PHONOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE: A CASE STUDY OF EDO-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY. IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A) HONOURS IN LINGUISTICS STUDIES.

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APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that this research was carried out by **IYEMEAIKERE Victoria Blessing** with the Matriculation Number: **ART2004740** in the Department of Linguistics Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under my supervision.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project work to God Almighty, the source of all wisdom and strength. Without His Grace, this work would not have been possible. I am grateful for His constant presence and guidance in my life, guiding me through challenges and illuminating my path with His divine light. And to my parents and siblings who stood by me all through this adventure.

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Iam profoundly grateful to God Almighty for His mercy and protection throughout my course.

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Abstract

This study investigates phonological interference in the pronunciation of English words among Edo-English bilingual speakers. It examines how the Edo language influences the articulation of English sounds, leading to pronunciation variations. Using the contrastive analysis framework, the research compares the phonological structures of Edo and English to identify patterns of interference.

Data were collected through audio recordings and interviews involving **20 Edo-English bilingual speakers** pronouncing selected English words. A list of 50 English words and 50 Edo words was compiled, representing various phonological patterns. The informants, selected based on their language proficiency, age, and educational background, were asked to pronounce each word on the list. One of the interviews was conducted in a market setting, where a female trader was met and agreed to participate in the study. The wordlist used in this interview consisted of words related to her daily activities, such as items she sells (e.g., vegetables, fruits, cloth), objects she sees around her (e.g., market stalls, customers, money), and actions she performs (e.g., buying selling, counting). This approach allowed for a more natural and spontaneous data collection process, as the informant was able to respond to words and phrases that were familiar to her. The audio recordings were transcribed, and the data was analyzed using phonological analysis.

Analysis revealed several phonological interference patterns, including sound substitution, vowel length distortion, spelling-based pronunciation, consonant cluster reduction, sound insertion and deletion, nasalization, and stress pattern alterations. For instance, Edo speakers frequently replaced English sounds absent in Edo phonology, such as substituting /θ/ in *third* with /t/ (/tɛd/ instead of /θɜ:d /). Consonant clusters were simplified, as seen in *basket* pronounced as /baskɛt/. Additionally, spelling pronunciation errors occurred, such as *picture* /piktʃər/ being pronounced as /pikso/.

The study concludes that phonological interference arises due to structural differences between the two languages, reinforcing the contrastive analysis hypothesis. These findings have implications for language teaching, pronunciation training, and second-

language acquisition. The study recommends targeted phonetic drills and increased exposure to native English pronunciation to help Edo-English bilinguals improve their phonological accuracy.

Keywords: Phonological Interference, Edo-English Bilinguals, Pronunciation, Contrastive Analysis, Second-Language Phonology.

ABSTRACT

CHAPTER ONE

General introduction

This research investigate how Edo language interferes with the articulation of English words phonologically. This chapter examines the background to the study, objectives to the study, statement of problems, Research question, methodology and significance of the study.

1.0 Background to the study

Language is a vital component of communication, and it's use is influenced by various factors including the speaker's native language, cultural background and Linguistic environment. Every language speaker must master their native language before moving on to a second or foreign language (Chaser, 2003, p.163; Aswad et al., 2009, p.157). The first language is the first one that a speaker recognizes and learns, whereas the second language is any language learned after mastering the first. When the same speaker uses two languages alternately, it is referred to as mutual contact; in other words, bilingualism arises as a result of language contact (Abdul & Leonie, 2010, p.126; Soo& Won, 2009, p.7; Dasom, 2014, p. 159). According to Apeltauer and Shaw (1993, p. 257), bilingual people can experience interference phenomena when there is verbal contact between two languages; this interference can produce departures from both norms. In Multilingual societies, where speakers are exposed to multiple languages, influence of one language on another can result in Phonological interference.

Various linguistic scholars have explained the term "interference." According to Ellis (1997), it is the interchange that happens between the learner's native language and the study of a second language (L2). Lott (1983) defines interference as errors in the learner's use of a target language. It can be defined as the influence of one language over another in bilingual spoken language use.

Phonological interference occurs when the sound system of one language. This phenomenon is common in bilingual or multilingual settings, where speakers may substitute sounds, adopt pronunciation patterns, or transfer Intonation from one language to another. Ellis (1997) says when assimilating a target language, learners create intermediate norms based on their c`omprehension of the language.

1.3 The Edo people and Language

The Edo language, also known as Bini, is the native language of the Edo people who primarily reside in the Edo State of Nigeria. It is spoken by millions of people and is an important aspect of their cultural identity. The language has its unique linguistic features, including a rich repertoire of idioms that are widely used in everyday conversations. These idioms often reflect the values, beliefs, and experiences of the Edo people.

Any formal account on any aspect of Edo language must begin with a clarification of the term "Edo", especially as it has come to be associated with a number of distinct interpretations. The oral traditional account, as diligently documented by Chief (Dr) Jacob U. Egharevba in his various works on Benin History, traces the origin of the use of the term "Edo" as the indigenous name for Benin City to Oba Ewuare (1440 1473). According to one version of the account:

"Edo was a slave to the then Ogiefa. He saved Ewuare from a sudden death when he was about to be arrested by the Chiefs. Therefore in order to immortalize the name of his deified friend, Edo, for the good service he rendered him, Ewuare changed the name of the City to "Edo" according to his friend's name.(Egharevba 1954:8)

If this saccount is true, (and it has not yet been contested in the literature), it would appear that the extension of the name to refer also to the language of the inhabitants of the City, and indeed of the Benin Kingdom, was a natural development from this. One of

the earlier names for the territory before this change to Edo was Idu, a term which remains current in names such as Idubo; Idumwonyi, etc.

