of the indigenous speakers of the Eve Language in Ghana is estimated between three to four million. The standard Eve which is being taught and read in schools, colleges and in the universities was developed into writing by the German (Bremen) Missionaries in the then German-Togoland in the nineteenth century.

The Missionaries studied the four main differences and similarities of the main dialects and arrived at a common point of convergence for the purpose of mutual intelligibility. Eve is strictly not spoken by any particular group of people. It is the written form for formal education and so is read and understood by all, irrespective of their education. This adapted and written form of the language is what has come to be known today as the Standard Eve. In 1938, the Eve language became an examinable subject at the Cambridge School Certificate Examination Level, barely eight years after the original diacritic Roman Alphabet was changed to the African Alphabet in Lome, the capital of the Republic of Togo in 1930. Today, Eve is studied as a subject at the basic school level in Ghana, both as a core and elective subject in second cycle institutions and for degree programmes in the universities in Ghana and beyond.

Evegbe in Contrast with English Language

According to Yankson (2001) ^[34], most Ghanaian languages employ the Romanized alphabet system. In Ghanaian languages, however, there is an almost one-to-one correspondence between letter and sound. The orthography of most Ghanaian languages is more phonetic than English orthography which is sometimes quite illogical. In English, there is no one-to-one relationship between a letter and the sound it represents. Yankson asserted that the phonetic differences between the two orthographical systems are

sometimes the cause of the phonological and graphological confusion seen in the writings of most Ghanaian learners of English. According to Yankson, what always happens is that the Ghanaian learner of English who is literate in his own language tends to transfer the values he associates with a particular letter in his own language onto a similar letter he meets in English.

A more comprehensive explanation of this assertion is seen in the form of most Eve words that have the same form with English and are likely to be realized in English the same way as the Eve speaker does in Evegbe. This means that the values associated with stress and intonation, for example in Evegbe tend to reflect in English of the Anlo native.

Anyidoho (1990) [2] shows that the following words for instance, in both English and Eve languages have similar forms but are different in sound and meaning:

Table 1: Graphological Comparison of English and Evegbe Words

English	Realizations	Evegbe	Realizations
able	/eib ^h l/	able (will deceive)	/ ʌble/
age	/eidz/	age (will drop)	/ ʌge/
ago	/e.gəu/	ago (an excuse)	/ ʌgo/
be	/bi:/	be (hide)vb.	/ be/
data	/dei.tə/	data (throw leg)	/ data/
eve	/iv/	eve (two)	/ evel/
eye	/ai/	eye (subordinating conjunction)	/ eye/
gate	/geit/	gate (corn-mill)n.	/gate/ among others

adapted from Anyidoho R.K (1990) [2]

On the basis of the differences in these sound patterns in the two languages illustrated above, it is possible that children who use the mother tongue as the basis for developing the sound systems of the target language will transfer the sound patterns of the former into the latter.

The Sounds of the Eve Alphabet

Anyidoho (1990) [2] tabulated the sounds of Evegbe, both vowels and consonants as follow:

Table 2: Vowels and Consonants of Evegbe

No:	Vowels	Consonants
1	/a/ /e/ /ɛ/ /i/ /o/ /ɔ/ /u/	/b/ /d/ /d / /ʒ /h/ k /t/ /f/ /g/ /x/ /l/ /m/ /n/ /ŋ/ /p/ /t/ /s/ /t /v/ /v/ /w/ /y/ /z/

It could be drawn from table 2 that the following are the Eve sounds non-existent in English sound system: /d /, /ɛ/, /f/, / ʒ/, /x/, /v/ and /ŋ/. The sound, /ŋ/ exists in English but the distribution differs in the Eve language.

The Sounds of the English Alphabet

The Consonant Sounds

In establishing the consonantal phonemes of English, Cruttenden, A (2001) [7] identified twenty-four distinctive units which are consonantal, both in terms of their position in syllables and also in terms of their phonetic nature. Cruttenden (2001) [7] classified these twenty-four consonantal phonemes in two general categories; thus obstruents and sonorants. Obstruents, he said, are those articulations in which there is a total closure or a stricture causing friction, both groups being typically associated with a noise component. In this class, there is a distinctive opposition between voiceless and voiced types. In the second category, the sonorants, Cruttenden (2001) [7] states that “there is only a partial closure or unimpeded oral or

nasal escape of air. Such articulations are typically voiced and frequently frictionless without a noise component and may share many phonetic features with vowels” (p.149). The table below explains further, the distinctive consonants of English.

Table 3: The Distinctive Consonants of English

	Plosive	Affricate	Fricative	Nasal	Approx.
Bilabial	/p/, /b/			/m/	/w/
Labiodental			/f/, /v/		
Dental			/ð/, /θ/		
Alveolar	/t/, /d/		/s/, /z/	/n/	/l/
Post-alveolar					
Palato-alveolar		/tʃ/, /dʒ/	/ʃ/, /ʒ/		
Palatal					/j/
Velar	/k/, /g/			/ŋ/	/w/
Glottal			/h/		

Source: Cruttenden (2001:149) [7]

The Vowel Sounds

According to Cruttenden (2001) [7], a large number of vowel sounds have a distinctive function in Received Pronunciation in English. Cruttenden establishes the oppositional nature of these vowel sounds by possible commutations in series in a table below.

Table 4: The Distinctive Vowel Sounds of English

/i:/	as in	heed, feel, bead, pea
/i/	as in	hid, fill, bid, except
/e/	as in	head, fell, bed
/æ/	as in	had, bad, mat
/ɑ:/	as in	hard, bard, par
/ɒ/	as in	hod, bod, got, shot
/ɔ:/	as in	hoard, fall, board, paw
/u/	as in	hood, full, pull
/u:/	as in	fool, pool, who'd, pooh
/ʌ/	as in	bud, come, country
/ɜ:/	as in	heard, furl, bird, purr, girl
/ə/	as in	accept, about, virus, method, catalogue

Source: Cruttenden (2001:91) [7]

From the revelations of Cruttenden, (2001) [7], a distinction of the English sounds, both vowels and consonants, is drawn from those of the Eve sounds. The following are the English sounds non-existent in Evegbe: /i:/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ə/, /θ/, /ð/, /ɜ:/, /ʃ/, /ʒ:/. However, the two palato-alveolar fricative sounds, /ʒ/ and /ʃ/ appear non-existent in standard Evegbe but they do exist in Anlo Eve, except the distribution (phonetic environment). The Anlo speaker will say: “toshishi” /ʃ/ (river) instead of the standard version: “tɔsisi”. Similarly, the Anlo speaker will say: ‘zikpi’ for stool, instead of ‘zikpi’ (stool).

