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Multilingualism and Linguistic Hybridity: An Experiment with Educated Nigerian Spoken English

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Abstract

One prognosis that became an outgrowth of the Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis is the notion that the culture of any given society, to a large extent, influences and ultimately determines the type of language that would exist. This study anchors its findings on this framework. It generally investigates into the spoken English in a multilingual environment, Nigeria, and particularly, notes the various instances of hybridized (acculturated) variants emerging among the speakers from different linguistic backgrounds. Using a corpus-based approach, the author took samples from respondents in four Nigerian universities, comprising mainly final-year university students from nineteen linguistic groups. The universities located in different parts of the country were randomly selected so as to capture different linguistic groups of educated Nigerians. The corpus, a 75-worded paragraph, was read into an MP3 player by the respondents, and then loaded into a Gateway Computer. The data was first analyzed perceptually, and then, acoustically using Praat – a software for phonetic analysis. The result shows that, although mother-tongue interference and the people's culture had major influences on the utterances heard among the respondents, national intelligibility was not impeded in a significant way; rather, it provided a unique identity. Again, the rate of social acceptability was high among the respondents indicating some level of uniformity. However, the tempo of utterance was generally slower than that of the native speaker used as the control. The study concludes that in a nonnative, multilingual environment, English language assumes a hybridized posture. The author then advocates the setting up of harmonized, intralingual, national standards within multilingual communities in nonnative English speaking communities to facilitate effective communication that could run concurrently with international English without impeding global intelligibility in a significant way.

Keywords: Multilingualism, Hybridity, Educated Nigerian, Spoken English

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Introduction

Research into language contact situations and the relevance of world Englishes or the expanded circle Englishes to a largely globalized world has been quite prominent with applied linguists, especially for pedagogical purposes (Kachru, 1998; Jenkins, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Matsuda, 2009; Sharifian, 2010). Besides, a large repertoire of literature have emerged from researches carried out by contrastive linguists in an attempt to isolate areas of convergence and divergence of languages in contact as the basis for pedagogical experiments (Lado, 1957; Odline, 1989; Kassal, 1987; Banjo, 2004; Hansen, 2006). The obvious conclusions from such researches have always been the attempt to establish the unobjectionable fact that languages in contact in a bilingual and multilingual communities are bound to produce unpredictable sociolinguistic features which may result in what Haugen (1972) refers to as "intralingual" (and interlingual) contagion.

In addition, the notion of "native-speakerism" – the ideology which underlies the privileged status of native speakers as language teachers (Petric, 2009: 141) is gradually waning and is being considered on anachronism even in the most prestigious language environment. The approach now, in the spirit of globalization, is to make language teaching/learning more proactive to human communicative needs. This derives from the unanimous perception among linguists, that language is, generally speaking, a cross-cultural product which only finds market among humans in diversified cultures. The English language in a rapidly globalised world is expected to play no fewer roles than that exemplified in this macro vision. Elsewhere (see Josiah, 2009), it has been pointed out that the English language, having left its shores in South-East London in the 15th century owing to trading, missionary activities and mounting imperialist interests, had gone into circulation in different global shores, acquiring new identities as it does so.

In the same vein, in a multilingual environment like Nigeria, the English language behaves true to type: acquiring new identities presented by the cultural melieu of its new environment. In such an environment, the language assumes an acculturated posture. This is what legitimizes the Nigerian English variety.

Our attempt in this study, therefore, is to provide a synoptic, synchronic analysis of the hybridized variants of Nigerian Spoken English in a multilingual setting as a proof of its distinctiveness.

The study also aims at finding out the nature and extent of hybridization of the English language in Nigeria, its implications to national and international intelligibility and social acceptability. Finally, the work tries to create the necessary correlation between Nigerian Spoken English and the concept of World Englishes.

Multilingualism and the Nigerian Language Situation

Three major features of the human language are its inelastic variability, its endless versatility and its inevitable complexity. These features have ultimately given birth to sustained, natural proliferation of languages and dialects all around the world. This is why most communities and countries are largely described as being either bilingual or multilingual. In fact, only very few nations or groups of speakers can be categorized as being purely monolingual. Therefore, bilingualism and multilingualism are the predominant linguistic identities of most nation-states and communities globally.

Bilingualism, on the one hand, describes a linguistic situation in which an individual, a group (of speakers) or a society uses two languages interchangeably for communication (Eka, 2000; Dadzie, 2004). The Bloomfieldian School provides a distinct definition to a bilingual: somebody with 'native-like control of two languages' (Dadzie, 2004: 140). Many other researches have attempted to specifically categorize bilingualism based on the degree of proficiency of speakers as described by their levels of competence and performance in the language. (Haugen, 1953; Eka, 2000; Dadzie, 2004). This is not our primary concern here.

We now turn to our interest: multilingualism. This is a linguistic concept used to describe a situation in which an individual, a group or a nation uses "more than two languages in communicating national or group needs" (Eka, 2000: 18). The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language also defines multilingualism as "the ability of an individual or a community of speakers to use multiple languages". It adds that a person who can speak multiple languages is referred to as a polyglot or a multilingual.

A synopsis of these definitions indicates that multilingualism can be used to describe an individual speaker, or a group of speakers. It can also be applied to a whole country, for instance, Nigeria.

Countries like Switzerland, India, China, Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Ginea, among others are said to be multilingual nations, in spite of the fact that they have specific official languages used for communication. In the same vein, Nigeria is known to harbour a multiplicity of ethnolinguistic groups; therefore, it is doubtless a multilingual nation (cf Emenanjo, 1990).

Brann (2006:24) offers a seeming taxonomic appraisal of levels of multilingualism of persons and societies/states. Using Latin and Greek derivatives for his two-prong categorization, he lists such terminologies as unilingualism, bilingualism, trilingualilsm, quadrilingualism, quinlingualism (common in Africa), and then, multilingualism - all of which describe individual language use; and monoglossia, diaglossia … polyglossia, among others for the description of language situation affecting societies and states. On the wrung of the ladder of these taxonomic presentations, two major typologies best describe the language situation in Nigeria: multilingualism and polyglossia. These are confirmed in the literature – that Nigeria is known to harbour a multiplicity of ethnolinguistic groups (Foritt, 1931; Bamgbose, 1982; Banjo, 1996; Eka, 2000; Grimes 2000; Essien, 2003; Emenanjo, 2003; Brann 2006; Josiah and Babatunde, 2011).

Emenanjo (2003) in particular attempts a plethora of analysis on the large number of linguistic groups in Nigeria – beginning from 150 (Tiffen, 1968), to 250 (Coleman, 1958), to 374 (Otite, 1990), to 394 (Hansford, Bendor-Samuel and Standford, 1976), to 400 (Bamgbose, 1982) and to between 400 and 500 languages and dialects (Gittal 1998). Eka (2000), citing Elugbe (1990) puts the number between 394 and 400 linguistic groups while the same source, citing Bamgbose (1978) places the figure at 513 languages and dialects. This analysis leaves us with one basic conclusion: that the knowledge of the exact number of languages and dialects existing in Nigeria is inconclusive and nebulous. A second is a derivation from the first conclusion – that Nigeria is no doubt, a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multilingual nation-state. This implies that polyglotism is a known phenomenon in Nigeria. These analyses quixotically describe the general language satiation in Nigeria.