The other names also currently associated with the city and the language of its inhabitants, namely, "Benin" and "Bini" have a somewhat more obscure origin. Again, according to the traditional account: "from the time of OgisoIgodo (Obagodo) to Ere, the country was known and called 'Igodomigodo'; from the time of Ogiso Ere to Evian, it was called 'Ile'. Ọramiyan called it 'Ile-Ibinu', Oba Ewedo (ie. 1255 1280) changed it to "Ubini' (Benin)", (Egharevba 1956:3)

Again, if Oba Ewedo's name for the City "Ubini" is the origin of "Benin" and "Bini", then it would seem that their use for the City and the language pre-dates that of "Edo"; in which case the latter was intended to have replaced them. According to anotisher account by Chief Egharevba:

"Ruy de Sequira discovered Benin in 1472. He does not appear to have known of the new name, as it was by the old name, Benin, that he made the country known to Europe", (Egharevba 1954:8)

Thus all three names have continued to be used side by side, though with some degree of specialization in their respective references. "Benin" system- atically came to be used strictly as a territorial label, as in the expressions: Benin City, Benin Kingdom, Benin Empire, Benin Division, etc., while the other two names, "Bini" and "Edo" have become predominantly linguistic and ethnic labels referring in scope to the language and people of the entire Benin Division. In addition "Edo" however, has continued to serve as the indigenous name for the City.

Further ambiguity was introduced later into the reference of the term "Edo" as a linguistic label, when linguists decided to use it as the designation for the group of historically related languages and dialects spoken in various communities within and around the

former Benin Kingdom. These languages and dialects include the Edo language proper of the Benin Division; the Ishan group of dialects; the languages and dialects now spoken in the present Owan, Etsako and Akoko-Edo Local Government Areas..

The focus of the present work being on the single language per se, rather than the group of related languages, the usual nomenclatural ambiguity is presumed to be irrelevant, and so "Edo" is intended to refer to "Edo (Bini)" rather than the Edoid languages.

1.2 Purpose of the study

To identify and investigate the pattern of Phonological interference among the Edo - English speakers.

1.2.1 Statement of the problem

Phonological interference is common in multilingual societies, where speakers are exposed to multiple languages. In Nigeria, where English is the official language, its influence on the phonology of Nigerian languages, including Edo, is significant. Edo speakers, in particular, are open to phonological interference due to their exposure to English through education, media, and social interactions.

Despite the widespread nature of phonological interference, there is a need for a comprehensive study on the specific interactions between English and Edo languages. This study aims to address this knowledge gap by investigating the phonological interference between English and Edo languages, with a focus on how the sound system of English influences the pronunciation of Edo speakers.

1.2.2 Aim and Objectives

This is to explore the interference among Edo - English speakers. This study is to be guided by specific objectives which includes;

1) To identify the patterns of Phonological interference that occurs between both languages

2) To examine the effect of Phonological interference between both languages

The data for this study was collected through a combination of audio recordings and interviews. Audio recordings of 20 Edo speakers and 10 English speakers were made, pronouncing a list of English and Edo words and phrases. The recordings were made in a quiet room with minimal background noise.

1.2

1.3 Significance of study

The properly sized of this lookup work is to emphasis on the incorrect pronunciation of sounds specifically these that are as an end result of history factors, which cannot but be decided until the final stage of this look up is reached. The lookup as a result assures us that all elements that are perchance to be accountable for the incorrect or suitable pronunciation of the sounds will be drawn and appeared into. It was once determined that the Edo audio system of English regularly transfer their mom tongue know-how of alphabets or letters to English words. Example are: 'fever' said as 'fiva' by means of a Edo speaker on the other hand of /fi:v∂/ 'church' is suggested as 'surs'. The speaker substitutes /s/ for /tʃ/ sound, 'check' is additionally said as 'seck' e.t.c

The problem to be analyzed in this research is the problem of pronunciation by the Edo speakers of English. The research work is meant to test and see if truly the transfer of Ll

to L2 (that is, the Edo phonetic system and the English phonemic system) are the major causes of the problem of pronunciation by the Edo users of English sounds in attaining the Received Pronunciation standard. Other factors that would be examined as part of the problems include, educational background, level of exposure, status e.t,c. The mispronunciations of the English.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

The chapter reviews for this study provides relevant scholarly work related to the study. The work of other scholars who contributed to the overview of existing research on Phonological interference.

2.1 Conceptual Review

Phonology

The organization , the structure and the use of sounds in a language known as phonology (Nathtan, 2008).Phonology is the study of the patterning of speech sounds in a language. It also examines the distinctiveness of sound segments in a given Language .it discovers the principles guiding the organizations of sound in a language. McMahoon (2002) state that sound in linguistics comprises of two, namely phonetics and phonology. Phonetics is the foundation for Phonology. Phonetic generates the input for Phonological Analysis.

Phonemes are functional sounds in a language. It also a speech sound in a language capable of causing in meaning between utterances. Phonology is language-specific (McMahoon, 2002), it involves reducing the essential information between speakers and hearers in transferring information (conversation).