The Teaching of Pronunciation

Cruttenden (2001) [7] observes that most people will make a considerable difference of length between the vowels in *hat*, *had* and *bad* when the words are said in isolation, the vowel in *bad* being nearly as long as any of the ‘long’ vowels. Nevertheless, this length is not a constant distinctive feature of the vowel, but is rather dependent upon the context or is characteristic of the pronunciation of particular words. According to Roach, (2000) [29] and Madsen, (1983) [18], the teaching of pronunciation has not had the needed attention from language teachers. Pronunciation has not been specifically taught as other language aspects. One of the reasons given is that the activity is difficult to carry out. For example, Roach (2000) [29] laments that in the 1970s and

1980s, it was fashionable to treat it as a rather outdated activity. Madsen (1983:57) ^[18] explains that even in evaluation, pronunciation was relegated to the background in the 1980s. He says that ‘test devoted to pronunciation are rare today’ but checking ‘the individual sounds that students could pronounce was common during the audio-lingual period following World War II.’

Otowski (1998) ^[22] echoes this sentiment and goes further to trace the problem to the assertion that no matter the effort put into teaching pronunciation, there would not be any meaningful change in the learner’s pronunciation. He however, is of the view that there can be a change if the teaching is carefully done. He concludes that in contrast, research indicates that the teacher can make a noticeable difference if certain criteria are taken. Even though mother tongue accent cannot be fully changed into accent, it can be improved upon to ensure intelligibility.

Kenworthy (1989) ^[16] supported the hope that when pronunciation is accorded the needed attention, a positive influence on L2 learners’ pronunciation would be achieved. Kenworthy is of the view that sensitive and sensible are the two key attributes of good pronunciation. Teachers and learners must be sensitive to pronunciation and its importance, while all concerned should be sensible about the goals of pronunciation teaching.

This work by Kenworthy is relevant to the present study as it reminds this researcher to take note of the need for speakers of Ewe to be both sensitive and sensible when pronouncing English words so as to ensure intelligibility not only among themselves but especially people from different linguistic backgrounds. It is very important to devote time for the teaching of pronunciation because cross-linguistic miscommunication and communication breakdown are largely attributed to errors and mistakes in pronunciation (Jenkins, 2006: 1).

This is the conclusion reached by Jenkins after studying the causes of miscommunication between native speakers of English and non-native speakers. In that study, pronunciation is regarded as the central ingredient to successful communication; and mispronunciation is largely blamed for miscommunication. Therefore the pronunciation in English of speakers of Ewe needs to be examined so that a bilingual contrast can be established to ensure successful communication.

Furthermore, L2 accent may lead to discrimination as a research conducted by Bonfiglio (2002) ^[3] indicated. In the said study, Bonfiglio interviewed subjects of different linguistic backgrounds either than English in the U.S.A to know their experiences as far as the issue of discrimination on grounds of foreign accent was concerned. He found out that majority of the subjects believed that they had, at one time or the other, been discriminated against because of their L2 accent.

As this study is aimed at establishing phonological contrast in English and Ewe, Bonfiglio’s findings will help underscore the need for the pronunciation of Ewe speakers to be improved upon so that they do not have the bitter experience Bonfiglio’s subjects had. This is because though speakers of Ewe are not discriminated against in Ghana on account of their L1 accent, they may suffer it elsewhere since it is a disadvantage to have poor pronunciation.

Another point is that the teaching of pronunciation will have a positive impact on spelling and vice versa, (Dolphyne, 1989) ^[11]. Dolphyne sampled and interviewed, senior

secondary and university level 100 students to find their attitude towards the teaching of oral English in Ghana. The subjects regarded Oral English as important and would like to speak with the RP accent. They further admired those who spoke that accent. However, they did not like the methodology their teachers used in teaching. The study chose the right subjects as many users of the English in Ghana fall within Junior High School, Senior High School and the tertiary institutions. This study is so enlightening and would guide the present study especially in identifying the English problem sounds to Ewe speakers as well as improving upon the pronunciation of speakers of Ewe by adopting interesting teaching methodology in the classroom. In this regard, the selection of subjects is of special interest in this study.

Another concern about pronunciation is the issue of standard accent of English. Generally, it is Received Pronunciation (RP) that many argue in favour, as the Standard English. Further, it is RP that many non-native speakers are exposed to commonly through BBC Radio and TV. RP is generally the accent that serves as a point of reference for Standard English. Jenkins (2006) attests to this in the National Curriculum 200 Policy Document, when she says that “if any accent is implied by ‘standard’, then it is likely to be Received Pronunciation” (p.5).

On her part, Odamtten (1997:25) says that some students in Ghana are so unfamiliar with RP that they cannot help but laugh over the use of RP to pronounce the following words: *Squad, Quarrel, Journalism, Circumstances*. The West African Examination Council uses RP to conduct the Oral English exams for candidates of the SSSCE; now WASSCE. So for students in this category especially, whose teachers are the subjects in this study, RP is the Standard accent. The above arguments lend support to the choice of RP as the reference Standard English pronunciation for this study.

But the need to learn the aspects of the pronunciation of non-native speakers that tend to jeopardize mutual intelligibility is still a priority. Non-native speakers may need to communicate with native speakers who might find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to understand.

Gibson (2001:296) ^[13] expresses this vividly when he says: Clear, a foreign learner who requires an adequate performance in the language for the practical purposes of everyday communication will not need to master all the pronunciation variants...Nevertheless, any teacher or learner must consider how much of the time is given to the acquisition of another language. Time should be devoted to pronunciation and what level of performance is necessary for efficient communication.

Following from the above, it is necessary for speakers of Ewe to be aware of their pronunciation peculiarities such that they would work at improving them in order to ensure mutual intelligibility.

On his part, Daniels (1995:10) ^[10] argues that there is no need for non-native speakers to break what he calls the ‘umbilical cord’ (mother tongue accent) before ensuring intelligibility. By this, Daniels equates mother tongue accent to the umbilical cord of a baby to its mother showing a sense of togetherness. Rather it is very necessary to maintain one’s ‘unbiblical cord’ if one desires it for self identification. He states thus: “whenever we speak an L2, we cut that cord, perhaps unconsciously afraid of not being able to find it up again when we revert to L1. To do this, non-native speakers

need to retain the sounds, rhythm and intonation of their mother tongue”, (Daniels, 1995:10)^[10].

The present study agrees with Daniels and therefore is concerned much with pronunciation that impedes intelligibility. However, if maintaining the cord would impede intelligibility, it needs be tempered with for the purpose.

Hudu (2002)^[14] in a study of the phonological processes involved in adopting English words into Dagbani found out that the processes include epenthesis. This is done in order to break consonant clusters as well as closed syllables. Hudu recorded respondents as he engaged them in focused discussion for his data. Hudu (ibid) identifies sound deletion and phoneme substitution as some of the processes involved in the integration of English loan words into Dagbani. These reflect similar phonotactical processes that speakers of Dagbani apply in the pronunciation of English words. Adopting the English phonological processes to those of Dagbani results in some of the difficulties speakers of Dagbani encounter in pronouncing some English words.

This is useful to the present study in tracing the sources of mispronunciation identified in the course of this study. The use of recording and focused discussions of subjects is replicated in this study.

On its part, the World Book Encyclopedia (2001) stated that non-native speakers of English mispronounce words for one of the following reasons: that letters of English often have multiple sounds and that there are many loan words which maintain their original pronunciation or part of it. In addition, the sounds of some words have changed over the period but are still written in the same way. Just like Hudu, the insight from these observations would help trace reasons for the differences in pronunciation identified among the Eves.