In addition to this general observation, Nigeria has three major group languages: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, and many minor-group languages and dialects such as Ibibio, Efik, Ijaw, Igbira, Nupe, Kanuri, Idoma, Igala, among numerous others.

With these explanations, it would be expected that the contact of these indigenous languages with the English language brings about a great deal of interlingual and intralingual sociolinquistic forms. This explains why the English language spoken in Nigeria can hardly be said to be SBE-compliant.

Multilingualism and Linguistic Hybridity: Conceptual Clarifications

The word 'hybrid', in its denotative form, means 'mixture' and it implies anything of mixed ancestry or origin. It is fundamentally a biological terminology, and is derived from the pseudo-scientific models of anatomy and craniometry. From a purely biological sense, the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, defines 'hybridity' as "an animal or a plant produced from parents of different breeds or types". In its elementary and derogatory sense, the term was conceived in terms of racial breeding and was used to argue that African, Asians, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders were racially inferior to Europeans (Homi, 1994). This pre-colonial conception later, metamorphosed into the notion that the off-spring of a racial interbreeding would result in the delusion of the European race (see Robert, 1995).

In linguistics, the term "hybridity" (a derivative from hybrid) has some relational reference to its biological connotation. It was employed in linguistics in the 19th century to refer to the case of mixed languages. Since then, it has been used to demonstrate that every human language is a mixture of several other languages. For instance, from linguistic history, the English language from its inception has had inputs from several languages of the world – Anglo-Saxon, French, Greek, Latin, and several other European, Asian and African languages. This linguistic genesis indicates that several languages in the world have developed in this same pattern.

Back to our concern in this section. there is an interactional relationship, a kind of an interface, between multilingualism and linguistic hybridity. In relational parlance, there exists what we would like to refer to as a *gynaecological linguistic chemistry* (a kind of admixture of linguistic forms) that becomes inevitable once languages are in contact. This is what informs our coinage, "linguistic hybridization".

The conceptual import here is that, in a multilingual state like Nigeria, the contact of the English language with several indigenous Nigerian languages have produced other linguistic forms that are slightly, or sometimes, distinctly different from the standardized, native-speaker-British English, and those forms are here referred to as "linguistic hybrids". The process involved in the derivation of the variant forms of those hybrids are what we have generally coined "linguistic hybridization". It is a linguistic process that facilitates cross-cultural communication in a multilingual society, especially where a target language is involved.

Linguistic Hybridity and the Nigerian English Phenomenon

One challenge with multilingualism is its multi-cultural outlook. In Nigeria, most linguistic forms, whether written or spoken, are a modified blend from speakers with different sociocultural and sociolinguistic backgrounds. This is why linguistic variability is a common phenomenon in almost all multilingual communities, including Nigeria. What usually obtain in such a speech community are mutual adjustments to accommodate interlocutors in any communication act. This explanation suffices for the description of the Nigerian English phenomenon.

Linguistic hybridity, on the other hand, explains a situation in which different phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic innovations or modifications are noticeable in both the spoken and the written language.. As pointed out earlier, a hybrid is produced from parents of different breeds or types, according to *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. To hybridize, therefore, is to form a new type of plant or animal from two existing types so that the new type has some qualities from each of the other types. In linguistics, this same sense is implied. Nigerian English is an outgrowth of the contact of the British English with numerous indigenous Nigerian languages. The result is a variety of English that is practically distinct from the Standard British English, particularly the spoken form, although the core elements of the latter remain sacrosanct in the former. The other way to say this is that Nigerian English derives its legitimacy from a parent-source, the British English, but it is not exactly British English, particularly, in its spoken form. It is an admixture of features of one language (in this case the English language) with another or other indigenous languages to the extent that the outcome (the hybridized forms) facilitates effective communication in a multicultural, multilingual society such as Nigeria.

Theoretical Issues

This paper is anchored on the tacit assumption that the English language in nonnative environment is basically an admixture of unpredictable, sociolinguistic ***progeny*** which manifests in several forms: pidginization, creolization, diaglossia, attrition, word-borrowing, word-coinage, transliterated forms, code-mixing, code-switching, language shift, birth of a new language, and even linguicide (death of part or whole of an existing language). Moreso, in Nigeria, the consequence of multilingualism has ultimately become a cynosure for all forms of linguistic investigations owing to the numerous variable forms emerging as linguistic patterns among speakers/learners of English. The ultimate result is various shades of endonormative forms and, of course, a departure from the conventional exonormative models. This is one way of hinting that linguistic domestication or hybridization results in what Jowitt (1991) refers to as "gynaecological re-processing" of a target language (TL) in an L_2 environment. This is where Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis popularized by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf becomes relevant and adaptable to our study.

The Sapir-Whorfian Hypothesis (or more popularly, the Whorfian Hypothesis) is anchored on the principle that cognitive processes, such as thought and experience, may be influenced by the categories and patterns of the language a person speaks (Wikipaedia, the free Encyclopaedia). The hypothesis has a two-prong approach: linguistic relativity and linguistic determinism. The former expresses the notion that one's language shapes one's view of reality while the latter holds the view that what is said, has only some effect on how concepts are recognized by the mind (Badhesha, 2002). The summary of the hypothesis is that different cultures interpret the same world differently and this has an impact on how they both think and construct meaning in language (Dewey, 2010). Put differently, language shapes or influences thought to some degree. An extension to this theory is that the culture of any given society, to a large extent influences, and ultimately determines the type of language that would exist. This is what informs our resort to this theory and we shall explore it in our analysis in this work.

Specifically, our interest in the present study is to find out the extent to which Nigerian indigenous languages and culture generally affect the type of English spoken in Nigeria.

In other words, we are attempting to find out the extent to which the various mother-tongues in Nigeria Influence the kind of English spoken in the country. Our assumption is that the spoken English in Nigeria undergoes series of modifications as a result of its contact with several indigenous languages. The result is endless, proliferated forms of utterances which are a consequence of some form of nativization process. We will dwell more on this subject during the analysis of the data collected from Nigerian students.

Another relevant theory that could explicate the linguistic situation in relation to English language in Nigeria is what has been tagged communication accommodation theory (CAT) (Jenkins, 2000). Developed by Professor Howard Giles and popularized in Giles and St. Clair (1979), Giles and Coupland (1991) and more elaborately Jenkins (2000), CAT is perceived in terms of the mutual phonological intelligibility and acceptability between speakers of Inner Circle Englishes (ICE) and Expanded Circle Englishes (ECE). It is premised on the notion that speakers need to develop the ability to adjust their pronunciations according to the communicative situation in which they find themselves (Jenkins, 2000:167-168). CAT derives its legitimacy from intercultural communication. We will explore the import of this theory for an insightful analysis. Generally, what seems plausible in explicating phenomenal occurrences in language contact situations and its implications on TL (for instance, the English language) in nonnative environment is the adoption of an eclectic approach to accommodate unpredictable nuances of language contact situations (cf Alptekin:2002). This is what we are attempting to do in this study.

