

**THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN NIGERIA:  
NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL INTELLIGIBILITY**

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**BY**

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***ABSTRACT***

*The English Language is arguably a world language. In Nigeria, the language has grown so fast to the extent of acquiring important status as the official language, national language, the language of international diplomacy, education, sports, mass media, commerce, administration and the judiciary. It is therefore a national and an international medium of communication. The present study set out to discover the type of English pronunciation exhibited by newscasters on radio and television in Nigeria, and how the level of competence of the newscasters has placed them on a pedestal to achieve international intelligibility and acceptability in their daily endeavours. Thirty-eight news bulletins of five Nigerian media houses and three international media houses (all electronic) were listened to and analyzed using the Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary Third Edition as the standard. It was found out that Nigerian newscasters fall short of the expected target of pronunciation of English segments and non-segments caused by inadequate knowledge of the English phonology, lack of training and exposure, as well as laissez-faire attitude to their job. It has been recommended that Nigerian newscasters should be sent on at least one training programme where English Language is spoken as L<sub>1</sub> in addition to regular courses within the country. It is also suggested that they (Nigerian newscasters) should listen to foreign news in English as well as educated speakers of the language.*

**KEY WORDS: English, Phonology, consonants, vowels, medium, accentuation, Intelligibility, news casters, acceptability and pronunciation**

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**INTRODUCTION**

English language has arguably become a world language. It is used interchangeably with the French language at various international foray ranging from international court proceedings, sports, cultural festivals, trade exhibitions, to academic conferences and technology expositions. In Nigeria English language is the major medium of communication among the various diverse ethnic groups who speak mutually un-intelligible languages. There are 513 Nigerian languages reported by Elugbe as quoted by Eka (2000: 20). Of this number of languages some are mutually intelligible. A typical example is the case of Anang language and Ibibio language in Akwa Ibom State. Furthermore, in Akwa Ibom State all other linguistic groups speak Ibibio as L<sub>1</sub> in addition to their first L<sub>1</sub> (they are therefore coordinate bilinguals). Only Ibibio Speakers may not understand the languages of the other speech communities such as Oro, Ekid, Obolo, and Itu Mbonuso etc.

The Nigerian Language policy as enunciated in the national policy on education first published in 1977 and revised in 1981 and in 1997 (cf Eka 2000:25) makes English language the medium of instruction from the primary school or lower basic to the university level. A pass at credit level in English language is a criterion for admission in any Nigerian university. Apart from academics, English is used in Nigeria as a national language, official language, lingua franca, and language of business transaction, language of law, administration, communication and international diplomacy. It is a language that has solved once and for all the problem of communication across ethnic groups in Nigeria.

The need for this study arose out of the seemingly low performance of our newscasters and duty continuity announcers on radio and television in Nigeria. But the focus of the present study is on newscasters and by implication the pronunciation of English. With an interest on international communication, the aim is to see how our newsreaders perform to the understanding of listeners outside Nigeria particularly those whose mother tongue is English. Listeners from the United States of America, the Great Britain, Australia and South Africa among others can access electronic media news in Nigeria with the availability of modern communication systems. Apart from international listeners, there are many educated users of English who are of Nigerian origin residing in and outside the country who also desire and deserve to understand the news read on radio and television studios in Nigeria.

The major issue of this paper is the pronunciation of English. What is expected of the newscasters is what A.C. Gimson (1984: 301) calls 'careful colloquial style'. The newscasters need to achieve a minimum general intelligibility which equates with high acceptability (Gimson 1984: 301)

In order to achieve Gimson's requirements, our newscasters ought to be educated in the pronunciation of English as well as its grammar and form. For as Eka (1996) observes:

When an L<sub>2</sub> or a foreign speaker of a language (in this case English) is educated in the language, he is shown to have mastered the language so appreciably that he satisfies both national and international standards of intelligibility and acceptability. It is also the model that has relevance to the community (as contrasted with an ideal far removed model like RP). (Eka 1996: 3).

Eka's observation is consistent with Gimson's requirements.

## **Methodology**

This study is a survey of the performance of newsreaders of some Nigerian radio and television stations in addition to foreign television and radio stations covering a period of one month. The media houses are:

1. Federal Radio corporation of Nigeria (FRCN)
2. Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)
3. Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation – (AKBC Radio)
4. Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation Television (AKBC - TV)
5. African Independent Television (AIT)
6. British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC Radio Service)
7. British Broadcasting Corporation, Television Service (BBC - TV)
8. Cable Network News, Television (CNN TV)
9. Voice of America, Radio Service (VOA)

Thirty-eight (38) bulletins of the news broadcast were listened to and analyzed for English vowels, consonants and accentuation. Not all the bulletins of Nigerian media houses had issues in all three variables of pronunciation. The three foreign stations: BBC, VOA and CNN were analyzed as a guide or standard that could be looked up to. My assumption in this

exercise is that since the newsreaders did not know that they were being examined their actual performance could be possible. The rationale/justification for the selection of Nigerian Television Authority news bulletins is that the station exists as an apex or clearing house for state owned stations and it also employs staff (newsreaders) from almost all the states of the federation. Newscasters from the major tribes work at NTA. The same pattern of employment is carried out at the radio arm (FRCN). The geographical spread in personnel is naturally guaranteed.

Akwa Ibom State Television and Radio Stations also represented state-owned media houses while African Independent Television represented private stations. British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Voice of America (VOA) and Cable Network News (CNN) represented standard models.

In this study, the standard pronunciation is taken from Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary (CALD). Deviations from the CALD are scored zero. A deviation in pronunciation from the pronunciation of Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary is taken as a deviation from the standard. Extracts from the 38 news bulletins were analyzed on the variables of vowels, consonants and accentuation.

### **QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE LIMITATIONS**

My limitation was that I did not have the opportunity of listening to the production of a particular feature of the language: segment, non-segment, sentence or stream of speech for a second time except it was repeated by the newsreader. The study could not cover all radio stations (both federal and state) and all arms of Nigerian Television Authority in the country due to shortage of resources.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study sieves through applied linguistics, descriptive linguistics and systemic functional grammar. Schmitt Norbett (2013:1) describes applied linguistics as using what we know about (a) language (b) how it is learned and (c) how it is used in order to achieve some purpose or solve some problem in the real world. Corroborating the above position, Lyons (1981:34) sees applied linguistics as a subfield of linguistics which has as its concerns the application of the concepts and findings of linguistics to a variety of practical tasks. One of the principal tasks of the linguist is to describe languages in a scientific fashion. This activity and the development of the techniques required for its practice can be called descriptive linguistics (Dineen F. P. 1966:1-2). Continuing, Dineen observes that a course in descriptive linguistics usually includes training in phonetics as well as in phonological and grammatical analysis. In this wise, units, categories, descriptive techniques, their value and justification come from a general theory of language founded on a good deal of experience in scientific description of languages. Dineen sees interdependence between descriptive and general, or theoretical linguistics, whereby each unit must be constantly revised in the light of the other. In further explaining descriptive linguistics, Dineen sets down the scientific procedure of the linguist:

The linguist first records all there are to hear, as accurately and objectively as he can. It is not his task to lay down rules for usage, although he would obviously be in a favorable position to do this objectively. The difference between the linguist's approach to language and that of the school grammarian is obviously the difference between a scientific and a humanistic goal. Both objectives are sensible in their own spheres. (Dineen1966:6).

