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Stress Patterning and Politicking: A Study of Campaign Speeches of Selected Ibibio/English-Bilingual Politicians

Dr. Charles O. Effiong

Chief Lecturer, Department of English, Akwa Ibom State College of Education, Nigeria

Daniel Inyang

Lecturer, Department of English, Akwa Ibom State College of Education, Nigeria

Prince Wekpa

MA Candidate, Department of English, University of Uyo, Nigeria

Abstract:

The work investigated the use of word stress and accentuation by the Ibibio/English-bilingual politicians in politics and implication of the use of the prosodic feature in the Ibibio socio-political-cultural environment. The data for the study, recorded campaign speeches, were gathered between January and April, 2015. Word stress was analyzed based on Metrical Phonology framework propounded by Liberman & Prince (1977), and accentuation was studied with the help of a computer digitalized system –PRAAT (version 5.1.25) developed by Boersma and Weenink. The analysis showed that subjects accented both grammatical and content words in their utterances and there was a proliferation of accented syllables in the speeches –a characteristic of the native Ibibio language of the subjects. Thus the tempo of the speeches was dragged and the rhythm was mostly syllable-timed. While the conclusion therefore was that the subjects do not use stress and accentuation the way native speakers do, the implication for the subjects' performance was that subjects in some cases wanted to be down to earth with the electorates and did not want to alienate themselves even if they had the ability to be sophisticated in the language. The study recommended that researchers should no more over dwell in finding out whether the Ibibio and Nigerian speakers of English speak the language with native-like intuition or not, but in extracting the peculiar characteristics of the Nigerian English that make the language Nigerian and adoptable for both political and academic purposes.

Keywords: Stress, accentuation, patterning, politicking, bi-linguals, campaign, rhythm, tone

1. Introduction

English language has been seen as the most domineering legacy of the British colonial government in Nigeria, and other African countries which were colonies of Britain. This language, embraced alongside the already existent multiple languages in the country, forms part of the peoples way of life and culture. Its history in Nigeria is likened to oral history of literature in Africa which is transmitted from one generation to another. A lot of researchers have traced and documented the history of the language in Nigeria from different standpoints, though no one is certain about the actual date that the language began to be used/was first used.

Taiwo's (2009) view as to when English language was first used on the Nigerian soil is that English language dates back to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries when British Merchants and Christian missionaries settled in the coastal towns called Badagry, close to Lagos in the present South-Western region of Nigeria and Calabar in the present South-Southern Nigeria. This opinion corroborates Eka (2000) and Gut (2004). According to Gut, English language served as a language of trade for communication between Englishmen and Nigerians in the various forts along the Nigerian coast. Consequent upon its function as a common language, English language becomes invaluable in Nigeria. Apart from serving as a symbol of modernization and a means of success and mobility, as it is used in international communication, it is the language of science and technology, literature and arts, the language carries with it a prospect of social as well as material gain (cf Gut, 2004; Taiwo, 2009).

As mentioned earlier, English language came in contact with the already existent Nigerian languages, each of which expresses and transmits the culture, philosophies and the general worldview of its users. Eka (2000) suggests that languages in contact presuppose people (speakers of two or more languages) coming together for communication purposes. Explaining the consequence of language in contact, he maintains that a speaker is bound to demonstrate appreciable mastery of the two languages; and that such a speaker maybe referred to as a bilingual. In the repertoire of the speaker, it is generally observed that one of the languages may become dominant in the sense that the dominant language is more frequently used or it may be considered more prestigious than the other. According to Okebiurun (2014, p.1), from the sociolinguistic point of view, 'diglossia, language shift or language death may occur when two or more languages are in contact'. This complements Adekunle (1985) who, deploying the theory of language change and linguistic variation, comes

to a conclusion that 'what constitutes the changes in English language usage in Nigeria came as a result of inexorable pressure in the social environment of the language'.