2.1.1 Segmental Phonology

This is the subdivision of phonology that is concerned with the analysis of speech into phonemes. It is concerned with the segments of the sounds. It comprises consonant sounds and vowels sounds and how they are combined to represent words. Osisanwo (2009) says that segmental phonology is the aspect of phonology that studies individual sound segments and how these segments come together. According to Ramatu (2007), segmental phonology is the study of sound segments and how they coalesce or join together to produce meaningful utterances. It focuses on the how individual sound segments are organized and how they are combined together to convey meaning. Roach (2000) claims that it is sometimes helpful to think of the phonemic system as similar to…a set of pieces used in playing chess…in a similar way, we have a more or less fixed set of pieces called phonemes with which to participate or engage in the game of speaking English. This implies that the segmental aspect of phonology deals with a set of speech sound units. Phonemes are the minimal phonological elements of language systems; speech sounds that help us construct meaning. Segmental phonology comprises vowels sounds and consonant sounds. Vowel and consonant sounds are discrete sound units. They are highlighted and explained further below;

2.1.2 Consonant Sounds

Consonant sounds are speech sounds produced when the airstream coming from

the lungs is obstructed either partially or completely at a particular point in the oral cavity. Eyisi (2007) asserts that ‘we define a consonant as a sound which is made by a definite interference of the vocal organs with the airstream from the lungs. Consonants constitute the bones of the English words. They are the skeleton around which English words are formed as they give words their basic shapes. English consonant sounds are usually described in mainly articulatory terms because they involve contacts of speech organs in their description. Ogbulogo (2007) says that ‘consonants have been presented as a major class of the English sound system. Consonants are produced with different degrees of the obstruction of the air passage by the different organs of speech. The air trapped during this obstruction may be released gradually or suddenly. The contact between organs of speech may also be partial such that the air escapes from the sides of the point of contact. ’English consonant sounds are as follows;

/p/- /p/ as seen in pat, part, happen, appear, copy, etc.

/b/- /b/ as seen in boat, bed, rubber, table, lobby, etc.

/f/- /f/ as seen in fish, laugh, suffer, phrase, off, fat, etc.

/v/- /v/ as seen in visit, van, of, nephew, vet, etc.

/t/- /t/ as seen in thames, talk, bent, better, promised, etc.

/d/- /d/ as seen in dip, duck, calmed, do, dent, etc.

/θ/- /θ/ as seen in thank, both, teeth, three, thought, etc.

/ð/- / ð/ as seen in father, brother, those, then, leather, etc.

/s/- /s/ as seen in city, dress, axe, ice, bus, etc.

/z/- /z/ as seen in zebra, zoo, does, buzz, rose, etc.

/ʃ/- /ʃ/ as seen in short, sugar, passion, Russia, ocean, Asia, etc.

/ʒ/- /ʒ/ as seen in visual, prestige, garage, usual, seizure, etc.

/tʃ/- /tʃ/ as seen in rich, pitch, mature, ritual, chalk, etc.

/dʒ/- /dʒ/ as seen in joy, january, soldier, age, etc.

/k/- /k/ as seen in key, make, ox, account, question, etc.

/g/- /g/ as seen in girl, good, beggar, rogue, etc.

/l/- /l/ as seen in look, fellow, tall, will, like, etc.

/r/- /r/ as seen in race, real, marry, bring, etc.

/w/- /w/ as seen in weak, woman, quest, quite, etc.

/j/- /j/ as seen in you, security, unity, year, etc.

/h/- /h/ as seen in heat, hen, behave, hall, etc.

/n/- /n/ as seen in need, nest, winner, sin, man, etc.

2.1.3 Vowel Sounds

Vowel sounds are speech sounds articulated without obstruction to the airstream that originates from the larynx to the mouth. Roach (2002) defines vowels as the group of sounds which make the slightest obstruction to the airflow. Therefore, all vowel sounds are voiced. Vowels are classified and described based on three categories; the tongue height, the tongue part and the shape of the lips. The tongue height which is concerned with the height the tongue assumes when the vowel sounds are produced. When vowel sounds are being produced, the tongue height could be close (close vowels are sounds articulated at the time the tongue is at its peak, that is, the tongue's highest possible

position), open (vowel sounds regarded as open vowels are realized at the time the tongue is on the lowermost position) and intermediate (intermediate vowels are realized when the tongue is between the highest and the lowest position, that is, half-open or half-close). The tongue part focuses on the parts of the tongue that aid the articulation of vowels; it entails the front, back and central. Vowel sounds that are produced when the front of the tongue part is used in the course of the production are called the front vowels. Vowel sounds that are referred to as back vowels are articulated at the time the back of the tongue is used during the articulation of these sounds while central vowel sounds are vowel sounds that are produced when the central part of the tongue is employed in the production. The shape of the lip classification entails the position the lips take in the production of vowel sounds. The lips can assume a spread, rounded or unrounded position.

2.1.4 The nature of Edo Phonology

Each Human language has its unique sound pattern and sound system. According to Okolo and Ezikeojiaku (1999:103), 'Although all languages share certain basic properties, it is highly unlikely that any two languages will have exactly the same sound pattern'. Every language's sound system is composed of segmental and suprasegmental elements. English has 44 sounds, whereas Edo only has 32.

2.1.5 The Edo vowel sound

The vowel system of Edo is made up of 12 vowels in its sound system. According to Omozuwa (2010), of this number, 7 are oral vowels while the remaining five are nasals. The vowels are: Oral vowels: /i e ɛ a ɔ o u/. Nasal vowels: /ĩ ɛ̃ ã ɔ̃ ũ/ The vowel sounds and their distribution are presented below;

THE VOWEL SOUNDS ARE PRESENTED BELOW

S/N	Sounds	Words where they occur
1	I	ise (nail), fi(throw)
2	E	eva (two), ebe(book)
3	ɛ	ẹho (throat), isẹ(amen)
4	A	amẹ (water), ema(pounded yam)
5	ɔ	ọmọ (child), obọ
6	O	obọ (hand), so(shout)
7	U	ukpọn (cloth), ẹwu(draw)
8	Ĩ	tin (fly), ivin(coconut)
9	ɛ̃	isẹn (five), ofẹn(rat)
10	I	isan(excreta)tan (tall)
11	ɔ̃	tọn (hot), esọn(is grace)
12	Ũ	uvun (hole), sun(smooth)

The Segmental Phonemes of English and Edo: A Contrastive Analysis: G.A. Ikhimwin

2.1.6 The Edo consonant sound

We have identified 27 consonants in Edo. These sounds do not appear in the word - final position in the language, but rather at the word-initial or middle position of lexical elements. Edo has an open syllable structure, as opposed to English's closed syllable structure. The Edo's consonant sound system is basic, with each subject represented by a single letter from the alphabet.