Purpose of the Study

It was the intention of this research to employ relevant empirical approaches to find out the way the English language behaves in contact with numerous indigenous Nigerian languages and dialects so as to provide the necessary insight into the nature of spoken English in Nigeria, especially for pedagogical purposes. This is because Nigeria was colonized by Britain since the 16th century, and so, her citizens are presumably speakers of Standard British English. Again, as a multilingual nation, Nigeria adopts the English language for inter-cultural as well as international communication in all spheres of national life. It will, therefore, be an interesting exercise to examine the linguistic content, including the hybridized or acculturated forms of the Nigerian English variety.

The result of such an exercise could be of assistance in understanding the performance of speakers/learners in second language learning situation and that would assist applied linguists in curriculum design or other pedagogical purposes.

Research Design

In order to achieve the broad objectives of this study, the following research procedures were adopted. The goal was to present findings that are empirically reliable and germane.

Research Sample

The subjects of this study comprised two groups of respondents: an Experimental Group (EG) and a Control. The experimental group was made up of one hundred final-year university students, all of them Nigerians, from varying socio-economic, socio-political and educational backgrounds. This group of respondents was randomly selected from four federal universities in Nigeria, covering University of Port Harcourt (South-South, minimally Igbo-speaking and other languages), University of Ilorin (North Central but mostly Yoruba-speaking), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (North Central but mostly Hausa-speaking and other languages) and Othman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto, core Hausa-speaking area). This arrangement was to ensure a fair spread of respondents' base to cover, at least minimally, various ethnic groups in various parts of the country. From such an experiment, generalization could be attested to as being truly widespread.

Population

The one hundred (100) respondents in the experimental group offered twenty-eight different courses covering the humanities, social sciences, the sciences and engineering at the universities listed above. They were drawn from nineteen linguistic groups including both the three major-group languages (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo) and some minor-group as well as medium-group languages (Egbokhare, 2003). It would be doubtful if nineteen languages and dialects out of between 400 and 513 languages and dialects identified in Nigeria (Grimes, 2000; Elugbe, 1990) are adequate for generalization in this study. Ideally, we cannot take samples from all the ethnic groups in Nigeria.

It, however, makes sense to make use of a few other linguistic groups, apart from the three major languages (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo) for the purpose of this study. Our selection of respondents from the nineteen linguistic groups is merely representative of different parts of Nigeria.

Each of the respondents in the experimental group had exposure to English speaking for up-ward of fifteen to twenty-five years. As postulated in Banjo (1971; 1976; Fakuade, 1978, Adesanoye, 1973; Eka, 1985; 2000) among others, many final-year university students are considered to be speakers or exponents of Educated Nigerian English. This is why we have selected our respondents from this class of Nigerians (cf Jowitt, 2000; Udofot, 2004; 2006).

The Control Group had just one respondent – a Briton who is a native speaker of English. The respondent used as control admitted to speaking a variety of SBE. One respondent in the Control Group may appear inadequate, but it is necessary to emphasize that this is not purely a contrastive study of Educated Nigerian Spoken English and another variety of English, SBE. We consider that one native-speaker is enough to facilitate interpolation and an invariable control to the variables used for the study (cf Udofot, 2004:96; 2006:3).

Elicitation Procedure

The study adopted a corpus-based approach. The data used for this study was a seventy one-worded paragraph and another thirty-four single words and phrases. The single words and phrases as well as the short paragraph were provided for the respondents to read into an MP3 player provided for them. Each of them read in turn, and adequate time was given to each respondent to go through the script before reading. Each respondent read a total of 105 words into the tape within three to four minutes. At the end, approximately five hours, thirty minutes was spent in recording the data. The single words and phrases were read in isolation while the short paragraph was read at a stretch. The sentences in the paragraph were meant to test the tempo of utterance of the respondents while the single words and phrases were aimed at testing other prosodic features, e.g. potential instances of pitch and stress.

Analytical Procedure

A two-prong approach was adopted for the analysis of the data. The first was perceptual while the second was acoustic.

The perceptual phase was an aural exercise which resulted in the transcription of audio sounds. After the respondents read the data, we then commenced the transcription exercise after listening meticulously to each of the respondents' readings. Although the transcription was solely carried out by the researcher, yet other phonologists made some useful suggestions during the transcription exercise. In all, ten thousand, five hundred (10,500) words were transcribed. We adopted different transcription models for the varying data. For instance, the Gimson's Transcription System was used for the English data exemplified by the Control. But, in transcribing the Nigerian English data, Nigerian English phonemes enumerated in Odumuh (1987), Eka (1985; 2000), Jowitt (1991), Jibril (1982), Adetugbo (2004), Awonusi (2004) as well other available models on Nigerian English were juxtaposed with the Gimson Transcription System for a more accurate representation. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis were also used in explaining the data derived from the study.

Acoustic Analysis of the Data

The second aspect adopted for the analysis of the data was acoustic. The recorded data in the MP3 player was then loaded into a Gateway Computer for instrumental analysis using Praat, a sound analysis software for undertaking phonetic analysis and sound manipulations (Mills, Edwards and Beckham, 2005). The software was used to determine such phonetic features like duration of utterance (tempo) between the EG and the Control, amplitude and frequencies of utterances to determine pitch and stress, voicing ripples to determine voiced and devoiced or voiceless segments as displayed on the spectrogram along with Voice Onset Time (VOT) in aspirated segments, and so on.

Some of the recordings were not very clear because of the environment where the recordings were carried out – all of them were not undertaken in a sound-proof studio. But, at African Languages Technology Initiative (ALT – I) Centre, a non-profit organization based in Ibadan, the recordings were pre-processed and made clearer, using noise reduction softwares available in Adobe Auditioning and Cool Edit Pro. This made the recordings clearer and better for analysis.

Data Presentation / Analysis

The respondents' performances were statistically derived after careful study. The results are presented in tables and figures below. Table 1 shows patterns of realization of hybridized variants among Nigerian subjects tested with words in connected speech while Table 2 displays patterns of realization of hybridized variants among Nigerian subjects tested with single words**.** The Control's performance serves as the yardstick for measuring standardization. Table 3 displays variants of one-word pronunciations as realized by the respondents used for the study while Table 4 shows the pronunciation patterns in connected speech. Again, the Contol's variant serves as the SBE model. Tables 5, 6 and 7 show pitch levels of individual syllables as realized by each of the respondents, including the Control. Table 8 indicates the duration within which each of the respondents (including the Control) completed the reading of the short passage given to them. Figures 1 and 2 are used to demonstrate the differences in duration between the EG and the Control. The spectral slides that provided the necessary acoustic details used for the analysis are presented as Apendices at the end of the paper.

Table 1: Patterns of Hybrized Variants Realized by EG Subjects tested with Words in Connected Speech)

S/N	Items tested	No. of V/A*	NA	NNA
1	Watch you	4	6	94
2	In case	4	10	90
3	All right	5	52	48
4	Cats and dogs	6	16	84
5	Cats, dogs and horses	5	26	74
6	The idea of it	7	2	98
7	This year	6	6	94
8	I will watch you	7	9	91
9	Coach him	7	8	92
10	Would be defeated	6	9	91
11	A lot of	6	2	98
12	Fiscal year	10	4	96

Source: Author

Key: NA = Number Able to produce SBE variant NNA= Number Not Able to produce the SBE variant ; No. of V/A=Number of variants/Alternants

*Number of Variants/Alternants indicates how many forms of the same expression were realized by the different Respondents used.