From the foregoing, it is clear that what is known as Nigerian English today is a product of certain socio-linguistic factors in Nigeria which affect performance in Standard British English. Utiam (2014) views the present form and status of English as resulting from the contact between English and Nigerian languages in the socio-cultural and political situation which consequently converted English to a second language with a distinctive Nigerian flavour. Utiam (2014) believes that English in Nigeria should have its uniqueness. This uniqueness of English in the Nigerian environment is traceable to the social values and cultural norms offered by the Nigerian society itself. This view confirms earlier studies (cf 1995; Eka, 1985, 2000; Jowit, 1991; Udofot, 1997) which emphasize the core features of Nigerian English. The summary of the above is that, wherever English has spread to and remained for some length of time, it gets naturalized, and thus develops peculiar features reflecting its new environment. These peculiar features are manifest in the areas of sounds, intonation, rhythm accentuation or structural patterns. This paper therefore is designed to investigate how words stress/accentuation is used by the Ibibio/English bilinguals in the Ibibio culture of politicking.

2. Related Literature

Several scholars have researched into the various characteristic features and the use to which the English language is put in Nigeria. Of these studies, of specific interest to this paper are those concerned about the prosodic features of the language. Gut (2001) is one of the works which associate the English language spoken in Nigeria to the identity and culture of the Nigerian speakers. Gut analyzed the prosodic features of the Standard Nigerian English and compared to those of Southern British English. He was of the view that these two varieties differ significantly from each other. Subjecting read and semi-spontaneous speeches to acoustic analysis, he found out that Nigerian speakers of the English language split texts into more phrases than British English speakers and therefore realize comparatively few syllables in each phrase. Also, in the study, there were greater vowel intervals in Nigerian English than in British English making a difference in rhythm, and tonal inflections were observed to run through Nigerian English as they do in Nigerian indigenous languages. Gut's study confirms that although there could be a high level of even international intelligibility, not ruled out is the fact that these apparent differences maintain and sustain the identity of the Nigerian speakers as recoverable from the raw materials of their indigenous cultures.

Josiah and Akpan (2016) re-echo this cultural identity construction which results from the hybridization of the prosodic features of English and Nigerian indigenous languages. The duo examined the major challenges Akwa Ibom English bilinguals experience in attempt to realize the English rhythm. Using a production test, they tested 60 respondents from three major ethnic groups of Akwa Ibom State (Oron, Ibibio and Anaang) to ascertain speakers' abilities in producing the English rhythm using Quirk and Greenbaum's (1973) and Eka's (1993) excerpts as control. The data mounted on metrical-theoretical framework was analyzed perceptually and acoustically, their study observes that:

some educated Nigerian English users are faced with the problem of improper articulation of rhythm. It was also discovered that the ability to realise the correct rhythm depends on the respondents' academic discipline and level of education. Besides, it was observed that some of the problems encountered by the subjects arise from mother-tongue interference. The authors attempt to prove that studying and understanding the proper rhythm in an English utterance requires adequate knowledge of the rhythms in Standard English (p. 16).

Obviously, the above observations assert Nigerian English as possessive of its own specific rhythm re-produced from and by the inflections of the Nigerian speakers' languages existent in Nigerian cultures. As a matter of fact, since Nigeria is a cornucopia of different languages, identities are enacted as we move from one region or linguistic group to another. Josiah and Akpan conclude that 'inadequate knowledge of the correct rhythms of the English language has resulted in distortion of meaning and low level of intelligibility, leading to misunderstanding of utterances during social interactions' (p.16).

Nigerian English is often known to reorder stress patterns. Nigerian speakers of the English language preferably go for a rightward syllable in placing primary stress. Sunday and Oyakotun (2016) confirm this in their paper. Studying the three major Nigerian ethnic groups (Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba), both authors also note that the Nigerian English is marked by the placement of vowels in places where syllabic consonants are supposed to occur in the British variety, the lack of vowel obscurity as all vowels are realized in their full forms, no occurrence of syncope, and a high pitch being the prominent determinant of stress undermining other determinants such as intensity and duration. They made these observations by administering normative texts to 150 educated Nigerians spread across the three ethnic groups and, with optimality theory, analyzing the recorded productions perceptually and acoustically. Sunday and Oyakotun's (2016) observations further massage the fact that a speaker's identity is largely wrapped around language which is in itself influenced by culture and ethnicity. According to them, and as the present study notes using the contours of Ibibio English bilinguals, tone inherent in our indigenous languages characterizes the Nigerian English, thus lending to it its own colour of identity.