Wikipedia.org. com. (2018) explains that Systemic functional grammar is a system of functional linguistics. It is a theory that is strongly oriented to the description of how language makes meaning in context. It is a tool for exploring meaning in any language, and begins by locating SFL within the larger linguistic community. It is an offshoot of the Systemic Grammar propounded by M a K Halliday. (Wikipedia@<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>).

The type of data collected in this study is called cross sectional data whereby different newscasters each from a particular tribe working in a media house that is of interest to the researcher was listened to and analyzed (cf Anthony woods, Paul Fletcher and Arthur Huge 1986:4).

The major objectives of this study are to discover the performance of some Nigerian newscasters in English phonology, to assess how their competence in English has aided their performance in news-reading and finally to assess how the performance of the newscasters can hinder or facilitate minimum general intelligibility and international acceptability. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations of this study will contribute new insights to national and international communication in English via television and radio broadcasting as well as help the newscasters to sharpen their methods and procedures and reposition electronic media industry for optimal performance.

### **Data Analysis**

The data gathered in the study show that eleven newscasters of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria scored a cumulative average of 37.4% in the pronunciation of vowels. The two newscasters of the Nigerian Television Authority also scored a cumulative average of 37.5% in vowels. Seven newscasters of Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation, radio service scored a cumulative average of 26.8 %in vowels articulation while two newscasters of the AKBC, Television Service scored 64.3 %. In the same vein, newscasters of African Independent Television (AIT) scored an average of 46.7% in vowels. Four newscasters of the British Broadcasting Service (BBC) Radio Service scored a cumulative average of 83.8% in vowels. Similarly, two newscasters of the BBC Television Service scored 88.9% in the pronunciation of English vowels. Three newscasters of the Cable Network News, (CNN) television scored a cumulative average of 79.2% while three newscasters of Voice of America, Radio Service scored 82.9% in English vowels.

The data gathered from the study show that the cumulative average score of eleven newscasters of the Federal Radio Corporation stood at 43.2% in consonants. Of the thirteen newscasters: four of the Nigerian Television Authority, seven of the Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (Radio Service), two of the Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (Television Service) none scored in the consonants selected and analyzed. Two newscasters of African Independent Television scored 50% in English consonants. Expectedly, four newscasters of the British Broadcasting Corporation (Radio Service) scored 75% in English consonants, but two newscasters of the television arm of BBC scored 12.5%. Three newscasters of Cable Network News (CNN) Television Service and three newscasters of the Voice of America (Radio) all scored zero in English consonants for reason(s) that will be handled in the discussion segment.

The data in table 6 shows that eleven newscasters of FRCN scored cumulative average of 47.7% in accentuation and four newscasters of NTA scored 75% while seven newscasters of AKBC (Radio) scored 64.2%. Two newscasters of AKBC (TV) scored 50% in accentuation while two newscasters of African Independent Television scored 50%. As a matter of course, four newscasters of BBC (Radio), two of BBC (TV), three of CNN (TV)

and three of VOA (Radio) all scored 100% in accentuation. The data are presented in the tables below:

TABLE 1 SHOWING THE PERFORMANCE OF NEWSCASTERS IN VOWELS

MEDIA HOUSE	S/N	WORDS STUDIED	REALIZATION OF VOWELS	OF	APPROPRIATE REALIZATION
FRCN(NNN) - BULLETIN 1	1	Violence	/'vaɪləns/		/'vaɪələnts/
	2	Day	/de/		/deɪ/
	3	Explore	/eks'pləʊ/		/ɪks'plɔ:/
	4	Enacted	/e'nækted/		/ɪ'næktɪd/
	5	Secretary	/'sekɹətɹɪ/		/'sekɹətɹɪ/
	6	Politicians	/'pɒlɪtʃənz/		/pəlɪ'tɪʃənz/
	7	Global	/'gləʊbəl/		/'gləʊb(ə)l/
BULLETIN 2	1	Examination	/egzæmɪn'eɪʃn/		/ɪgzæmɪn'eɪʃn/
	2	Entrepreneur	/en'trəprən'ɪɔ/		/ɔn'trəprənɜ(r)/
	3	Embark	/em'bæk/		/ɪm'ba:k/
	4	Twenty-Third	/tɔ:d/		/θɜ:d/
	5	Really	/'ri:li/		/'riəlɪ/
	6	Worthy	/'wɔ:θɪ/		/'wɜ:ðɪ/
	7	Regulation	/regju'leɪʃn/		/regjʊ'leɪʃn/
	8	Tactical	/'tæktɪkəl/		/'tæktɪk(ə)l/
	9	Emmanuel	/ɪ'mænwel/		/ɪ'mænjʊəl/
BULLETIN 3	1	Entrepreneurship	/ɔn'trə'prənɜ:ʃp/		/ɔn'trə'prənɜ:ʃp/
	2	Rate	/reɪt/		/reɪt/
	3	Ameliorate	/ə'mɪ:lɪə'reɪt/		/ə'mɪ:lɪə'reɪt/
	4	Reality	/rɪ'ælɪtɪ/		/rɪ'ælɪtɪ/
	5	Care	/kɪə/		/keə(r)/
	6	Worsening	/'wɔ:sənɪŋ/		/'wɜ:sənɪŋ/
BULLETIN 4	<b>No Issues In Vowels</b>				
BULLETIN 5	<b>No Issues In Vowels</b>				
BULLETIN 6	1	Concern	/kən'san/		/kən'sɜ:n/
	2	Disbursed	/dɪs'bɔ:sd/		/dɪs'bɜ:sd/
	3	Presentation	/prɪzən'teɪʃn/		/prezən'teɪʃn/
	4	Preparation	/prɪpe'reɪʃn/		/prepe'reɪʃ(ə)n/
BULLETIN 7	1	Ascertain	/æ'sətn/		/æso'teɪn/
BULLETIN 8	1	Retirement	/rɪ'taɪmənt/		/rɪ'taləmənt/
	2	Irregularities	/'ɪrɪgʊlə'ɪtɪz/		/'ɪregjʊlə'ɪtɪz/
BULLETIN 9	1	Traversed	/tra'vɑ:sd/		/trə'vɜ:sd/
	2	Through	/θreə/		/θru:/
	3	Optimistic	/ɒptɪ'mɪstɪk/		/ɒptɪ'mɪstɪk/
	4	Commemorate	/kə'memə'reɪt/		/kə'memə'reɪt/
	5	Information	/ɪnfə'meɪʃ(ə)n/		/ɪnfə'meɪʃ(ə)n/
	6	Eradicate	/ɪ'rædɪkeɪt/		/ɪ'rædɪkeɪt/
	7	Cathedral	/kə'θi:drəl/		/kə'θi:drəl/
BULLETIN 10	1	Park	/pɑk/		/pa:k/
	2	Suicide	/'su:sɑɪd/		/'su:ɪsaɪd/
	3	Monitoring	/'mɒnɪtərɪŋ/		/'mɒnɪtərɪŋ/
	4	Custodian	/'kʊstədiən/		/kʌs'təʊdiən/
	5	Custody	/'kʊstədi/		/'kʌstədi/
BULLETIN 11	1	Their	/ðɪə(r)/		/ðeə(r)/