Table 2: Patterns of Hybridized Variants Realized by EG Subjects Tested with Single words

S/N	Items tested	No. of V/A	NA	NNA
1	Coach	5	7	93
2	Bad	5	15	85
3	Bat	5	10	90
4	Secretary	6	6	94
5	February	6	6	94
6	Several	7	7	93
7	Suppose	9	3	97
8	Ask	7	50	50
9	Take	5	7	93
10	Cat	6	25	75
11	People	7	7	93
12	Tested	3	29	71
13	Watched	8	2	93
14	Warned	6	65	35
15	Fiscal	9	2	98
16	Learn	6	28	72
17	Health	6	12	88
18	Thorough	6	4	96
19	Computer	4	7	93
20	Scientists	5	17	83

Source: Author

Key: NA = Number Able NNA = No Not Able

No. of V/A = Number of variants of items produced by the subjects

Table 3: Variants of One-word Pronunciations as Realized by the Respondents

Variant	Secretary	No	February	No	Several	No.	People	No.	Suppose	No
Contro	'sekrətrI	6	'febrʊərI	6	sevrəl̩	7	'p^{h}i:pl	7	s'pəʊz	3
V 1	sektrI	37	'febrʊəri	18	sevrəl̩	16	'p^{h}i:pl	11	sɔ'pɔs	9
V2	sekitri	23	'febreri	14	sevral	34	'p^{h}ipl	18	sɔ'pos	39
V3	sektri	14	'febri	25	severəl	13	'pipl	25	s'pos	9
V4	'sekrətrI	9	'febuari	17	several	11	'pipʊl	10	sʌ'pos	5
V5	seketerI	6	'febrari	13	sevræ	10	'Pipʊ	12	so'pos	8
V6	sekjərətri	5	'febʊeri	7	sivral	3	'pipəl	8	'popos	1
V7	-	-	-	-	sevrl̩	6	'pəpəl	4	so'fos	4
V8	-	-	-	-	-	-	'fifl	5	sə'pəʊz	11
V9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	sɔpəʊz	9
V10	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	sʊ'pəʊz	2
Total	6	100	6	100	7	100	8	100	10	100

Source: Author

Table 4: Variants of Pronunciations in Connected Speech as Realized by the Respondents

Variants	Watch you	No.	Coach Him	No.	This Yea	No.	Fiscal Year	No.
Control	wɒtʃ ju:	4	kəʊtʃ hɪm	8	ðɪs j3:	6	'fiskl̩ j3:	4
V1	wɒtʃ jiu:	12	kəʊtʃ hɪm	15	ðɪs j3:	12	'fiskl̩ j3:	12
V2	wɔtʃu	5	kotʃim	48	dIs j3:	9	'fiska:I jie	10
V3	wɔtʃ dʒu:	45	kɔtʃim	6	'disie	47	'fiskal jie	21
V4	wɔtʃiu:	8	koʃim	7	'disia	7	'fɪskʊ jie	17
V5	wɔtʃ aʊt	1	kotʃ him	9	dis jie	11	'fisika jie	11
V6	watʃ dʒu:	8	kəʊtʃ hɪm	7	diʃie	8	'pis(i)ka jia	5
V7	wɔʃ u:	6	-	-	-	-	'fiʃal jie	1
V8	wɔʃd ʒu:	3	-	-	-	-	'fɪskʊl jia	8
V9	wɔ:tʃ ju:	8	-	-	-	-	'fɪskʊl jie	11
Total	10	100	7	100	7	100	10	100

Source: Author

Table 5: Respondents' Pitch Levels for Each Syllable in the word 'Secretary'(in Hz)

Respondents	Syllable 1	Syllable 2	Syllable 3	Syllable 4
	se	cre	ta /try	ry
R 1	195.8	188.8	163.3	135.7
R 2	246	224.7	218	-
R 3	251.6	247.6	230	-
R 4	239.5	223.8	214.2	201
R 5	174.4	156.8	150	-
R 6	149.6	136	133.5	-
R 7	224.8	210.5	185	-
R 8	197.8	175.6	181	147.8
R 9	142.2	134.4	119	-
R 10	195.3	188.7	201.9	-
Control	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Figure 1: Respondents Performance on the Realization of the Sylables in the word 'Secretary'

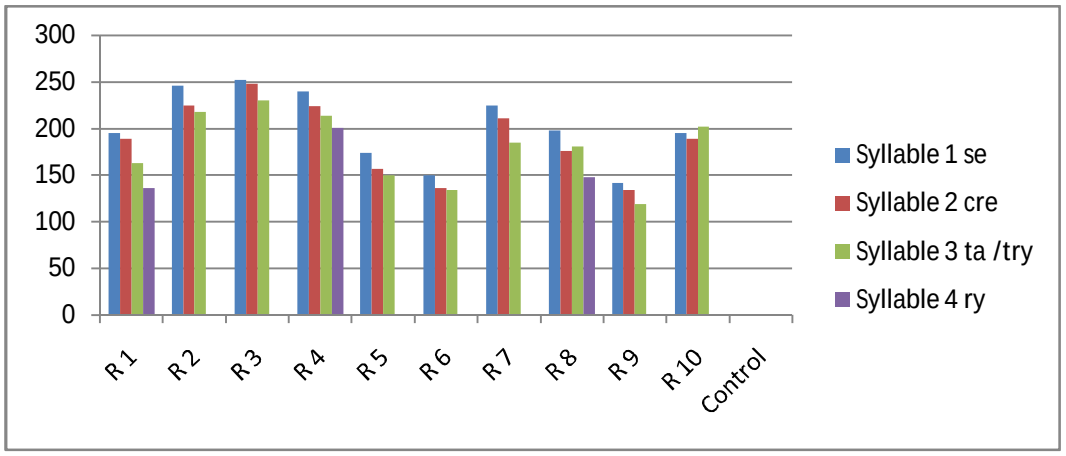


Table 6: Responents' Pitch Levels for the word 'February' (in Htz)

Respondents	Syllable 1	Syllable 2	Syllable 3
	Fe	brua	ry
R 1	175.1	172.1	150.2
R 2	245.6	210.6	201.3
R 3	225.5	214.5	195.6
R 4	216.8	212.1	206.2
R 5	162.2	143.4	137.4
R 6	149.6	111.1	191.8
R 7	206.7	173.2	140.7
R 8	181.6	159.1	138.8
R 9	146.8	138.2	106.4
R 10	187	153.6	127.4
Control	Nil	Nil	Nil

Figure 2: Respondents Performance on the Realization of the Sylables in the word 'February'