SOUND	LETTER	
P	P	pịẹn, (press b b baba (father
B	B	baba (father
B	Vb	vbe(at)evbare (food)
T	T	ta (say),
D	D	da (drink), odo (mortar)
K	K	ka (dress), iku (rubbish) g
G	G	ga (worship), igan (feather)
Kp	Kp	kpe (wash), ọkpa
gb̂	Gb	gbe (dance), ugbo (farm)

F	F	fi (throw), ofẹn (rat)
V	V	vaan (break), ivie (bead)
S	S	osa (god) sa (fetch),
Z	Z	zẹ (choose), izẹ
X	Kh	kha (say), okha (name of a village)

ɣ	Gh	ɣ ghgha (worship), igho (money) h hhoo (know), eha

		(three)
H	H	hoo (know), eha (three)
L	L	le (cook), uleˌ (rac
M	M	ma (match) ema (pounded yam)
ɱ	Mw	mwa (measure), ọmwa (person)
N	N	na (narrate), ona(this)
ŋ^{w}	Nw	ŋ^{w}nwnwọ (drink), onwọ
ɲ	Ny	ɲ nynya (own), inya (yam)
R	R	r r re (eat), ore (outside)
W	W	w wwu (die), ewa (mat)
J	Y	yo (go), iye (mother)

The Segmental Phonemes of English and Edo: A Contrastive Analysis: G.A. Ikhimwin

	Bilabia	Labio	Alveola	Alveopalata	palata	vela	Labial	Dental	Glotta

	l	denta l	r	l	l	r	velar	l	l
Stop	p b		t d			k g	kpgb		?
Fricative	β	f v	s z	ʃ ʒ			x ɣ	ɵ ð	H
Affricate				ʧ ʤ					
Trill			R						
Tap			ɾ						
Lateral			L						
Nasal	M	ɱ	N		ɲ	ŋ			
Approxima nt					J	w			

2.1.7 Phonological Interference

Phonological interference occurs when a learner's first language (L1) affects their production of sounds in a second language (L2). This phenomenon is common among bilingual and multilingual learners, often resulting in errors or deviations from native-like pronunciation in the target language. Interference can be either positive or negative. Positive transfer facilitates L2 learning when similar phonological features exist between the two languages, whereas negative transfer results in errors due to differences (Odlin, 2005).

Selinker (1972) introduced the concept of inter-language, which describes a learner's transitional language system influenced by their L1. According to Selinker, phonological interference is one manifestation of inter-language where habitual L1 pronunciation patterns are transferred to L2 production. This often leads to difficulties in acquiring sounds not present in the learner's native phonetic inventory. For example, Buginese and Makassarese students may substitute unfamiliar English sounds like /θ/ or /ʒ/ with phonetically closer sounds from their L1 (Utami et al., 2017).

Weinreich (1968) described interference as the overlap of two language systems within bilingual individuals, leading to deviations in pronunciation. Phonological interference can be attributed to psychological and sociolinguistic factors, as suggested by Dulay and Krashen (1982). Psychological factors include ingrained habits and memory limitations, while sociolinguistic factors arise from language contact in a bilingual or multilingual society.

Phonological interference can manifest in several ways, including the facts that learners replace unfamiliar L2 sounds with similar L1 sounds. For instance, Makassarese students might pronounce the English word "think" /θɪŋk/ as /tɪŋk/ due to the absence of /θ/ in their phonetic system (Utami et al., 2017).

Complex L2 phonological structures may be simplified based on L1 rules, such as dropping consonants in clusters or altering syllable structures (Nada, 2012).

Learners often struggle with L2 vowels due to variations in vowel length and placement. Weda and Sakti (2017) noted that Indonesian learners frequently confuse short and long vowels in English.

Kridalaksana (1985) emphasized that phonological interference is not only a linguistic issue but also a pedagogical challenge, as it often reflects learners' insufficient exposure to L2 pronunciation norms. Furthermore, Chaer and Agustina (1995) pointed out that interference persists due to the deeply ingrained nature of L1 phonological habits, which can conflict with L2 acquisition.

Phonological interference is a critical issue in second language acquisition, particularly in contexts involving significant phonetic disparities between L1 and L2. Addressing this interference requires targeted instruction that raises learners' awareness of phonological differences and promotes consistent practice of L2 sounds. Effective teaching strategies can mitigate the impact of negative transfer and improve learners' pronunciation proficiency in the target language.

2.1.8 Multilingualism

Multilingualism refers to the ability to use multiple languages or the coexistence of several languages within a society. Clyne (2003) describes it as both an individual competence and a societal occurrence, encompassing diverse levels of language use and proficiency. This concept is crucial in understanding how language diversity impacts communication, cultural preservation, and national unity.

Historically, multilingualism has been influenced by factors such as migration, colonialism, imperialism, and border realignments. In Nigeria, for example, European colonization, missionary activities, and administrative policies have contributed to the complex linguistic landscape (Adegbija, 2004). These historical processes have entrenched languages like English as official communication mediums while presenting challenges for the preservation of indigenous languages.