Factors of Speech Difference in Language

Another reason why there are differences in speech patterns of most educated people of different background as identified by Odlin, (1989) is stated in his theory of language transfer. According to him:

Many errors in speech bear a strong resemblance to characteristics of the mother tongue, indeed many erroneous utterances read like word-for-word translations. This observation has led to the widely accepted theory of transfer which states that a learner of a second language transfers into his performance in the second language the habits of his mother tongue. If the system of the first language resembles those of the second language we speak of facilitation, and where they differ there is interference or, at least, a learning problem (p.68)

This is in support of the behaviourists assumption stated earlier in this work that the difficulty of learning a second language is basically the result of the interference between the mother tongue and the second language.

Similarly, Yankson (2001)^[34] supported this assertion and further identified language loyalty as yet another factor of speech difference. He noted that language is culture-tied. To speak exactly like native speakers demands a surrender of part of one’s identity because language loyalty is built into our system in one form or the other and this is why people do not give up their mother tongue easily. Yankson explained that one’s native language is an important factor in one’s sense of identity as an individual and a member of a group. Learning a new language means adopting a new

identity. It involves some kind of identification on the part of the learner with members of that new culture. He concluded that one’s loyalty to the mother tongue serves as a kind of psychological block, preventing the West African speaker of English to sound native-like.

According to Akpanglo-Nartey, (1998), there are also phonological rules that underlie the flow of speech in language. He contends that knowing the phonemes as well as the allophonic components of a language is not enough. The speaker needs to know the actual sequences in which these sound units occur in the language. Few of these phonological rules include phoneme sequence, sound environment and syllable isochronicity.

The phoneme sequence has to do with the combinational possibilities of the sound segments. There are, of course, restrictions on the maximal length of possible consonant sequence as well. This is because not all possible combinations of sounds occur in a language. Akpanglo-Nartey referred to such restrictions on the possible sequences of phonemes in a language as phonotactic constraints. Thus, while combinations as *pl*, *kr*, *sp*, *skw*, *skt* are permissible sequences in English, the combinations such as *sd*, *kz*, *lkp* are not permissible and cannot occur in English.

The second phonological rule, the sound environment has to do with the distribution of the sound in different environments of the two languages in contrast. In English for example, the segments /z/, /ŋ/ never occur word initially but in medial and final positions. However, in Aŋlɔ Eve, these sound segments occur at word initial. Therefore, a foreign learner of Aŋlɔ Eve, because of difference in sound distribution, is likely to pronounce:

‘ŋku’ (eye) as ‘nuku’
 ‘ŋkeke’ (day) as ‘nukeke’
 ‘ŋdɔ’ (afternoon) as ‘nudo’, among others

Another speech pattern identified to have been a likely factor in phonological difference in languages is syllable isochronicity. Most West African languages are syllable-timed; that is in an utterance, the syllables occur at almost equal intervals of time. English speech is, on the other hand, stress-timed. The stressed syllables occur at almost equal intervals of time, with the unstressed syllables squeezed in between the stressed ones, thus producing a stress isochronous rhythm. The transfer of a syllable isochronous rhythm onto a stress isochronous pattern makes the West African’s spoken English sometimes appear laboured.

O’Connor (1977) supported these phonological rules and agreed that the phonological study of a language is what addresses the question of how the phonemes of that language can be put together to make well-formed syllables and words that are permissible in that language as against the other. He contended that the domain of phonotactics is the syllable and that the consonant clusters that are permissible; the sequences of vowels and consonants and their positions within words and the syllables that these clusters and sequences allowed – all constitute the distinguishing factors of difference in languages. However, among the set of conceivable and admissible onset clusters in English, O’Connor ruled out /pf/, /ml/ and /lr/, which otherwise may be admissible in other languages.

Referring to sound environment as a factor, O’Connor identified /z/ and /ŋ/ as the only consonants that cannot

occur in onset position. He explained that /z/ is a marginal phoneme in English and its absence from onset may well be due to an accidental gap in the vocabulary. /ŋ/ is a different problem: it is not only disallowed in onsets altogether but also, severely restricted within the rhyme.

From the above, it suggests that consonantal clusters are phonotactically related to specific language and that languages do not have same clusters. This may account for the reason why some people cannot produce certain clusters in English. It is therefore possible that second language learners may commit errors when proceeding from the source language to the target language. The L2 teacher should therefore, adopt a very humane and tolerant attitude towards learner's errors.

Summary of Literature Review

The focus of this study is to establish phonological differences between the Anlo Eve and the English language and to find out the dominant sounds in the English language that pose learning difficulties to the Eve speaker of English, particularly the Anlo graduate teacher.

Emerging issues from the review of related literature on the topic reveal that the Eve language, like other West African languages, is tonal and also employs the Romanized alphabet system. It could be said that the orthography of the Eve language is more phonetic than English orthography which is sometimes quite illogical. The chapter identified language transfer and language loyalty as factors of speech difference. Other factors emerging from the literature that may establish the difference include phoneme sequence (phonotactic constraints), sound environment (distribution) and syllable isochronicity- all of which are non-existent features in Anlo Eve. The Eve speaker is likely to pronounce every letter of an English word.

In conclusion, the chapter explored the phonemes of the two languages in contrast (English and Anlo Eve) and has come out with the English sounds non-existent in Anlo Eve. These unique sounds (/θ/, /ð/, /i:/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ə/) will, in the next chapter, be used as the bases for the study in testing speech patterns among Anlo graduate teachers.

Methodology

Design

The design used in the study is a survey research design. This design involves acquiring information about one or more groups of people, about their characteristics opinions, attitudes or previous experiences by asking them questions and tabulating their answers. In this design, the ultimate goal is to learn about a large population by surveying a sample of that population. A survey research is quite simple in design. Series of questions are posed to willing participants and their responses are summarized with percentages, frequency tables or more sophisticated statistic indexes. From the responses of the sample, inferences are drawn about a particular population.

This design was used in this study because it relies on self-report data. People tell us what they think or believe to be true. Furthermore, people's description of their attitudes and opinions are often constructed on the spot, oftentimes they have not really thought about certain issues until the researcher poses a question about them. Again, this design is considered appropriate for the study based on the fact that it typically employs face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews or written questionnaires.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on establishing the phonological differences and the influence of Anlo Eve on spoken English among Anlo graduate teachers. Similarly, the study is grounded on the Contrastive Analysis hypothesis that the difficulty of learning a second language is as a result of interference between the learner's mother tongue and the target language. Contrastive analysts believe that by mapping out the linguistic differences between the two languages, that is the learner's language and the target language, learning problems can be more effectively and specifically defined to enable the teacher to lay adequate emphasis on the problem areas.

In this regard, the focus is to identify the contrastive sounds in the two languages that pose pronunciation problem or otherwise to the Eve speaker of English so that the learning problems of the Eve speaker of English in the area of phonology can be well defined.