Essien's (2018) study proves the identity inherently attached to and constructed in the prosodic features of Nigerian English accent, especially stress and rhythm. She examined specifically the Educated Nigerian Accent of English (ENAE) to analyze its stress and rhythmic patterns using the British English accent as control. The study was premised on the fact that the Nigerian stress and rhythmic patterns are remarkably different from the British stress and rhythmic patterns where the speakers of the former feature more stressed syllables in their speech so that the rhythm becomes 'jerky' and communication 'distorted' (p. 30). To verify this claim, through Random Sampling Technique, she selected from two Nigerian federal universities twenty Nigerian speakers educated in the language and compared them to a Briton who

served as the control. Subjecting the study to a metrical-theoretical analysis, Essien (2018) found out that the Nigerian speakers feature more stressed syllables and frequently spend more time in pronouncing stressed syllables. She thus concludes by affirming the premise. The implication of this, this paper adds, is that the difference in rhythm, possibly caused by the numerous existing languages in Nigeria, immediately identifies the accent as Nigerian, thus enacting a cultural identity. Josiah and Akpan's observations and conclusions largely align with Essien's (2018) in the uniqueness of the Nigerian accent as its own marker of Nigerian cultural identity.

The studies above are agreed on one cardinal truth that language is the tool through which culture and identity are driven. The preference for the English language, even the bastardized form or Pidgin English over the estimated 500 indigenous Nigerian languages, is a pointer too to the culture of preference for what is sophisticated and foreign against what is simple and indigenous among Nigerians. The English language amongst the Ibibio is a symbol of pride and prestige, and it has become the integral part of and a vehicle that promotes the Ibibio culture. This present paper differs a bit from the works reviewed above in its concentration on Ibibio/English bilinguals and its approach in investigating how the language, which is also part of the Ibibio socio-political life, is deployed in politicking with particular attention to accentuation.

3. Methodology

It is generally observable, especially in Nigeria that it is mostly when politicians campaign for political power that they become readily available, accessible and relational. Therefore, 15 Ibibio/English-bilingual politicians' campaign speeches of the 2015 general elections were selected. The selected speeches formed the data for this study. The data were mainly audio recordings of campaign speeches delivered by the subjects at open-air campaigns and some from television and radio interviews recorded using an audio recorder. These data were subjected to both theoretical and acoustic analyses to uncover the way Ibibio/English-bilingual politicians employ prosodic nuances in their speeches during campaigns. The theory used was metrical theory; PRAAT software (version 5.1.25) developed by Boersma and Weenink (2001) for a computer digitalization of the recorded utterances was used for digital analysis. The researchers built text grids with interval and point tiers. Within the interval tier, a three-tier system consisting of the sentence, word and syllable was built. In the point tier, four tiers were created to show readings for intensity, pitch, syllable duration and utterance duration. The audio recordings were played through the software, and the selected utterances annotated according to individual speakers only specified UT1-15.

4. Theoretical Underpinning

The theory employed in this research is metrical theory. The central assumption of metrical phonology is that stress is a relational property, represented by prominence relations between constituents in hierarchical structures (Lieberman, 1975; Lieberman & Prince, 1977; Hayes, 1981). The theory was deployed in this work to study the hierarchical rhythmic organization of utterances since the theory proposes that utterances are organized: segments are organized into syllables and syllables are organized into feet. In analyzing stress, we adopted a system in which stress is defined on a tree structure where nodes are used. These nodes divide binary into Strong (S) and Weak (W) nodes. Sister nodes are labelled S W or W S. 'S' stands for stronger than W, and 'W' stands for weaker than S; of course no other labelling or branching is permissible within this framework. Therefore, branching such as: SS and WW are not allowed. This does not only apply at word level but also at sentence level.