The phenomenon manifests in various dimensions. Individual multilingualism pertains to a person's ability to speak multiple languages, often acquired through exposure to diverse linguistic environments. Societal multilingualism refers to the coexistence of different languages within a community, often necessitating language planning and policy to allocate roles for each language (Cenoz and Gorter, 2011). For example, Nigeria's National Policy on Education emphasizes the use of mother tongues in early education while recognizing English as a unifying official language.

Multilingualism offers numerous advantages. It facilitates cultural preservation by maintaining links to heritage and identity (Ngubane, 2003). Economically, it enhances employability and access to global markets, while educationally, it promotes cognitive flexibility and learning abilities (Durk et al., 2005). Additionally, it serves as a tool for national unity, as seen in Nigeria, where English bridges communication gaps among diverse ethnic groups.

However, multilingualism also presents challenges. Language policy design can be complex, particularly in allocating roles to various languages. Minority languages often face endangerment, risking extinction in the face of dominant languages (Bamgbose, 1985). Moreover, language diversity can be exploited for political or divisive agendas, and resource allocation for multilingual education and documentation can be demanding.

Educational and policy frameworks play critical roles in managing multilingualism. Effective language planning can balance linguistic diversity while fostering respect for all languages. For instance, Nigeria's inclusion of language villages for French and Arabic highlights the integration of international languages to complement indigenous ones.

In conclusion, multilingualism is a multifaceted phenomenon offering significant cultural, economic, and educational benefits while posing challenges related to policy, preservation, and resource management. Its effective management requires deliberate and inclusive language policies to harness its potential for fostering development and unity.

2.1.9 Language Attitude

Language attitude refers to the feelings, beliefs, and values that individuals or groups hold towards languages, language varieties, or language speakers (Baker, 1992). Language attitudes play a crucial role in shaping language use, language policy, and language education.

Language attitudes can be categorized into different types, including positive language attitude, negative language attitude, and neutral language attitude. A positive language attitude is a favorable attitude towards a language or language variety, often accompanied by a sense of pride and loyalty (Giles &Coupland, 1991). A negative language attitude is an unfavorable attitude towards a language or language variety, often accompanied by a sense of disdain or prejudice (Ryan, 1979). A neutral language attitude is a neutral or indifferent attitude towards a language or language variety (Baker, 1992).

Language attitudes are influenced by a range of factors, including social identity, cultural values, language policy, and personal experience. Language attitudes are often closely tied to social identity, with individuals or groups using language as a marker of belonging or distinction (Giles &Coupland, 1991). Language attitudes are also influenced by cultural values, with languages or language varieties often being associated with

particular cultural practices or traditions (Kroskrity, 2000). Official language policies often shape attitudes towards languages or language varieties (Spolsky, 2004). Individuals' experiences of language use and language learning also shape their attitudes towards languages or language varieties (Baker, 1992).

Language attitudes have significant consequences, including language maintenance, language shift, and language education. Positive language attitudes can contribute to language maintenance, with individuals or groups working to preserve and promote their language (Giles &Coupland, 1991). Negative language attitudes can contribute to language shift, with individuals or groups abandoning their language in favor of another (Ryan, 1979). Language attitudes shape language education, with attitudes towards languages or language varieties influencing curriculum design and language teaching practices (Baker, 1992).

Understanding language attitudes is essential for promoting language maintenance, language diversity, and language education. Language attitude is a complex and multifaceted concept that plays a crucial role in shaping language use, language policy, and language education.

2.1.10 language contact

Language contact occurs when two or more languages interact, resulting in changes to one or both languages (Weinreich, 1953). This can happen due to various factors, such as geographical proximity, migration and diaspora, trade and commerce, colonization, and imperialism (Thomason, 2001). Languages spoken in neighboring regions or countries may influence each other, leading to the adoption of words, phrases, or grammatical

structures (Haugen, 1950). People moving to a new region or country may bring their language with them, leading to language contact (Kuhl, 1991).

Business interactions, tourism, or international relations can also facilitate language contact (Gumperz& Wilson, 1971). The dominant language of a colonizing power may influence the language of the colonized people (Wardhaugh, 2006). Language contact can result in various outcomes, including borrowing, where words or phrases from one language are adopted into another language (Muysken, 2000). Speakers may alternate between two or more languages in a single conversation, known as code-switching (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Languages can become more similar due to contact, a phenomenon referred to as language convergence (Gumperz& Wilson, 1971). Speakers may abandon their native language in favor of another language, known as language shift (Giles & Byrne, 1982). A simplified language may emerge as a result of contact between two or more languages, a process called pidginization (Todd, 1990). A pidgin language can become a native language for a community, referred to as creolization (Bickerton, 1981).

Examples of language contact include Spanglish in the United States, Hinglish in India, Singlish in Singapore, and Chinglish in China (Mesthrie& Bhatt, 2008). Language contact can enrich languages, create new forms of expression, and facilitate communication between people from different linguistic backgrounds (Kachru, 1983).

2.2 Previous studies

Previous Studies

Numerous studies have explored the influence of a learner's first language (L1) on second language (L2) acquisition, particularly in phonology. Weda and Sakti (2017) found that formal instruction improved English short vowel acquisition among Indonesian students, though errors like substituting /ɪ/ with /i/ persisted, highlighting the need for targeted interventions. Nada (2012) identified Arabic L1 interference in Iraqi EFL students' English writing, emphasizing the need for strategies to reduce negative grammatical transfers. Akhyaruddin (2011) analyzed Bugis language interference in Indonesian learners, noting subconscious phonological, morphological, and syntactical transfers. Bennui (2008) observed significant L1 interference in Thai EFL students' written English, including vocabulary misuse and sentence structure errors, underscoring the importance of addressing negative transfers in teaching.