Related literature reviewed in the previous chapter explored the phonemes of the two languages in contrast (English and Anlo Eve) and has come out with the English sounds non-existent in Anlo Eve. These unique sounds include: (/θ/, /ð/, /i:/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ə/). It identified the orthography of the Eve language as more phonetic than English orthography which is sometimes quite illogical. The previous chapter also identified language transfer and language loyalty as factors of speech difference. Other factors emerging from the literature that may establish the difference include phoneme sequence (phonotactic constraints) and sound environment (distribution) - all of which are non-existent features in Anlo Eve. The Eve speaker is likely to pronounce every letter of an English word since the L₁, the Evegebe is tonal and syllable-timed.

On the basis of the differences in these sound patterns in the two languages, thus Eve and English, it is possible that children who use the mother tongue as the basis for developing the sound systems of the target language will transfer the sound patterns of the former into the latter. It suggests therefore that acquiring a second language can be a lifelong learning process for many. All these factors identified in the literature review in this theory of contrastive analysis will inform the discussion of the data collected on the study. This will enable the researcher to draw valid conclusions on these contrastive sounds and their pronunciation patterns in the speech of the Anlo speaker.

Population and Sample Size

In this study, the target population is mainly the Anlo graduate teachers who hold at least a bachelor's degree. The researcher chose this category of respondents to enable him find out how Anlo graduate teachers articulate certain English sounds that are non-existent in Anlo Eve. The researcher explored the Anloland, particularly the secondary schools and colleges of education in the area to reach this group of people. They were drawn from five (5) senior high schools and one (1) college of education in the area. These institutions are Anlo Senior High School, Zion College of West Africa – both in Anloga; Keta Senior High School in Keta, Business Senior High School in Keta, St. Paul's Senior High School in Denu and Akatsi College of Education in Akatsi. These institutions were selected because they are located in the linguistic community of the target population for this study and that the senior high

schools are grade I institutions in the area whose teachers are more likely to be graduates.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Out of the total target population having a dispersed settlement of which most were drawn from the Anlo linguistic communities, a sample size of one hundred (100) participants was selected to respond to the instruments in this study. Purposive sampling design which is a non-probability sampling procedure was later employed to arrive at the final sample size of eighty (80). In this sampling procedure, people are chosen based on their typical characteristics. In purposive sampling, certain elements of the population are deliberately selected on the judgment of the researcher and nothing is left to chance

To be very sure that all respondents are native Anlo speakers, provision was made on the instrument, the questionnaire for respondents to state their native language. This enabled the researcher to eliminate non-native Anlo speakers and to make a valid selection of which respondents qualify for the study.

Research Instruments

A two-tier instrument involving questionnaire (see Appendix A) and a word list (see Appendix B) for pronunciation was used to collect data. The questionnaire was used to collect socio-demographic and linguistic data on the respondents. This includes gender, age group, native background, academic level, languages spoken etc. The word list was used to collect pronunciation of some specific sounds in words as spoken by the participants. These two instruments used enabled the researcher to identify peculiar pronunciations of the participants and also to enable respondents to give comments on the difficulties they faced in pronunciation of some English sounds.

Data Collection Procedure/Instrumentation

A list of words containing the sounds in focus was provided to the respondents to read. The researcher explained the relevance of the study to the respondents and asked them to relax and pronounce the words as naturally as they would use them in speech. The following is the word list with the focus sounds:

Table 5: Word list for Pronunciation Test

Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription
heed	/hi:d/	bad	/bæd/
peel	/pi:l/	pan	/pæn/
feel	/fi:l/	man	/mæn/
clean	/kli:n/	had	/hæd/
see	/si:/	catalogue	/kæ:t ² lg
come	/kʌm/	about	/əˈbaʊt/
gllove	/glʌv/	virus	/vai.rəs/
dove	/dʌv/	method	/me:θəd/
monkey	/mʌŋ:ki/	catalogue	/kæ:t ² lg
country	/kʌn:tri/	corrupt	/kəˈrʌpt/
thank	/θæŋk/	whether	/hwe:ðə/
think	/θɪŋk/	that	/ðæt/
thought	/θɔ:t/	though	/ðeu/
filth	/fɪlθ/	further	/fə:ðə/
booth	/buθ/	therefore	/ðeə.fɜ:/
vision	/vi:ʒn/	shout	/ʃaʊt/
visual	/vi:ʒuəl/	shirt	/ɜ:t/
measure	/me:ʒə/	seashore	/si:ʒə:/
pleasure	/ple:ʒə/	fish	/fɪʃ/
seizure	/si:ʒə/	refresh	/rɪfref/

The transcription of the words was derived from Cambridge International Dictionary of English, Cambridge CUP.

The words were selected based on the fact that they contain the sounds that are non-existent in Ewe. Each respondent was given separate wordlist. This enabled the researcher to deal with the individual pronunciations and transcriptions separately. Provision was also made on the wordlist for respondents to give their language background as well as comments in relation to difficulties they face in pronouncing some of the words on the list

Pilot Testing of Instruments

A pilot test on both the questionnaire and the wordlist was conducted at St. Teresa’s College, Hohoe. Ten (10) tutors were sampled to respond to the items. This was done to see whether respondents would have difficulty understanding any item and to enable the researcher to scrutinize the final product carefully to make sure that every question is essential and sufficient to address the research problem.

The results of the pilot test revealed that the questionnaire could not make a clear distinction between the Anlo speaker and other speakers of different varieties of Ewe, and so provision was made to separate the target variety for this research, the Anlo Ewe, from other varieties. Again, it was revealed that some demographic information of the respondents, for instance the age group of 60 above, were irrelevant. These were deleted.

Administration of Instruments

Administration of the instruments was done in two phases in all the six institutions. In the first phase, the researcher contacted the headmasters in their offices to seek approval for the distribution of the questionnaire and to conduct the pronunciation test. The headmaster then summoned the staff and introduced the researcher to them. The researcher also took time to explain the relevance of the study to the tutors. The questionnaire was then distributed to respondents. On the same day, during lunch times, the researcher contacted respondents individually to conduct the pronunciation test. On the pronunciation, the researcher asked the respondents to read the words on the sheet. This was recorded on a tape for broad transcription later. It took almost five (5) minutes for each respondent to take the pronunciation test; and so much was not covered during the short period of lunch since the exercise coincided with their meals. Others were contacted at their free times on campus to take the test. Even though some of them complained of time and their schedules, the researcher was able to get his average of twenty (20) respondents from each institution. The purpose of conducting the pronunciation test instantly on the first day of contact was because the data might not be as natural as it should be if respondents kept it overnight.

In the second phase, the researcher visited the institutions to retrieve the questionnaire distributed during the first visit. Other linguistic data on the respondents in the form of interviews were also collected from the respondents, especially those who were not able to take the oral pronunciation test. All these information enabled the researcher to come out with valid judgment. This means that the researcher visited each institution on two (2) separate occasions, apart from the subsequent follow-ups for late retrievals.

Selection and Transcription of the Words

The selection of the words used in the pronunciation test was done in relation to the focused contrastive English

sounds non-existent in Ewe as established in chapter two of this study.