	2	Entire	/en'taɪə/	/ɪn'taɪə/
	3	Suicide	/'sɪʊsaɪd/	/'su:ɪsaɪd/
	4	Ethiopia	/'eθɪəʊpɪə/	/ɪ:θɪ:'əʊpɪə/
	5	Super Eagles	/'supə(r) i:glz/	/'sɪʊpə(r)ɪ:glz/
	6	Coloured	/'kɔlɔ:d/	/'kʌləd/
	7	Various	/'vɪərɪəs/	/'veərɪəs/
NTA(NNN) – BULLETIN 1	1	Their	/ðaɪə/	/ðeə(r)/
	2	Declaration	/dɪklə'reɪʃn/	/deklə'reɪʃ(ə)n/
BULLETIN 2	1	Vandalism	/'vændəlɪzəm/	/'vænd(ə)lɪz(ə)m/
BULLETIN 3	1	Permanent	/'pæmənənt/	/'pɜ:mənənt/
	2	Political	/pə'lɪtɪkəl/	/pə'lɪtɪk(ə)l/
	3	Annual	/'ænjuəl/	/'ænjʊəl/
BULLETIN 4	1	Steering	/'steərɪŋ/	/'stɪrɪŋ/
	2	World	/wɜ:ld/	/wɜ:lɪd/
	3	Singular	/'sɪŋɡjʊlə(r)/	/'sɪŋɡjʊlə(r)/
	4	Serious	/'sɪəriəs/	/'sɪəriəs/
AKBC RADIO – BULLETIN 1	1	Federal	/'federal/	/'fedrəl/
	2	Star Award	/sta:ə'wɔ:d/	/sta:ə'wɔ:d/
	3	Commemorate	/kə'meməreɪt/	/kə'meməreɪt/
	4	En Masse	/'ɒnmæs/	/'ɒ'mæs/
	5	Individuals	/'ɪndɪvɪdʒjuəlz/	/'ɪndɪvɪdʒjuəlz/
	6	Elite	/e'li:t/	/ɪ'li:t/
	7	Executive	/ek'zekjʊtɪv/	/ɪg'zekjʊtɪv/
	8	Jointly	/'dʒɔɪntli/	/dʒɔɪntli/
	9	Development	/de'veləpmənt/	/dɪ'veləpmənt/
	10	Biography	/baɪ'grəfi/	/baɪ'ɒgrəfi/
	11	Deaconess	/'di:kənes/	/'dɪ:kənes/
BULLETIN 2	1	Seriously	/'sɪəriəsli/	/'sɪəriəsli/
	2	Eighteen	/ɛ:'ti:n/	/eɪ'ti:n/
	3	Moral	/'mɔrəl/	/'mɔr(ə)l/
	4	Decadence	/de'kedəns/	/'dekəd(ə)nts/
BULLETIN 3	1	Caucus	/kɔkəs/	/'kɔ:kəs/
	2	Embers	/'embə(r)z/	/'embə(r)z/
	3	Grace	/gɹes/	/gɹeɪs/
	4	Entrepreneur	/'ɒntɹəprə'nɪə(r)/	/'ɒntɹəprə'nɜ:(r)/
	5	Their	/ðaɪə/	/ðeə(r)/
	6	Deliberate(Vb)	/de'lɪbrət/	/dɪ'lɪbəreɪt/
BULLETIN 4	1	Dealers	/dɪləz/	/'di:lə(r)z/
	2	Speaking	/'spi:kɪŋ/	/'spi:kɪŋ/
	3	Characterized	/'kærəktəraɪzd/	/'kærɪktəraɪzd/
BULLETIN 5	1	Trade	/tred/	/treɪd/
	2	Award	/ə'wɜ:d/	/ə'wɔ:d/

	3	Attained	/ə'tend/	/ə'teɪnd/
BULLETIN 6	1	Collaborating	/kəʊləbəʊ'reɪtɪŋ/	/kə'læbərəɪtɪŋ/
	2	Access	/ə'ses/	/ækses/
	3	Commentary	/'kɒməntri/	/'kɒməntri/
BULLETIN 7	1	Slave Trade	/sleɪv/ /treɪd/	/sleɪv/ /treɪd/
	2	Various	/'vɪərɪəs/	/'veərɪəs/
	3	Vehicles	/'vɪkls/	/'vɪ:ɪkls/
AKBC TELEVISION- BULLETIN 1	1	Presentation	/prez(ə)n'teɪʃ(ə)n/	/prez(ə)n'teɪʃ(ə)n/
BULLETIN 2	1	Wreath	/ri:θ/	/ri:θ/
	2	Tomb	/tʊm/	/tu:m/
	3	Their	/ðəɪ/	/ðeə(r)/
	4	Heroes	/'hɪərəʊz/	/'hɪərəʊz/
	5	Clear	/kle(r)/	/klɪə(r)/
	6	Professor	/prə'fesə(r)/	/prə'fesə(r)/
	7	January	/'dʒenwəri/	/'dʒænjuəri/
AIT - BULLETIN 1	1	Workers	/'wɔ:kə(r)s/	/'wɜ:kə(r)s/
	2	Tour	/tʊr/	/tuər/
	3	Work	/wɜ:k/	/wɜ:k/
BULLETIN 2	1	Ascertain	/æsə'teɪn/	/æsə'teɪn/
	2	Heinous	/'hi:nəs/	/'hi:nəs/
	3	Commemorate	/kə'meməreɪt/	/kə'meməreɪt/
	4	Learnt	/la:nt/	/lɜ:nt/
	5	Permanent	/'pɜ:mənənt/	/'pɜ:mənənt/
BBC (RADIO) – BULLETIN 1	1	Preparation	/prep(ə)r'eɪʃ(ə)n/	/prep(ə)r'eɪʃ(ə)n/
	2	World	/wɜ:ld/	/wɜ:ld/
	3	Seeking	/si:kɪŋ/	/sɪ:kɪŋ/
	4	Periods	/'pɪəriədz/	/'pɪəriədz/
	5	Continental	/kɒntɪ'nen(ə)tl/	/kɒntɪ'nen(ə)tl/
	6	Vehicle	/'vɪ:ɪkl/	/'vɪ:ɪkl/
	7	Vehicular	/vɪ'hɪkjʊlə(r)/	/vɪ'hɪkjʊlə(r)/
BULLETIN 2	1	Legal	/'li:g(ə)l/	/'li:g(ə)l/
	2	Row	/raʊ/	/raʊ/
	3	Washington	/'wɒʃɪŋt(ə)n/	/'wɒʃɪŋt(ə)n/
BULLETIN 3	1	Purposes	/'pɜ:pəsɪz/	/'pɜ:pəsɪz/
	2	Programme	/'prəʊgrəm/	/'prəʊgræm/
	3	Community	/kə'mju:nəti/	/kə'mju:nəti/
	4	Monday	/'mʌndeɪ/	/'mʌndeɪ/
	5	Sacking	/'sækɪŋ/	/'sækɪŋ/
	6	Materials	/mə'tɪəriəlz/	/mə'tɪəriəlz/
BULLETIN 4	1	Decades	/'dekeɪdz/	/'dekeɪdz/
	2	World	/wɜ:ld/	/wɜ:ld/
	3	Framework	/'freɪmwɜ:k/	/'freɪmwɜ:k/