In bilingual contexts, phonological interference is shaped by structural differences between L1 and L2, as well as sociolinguistic factors like exposure and attitudes (Atoye, 1980; Odlin, 1989). For Edo-English speakers, phonological interference often arises from differences in consonant and vowel systems, with Edo speakers simplifying English consonant clusters due to L1 rules (Ugorji, 2012; Ogie, 2004). Extended exposure to English reduces such interference, highlighting the role of immersive learning environments.

This study builds on these insights to examine phonological interference among Edo English speakers, focusing on assimilation patterns.(Iyemeaikere, 2025) For instance, respondents assimilated /stɔːl / to /stɔl/ and nasalized /tin/ to /tĩ/, while omitting consonants in words like /haʊs/. These findings align with previous research, emphasizing the need for targeted pedagogical strategies to address such challenges.

2.3 Concerns of the Present Study

The research investigates how Edo language interferes with the articulation of English words phonologically, highlighting the influence of one language on another in a multilingual setting.

The research examines how Edo language speakers transfer sounds, pronunciation patterns, and intonation from their native language to English, affecting their articulation of English words.

The study explores the speech patterns of bilingual/multilingual speakers, focusing on the phonological aspects of language use and the impact of Edo language on English pronunciation.

The research touches on the process of language learning and acquisition, investigating how Edo language speakers learn and acquire English phonological patterns, and how their native language influences this process.

The study implies that phonological interference can lead to communication breakdown, highlighting the need to understand and address this issue in multilingual settings.

3.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Theoretical Orientation and Application

Contrastive Analysis (CA), as propounded by Robert Lado in Linguistics Across Cultures (1957), is a theoretical approach designed to identify and address the challenges learners face when acquiring a second language (L2). According to Gast (2009), Contrastive Analysis is a sub area of comparative linguistics that focuses on socio-culturally related language pairings. According to him, two languages can have a social and cultural connection if a significant number of bilingual or multilingual speakers use them, or if there is a noticeable amount of "linguistic output," which could be text or discourse translated from one language into another. Similar to this, Zawahreh (2013) asserts that linguistic researchers use contrastive analysis as a study to predict the mistakes made by

second language learners when creating the language. According to Ummhy (2012), contrastive linguistics is an area of applied linguistics that studies and characterizes the similarities and differences between the foreign language being learned and the mother tongue or native language. The foundation of "Contrastive Analysis" is the idea that learners of second languages are more likely to make interference errors due to variations in language systems. Ogbulogo is credited with making this assumption (2005) Lado posits that the structural and cultural differences between a learner's first language (L1) and the target language determine the ease or difficulty of learning. Where the two languages share similarities, learners experience little difficulty. Conversely, differences between the languages create areas of difficulty, with the degree of difficulty corresponding to the extent of the differences (Lado, 1957). In structural linguistics, Contrastive Analysis views language as a hierarchically organized system of subsystems, beginning with phonology, followed by morphology, syntax, and lexicon (Bloomfield, 1933). Phonology occupies a foundational role in this framework, as it deals with the sound system of a language, which is critical for both comprehension and articulation. Phonological interference, therefore, arises when the sound patterns of L1 affect a learner's ability to perceive and articulate L2 sounds.

3.1 Theoretical Orientation and Applications

The application of Contrastive Analysis (CA) to the current study on phonological interference among Edo-English bilinguals plays a pivotal role in identifying and addressing the specific challenges these learners face when acquiring English pronunciation. As propounded by Lado (1957), CA offers a systematic method for comparing the phonological systems of two languages, enabling the identification of

differences that might lead to language learning difficulties. In the case of Edo-English bilinguals, such a comparison helps highlight phonological discrepancies between the two languages, particularly in their sound systems.

For example, the sounds /θ/ (as in "think") and /ð/ (as in "this"), which are common in English, do not exist in the Edo language. According to CA, such differences predict that Edo speakers may struggle with these English sounds and may substitute them with phonemes from their own language, leading to pronunciation errors (Lado, 1957). These errors reflect the influence of the first language (L1) on the second language (L2), a central tenet of CA, where learners transfer features from their native language into the target language, often resulting in mistakes (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

In practical application, CA suggests that language instruction can be tailored to address these phonological issues. For Edo-English learners, teaching strategies may include targeted pronunciation drills, focusing on those English sounds that are absent in Edo. By using CA, educators can anticipate specific challenges and proactively design exercises that help learners produce the correct English sounds. This aligns with Lado's (1957) view that teaching materials should be adapted based on the differences identified through contrastive analysis. By systematically addressing these difficult areas, learners can gradually reduce errors and improve pronunciation. Whitman (1970) divided contrastive analysis into four processes, which Ellis (1994) investigated further. A contrastive analysis consists of four phases:

1. Description: The native language (L1) and target language (L2) will be formally defined.

2. Selection: Some forms of the two languages are chosen from the descriptions for comparison.

3. Comparison: The selected forms are contrasted to highlight their similarities and contrasts.

4. Prediction: The comparison predicts the challenges that would arise as a result of the possible faults.

One important area of contrastive analysis is the interference theory, which is the basis for this study. The theory focuses on analyzing the second language through the lenses of the first language, comparing the rules governing the first and second language systems to see how they interfere with one another. Contrastive analysis is the method used to analyze these interferences.