The transcription of the words used in this work is clearly of the comparative phonemic sort. It uses symbols which are to some extent indicative of the usual qualities of those vowels. Thus, the short vowels /i/, /ə/, /æ/, /u/ are given different symbols from the long vowels /i:/, /ə:/, /u:/, /a:/ to show that they are different in quality as well as length. At the same time, the length mark is still used with the long vowels.

Data Analysis Plan

The data collected was edited and analyzed for consistency and the results were processed and analyzed. All responses were coded into definite categories: gender, age group, academic qualification, native language for easy and adequate analysis. The responses were tabulated and some were presented in a graphical form to give a more visual impression and description of the findings. Simple percentage and frequencies were also used to tabulate the data. The analysis is illustrated in the next chapter of this study.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Data Presentation

A total of one hundred (100) graduate teachers from five (5) second cycle institutions in the Anlo land received the questionnaire and the oral test. Out of this number, eighty (80) respondents are native speakers of the Anlo Ewe. The remaining twenty (20) are non-native speakers working in the Anlo land. Since the target group for the study is native Anlo speakers of English, the researcher used only the eighty (80) respondents who were native Anlos. To ensure that all respondents are native Anlo speakers, provision was made for respondents to show their ethnolinguistic background on the questionnaire. This enabled the researcher to eliminate non-native Anlo speakers and to make a valid selection of respondents for the study.

Analysis of Data

Table 6: Academic Qualification (Programme of Study) of Respondents

Degree Programme	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Bachelor of Arts	13	16.25
Bachelor of Education	41	51.25
Bachelor of Science	12	15.00
Bachelor of Mgt. Studies	03	3.75
Other (Specify)-----	11	13.75
Total	80	100

The table above gives an illustration of the various academic and professional programmes that respondents pursued at the University. Out of the eighty (80) respondents, forty-one (41) of them have degrees in Education (B.Ed), representing 51.25% of the total number of respondents. The high number of B.Ed respondents is justifiable because they are trained mainly to teach, and this explains why most of the respondents are B.Ed graduates.

The smallest group of three (3) respondents was those who have Bachelor of Management Studies (BMS) degree but have found their way into the classroom. Eleven (11) respondents did not offer any of the programmes on the questionnaire but were able to specify their qualifications.

Seven (7) of them said they were Higher National Diploma (HND) holders, three (3) of them said they hold Ghana Accounting Technician (GAT) III certificate, equivalent to the HND; while one (1) of them said she possessed NIIT certificate in ICT.

Socio-Linguistic Background of Respondents

Eighty (80) graduate natives of Anlo took the oral test. The table below shows how long respondents have lived their lives in Anlo land.

Table 7: How Long Respondents have lived in Anlo land

No: of Years	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
0 – 10	12	15
11 – 20	16	20
21 – 30	19	23.75
31 – 40	18	22.5
41 – 50	14	17.5
51 above	1	1.25
Total	80	100

It emerged from table 7 that a total of fifty-two respondents spent their productive years in their native Anlo land, ranging from 21 – 51 years. This number constitutes 65% of the total respondents. The remaining number of respondents, thus twenty-eight, representing 35% spent their productive years outside their native land.

Data collected also revealed that sixty-six (66) out of the eighty (80) respondents use Anlo Ewe as a medium of communication with their family at home. Again, thirty-one (31) respondents claimed they do not speak any other Ghanaian language apart from Ewe while forty-nine (49) of them said they speak other Ghanaian languages apart from Ewe. Respondents also gave the educational levels at which they started speaking English. This is tabulated below:

Table 8: Levels at which Respondents Started Speaking English

Level of Education	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Pre-School	11	13.75
Primary	43	53.75
JHS/Middle School	23	28.75
Secondary Level	3	3.75
College Level	0	0.00
Total	80	100

It is seen from table 8 that majority of the respondents began to speak English at primary level. It is also deduced from the table that the percentage of respondents who started to speak English between primary and junior high school is very high (82%). This suggests that the mother tongue (Anlo Ewe) of these respondents was their dominant language of communication at home during their early stages of language development. In response to the question of whether respondents used Anlo Ewe more than English language in every day communication, the result is tabulated below.

Table 9: Dominant Language of Communication

Dominant Language	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Ewe	53	66.25
English	27	33.75
Total	80	100

Table 9 above illustrates that the dominant language of everyday communication of the respondents in this study is Ewegebe. This may have its implications for their pronunciation in English.

Table 10: Difficulty in Pronouncing Some English Words/Sounds:

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	51	63.75%
No	29	36.25%
Total	80	100%

In response to the question of whether respondents find it difficult to pronounce certain sounds when reading or speaking English, fifty-one (51) respondents admitted that they sometimes face problem with some sounds in English in their communication. Twenty-nine (29) of the respondents were of the view that they do not find it difficult to pronounce any English word in their communication, both in reading and speaking. This also represents 36.25% of the responses. It is however interesting to note that although these respondents admitted perfection in spoken English, they could not sound native-like in most of the sounds in the wordlist of the oral test conducted.

Analysis of Pronunciation Test

This section of the study focused on the oral test in finding out the pronunciation patterns of Aṅlɔ speakers of English. A wordlist was provided on the questionnaire and respondents were asked to pronounce the words as they often use them in everyday communication. In all, eight (8) sounds in English that are in contrast to standard Ewegebe were distributed in different environments in forty (40) words. These sounds are: /i:/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ə/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/, /ʃ/. Each of the eighty (80) respondents was tested. The results are as follow:

Table 11: Articulation of /i:/ by Respondents

Sound Tested	/i:/	Percentage (%)
Native-like	64	80%
Non native-like	16	20%
Total	80	100%

This front vowel sound /i:/ is contrasted with /i/ by respondents in the pronunciation test. It was used in the words: *heed* /hi:d/, *peel* /pi:l/, *feel* /fi:l/, *clean* /kli:n/ and *see* /si:/ for pronunciation. Respondents who sounded native-like produced *hi:d*/, *pi:l*/, *fi:l*/, *kli:n*/, *si:/* respectively while 16 of them, representing 20% sounded non native-like and used the near equivalent /i/ to replace it in the words. The percentages in the table shows that majority of Aṅlɔ speakers of English do not have problem in articulating the sound /i:/.

Table 12: Articulation of /æ/ by Respondents

Sound Tested	/æ/	Percentage (%)
Native-like	22	27.5%
Non native-like	58	72.5%
Total	80	100%

Table 13: Articulation of /ʌ/ by Respondents

Sound Tested	/ʌ/	Percentage (%)
Native-like	27	33.75%
Non native-like	53	66.25%
Total	80	100%

This sound /ʌ/ is articulated with a considerable separation of the jaws. The back of tongue is raised with the lips in neutral position. It was distributed in five (5) English words including *come* /kʌm/, *glove* /glʌv/, *dove* /dʌv/, *monkey* /mʌŋki/ and *country* /kʌntri/ for pronunciation by respondents. As shown in the table, twenty-seven (27) of them produced native-like pronunciation, representing 33.75% while fifty-three (53) respondents sounded non native-like. Some of the latter group used /ɔ/, /o/, /au/ as substitutes depending on the phoneme sequence in Aṅlɔ Eve. This implies that the sound posed problem to 66.25% of Aṅlɔ graduates when used in different environments. The result on this sound agrees with Akpanglo-Nartey's (2002) [1] phonological rules that underlie the flow of speech in a language. He contended that knowing the phonemes as well as the allophonic components of a language is not enough. The speaker needs to know the actual sequences in which these sound units occur in the language as well as the combinational possibilities of the sound segments.