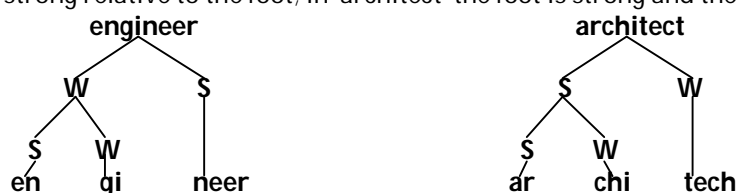
As explained by Kreidler (2004), numerous English words contain one strong syllable (containing the stressed vowel) and one or more weak syllables, as in these examples:

S w	w S	S w w	w S w
Salad	balloon	bulletin	remember

In long words, there may be two strong syllables, but only one of the strong syllables is the stressed syllable.

s w S	S w s	S w s w	s w S w
engineer	architect	architecture	California

Metrical Phonology recognizes another prosodic unit between syllable and tone unit, the foot. A foot consists of two syllables, one strong and the other weak. A word with two syllables contains one foot; a four-syllable word has two feet, and so on. A word may contain one extra syllable. The words 'engineer' and 'architect' both consist of a foot plus an extra syllable, and in both words the foot consists of a strong syllable followed by a weak syllable. In 'engineer' the extra syllable is strong relative to the foot; in 'architect' the foot is strong and the extra syllable is weak.



For thoroughness in the analysis to indicate cases of stress clash, timing and rhythmic alternations of syllables in the respondents' speeches, metrical grids were used to analyze certain words. For instance, let us consider the metrical grid of the sentence *Johnny dislikes paperbacks* used for illustration below.

11
8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Johnny dislike paperback

There are seven syllables assigned the numbers 1-7; the stressed syllables are reassigned 8, 9 and 10 and the Nuclear Stress Rule (NSR) is applied to assign to the first syllable of *paperback* the Nuclear Stress (Akinjobi 2012). The beauty of this theory is that it also accounts for secondary accent by showing stress clash i.e., a situation where adjacent syllables are stressed. This work, therefore, draws insight from metrical theory because of its thoroughness in stress analysis.

5. Presentation of Data/Discussion on Word Stress

The data for this study were gathered within the period of January and April, 2015. From the audio recordings, the first 20 content words ranging from bi-syllabic to poly-syllabic words were extracted from each of the subjects' utterances. The stressed syllables of each of the extracted words were perceptually and instrumentally determined by the researchers. The words were finally analyzed statistically, metrically and acoustically using PRAAT (version 5.1.25). Sentences were also randomly selected from the utterances and subjected to acoustic analysis to arrive at the intonation and rhythmic patterns discovered in the study. For stress assignment on individual words, Daniel Jones' *English Pronouncing Dictionary* (2006) was used as control. The analysis of findings from the research is here presented starting with stress assignment on individual words. The table below presents the number of properly stressed items and deviations in percentage.

Utterances	Num of Appropriately Assigned Word Stress	Deviation	Percentage of Appropriately Assigned Word Stress	Percentage of Deviation
UTT1	15	5	75%	25%
UTT2	14	6	70%	30%
UTT3	14	6	70%	30%
UTT4	15	5	75%	25%
UTT5	16	4	80%	20%
UTT6	15	5	70%	30%
UTT7	14	6	70%	30%
UTT8	16	4	80%	20%
UTT9	17	3	85%	15%
UTT10	17	3	85%	15%
UTT11	14	6	70%	30%
UTT12	10	10	50%	50%
UTT13	14	6	70%	30%
UTT14	17	3	85%	15%
UTT15	15	5	75%	25%
Total	223	77	74.3%	25.7%

Table 1

From the data, the researchers discovered that subjects used more of mono and by-syllabic words in their utterances to corroborate Banjo, Ayodele & Ndahi (2010) who posited that, in impromptu or spontaneous speeches, speakers tend to use mono-syllabic words much more than multi-syllabic ones. The mono/di-syllabic words were in most situations properly accented by the subjects. However, the subjects found difficulties in accenting most of the poly-syllabic words they used though some of such words constituted the common register of politics. This is shown in Table 2 below.