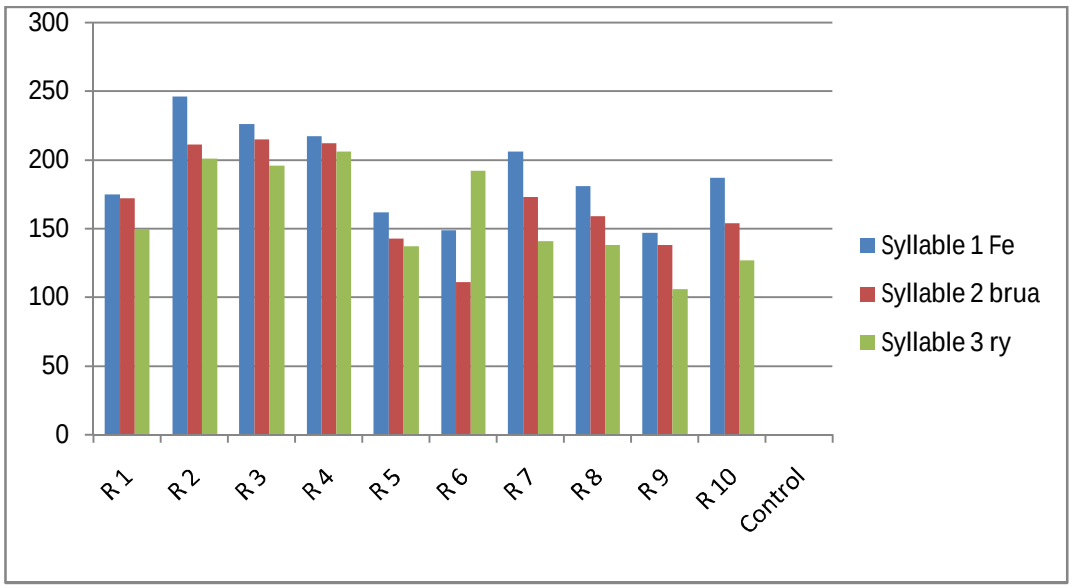


Table 7: Responents' Pitch Levels for the word 'Several' (in Frequencies)

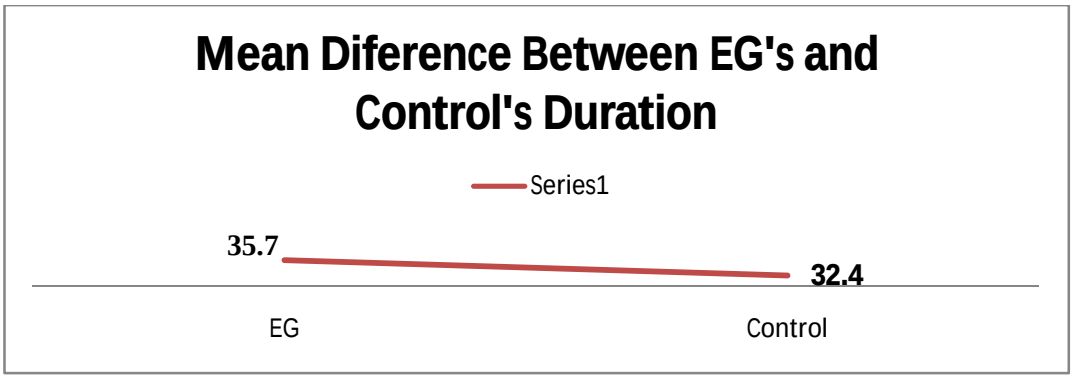
Respondents	Se	ve	ral
	Syllable 1	Syllable 2	Syllable 3
R 1	200.8	179.3	142.9
R 2	245.6	223	184.1
R 3	238	213.8	191.4
R 4	235	228.7	207
R 5	169	161	120.2
R 6	141.6	123.1	114.4
R 7	210.2	169.2	135.9
R 8	189.5	148.7	146.4
R 9	143.7	131.8	115.5
R 10	187.8	153.1	129.6
Control	Nil	Nil	118.5

Table 8: Respondents' Performance in Duration (in Seconds)

Respondents	Duration (in Seconds)
R 1	41.2
R 2	37.7
R 3	36.2
R 4	28.9
R 5	34.5
R 6	33.3
R 7	38.2
R 8	35.2
R 9	38.5
R 10	33.1
Control	32.4

Mean of EG's Duration = 35.7
Control's Duration = 32.4

Figure 3



Discussion

Table 1 displays information on respondent's pronunciations in connected speech. The performance shows that in the majority of cases, only a negligible number could produce exactly the SBE variant of the words. Phonetic details like allophones known to occur in native speakers' speech most of the times were found to be lacking in the EG's rendition. For instance, aspiration of word-initial plosives were not heard in many of the EG's realizations of the words: take, cat, people, etc. It was only the word 'all right' which had the largest index of 52 per cent. Majority rendered the non-SBE forms in different patterns. The performance in the words 'all right' and warned were appropriately pronounced by many of the respondents because the sound involved /ɔ/ is attested to in many Nigerian local languagea (cf Jowitt, 1991; Adetugbo, 1982; Awonusi; 2004). Many of the respondents produced the correct forms of the words accurately and jeffortlessly. Table 2 tested single words single words. Again, the performance here is not different from the ones in connected speech. In some of the renditions, the subjects fell short of the SBE variant. For instance, the word 'watched' is expected to be realized as /wɒtʃt/ but respondents in majority of the cases realized it as / wɔtʃd/ or /waɔtʃd/.

Tables 3 and 4 are evidences of the respondents' actual realizations of some of the words or phrases provided for them. They generally produced different versions of the same word.

This is where Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis become explainable: that the respondents performances showed the local language of the respondents played a major role in influencing the rendition of the correct form of the English words and phrases provided. For instance, the word 'secretary' and 'February' had 7 variant forms each; 'several' had 8; 'people' had 9; 'take' had 6 while 'suppose' had 11 variant forms. The performances here were mostly affected by the respondents' mother-tongue or their sociolinguistic background.

Table 4 displayed respondent's realization of words in connected speech. The common feature of the words in this section is feature spreading resulting in assimilation of many of the segments either at word or syllable boundaries. At other times, some sounds were elided by syncopation, as in 'this year' realized as/disie/ instead of /ð**Is j3:/; '**would be' / wʊd bI/ became / wʊb bI/, and so on.

Tables 5, 6 and 7 tested respondents on pitch and stress placement. For the pitch, all the EG candidates had pitches in their utterances as indicated by the pitch contours on the spectrogram. But in the Control's rendition, only one pitch is indicated on the instrument with the last syllable on the word several (Table 7). All other syllables had no pitches in the Control's rendition. For the stress, some of the respondents place the stress in a way not conventional with the SBE variant. An examination of the frequencies listed on the Tables 5, 6 and 7 proves that there were high frequencies on the second syllables, sometimes far higher than some on the first syllable whereas the stressed syllable was expected to be the first in the series.

Table 8 displays spectrographic information on the duration of reading through the short paragraph by each of the respondents. To demonstrate the tempo of utterance, each respondent's duration was taken. At the end the mean duration for the EG stood at 35.7 seconds while that of the Control remained at 32.4 seconds proving that, on the whole, the control used lesser time to read the paragraph than the EG did. Candidate R7 in the EG category made it at a lesser time than the Control, but from the perceptual level, we noticed that this respondent was particularly very fast, and also did not observes any pauses like comma, period, stress, intonational patterns, among others, etc. We then draw the conclusion that the Control's reading, including the observation of necessary pauses and intonational patterns was faster than that of the EG. The details of these are shown in figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1 presents the respondents' performance in durational parlance as displayed on Praat Object Window. As could be observed from the figure, the mean duration of EG's performance is 35.7 while that of the Control stands at 32.4 resulting in a difference of 3.3. The implication is that, on the average, the Control's realization of the corpus was generally faster or shorter (in temporal measurement e.g. in seconds) than that of the EG represented by the Nigerian respondents. Logically, therefore, a native speaker of English has the capability of speaking faster than an L2 speaker; howbeit, depending on the context and other variables (such as observation of pauses, etc) within which the utterance is made. Figure 2 is a follow-up to figure 1: it is a graphic representation of the difference between the performance of the native speaker indicated as the Control and the Nigerian respondents signalled by the Experimental Group (EG).