3.3 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter outlined the theoretical framework of the study, focusing on contrastive analysis the primary theory guiding the research. The chapter first provided an introduction to content analysis, discussing its descriptive nature and its application in analyzing phonological interference. The theoretical orientation was explained in terms of its focus on identifying and interpreting patterns within linguistic data. Finally, the application of content analysis to this study was discussed, highlighting its relevance in analyzing the phonological interference between Edo and English. The chapter concluded by reaffirming the suitability of contrastive analysis as the framework for exploring the phonological aspects of this study (RobertLado 1957).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Data Analysis

In this section, we examine the sampled voice recordings in order to detect how Edo interferes with the pronunciation of the selected English words. We intend to present how the words are pronounced by the respondents as against the Standard British English pronunciation of the sample words. We also examine the instances of phonological interference and the possible stress placements on syllables as well as intonation patterns of the sentences.

S/N	Source Language(SL)	Phonemic Realization	Target Language(TL)	
1	Knife	/naif/	/nɛf/	
2	Basket	/ba:skit/	/baskɛt/	
3	Rubber	/rʌbər/	/ rʌbɑ/	
4	Onions	/ʌnJənz/	/ɔnĩs/	
5	Table	/teibl/	/tebu/	
8	Fan	/fæn/	/fɛn/	
7	Earrings	/iəriŋz/	/jɛrĩns/	
f8	Leaf	/li:f/	/liv/	
9	Plate	/pleit/	/prɑte/	
10	Clothes	/kləuðz/	/krɔs/	
11	Head-tie	/hɛd-tai/	/etie/	

12	Slippers	/slipəz/	/slipas/s	
13	Bathroom	/ba:θru:m/	/ba:trum/	
14	Plantain	/plæntin/	/prænten/	
15	Pawpaw	/pɔ:pɔ:/	/pɔpɔ/	
16	Boy	/bɔi/	/bɑi/	
s17	Mango	/mæŋgou/	/mæŋgou/	
18	Chalk	/ʧɔ:k/	/sɔk/	
19	Buy	/bɑi/	/bɑɛ/	
20	oil	/ɔil/	/ɔjɛ/	
21	Picture	/pikʧər/	/pikso/	
22	Umbrella	/ʌmbrɛlə/	/ʌmblɛlə/	
23	Hospital	/hɒspitl/	/hɒspitul/	
24	Search	/sɜ:ʧ/	/sas/	
25	Stall	/stɔ:l/	/stɔ:/	
26	Nylon	/nailən/	/lailən/	
27	Tray	/trei/	/trai/	
28	Pumpkin	/pʌmpkin/	/pɔkĩ/	

:

29	Tin	/tin/		
30	Tomatoes	/tumatəus/		
31	Potash	/	/patæʃ/	
32	Powder	/	/pada/	
33	House			
34	Five	/faiv/	/faif/	
35	Engine		/en	
36	Water			
37	Carton			
38	Packet			
39	Sweet	Suwit		
40	Doughnut			
41	Pie			
42	Roll			
43	Third	/θɜ:d/	/tɛd/	

44	Sorry	/sɑ:ri/	/sɔri/	
45	school			
46	chair			
47	woman		/uman/	
48				
49				
50				

The areas of Edo interference with the correct pronunciation of the selected English words are categorized as follows;

4.4.1 Substitution

The respondents substituted certain sounds while pronouncing some English words. This was due to the absence of specific sound segment in Edo Phonology. Examples of these substitutions, identified from the recordings, are outlined below;

1

Observed word: Knife

Phonemic transcription: /naif/

Error: /nef/

The above word *'knife'* was articulated as /nef/ by thirty-five respondents out of fifty respondent. The sounds /ai/ was replaced with /e/.

2

Observed word: fan

Phonemic transcription: /fæn/

Error: /fɛn/

The above word 'fan' was articulated as /fɛn/ by Thirty respondents out of forty respondents. The sound /æ/ was replaced with /ɛ/.

3

Observed word: pawpaw

Phonemic transcription: /pɔ:pɔ:/

Error: /pɔpɔ/

The above 'papaw' was articulated as / /pɔpɔ/ by thirty-five out forty respondent. The long vowel sounds /ɔ:/ were replaced with short / ɔ/.

4.

Observed word: leaf

Phonemic Transcription: /li:f/

Error: /li:v/

The above word ‘leaf’ was pronounced as /li:v/ by twenty-five out forty respondents. The sound /f/ was replaced with /v/

5.

Observed word: plate

Phonemic Transcription: /pleit/

Error : /preit/

The above word ‘plate’ was pronounced as /preit/ by twenty- five out forty respondents. The sound /l/ was replaced with /r/.

6.

Observed word: Tomatoes

Phonemic realization:/təmatəuz/

Error /tumatəus/

The word ‘tomatoes’ was pronounced as /tumatəus/ by the forty respondents. The vowel sound /ə/ was replaced with /u/ and consonant voiced sound /z/ was replaced with the voiceless sound /s/.

7.

Observed word: search

Phonemic realization:/sɜ:ʧ/

Error: /sas/

The word ‘search’ was pronounced as /sas/ by thirty respondents. The long vowel sound /ɛ:/ and /ʧ/ was replaced with the vowel /a/ and /s/.

9

Observed word: plantain

Phonemic realization: /plæntin/

Error: /prænten/

The word ‘plantain’ was produced as /prænten/ by thirty respondents. The consonant sound /l/ and vowel sound /e/ was replaced with the consonant sound /r/ and the vowel sound /e/.