	4	Working	/w ɔ:kɪŋ/	/wɜ:kɪŋ/
	5	Mechanism	/'mekənɪz(ə)m/	/'mekənɪz(ə)m/
	6	Friday	/'fraɪdeɪ/	/'fraɪdeɪ/
BBC( TV) BULLETIN 1	1	Stories	/'stɔ:ri:z/	/'stɔ:ri:z/
	2	Wednesday	/'wenzdeɪ/	/'wenzdeɪ/
	3	Thursday	/'θɜ:zdeɪ/	/'θɜ:zdeɪ/
	4	Authority	/ɔ:'θɔ:rtɪ/	/ɔ:'θɔ:rtɪ/
	5	Priority	/'praɪ'ɔ:rtɪ/	/'praɪ'ɔ:rtɪ/
	5	Champion	/'tʃæmpɪən/	/'tʃæmpɪən/
BULLETIN 2	1	Democratic Party	/,demə'krætɪk/ /'pɑ:ri/	/,demə'krætɪk/ /'pɑ:ti/
	2	World	/wɜ:ld/	/wɜ:ld/
	3	Demands	/dɪ'mɑ:ndz/	/dɪ'mɑ:ndz/
	4	Road	/rəʊd/	/rəʊd/
	5	Economic	/ɪkə'nɒmɪk/	/ɪ:kə'nɒmɪk/
	6	Abroad	/ə'brɔ:d/	/ə'brɔ:d/
	7	Lead	/li:d/	/li:d/
	8	Wednesday	/'wenzdeɪ/	/'wenzdeɪ/
	9	Recovery	/'ri:kʌvəri/	/'ri:kʌvəri/
CNN (TV) BULLETIN 1	1	Military	/'mɪlɪtəri/	/'mɪlɪtəri/
	2	City	/'sɪti/	/'sɪti/
	3	Deserted	/dɪ'zɜ:ɪd/	/dɪ'zɜ:ɪd/
	4	Population	/'pɒpjʊ'leɪʃən/	/'pɒpjʊ'leɪʃən/
	5	Deteriorated	/dɪ'tɪəriəreɪt/	/dɪ'tɪəriəreɪt/
	6	Hospital	/'hɒspɪtəl/	/'hɒspɪtəl/
	7	Worse	/wɜ:s/	/wɜ:s/
	8	Trauma	/'trɔ:mə/	/'trɔ:mə/
BULLETIN 2	1	Their	/ðeə (r) /	/ðeə (r) /
	2	Capital	/'kæpɪtəl/	/'kæpɪtəl/
	3	Violence	/'vaɪələnt s/	/'vaɪələnt s/
	4	Critical	/'krɪtɪkəl/	/'krɪtɪkəl/
	5	Insurgents	/'ɪn'sɜ:dʒənt/	/'ɪn'sɜ:dʒənt/
BULLETIN 3	1	Territory	/'terɪtəri/	/'terɪtəri/
	2	Military	/'mɪlɪtəri/	/'mɪlɪtəri/
	3	Entire	/en'taɪər /	/'ɪn'taɪər /
	4	Referendum	/refə'rendəm/	/.refə'rendəm/
	5	Confirms	/kən'fɜ:mz/	/kən'fɜ:mz/
	6	Supporters	/sə'pɔ:rə(r)s/	/sə'pɔ:tə(r)s/
	7	Working	/'wɔ:kɪŋ/	/'wɜ:kɪŋ/
	8	Saturday	/'særədeɪ/	/'sætədeɪ/
	9	Centimetres	/'sentɪmɪ:rə(r)s /	/'sentɪmɪ:tə(r)s/
	10	Top Stories	/'tɒp'stɔ:ri:z/	/'tɒp'stɔ:ri:z/
VOICE OF AMERICA (RADIO) BULLETIN 1	1	Communities	/kə'mju:nəri:z/	/kə'mju:nəti:z/



	2	Military	/ˈmɪlɪtəri/	/ˈmɪlɪtri/
	3	Reprisal	/rɪˈpraɪz(ə)l/	/rɪˈpraɪz(ə)l/
	4	Popularity	ˌpɒpjʊˈlærəri/	ˌpɒpjʊˈlærəti/
	5	Security	/sɪˈkjʊərɪ/	/sɪˈkjʊərɪti/
	6	Responsibility	/rɪˌspɒn/sɪˈbɪlɪ/	/rɪˌspɒn/sɪˈbɪlɪti/
	7	Fighters	ˈfaɪtə(r)s /	ˈfaɪtə(r)s /
	8	Perpetrators	ˈpɜːpətretə(r)s/	ˈpɜːpətretə(r)s /
	9	Behind	/baˈhaɪnd/	/bɪˈhaɪnd/
BULLETIN 2	1	National	ˈnæʃənəl/	ˈnæʃənəl/
	2	Solidarity	ˌsɒlɪˈdærɪ/	ˌsɒlɪˈdærɪti/
	3	Voluntary	ˈvɒləntəri/	ˈvɒləntɪ/
	4	Community	/kəˈmjʊːnəri/	/kəˈmjʊːnəti/
	5	Sunday	ˈsʌndəɪ/	ˈsʌndəɪ/
	6	Prime Minister	/praɪm/ˈmɪnɪstə(r)/	/praɪm/ˈmɪnɪstə(r)/
	7	Eighty	ˈeɪti/	ˈeɪti/
	8	Crew	/kruː/	/kruː/
	9	Sunday	ˈsʌndəɪ/	ˈsʌndəɪ/
	10	Capital	ˈkæpɪtəl/	ˈkæpɪtəl/
	11	Cemetery	ˈsemətəri/	ˈsemətɪ/
BULLETIN 3	1	Stupid	ˈstjuːpɪd/	ˈstjuːpɪd/
	2	Secretary	ˈsekɪtərɪ/	ˈsekɪtərɪ/
	3	Decade	ˈdekeɪd/	ˈdekeɪd/
	4	Capital	ˈkæpɪtəl/	ˈkæpɪtəl/
	5	Fourteen	ˌfɔːˈtiːn/	ˌfɔːˈtiːn/
	6	World	/wɜːld/	/wɜːld/
	7	Economic	ˌiːkəˈnɒmɪk/	ˌiːkəˈnɒmɪk/
	8	Recovery	ˌriːkʌvəri/	ˌriːkʌvəri/
	9	History	ˈhɪstəri/	ˈhɪstəri/
	10	Government	ˈgɒvənmənt/	ˈgʌvənmənt/

TABLE 2 SHOWING THE PERFORMANCE OF NEWSCASTERS IN CONSONANTS

MEDIA HOUSE	S/N	WORDS STUDIED	REALIZATION OF CONSONANTS	APPROPRIATE REALIZATION
FRCN (NNN) BULLETIN 1		No issues in consonants		
Bulletin 2	1	Task	/tɑːs/	/tɑːsk/
Bulletin 3	1	Entrepreneur	ˌentrəprəˈnɜː(r)/	ˌɒntrəprəˈnɜː(r)/
	2	Third	/θɜːd/	/θɜːd/
	3	Gesture	ˈgestʃə(r)/	ˈdʒestʃə(r)/
	4	Regulation	ˌregjʊˈleɪʃən/	ˌregjʊˈleɪʃən/
Bulletin 4	1	Child	/tʃaɪld/	/tʃaɪld/
Bulletin 5	1	Twenty-three	ˈtwenti/ /triː/	ˈtwenti/ /θriː/