Finally, the spectral slides on the Appendix displays the spectrographic details of the respondents' pitches which are also used to determine the stressed syllable in the respondents' utterances. The ten respondents (R1 – R10) were randomly selected from the one hundred final year university students used for the study. The Control's rendition was placed as the last three slides. While pitches were observed in slides R1 - R10, only one (recorded in the syllable 'ral' in several) was observed in the Control's rendition.

Conclusion

This study has examined the existence and behavior of the English language in a multilingual society, Nigeria. It adopted the Sapir-Whorfian Hypothesis as its theoretical thrust to prove that the English language in an alien, nonnative environment identifies with the ambience of that environment, and subsequently becomes nativized (hybridized or acculturated) to the extent that it acquires new features other than its original form. Those new features along with the core elements of the original form serve the environment for which it has been adopted with the same capacity with which it serves its original home.

Using the responses from the subjects used for the study, the researcher has established empirically the fact that the English language existing in Nigeria today is not the same as the one that left the shores of Great Britain in the 16th century. This is because the language has gone through a 'gynaegological re-processing' (Jowitt, 1991) and has been acculturated to serve the communicative needs of Nigerians.

Therefore, to base the pedagogical model of English teaching on the exoglossic or exonormative standard called SBE, or more specifically the RP, is to promote on a large scale the concept of native-speakerism.

Native-speakerism is an endemic syndrome faced with anachronism in a globalized world. She can hardly survive emerging oppositions globally. The expanding circles Englishes is that formidable opponent before which the former cannot hold sway. If this syndrome is left sacrosanct, it could be difficult to have adequate teachers who are native speakers to go round the globe teaching only native speakers' model of English.

If the English language is to continue in its role as a global language (which it currently does), then there should be the setting up of intralingual, national standards that could serve the communicative needs of those communities where English is used as a second language, without at the same time compromising social acceptability and international intelligibility in a significant way. This proposal, equally corroborated by Jenkins (2000), to a large extent, is what will consolidate English teaching in L2 environments and at the same time promote the course of the new Englishes as a sine-qua-non for international or global communication.

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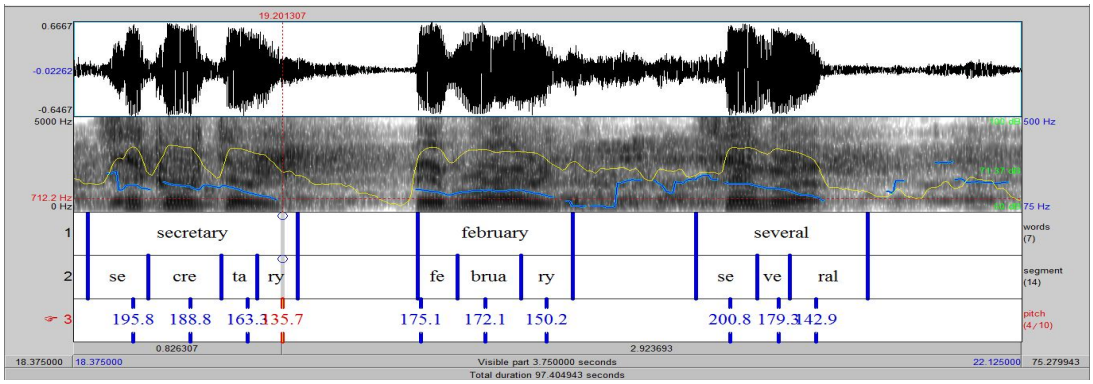
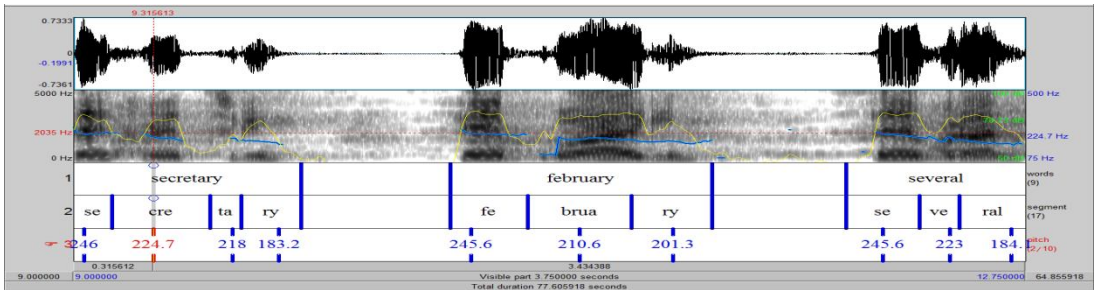
Appenddix

Samples of Spectral Slides Representing Pitches and Stress Performances of R1 to R 10