4.4.3 Consonant Substitution

Observed word: Third

Phonemic realization: /θɜ:d/

Error : /tɛd/

The word ‘third’ was pronounced as / /tɛd/ by thirty respondents out of forty. The sound consonant /θ/ was replaced with /t/.

10

Observed word: chalk

Phonemic realization: /ʧɔ:k/

Error: /sɔk/

The word ‘chalk’ was pronounced as /sɔk/ by twenty -five respondents out of forty respondents. The sound /ʧ/ and the long vowel /ɔ:/ was replaced with /s/ and the short vowel sound /ɔ/.

11

Observedword : bathroom

Phonemic realization : /ba:θrum/

Error : /ba:trum/

The word ‘bathroom’ was pronounced as /batrum/by thirty respondents out of forty. The sound /θ/ was replaced with /t/.

4.2.2 Spelling Pronunciation

Some Edo- English speakers pronounce sounds as they are written attempting to match pronunciation to orthography. There are cases of spelling pronunciation that can be traced back to voice recordings can be seen below:

1

Observed word: Third

Phonemic realization: /θɜ:d/

Error : /tɛd/

The word ‘third’ was pronounced as /tɛd/ instead of /θɜ:d/

2.

Observed word: Tray

Phonemic realization: /trei/

Error : /trai/

The word ‘tray’ was pronunced as /trai/ instead of /trei/

3

Observed word: bucket

Phonemic realization : /bukit/

Error : /bukɛt/

The word ‘bucket’ was pronounced as /bukɛt/ instead of /bukit/ by 75% of the respondents

4

Observed word: Rubber

Phonemic realization: /rʌbər/

Error : /ruba/

The word ‘rubber’ was pronounced /ruba/ instead of /rʌbər/ by 80% of the respondents

5

Observed word: picture

Phonemic realization: /pikʧər/

Error: /pikso/

The word ‘picture’ was pronounced as /pikso/ instead of /pikʧər/ 90% of the respondents.

6

Observed word: table

Phonemic realisation: /teibl/

Error: /tebu/

The word ‘table’ was pronounced as /tebu/ instead of /teibl/ by 50% of the respondents

7.

Observedword : bathroom

Phonemic realization : /ba:θrum/

Error : /batrum/

The word ‘bathroom’ was pronounced as /batrum/ instead of /ba:θrum/ by 80% of the respondent. The sound /θ/ was replaced with /t/ sound.

8.

Observed word: Sorry
Phonemic realisation : /sɑ:ri/

Error : /sɔri/

The sound /ɑ/ was replaced with /ɔ/ by 50% of the respondents.

9

Observed word : oil

Phonemic realization : /ɔil/

Error: /ɔjɛ/

The sounds /i/ and /l/ were replaced with /j/ and /ɛ/ respectively by 90 percent of respondents as they pronounced the word 'oil'.

Assimilation

This is where a speech sounds tends to look like the other sounds in the utterance Nasalization is an example of assimilation. The word 'stall' /stɔ:l/ was assimilated from vowel to vowel. Most of the respondents pronounced vowel /ɔ:/to vowel /ɔ/ Besides, there are two differences in assimilation in pronouncing vowels; those are: long vowel and short vowel. Nine respondents assimilated the vowel
'ɔ' into the long vowel of 'ɔ:'

In this section, the interference occurs in these following consonants:

First, there are several consonants that assimilated into consonant ‘s’. There are four words pronounced inappropriate sound into consonant /s/ the word fish /sɜ:ʧ/ which consonant ‘ /ʧ/ in the last word assimilated into consonant . here are one respondent pronounced sound /sɜ:ʧ/ into ‘/sa:s/ , the word potash /patæʃ/ which consonant /ʃ/ in the last word assimilated into consonant./ʃ/ is pronounced as /s/ and the rest pronounced well; the word tomatoes /təmatəuz/which consonant ‘z’ in the last word assimilated into consonant ‘s’. There are thirty respondents pronounced sound /təmatəuz/ into/təmatəs/ and the four respondents pronounced well, and the last word is usual bathroom /ba:θru:m/ which consonant ‘/θ/ in the middle word assimilated into consonant ‘/t/. There twenty-five respondents pronounced the sound /ba:θru:m into /ba:trum/ and /tɛd/ instead of /θɜ:d/ while the others pronounced well.

Thirdly, there are two words which assimilated into the same consonant from consonant ‘v’ into ‘f’; those are: there are thirty respondents pronounced the word five which sounded /faiv/’ into /faif/ and the other respondents pronounced well.

2) Deletions

Deletion is a kind of implementations speech that belongs to the segmental aspect of phonology. Deletion occurs when Edo-English speaker (respondents) delete/omit vowel, diphthong, and consonant inside the word

Deletions and Elision

At this point, there are two different words pronounced by two different respondents who delete/omit consonants inside the word; those are: first, the word tin /tin/ which consonant /t/ and /n/ between vowel /i/ the consonant /n/ spread it nasality to the vowel sound which became nasalized vowel sound /ĩ/ which most respondent pronounced as /t ĩ/ and the others pronounced it well and second, the word house /haʊs/ which consonant /h/ and /s/ between vowel /aʊ/ and consonant /h/ was deleted/omitted by one respondent became sound /aʊs/. The word

4)

Insertion

Insertion is kind of the implementations speech that belongs to the segmental aspect of phonology. Insertion occurs when respondents insert/add vowel, diphthong, and consonant inside the word pronounced by one respondent who inserted/added by vowel inside a word. The word oil /ɔil/ was pronounced as /ɔjɛ/ the vowel sound /i/ and consonant /l/ was inserted/added the vowel 'j' and became sound /ɔjɛ/ and the other 11 respondents pronounced appropriate sound.