Table 14: Articulation of /ə/ by Respondents

Sound Tested	/ə/	Percentage (%)
Native-like	32	40%
Nonnative-like	48	60%
Total	80	100%

This is a central vowel sound that occurs in unaccented and unstressed syllable. It is articulated with the tongue raised between half open and half close positions. Used in *about* /əbaʊt/, *virus* /vaɪrəs/, *method* /mei.θəd/, *catalogue* /kæp'lɔg/ and *corrupt* /kɔr'ʌpt/, the sound posed problem to forty-eight (48) respondents, representing 60% while the remaining thirty-two (32) respondents produced native-like pronunciation, representing 40%. This majority of respondents who produced non native pronunciations used /a/ in *about* and /ɔ/ in *virus* /vaɪrəs/, *method* /mei.θəd/, *catalogue* /kæp'lɔg/, *corrupt* /kɔr'ʌpt/, as substitutes.

Table 15: Articulation of /θ/ by Respondents

Sound Tested	/θ/	Percentage (%)
Native-like	50	62.5%
Non native-like	30	37.5%
Total	80	100%

This consonant is a dental fricative produced with tongue between the upper and lower teeth (inter-dental). It was used in five words: *thank* /θæŋk/, *think* /θɪŋk/, *thought* /θɔ:t/, *filth* /fɪlθ/ and *booth* /buθ/ for pronunciation by the respondents. As shown in the table, fifty (50) respondents pronounced this sound correctly in the words, representing 62.5% of the total respondents while thirty (30) of them used near-equivalent sound /t/ to replace; and so there pronunciations were: /tæŋk/, /tɪŋk/, /tɔ:t/, /fɪlt/ and /but/.

Table 16: Articulation of /ð/ by Respondents

Sound Tested	/ð/	Percentage (%)
Native-like	14	17.5%
Non-native-like	66	82.5%
Total	80	100%

This is also another dental fricative sound produced between the tip of tongue and the upper teeth but with glottis in vibration. In the test, it appeared in the words: *whether* /hwɛ:ðə/, *that* /ðæt/, *though* /ðeu/, *further* /fɜ:ðə/.

therefore /ðeə.fɜ/ for respondents to pronounce. The sound posed a problem to majority of respondents as shown in the table. Only fourteen respondents, representing 17.5% sounded native-like in pronouncing this sound while sixty-six of them produced non native pronunciation and used near equivalent /d/ to replace. It was realized that among the eight contrastive English sounds used in the pronunciation test, /ð/ appeared to have posed problem to the highest majority of respondents.

Table 17: Articulation of / ʒ/ by Respondents

Sound Tested	/ ʒ/	Percentage (%)
Native-like	62	77.5%
Non native-like	18	22.5%
Total	80	100%

The above consonant is a voiced fricative sound produced with front of tongue and the soft palate. It was used in words such as *vision* /vi:ʒn/, *visual* /viʒuəl/, *measure* /me.ʒə/, *pleasure* /pleʒə/, *seizure* /si:ʒə/ for pronunciation by the respondents. Sixty-two respondents produced native-like pronunciation, representing 77.5% of the total respondents while the remaining eighteen (18) respondents deviated from the native realization. This means that majority of respondents pronounced this sound correctly thus making the deviation quite insignificant. This perhaps is attributed to the existence of this sound in the Anlo Ewe used sometimes as allophone of the phoneme /z/. Again, this confirms the contrastive analysis hypothesis that where similarity exists in the first and the second languages, learning is enhanced in the latter.

Table 18: Articulation of /ʃ/ by Respondents

Sound Tested	/ʃ/	Percentage (%)
Native-like	80	100%
Non native-like	00	00%
Total	80	100%

The last sound tested in the pronunciation test is /ʃ/ which is also a fricative produced with the front of tongue and the palate. Unlike its corresponding counterpart /ʒ/, it is produced with an open glottis. It was distributed in *shout* /ʃaʊt/, *shirt* /ʃɜ:t/, *seashore* /si:ʃɔ:/, *fish* /fiʃ/, and *refresh* /rifreʃ/ for respondents to pronounce. Interestingly, all the eighty (80) respondents produced the exact native speaker pronunciation of the sound in the words. Again, the perfection of the respondents in the pronunciation of this sound could also be attributed to the existence of this sound in the Anlo Ewe used sometimes as allophone of the phoneme /s/.

Summary of Findings

On the pronunciation test, it was realized that among the eight contrastive English sounds used in the pronunciation

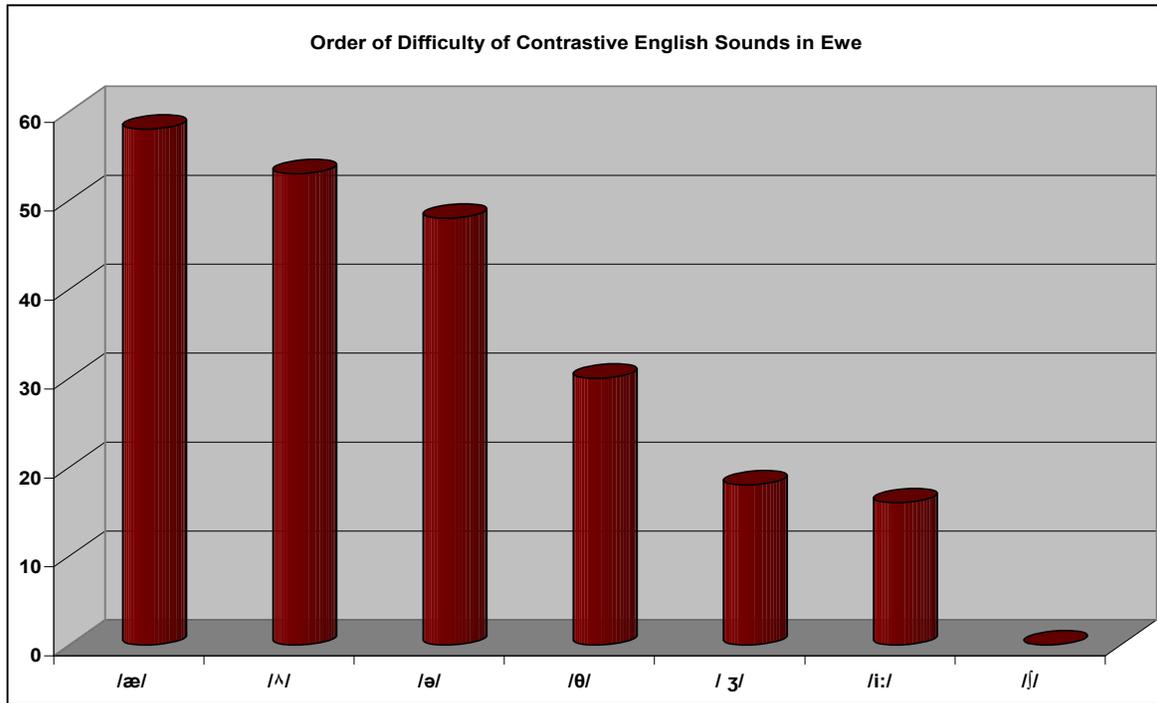
test, the voiced dental fricative sound, /ð/ appeared to have posed problem to the highest majority of respondents. Most of these respondents do not know that they produce non-native pronunciation of the sound since many of them claimed they do not face any difficulty in pronouncing the sound. It also came to light that most Anlo speakers of English replace /æ/ with /a/ and /ʌ/ in words such as *had* /hæd/, *bad* /bæd/ and *pad* /pæd/. Most Anlo graduates also find it difficult to articulate /ʌ/ in words like *monkey* /mʌŋki/, *glove* /glʌv/ and *country* /kʌŋtri/. They use the near-equivalent, /ɔ/ for *monkey* and *glove* and /aʊ/ for *country*. The Anlo speaker of English also substitutes /ə/ with /ɔ/ in words like *comfort* /kʌmfəʔt/, *method* /mei.θəð/ and *virus* /vai.rəʒ/.