Bulletin 6	1	The	/di:/	/ði:/
Bulletin 7		No issues		
Bulletin 8	1	Expressed	/ek'spres/	/ɪk'sprest/
	2	Determined	/dɪ'tamɪn/	/dɪ'tɜ:mɪnd/
	3	One Thousand	/wʌn/ /'θaʊ.zən/	/wʌn/ /'θaʊzənd/
	4	Super	/'su:pə(r)/	/'su:pə(r)/
Bulletin 9	1	Accelerated	/ə'seləreɪt/	/ək'seləreɪt/
Bulletin 10	1	Accessing	/'æsesɪŋ/	/'æksesɪŋ/
Bulletin 11	1	Impacted	/ɪm'pæ(?)ted/	/ɪm'pæktɪd/
Bulletin 12	1	Seven three seven	/'sevən/ /tri:/ /'sevən/	/'sevən/ /θri:/ /'sevən/
Bulletin 13	1	Belonging	/bɪ'lɒŋɪŋ/	/bɪ'lɒŋɪŋ/
		Their	/ðeə(r)/	/ðeə(r)/
NTA(NNN) Bulletin 1	1	Their	/dɪə/	/ðeə(r)/
Bulletin 2	1	Called	/kɔld/	/kɔ:ld/
Bulletin 3	1	Debt	/debt/	/det/
AKBC(Radio)Bulletin 1	1	Executive	/ek'zekʊtɪf/	/ɪg'zekjʊtɪv/
Bulletin 2	1	Singers	/'sɪŋgə(r)s	/'sɪŋə(r)s/
Bulletin 3	1	That	/dæt/	/ðæt /
Bulletin 4	1	End	/en/	/end/
	2	Journalists	/'dʒɜ:nəɪlɪst/	/'dʒɜ:nəɪlɪsts/
Bulletin 5	1	Branch	/brɑ:nʃ/	/brɑ:nʃ/
	2	Privileged	/'prɪvələdʒ/	/'prɪvələdʒd/
Bulletin 6		Access	/'æses/	/'ækses/
Bulletin 7		Back	/bæk(?)/	/bæk/
AKBC (TV) Bulletin 1		Took	/tu(?)/	/tʊk/
Bulletin 2		Twenty thirteen	/'twentɪtɜ:'tɪ:n/	/'twentɪθɜ:'tɪ:n/
		Accessible	/ə'sesəbəl/	/ək'sesəbəl/
AIT (TV) Bulletin 1	1	Independent	/'ɪndɪ'pend (ə) n/	/'ɪndɪ'pend(ə) nt/
	2	Dissolved	/dɪ'zɒlv/	/dɪ'zɒlvd/
	3	Thousand	/'taʊz (ə) n/	/'θaʊz (ə) nd/
	4	Prioritized	/praɪ'ɔrɪtaɪz/	/praɪ'ɔrɪtaɪzd/
	5	Recurrent	/rɪ'kʌr(ə) n /	/rɪ'kʌr(ə) n t/
Bulletin 2		No issues		
BBC (RADIO) Bulletin 1		No issues		
Bulletin 2	1	Capital	/'kæpɪt(ə)l/	/'kæpɪt(ə)l/
Bulletin 3		No Issues		
Bulletin 4		No Issues		
Bulletin 5		No Issues		
BBC (TV) Bulletin 1	1	Traffic	/'træfɪk/	/'træfɪk/
	2	Better	/'berə (r)/	/'betə(r) /
	3	Authorities	/ɔ:'θɔrɪtɪ:z/	/ɔ:'θɔrɪtɪ:z/
	4	Priority	/praɪ'ɔrɪtɪ/	/praɪ'ɔrɪtɪ/
Bulletin 2	1	Democratic	/'demə'krætɪk/	/'demə'krætɪk/
	2	Party	/'pɑ:rtɪ/	/'pɑ:rtɪ/
CNN (TV) Bulletin 1	1	Capital	/'kæpɪtəl/	/'kæpɪtəl/

	2	Deserted	/dɪ'zɜ:ɪd/	/dɪ'zɜ:ɪd/
	3	Hospital	/'hɒspɪ(ə)l/	/'hɒspɪ(ə)l/
Bulletin 2	1	Capital	/'kæpɪtəl/	/'kæpɪtəl/
Bulletin 3	1	Saturday	/'særədeɪ/	/'sætədeɪ/
	2	Centimeters	/'sentɪ,mi:tə(r)s/	/'sentɪ,mi:tə(r)s/
VOA (Radio)Bulletin 1	1	Popularity	/,pɒpjʊ'lærəɪ/	/,pɒpjʊ'lærəɪ/
	2	Security	/sɪ'kjʊəri/	/sɪ'kjʊəri/
	3	Responsibility	/rɪ,spɒn'sɪ'bɪlɪ/	/rɪ,spɒn'sɪ'bɪlɪ/
	4	Fighters	/'faɪtə(r) /	/'faɪtə(r) /
	5	Perpetrators	/'pɜ:pətreɪə(r)s /	/'pɜ:pətreɪə(r)s /
Bulletin 2	1	Solidarity	/'sɒlɪ'dærɪ/	/'sɒlɪ'dærɪ/
	2	Community	/kə'mju:nəɪ/	/kə'mju:nəɪ/
	3	Eighty	/'eɪtɪ/	/'eɪtɪ/
Bulletin 3	1	Capital	/'kæpɪ(ə)l/	/'kæpɪ(ə)l/

TABLE 3 SHOWING THE PERFORMANCE OF NEWSCASTERS IN ACCENTUATION

MEDIA HOUSE	S/N	WORDS STUDIED	REALIZATION OF ACCENTUATION	APPROPRIATE REALIZATION
FRCN (NNN) Bulletin 1	1	Politicians	'Politicians	Poli'ticians
	2	Contribution	Contri'butiun	Contri'butiun
Bulletin 2	1	Professor	'Professor	Pro'fessor
Bulletin 3	1	Component	'Component	Com'ponent
Bulletin 4		No issues		
Bulletin 5		No issues		
Bulletin 6		Distributed	Distri'buted	Di'stributed
Bulletin 7		No issues		
Bulletin 8		No issues		
Bulletin 9		Highlight (verb)	High'light	'Highlight
Bulletin 10		Professor	'Professor	Pro'fessor
		Success	'Success	Suc'cess
Bulletin 11		No issues		
Bulletin 12		Successes	'Successes	Suc'cesses
Bulletin 13		No issues		
NTA (NNN)Bulletin 1		No issues		
Bulletin 2		No issue		
Bulletin 3		No issues		
Bulletin 4		Vandalism	Van'dalism	'Vandalism
AKBC (Radio) Bulletin 1		Ongoing	On'going	'Ongoing
		Secretary General	(?)Secretary 'General	,Secretary 'General
Bulletin 2		Derivatives	Deri'vatives	De'rivatives
Bulletin 3		No issues		
Bulletin 4		No issues		
Bulletin 5		No issues		
Bulletin 6		No issues		
Bulletin 7	1	Ongoing	On'going	'Ongoing
	2	Effect	'Effect	E'ffect
	3	Challenging	Cha'llenging	'Challenging

	4	Professor	'Professor	Pro'fessor
	5	Reputable	Re'putable	'Reputable
	6	Repute	'Repute	Re'pute
ABCT (TV) Bulletin 1		No issues		
Bulletin 2		Professor	'Professor	Pro'fessor
AIT (TV) Bulletin 1		No issues		
Bulletin 2		Genuineness	Ge'nuineness	'Genuineness
BBC (Radio) bulletin 1		No issues		
Bulletin 2		No issues		
Bulletin 3		No issues		
Bulletin 4		No issues		
BBC (TV) Bulletin 1		South Africa	,South 'Africa	,South 'Africa
Bulletin 2		No issues		
CNN (TV) Bulletin 1		Deteriorated	De'teriorated	De'teriorated
Bulletin 2		No issues		
Bulletin 3		No issues		
VOA (Radio) Bulletin 1		No issues		
Bulletin 2				
Bulletin 3		No issues		