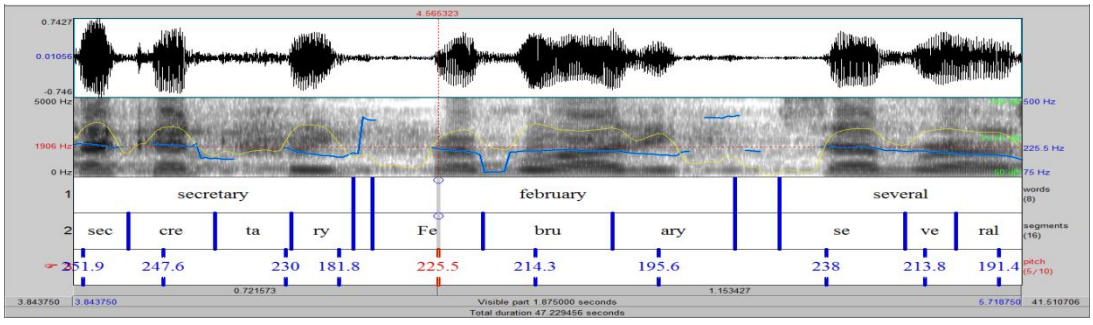
R 1



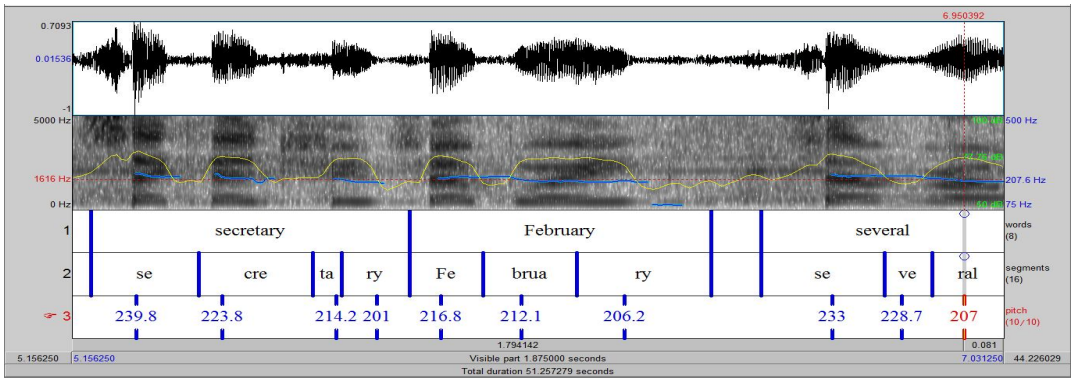
R 2



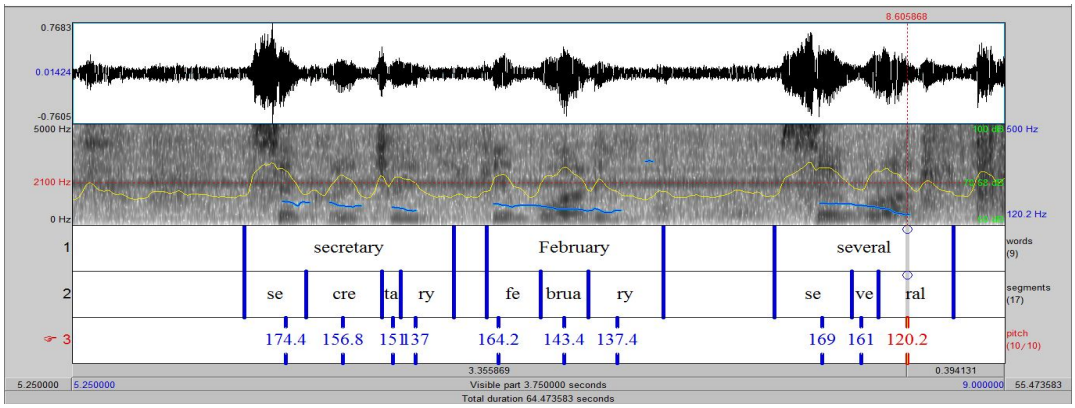
R3



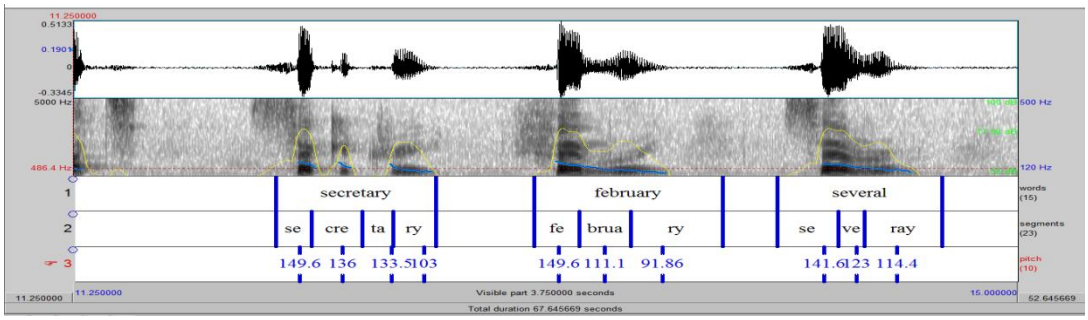
R 4


secretary
February
several
se cre ta ry Fe brua ry se ve ral
239.8 223.8 214.2 201 216.8 212.1 206.2 233 228.7 207
words (8)
segments (16)
pitch (10/10)
Visible part 1.875000 seconds
Total duration 51.257279 seconds

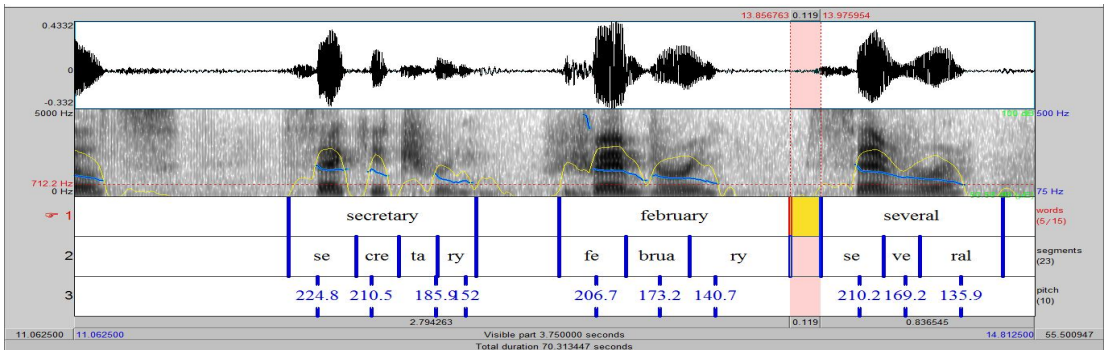
R 5


secretary
February
several
se cre ta ry fe brua ry se ve ral
174.4 156.8 151 137 164.2 143.4 137.4 169 161 120.2
words (9)
segments (17)
pitch (10/10)
Visible part 3.750000 seconds
Total duration 64.473583 seconds

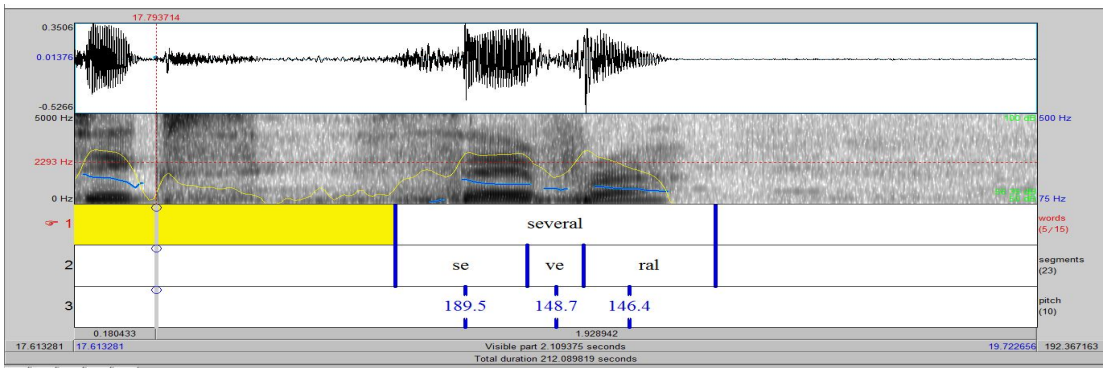
R 6


secretary
february
several
se cre ta ry fe brua ry se ve ray
149.6 136 133.5 103 149.6 111.1 91.86 141.6 123 114.4
words (15)
segments (23)
pitch (10)
Visible part 3.750000 seconds
Total duration 67.645669 seconds