However, in testing voiceless palato-alveolar fricative sound, /ʃ/, all the eighty (80) respondents produced the exact native speaker pronunciation of the sound in the words. The perfection of the respondents in the pronunciation of this sound could be attributed to the existence of this sound in the Anlo Ewe used sometimes as allophone of the phoneme /s/; and so the Anlo speaker of English will face very minimal (if any) difficulty to pronounce this sound.

A total of eighty (80) graduate teachers of the Anlo land received pronunciation test on eight (8) contrastive sounds in English. These sounds include: /i:/ /æ/ /ʌ/ /ə/ /θ/ /ð/ / ʒ/ /ʃ/. This implies that 640 pronunciations were made on these eight (8) sounds. Out of this number, 351 produced native pronunciation, representing 54.8%. Two-hundred and eighty-nine (289) on the contrary produced non-native pronunciations and used near-equivalent sounds to replace the exact native speaker pronunciations. This number represents 45.2% of the total respondents sampled for this study. Below is the breakdown of the sounds in order of difficulty in pronunciation.

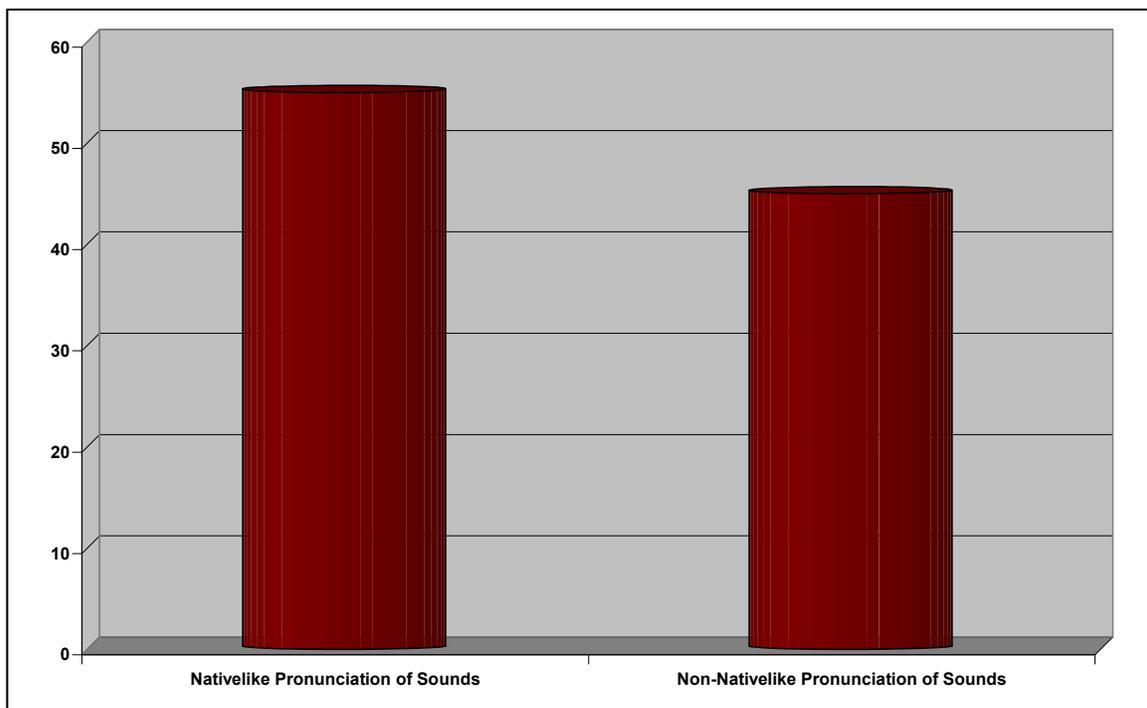
- /ð/ poses problem to a maximum of sixty-six (66) respondents
- /æ/poses problem to a maximum of fifty-eight (58) respondents
- /ʌ/ poses problem to a maximum of fifty-three (53) respondents
- /ə/ poses problem to a maximum of forty-eight (48) respondents
- /θ/ poses problem to a maximum of thirty (30) respondents
- / ʒ/ poses problem to a maximum of eighteen (18) respondents
- /i:/ poses problem to a maximum of sixteen (16) respondents
- /ʃ/ poses problem to none of the respondents

These findings are further presented on the chart below for a more visual impression.



In all however, the percentage of native-like pronunciation in the test is 54.8%. This compares favourably with 45.2%

deviation from the native speaker pronunciation presented in the diagram below



Conclusions

The study identified the focus contrastive English sounds non-existent in Ewegebe, both vowels and consonants that pose learning problems to the Aɲɔ learner of English. These sounds are: /i:/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ə/, /θ/, and /ð/. The study revealed that the two palato-alveolar fricatives, /ʒ/ and /j/ exist in Aɲɔ Ewe but are not in the orthography of the standard Ewe. However, they were also tested in the pronunciation to confirm their correct articulation or otherwise by the respondents. The correctness of respondents in articulating /j/

and the low deviation realized in articulating /ʒ/ confirmed the contrastive analyses hypothesis that where there are similarities between the two language systems, learning is enhanced.

The major findings from the study revealed that the Ewegebe was the dominant language of communication for most Aɲɔ graduates during their early stages of language development and most of the Aɲɔ graduate teachers still use Ewegebe in their everyday communication more than the English Language. This may have its implications for their

pronunciation in English. It was also revealed that most secondary schools in the Anlo land are staffed with more male graduate teachers than their female counterparts; presenting a ratio of 5:1 respectively. Data from the audio tape revealed that 45.2% of the Anlo graduates produce peculiar pronunciations of contrastive sounds that are non-existence in Ewebe and are not even aware of these idiosyncrasies.