TABLE 4. PERFORMANCE OF NEWSCASTERS IN PERCENTAGES: VOWELS

S/N	Name/Bulletin	No of Words	Correct Pronunciation	Deviant Pronunciation	Percentage of Success	Cum. Avr per Media House
1	FRCN 1	7	2	5	28.5	411 / 1,100 x 100 = 37.4
2	FRCN 2	9	0	9	0	
3	FRCN 3	6	4	2	66.5	
4	FRCN 4	5	5	0	100	
5	FRCN 5	4	4	0	100	
6	FRCN 6	4	1	3	25	
7	FRCN 7	1	0	1	0	
8	FRCN 8	2	0	2	0	
9	FRCN 9	7	5	2	71	
10	FRCN 10	5	1	5	20	
11	FRCN 11	7	0	7	0	150 /400 x 100 = 37.5
12	NTA 1	2	0	2	0	
13	NTA 2	1	1	0	100	
14	NTA 3	3	0	3	0	
15	NTA 4	4	2	2	50	186.66 / 700 x 100 = 26.66
16	AKBC (RADIO) 1	11	5	6	45	
17	AKBC (RADIO) 2	4	3	1	75	
18	AKBC (RADIO) 3	6	0	6	0	
19	AKBC (RADIO) 4	3	0	3	0	
20	AKBC (RADIO) 5	3	0	3	0	
21	AKBC (RADIO) 6	3	1	2	33.33	
22	AKBC (RADIO) 7	3	1	3	33.33	128.5 / 200 x 100 = 64.25
23	AKBC (TV) 1	1	1	0	100	
24	AKBC (TV) 2	7	2	5	28.5	
25	AIT 1	3	1	2	33.33	93.33 /

26	AIT 2	5	3	2	60	200 x 100 = 46.7
27	BBC (RADIO) 1	7	6	1	85.5	335.1 / 400 x 100 = 83.8
28	BBC (RADIO) 2	3	2	1	66.6	
29	BBC (RADIO) 3	6	6	0	100	
30	BBC (RADIO) 4	6	5	1	83	
31	BBC (TV) 1	5	5	0	100	177.7 / 200 x 100 = 88.9
32	BBC (TV) 2	9	7	2	77.7	
33	CNN (TV) 1	8	7	1	87.5	237.5 / 300 x 100 = 79.2
34	CNN (TV) 2	5	4	1	80	
35	CNN (TV) 3	10	7	3	70	
36	VOA (RADIO) 1	9	7	2	77.7	248.6 / 300 x 100 = 82.9
37	VOA (RADIO) 2	11	10	1	90.9	
38	VOA (RADIO) 3	10	8	2	80	

TABLE 5. PERFORMANCE OF NEWSCASTERS IN PERCENTAGES: CONSONANTS

S/N	Name/Bulletin	No of Words	Correct Pronunciation	Deviant Pronunciation	Percentage of Success	Cum. Avr per Media House
1	FRCN 1	1	1	0	100	475 / 1,100 x 100 = 43.2
2	FRCN 2	1	1	0	100	
3	FRCN 3	4	3	1	75	
4	FRCN 4	1	0	1	0	
5	FRCN 5	1	0	1	0	
6	FRCN 6	1	0	1	0	
7	FRCN 7	1	1	0	100	
8	FRCN 8	4	3	1	75	
9	FRCN 9	1	0	1	0	
10	FRCN 10	1	0	1	0	
11	FRCN 11	4	1	3	25	
12	NTA 1	1	0	1	0	00.00
13	NTA 2	1	0	1	0	
14	NTA 3	1	0	1	0	
15	NTA 4	1	0	1	0	
16	AKBC (RADIO) 1	1	0	1	0	00.00
17	AKBC (RADIO) 2	1	0	1	0	
18	AKBC (RADIO) 3	1	0	1	0	
19	AKBC (RADIO) 4	1	0	1	0	
20	AKBC (RADIO) 5	1	0	1	0	
21	AKBC (RADIO) 6	1	0	1	0	
22	AKBC (RADIO) 7	1	0	1	0	
23	AKBC (TV) 1	1	0	1	0	00.00
24	AKBC (TV) 2	2	0	2	0	
25	AIT 1	5	0	5	0	100 / 200 x 100 = 50
26	AIT 2	2	2	0	100	
27	BBC (RADIO) 1	2	2	0	100	300 / 400 x 100 = 75
28	BBC (RADIO) 2	1	0	1	0	
29	BBC (RADIO) 3	2	2	0	100	
30	BBC (RADIO) 4	4	4	0	100	

31	BBC (TV) 1	4	1	3	25	25 / 200 x 100 = 12.5
32	BBC (TV) 2	2	0	2	0	
33	CNN (TV) 1	3	0	3	0	00.00
34	CNN (TV) 2	1	0	1	0	
35	CNN (TV) 3	2	0	2	0	
36	VOA (RADIO) 1	5	0	5	0	00.00
37	VOA (RADIO) 2	3	0	3	0	
38	VOA (RADIO) 3	2	0	2	0	

**TABLE 6: PERFORMANCE OF NEWSCASTERS IN PERCENTAGES: ACCENTUATION**

S/N	Name/Bulletin	No of Words	Correct Pronunciation	Deviant Pronunciation	Percentage of Success	Cum. Avr per Media House
1	FRCN 1	2	1	1	50	525 / 1,100 x 100 = 47.7
2	FRCN 2	1	0	1	0	
3	FRCN 3	1	0	1	0	
4	FRCN 4	1	1	0	100	
5	6	FRCN 6	1	0	100	
		1	0	1	0	
7	FRCN 7	1	1	0	100	
8	FRCN 8	1	1	0	100	
9	FRCN 9	1	0	1	0	
10	FRCN 10	1	0	1	0	
11	FRCN 11	4	3	1	75	
12	NTA 1	1	1	0	100	300 / 400 x 100 = 75
13	NTA 2	1	1	0	100	
14	NTA 3	1	1	1	100	
15	NTA 4	1	0	1	0	450 / 700 x 100 = 64.2
16	AKBC (RADIO) 1	2	1	1	50	
17	AKBC (RADIO) 2	1	0	1	0s	
18	AKBC (RADIO) 3	1	1	0	100	
19	AKBC (RADIO) 4	1	1	0	100	
20	AKBC (RADIO) 5	1	1	0	100	
21	AKBC (RADIO) 6	1	1	0	100	
22	AKBC (RADIO) 7	6	0	6	0	100 / 200 x 100 = 50
23	AKBC (TV) 1	1	1	0	100	
24	AKBC (TV) 2	1	0	1	0	400 / 400 x 100 = 100
25	AIT 1	1	1	0	100	
26	AIT 2	1	0	1	0	
27	BBC (RADIO) 1	1	1	0	100	
28	BBC (RADIO) 2	1	1	0	100	200 / 200 x 100 = 100
29	BBC (RADIO) 3	1	1	0	100	
30	BBC (RADIO) 4	1	1	0	100	
31	BBC (TV) 1	1	1	0	100	300 / 300 x 100 = 100
32	BBC (TV) 2	1	1	0	100	
33	CNN (TV) 1	1	1	0	100	300 / 300 x 100 = 100
34	CNN (TV) 2	1	1	0	100	
35	CNN (TV) 3	1	1	0	100	
36	VOA (RADIO) 1	1	1	0	100	300 / 300 x 100 = 100
37	VOA (RADIO) 2	1	1	0	100	
38	VOA (RADIO) 3	1	1	0	100	