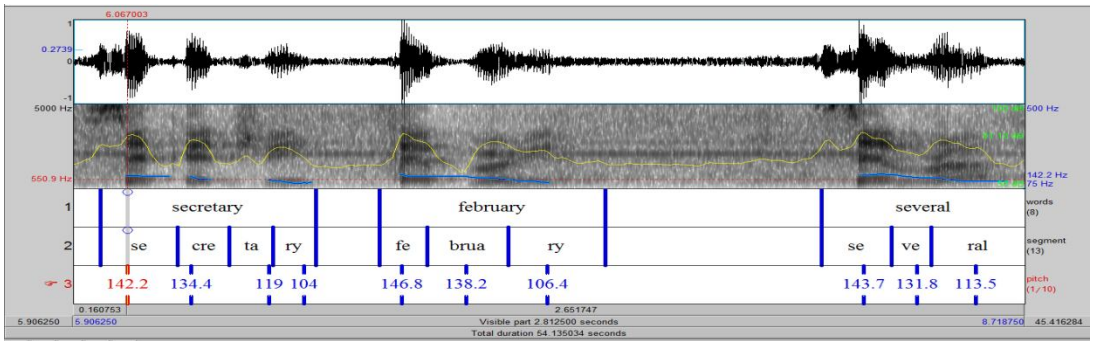
R 7


secretary
february
several
se cre ta ry
fe brua ry
se ve ral
224.8 210.5 185.9 152
206.7 173.2 140.7
210.2 169.2 135.9
words (5/15)
segments (23)
pitch (10)
Visible part 3.750000 seconds
Total duration 70.313447 seconds

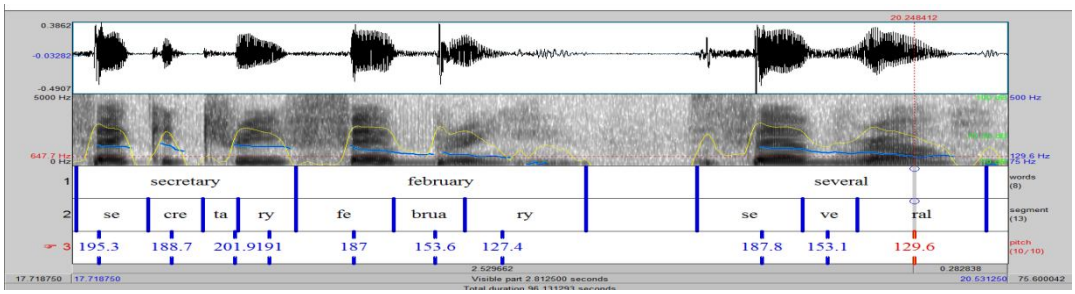
R 8


several
se ve ral
189.5 148.7 146.4
words (5/15)
segments (23)
pitch (10)
Visible part 2.109375 seconds
Total duration 212.089819 seconds

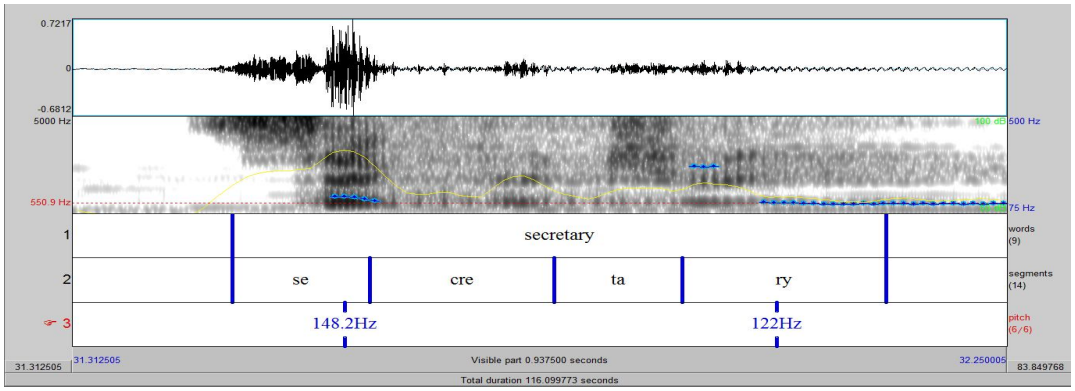
R 9


secretary
february
several
se cre ta ry
fe brua ry
se ve ral
142.2 134.4 119 104
146.8 138.2 106.4
143.7 131.8 113.5
words (8)
segment (13)
pitch (1/10)
Visible part 2.812500 seconds
Total duration 54.135034 seconds

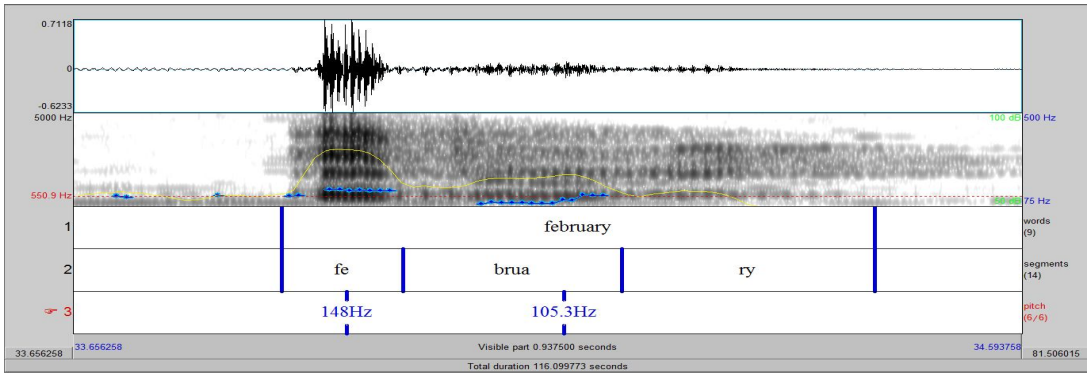
R 10



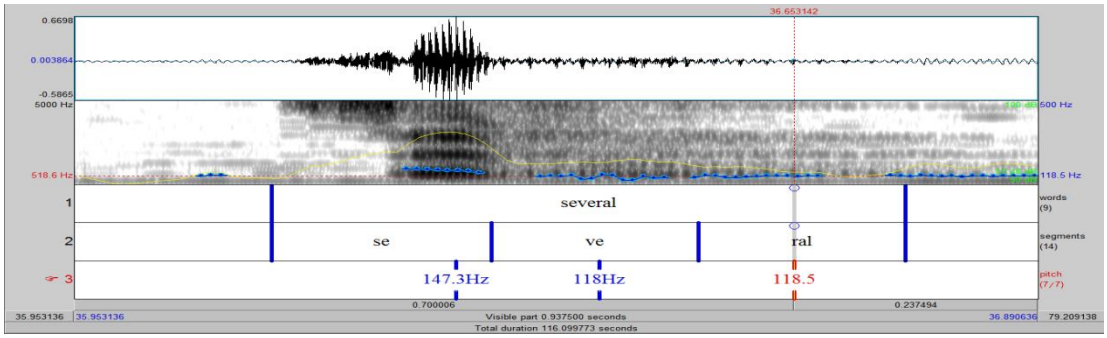
CONTROL



CONTROL



CONTROL


36.653142
0.6698
0.003864
-0.5865
5000 Hz
500 Hz
518.6 Hz
118.5 Hz
1
several
words
(9)
2
se
ve
ral
segments
(14)
3
147.3Hz
118Hz
118.5
pitch
(7/7)
0.700006
0.237494
35.953136
35.953136
Visible part 0.937500 seconds
36.890636
79.209138
Total duration 116.099773 seconds