Based on the findings that emanated from the study, it has been identified that there are indeed phonological rules that underlie the flow of speech in a language and that, knowing the phonemes as well as the allophonic components of a language is not enough. The speaker needs to know the actual sequences in which these sound units occur in the language as well as the combinational possibilities of the sound segments.

It has also been identified in the study that the pronunciation of any language can be analysed and systematized, and that as far as English is concerned, this system cannot always be deduced from the orthography. This situation, on the contrary does not favour the Ewe speaker/learner of English since Ewebe, particularly the Anlo variety is a tonal language. The Ewe speaker/learner would always want to pronounce every letter of an English word.

Learning to acquire the pronunciation habits of a foreign language involves a large number of new skills, especially recognition skills. In order to hear the foreign language accurately enough to imitate it, the foreign learner must respond to a whole new sound system. Hearing correctly is not always easy, and the learner is handicapped not only by his lack of control of the new language structure, but by his lack of knowledge of the new language in general.

The study again revealed that consonantal clusters are phonotactically related to specific language; not general and that languages do not have the same clusters. This may account for the reason why some educated people cannot produce certain clusters in English. This means that no second language learner automatically proceeds from his source language to the target language without committing errors. The L2 teacher should therefore, adopt a very humane and tolerant attitude towards learner's errors.

Recommendations

The findings from the study have necessitated the following recommendations for practice in the second language classroom:

Since English is the medium of expression and instruction in Ghana and the pronunciation of teachers affects students, it is only proper and reasonable to expect the teachers themselves to have an intelligible pronunciation if their students are to benefit from them. The teacher should always remember that the fact that the sound exists in both languages (L1 & L2) does not mean that the students can produce it when it occurs in the L2. They can produce it correctly only if the distribution of the sound is the same in both languages. If the distribution of the sound is different in the L2, there will be a learning problem.

Again in teaching pronunciation, especially to adults, the teacher should remember that he is dealing with the articulatory habits of individuals- a deeply personal and sensitive area- and therefore great sensitivity must be shown towards inhibitions and embarrassment of the learner. It will also be worthwhile if within the time at his disposal; he will let his students realize the following:

- That more than mere sound is involved in speech and that it is equally important to get the sound as well as the stress and intonation patterns correctly.
- That there are explicable reasons why the learning of a second language produces some characteristic differences from the target pronunciation; and therefore students and second language speakers need not feel embarrassed by their different pronunciations.
- That the pronunciation of any language can be analysed and systematized.
- That as far as English is concerned, this system cannot always be deduced from the orthography.
- That the goal of teaching and speaking English should not be based on Received Pronunciation (R.P.); they should rather aim at a modified standard that would be socially and internationally intelligible.

However, it is worth noting that failure to observe the above features does not impede communication, but they should be taught if the goal of the teacher is complete mastery of English.

It is also recommended that frequent quality and appropriate training for the language teachers should be encouraged especially in pronunciation. This is because high degree of competency and proficiency in English language is a prerequisite to teaching English for uniformity in pronunciation of both teacher and student.

References

1. Akpanglo-Nartey JN. An introduction to linguistics for non-native speakers of English, (2nd ed), Tema: Sakumo Books, 2002.
2. Anyidoho RK. Ewe morpho-syntax. Ho: Discovery Literature Center, 1990.
3. Bonfiglio T. Race and the rise of standard American English, 2002.
4. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. & Brew: pdf. www.userpages.umbcedul-clmallin/mail&brew2005pdf10/17/16
5. Cohen AD. Language learning: Insight for learners, teachers and researchers. Boston M.A: Heinle & Heinle, 1990.
6. Cohen AD. Strategies in learning and using a second language. Harlow: Longman, 1998.
7. Cruttenden A. Gimson's pronunciation of English (6th ed); London: Arnold, 2001
8. Curriculum Research and Development Division, The English language teaching syllabus for primary school. Accra: Ministry of Education, 1998.
9. Dakubu M, Kropp E. A Grammar of Grune. Legon: Language Centre, University of Ghana, 1996
10. Daniels H. Psycholinguistic, psycho-affective and procedural factors in the acquisition of authentic L2 pronunciation. *Speak out*. 1995; 15:3-20 www.naldicorg.uk/docs/members/documents/NQ2.3.3.pdf 10/07/06
11. Dolphyne FA. A course in oral English: Teachers' Handbook, Accra: Ghana, University Press, 1989.
12. Ferguson CA. The grammatical structure of English and Spanish. Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 1965.
13. Gibson AC. An Introduction to the pronunciation of English: London, Arnold, 1962-2001.
14. Hudu FA. Phonological integration of English – Dagbani Loan- Words: (Unpublished Long Essay);

- Department of Linguistics, University of Ghana Legon, 2002.
15. Jenkins J. Global English and the teaching of pronunciation, 2000. www.teachenglish.org.uk/think/global-english.shtml. (13/06/10)
 16. Kenworthy J. Teaching English Pronunciation. *ELT Journal*. 1989; 43(4):302-303
 17. Lado R. *Linguistics across cultures: Applied linguistics for language teachers*. Ann Arbor: Michigan Univ. Press, 1957.
 18. Madsen H. *Techniques in Testing*: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.
 19. O' Connor JD. *Phonetics*. London: Hazel Watson & Viney, 1977.
 20. Odlin T. *Language transfer: Cross-linguistics influence in language learning*; Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987.
 21. Olawsky JK. *Aspects of Dagbani Grammar-With Special Emphasis on Phonology and Morphology*. Munich: LINCUM (Dissertation), 1999.
 22. Otlowski, Marcus. Pronunciation: What are the expectations? *The Internet TESL Journal*, 1998
 23. Owolabi J. *Teaching the Ghanaian child*. Accra: Afolabi Publishers, 2000.
 24. Pit-Corder S. *Techniques in applied linguistics: Vol.3*; Oxford Univ. Press, 1977
 25. Politzer RL, Staubach CN. *Teaching Spanish: A linguistics orientation*. New York: Blaisdell, 1961.
 26. Procter P *et al.* *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. Cambridge: CUP, 1995
 27. Reid JM, *Learning styles in the ESL/EFL classroom*. Boston M.A: Heinle & Heinle, 1995.
 28. Rivers, Wilga M. *The psychologist and the foreign language teacher*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.
 29. Roach P. *English phonetics and phonology*: Oxford: Oxford, University Press, 2000
 30. Spada N, Lightbown PM. *Second language acquisition: An introduction to applied linguistics*. London: Arnold, 2002.
 31. Strevens P. *The linguistic sciences and language teaching*. London: Longman, 1965.
 32. Weinreich U. *Languages in contact*. Mouton: The Hague, 1970.
 33. *World Book Encyclopedia*. 2002, 15
 34. Yankson KE. *Notes on error and contrastive analysis*. (Unpublished Handouts), 2001