**DISCUSSION**

**a. VOWELS**

The discovery in this study is that English vowels pose a greater difficulty of pronunciation for the Nigerian speakers of the language than other aspects of English phonology namely, consonants and accentuation. English vowels are categorized into single sound segments, diphthongs and trip thongs. Right from Table 1 the diphthong /eɪ/ is reduced to /e/ in *day*, *grace*, *eighteen* and *trade* by the Nigerian newscasters. This performance highly contrasts with the pronunciation of the same diphthong in Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday by foreign newscasters. The difficulty in pronouncing /eɪ/ in *ascertain* is an analogous error in the sense that majority of Nigerian speakers are acquainted with the word *certain* which second syllable is pronounced with zero vowel as /tɪn/ and apply the same analogy wrongly. Conversely, Nigerian newscasters substitute vowel number 9 /u:/ for the diphthong /əʊ/. Examples are found in their pronunciation of *through* and *tomb*. This feature is partly analogous and partly inter-lingual. Consider words such as *throw* and *tone*. There is a substitution of the diphthong /eə/ for /ɪə/ in *various*, and *care* and *their* and /ɪə/ for /e/ in *serious* in table 1. Note that the words: *their*, *there* and *they're* take a similar diphthong-/eə/. Another wrong substitution of diphthong is the case of /eə/ for /ɪə/ in *clear* and /e/ for /eɪ/ in *attained*. The trip thong /aɪə/ in *violence* and *biography* seems to present both inter-lingual and intra-lingual difficulties to Nigerian newscasters. The same holds true in the realization of *retirement* where the trip thong is reduced to diphthong /aɪ/ in the middle syllable. There is a rampant case of rendering *tour* as /tɔ:(r)/. Quite awful! This is why the major concern of this study is the achievement of international intelligibility.

The diphthong /eə/ issued in steering instead of the vowel /ɪ/. This difficulty is purely inter-lingual which can be solved through listening to educated speakers or researching. The point must be made here that Nigerian speakers of English appear somewhat impatient when it comes to the articulation of English trip thongs quite unmindful of the fact that herein lies the melody and the beauty of English speech. Some English words containing trip thongs are *diary*, *science* and *psychiatry*.

Of the twelve English pure vowels, few do not present difficulties to the Nigerian speakers of English. These are likely to be vowel numbers 1, 3, 6 and 8. /ɪ, e, ɒ, ʊ/. The long vowels, the centering vowels and the schwa present difficulties of appropriate realization to Nigerian speakers of English. From inter-lingual point of view, the five words: *explore*, *enacted*, *examination*, *eradicate* and *embark* in table 1 show that many Nigerian speakers are yet to realize that many English words beginning with the grapheme [e] takes the vowels /ɪ/. It does appear that if such words appeared ten times in each bulletin the pronunciation of Nigerian Newscasters would have been the same. The impatience of Nigerian speakers in according English vowels their length quality can be observed in the pronunciation of words such as: *explore*, *concern*, *through*, *park*, *permanent*, *elite*, *deaconess*, *caucus*, *dealers* and *speaking*, these lexical items were articulated with short vowels. Newscasters ought to be serious in their work and act as models. They may be understood locally but we are considering international intelligibility and acceptability.

Vowel number 4/æ/ is known to present difficulty of realization to Nigerian speakers. It could not be articulated in *eradicate*, *annual*, *access* and *January*. The vowel in these words was reduced to its local counterpart /a/. Similarly, the long vowel number 5/a:/ in words such *park* and *embark*, was reduced to the short local /a/. Vowel number 7 /ɔ:/ was reduced to number 6 in *caucus*. There is a peculiar substitution of vowel number 11/ɜ:/ with

vowel number 7/ɔ: / or / ɔ/ in *worth, worthy, third, entrepreneur, worsening, worse, world, work, working, disbursed*. There is an important note to be taken here. The foreign newscasters quite a lot of times pronounce world with vowel number 7 instead of number 11 particularly when it is in a string like *world news* and *world war*. We do not know where to place this language behavior. It could be an act of idiosyncrasy, or anything. On any other occasion apart from news casting, the L<sub>1</sub> speakers realize *world* with vowel number 11. There is a case of regionalist with the pronunciation of vowel number 11. Some of the newscasters' substitute /ɜ:/ for /a:/ or /a/. This output was exemplified in *concern, traversed, learnt* and *permanent*. This is a case of mother tongue interference i.e. Interlingua issue. The newscasters need to listen to educated users of the language speak and try to overcome the L<sub>1</sub> influence. There is a case of substituting a short vowel for a long contiguous vowel in the pronunciation of *coloured*. The Nigerian news reader pronounced /'kələʊ: d / instead of /'kʌl.əd/

The data are much and not all the deviations in vowels can be discussed in this paper. For example *deliberate* (v and *characterized* which diphthong /eɪ/ in the second syllable and the segment /ɪ/ in the second syllable of the former and the latter are substituted by /e/ and /a/. A cursory look at the table will be of an advantage. It is in the interest of this paper to state that the foreign newscasters actually act as models as the only deviations exhibited by them were in *world* and perhaps *legal* were vowel number 7 /ɔ: / and number 12 -/ə/were used instead of 11 and 1. We assume this to be idiosyncrasy in language use. It must also be mentioned that Nigerian newscasters have performed creditably in the pronunciation of vowel number 12, the schwa. Cases of deviations in respect of this segment in this study have been very few. This may result from conscious learning effort.

## b. CONSONANTS

Perhaps the greatest difficulty of realization of English phonemes confronting the Nigerian speaker is the case of unreleased plosive. English plosives are: /p,b,t,d,k,g/. In the tables some transcriptions have the question mark (?) in the place of a consonant. This shows that the consonant was not properly realized or released. Examples are such words as: expressed - /t /, determined - /d/, impacted - /k/, called / d/, privileged - /d/, back - /k /, took - / k /, independent - / t/, dissolved - /d / and prioritized - / d /. The inability or refusal of Nigerians to release plosives and sometimes final consonants may lead to misunderstanding by listeners who are not Nigerians and whose mother tongue is perhaps English. Nigerian listeners may also have some difficulty of understanding the message. The realization of final consonants and release of plosives are what make L<sub>1</sub> speech in English interesting.

The absence of palatal semi-vowel /j/ in words that have consonant +ɪ is another deviant pronunciation by our Nigerians newscasters. The words: *regulation* and *executive* were pronounced by our newscasters without the palatal semi-vowel. Only vowel number 8 /ʊ/ was used instead. What were realized were /,regʊ'leɪʃən/ and/ek'zekʊtv/instead of /regjʊ'leɪʃən/and/ɪg'zekjʊtv/. Such a pronunciation exemplifies regionalist of a certain kind. Research and in-service training are recommended to help the Nigerian newscasters achieve this goal. Another issue which came up in this research is the difficulty of articulating the alveolar liquid lateral /l / when it precedes a consonant. An example is *child which* is pronounced without the / l / as /tʃaɪd/. The discussion of this feature may come under



phonotactics. What is recommended is training and practice to overcome the L<sub>1</sub> influence. Both the voiced interdental fricative /ð / and its voiceless counterpart: /θ / present difficulty of articulation to Nigerian newscasters. These two sounds were reduced to contiguous sounds like /d/ for /ð / and /t / for /θ /. Thus three, *the*, *their*, *that* and *thirteen* were rendered as tree, di, deir, dat and thirteen.

Another issue with the realization of final consonant is the voiced labia-dental fricative /v/ at word-final positions which in many instances is reduced to its voiceless counterpart /f/. An example was exhibited in the pronunciation of the word: *executive*. The pronunciation of the velar nasal /ŋ / when two of them appear with an intruding vowel in English present some challenges to our newscasters and Nigerians generally. Some Nigerian speakers like our newscasters disregard the nasal and go ahead to articulate the voiced velar plosive /g /. At other times they pronounce the velar nasal and end with the plosive / g / so that instead of having /bɪ'lɒŋɪ ŋ/ we hear / bɪ'lɒŋgɪŋ/ This is a deviant pronunciation which requires verification by newsreaders. Words of this nature include: singer, hanger, hangar, and bringing etc. The study featured *belonging* and *singers* which were not appropriately realized by Nigerian newscasters.

In majority of English words where the alphabet [ c] is double the first one is always realized as voiceless velar plosive /k/ while the second one is realized as voiceless alveolar fricative /s/. In this study *accessing* and *access* were realized as *assessing* and *assess*. This is why the concern of this paper is international intelligibility. Very unfortunately there are English words like *assessing* and *assess* which mean evaluating and evaluate or examining and examine or testing and test. The listener is very likely to be misled into thinking that the newscasters are reading *examining* and *examine* instead of getting a way through. These words came in the bulletin which featured pension reforms in the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, and listeners could think that *evaluating* was intended instead of *processing* the fund. The same deviant pronunciation was exhibited in the articulation of *accessible*. Our newscasters need to be more serious with their work. The realization of the voiced bi-labial plosive /b/ in *debt* shows an imperfect knowledge of English phonology and the problem is analogous. One should be careful with English phonemes for while *worth* is pronounced with voiceless interdental fricative, *worthy* is pronounced with its voiced counterpart.

It should be noted that table 5 shows that newscasters in BBC scored 100% in consonants while newscasters in CNN and VOA scored zero in all cases. The reason is not far-fetched. The American newscasters do not normally realize the voiceless alveolar plosive /t/ in syllable final positions. They substitute it with either /d/ or /ɾ/. Examples of such words in the study were: *better*, *authorities*, *priority*, *capital*, *hospital*, *democratic*, *party*, *centimetres* etc. Since this study looks at deviations from the system of Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary as inappropriate, the American newscasters were scored zero in this respect.

### c. ACCENTUATION

Accentuation and stress could be used interchangeably. Eka (1996: 112) observes that we can analyze in perceptual terms: the place that the hearer perceives prominence whether in the sound or the syllable or the word or a longer utterance. We can therefore analyze accentuation in phonological terms: the way prominence is organized in relation to sounds, syllables, words or other utterances. Where therefore we use the word accentuation... the reader is free to think about stress...its components in perceptual or phonetic terms. Accentuation as prominence can be achieved through a very intimate combination of two or

more of length, stress, pitch and inherent sonority (Ward 1972: 156). For Gimson (1984:33) stress is greater breadth effort by the speaker and loudness for the listener.

The Nigerian newscasters performed better in accentuation than in segments. Table 6 shows the cumulative average of 47.7% by newsreaders of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria. Newscasters in NTA scored 75%, those of AKBC (Radio) scored 64.2%. This performance shows a remarkable improvement compared to their performance in segments. Few problematic areas include: *professor*, *component*, *distributed*, *success*, *repute* and *derivatives*. The above listed English words have the principal stress or accentuation on the second syllable. The Nigerian newsreaders placed the stress on the first syllables of these words which was adjudged inappropriate or deviant. A word like *success* has the same accentuation pattern in all its paradigms: *succeed*, *successful*, *succeeding*, *succession*, *successor*, and *successive*. The deviant placement of stress on such words by the newscasters could be caused by wrong models, lack of training and exposure and lack of research. A corollary of the above description is the confusion in the realization of the primary stress on the first syllable of these English lexes: *highlight*, *vandalism*, *ongoing*, *challenging*, and *reputable* and *genuineness*. The Nigerian newsreaders exhibited deviant performance as they placed the stress on the second syllable. A word like *highlight* has the same stress pattern as a verb and as a noun. Another word that behaves like *highlight* is *approach*. The words: *politician* and *contribution* have the primary stress on the third syllable. The newsreader scored right on *contribution* the one who read *politician* scored wrong. Listening to the FRCN newscaster read *politician*, the wrong stress pattern sounded idiosyncratic: peculiarity of style. It should be noted that accentuation in this study was analyzed in connected speeches and not in words in isolation. The L<sub>1</sub> speakers in VOA, BBC, CNN all scored 100% in accentuation.

The articulation of *Secretary General* by newscasters in Nigeria is negatively peculiar. The L<sub>1</sub> newscasters render the first word, *secretary* as though it were in isolation and then proceed to the second word: *general* with a purposeful prominence. The Nigerian newsreaders take a nose-dive intonation in the first word before resurfacing as from water to pronounce the second word. Note a similar string: *director general*. In the pronunciation of the word *deteriorate*, the Nigerian newscasters sometimes squeeze the syllables and consequently miss the beauty of the word. The stress is necessary in this word that contains three diphthongs. The first stretch can be shortened to single sound segment but the last two must be realized for the beauty of the word to come out.

## CONCLUSION

There is some measure of arbitrariness in American English. In order to maintain the flow of intonation, prepositions can be stressed and segments can be faulted. An example was in the speech of Barack Obama who emphasized: 1. *No American troops will be left behind*. 2. *Last year Warsaw extended its lead by fifteen years*.

Listening to the speech of the former President the last two words: *behind* and *years* received emphatic stress. The Americans and perhaps the Britons rely on high pitch and keep the end of the sentence on a level tone whereas Nigerians keep it (the end of the sentence) on a low - tone. The Nigerian newscasters use the Nigerian style of raising the middle of sentences in order to land on a falling tone whereas the L<sub>1</sub> use level sequences. Some Nigerian newscasters do not show evidence of regular training and updating of knowledge and skills of the job of news reading and presentation. The African Independent Television- AIT which was chosen to represent private media houses has failed to prove its mettle as its newscasters have performed far lower than the personnel of FRCN and the NTA.

Generally, Nigerian newscasters are not fully conscious of the release of plosives in word final positions. On the contrary, British and American newscasters depend on this to

make meanings of words and sentences clear. The [d] morpheme as marker of past tense suffers the risk of not being realized in a great many instances. Nigerian newscasters generally perform better in segments and non-segments in news analysis than in actual news. The reason for this situation might be enough rehearsal and more consciousness for the former than the latter. Finally, newscasters of the National Network News in the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria – (FRCN) have shown remarkable competence over State Radio newscasters resulting in the former achieving higher level of international intelligibility. Newscasters of BBC, VOA and CNN stress important words in sentences particularly last words realize final consonants, achieve natural stress patterns for lexes and sentences and place emphatic stress on diphthongs and trip thongs. The difference between the L<sub>1</sub>newscasters and Nigerian newsreaders is the achievement by the former of effortless realization of segments and non-segments while the latter depend on conscious efforts. Nevertheless, there is a great degree of international intelligibility particularly with mainstream newscasters of FRCN and the NTA.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The first recommendation is that Nigerian newscasters should be sent on training courses at where English is spoken as L<sub>1</sub> for example the United Kingdom of Great Britain at least once. This is what is done for French students who attend a training programme in Paris. Secondly, Nigerian newscasters should go on refresher courses even locally from time to time. Nigerian newscasters should form the habit of listening to English L<sub>1</sub>speakers on radio and television. Finally, an assessment mechanism for forcing newscasters to research and improve on their own should be put in place by different media houses. This could be tied to promotion to make the motivation partly intrinsic. All efforts should be geared toward motivating the newscasters to eschew laziness and complacency. These steps will place our newsreaders on a pedestal which they will achieve general acceptability and international intelligibility in the English phonology.

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