Utterances	Words	Stress Assignment	Received Pronunciation
UT1	Initiative	/ɪnɪʃɪətɪv/	/ɪnɪʃɪətɪv/
	Paramount	/'pærə'maʊnt/	/'pærəmaʊnt/
UT2	Indomitable	/'ɪndɒmɪtəbl/	/'ɪndɒmɪtəbl/
	Honourable	/'ɒnərəbl/	/'ɒnərəbl/
UT3	Recognize	/'rekəg'naiz/	/'rekəgnaɪz/
	Recognition	/'rekəg'nɪʃən/	/'rekəg'nɪʃən/
UT4	Ascertain	/'æ'sətɛɪn/	/'æ'sə'teɪn/
	Destination	/'destɪ'neɪʃən/	/'destɪ'neɪʃən/
UT5	Politician	/'pɒlɪ'tɪʃən/	/'pɒlɪ'tɪʃən/
	Nominated	/'nɒmɪ'neɪtɪd/	/'nɒmɪneɪtɪd/

Utterances	Words	Stress Assignment	Received Pronunciation
UT6	Legislator representative	/lədʒɪs'leɪtə/ /'reɪprɪ'zentetɪv/	/'lədʒɪsleɪtə/ /reɪprɪ'zentetɪv/
UT7	Mobilize Celebrate	/məʊbɪ'laɪz/ /seɪlɪ'bret/	/'məʊbɪlaɪz/ /'seɪlbret/
UT8	Educated Communicate	/edʒju'kertɪd/ /kəmju:nɪ'kert/	/'edʒjukertɪd/ /kə'mju:nɪkert/
UT9	Commercialize Individual	/kəmɜ:ʃə'laɪz/ /'ɪndɪvɪdʒuəl/	/kə'mɜ:ʃəlaɪz/ /ɪndɪ'vɪdʒuəl/
UT10	Recommendation single-handedly	/'rekəmen'deɪʃən/ /'sɪŋ'gl-'hændɪdli	/rekəmen'deɪʃən/ /sɪŋgl-'hændɪdli
UT11	Injustice Embarrass	/'ɪndʒʌstɪs/ /ɪmbə'ræs/	/ɪn'dʒʌstɪs/ /ɪm'bærəs/
UT12	Knowledgeable separate	/nɒ'lɪdʒəbl/ /sepə'rət/	/'nɒlɪdʒəbl/ /'sepərət/
UT13	Innumerate Identify	/ɪnju:mə'reɪt/ /aɪdenti'faɪ/	/'ɪnju:məreɪt/ /aɪ'dentɪfaɪ/
UT14	Category Sophisticated	/kætə'gɔ:ri/ /sɒfɪstɪ'kertɪd/	/'kætəgəri/ /sɒ'fɪstɪkertɪd/
UT15	Manipulate Improvise	/mənɪ'pjʊ'leɪt/ /ɪmprə'vaɪz/	/'mənɪpjulert/ /'ɪmprəvaɪz/

Table 2: Randomly Selected Wrongly Stressed Tri/Poly-Syllabic Words

From the table above the predominant patterns of words stress is stress shifted to the right and double stress. The fixed pattern of words stress maintained by all subjects is stress on the final syllables of multi-syllabic words ending with –ATE –IZE or –ISE –FY. Such patterns are demonstrated in the following words 'recognIZE (UT3), mobilIZE, celebrATE (UT7), communiCATE (UT8), commercialIZE, (UT9), sepaRATE (UT12), identiFY (UT13), manipuLATE, improVISE (UT15). Some of the words with stress shifted to the right include: iniTIAtive, (UT3), legisLator (UT6), embarRASS, (UT11), knowLEdgeable (UT12), caTEGory, (UT14) etc. Some of the randomly selected wrongly stressed words were further analyzed on metrical trees which assign weak (W) nodes to unstressed syllables and strong (S) nodes to stressed syllables. This was done to answer the first research question:

Do Ibibio/English-bilingual politicians accent di/tri and poly-syllabic English words correctly?

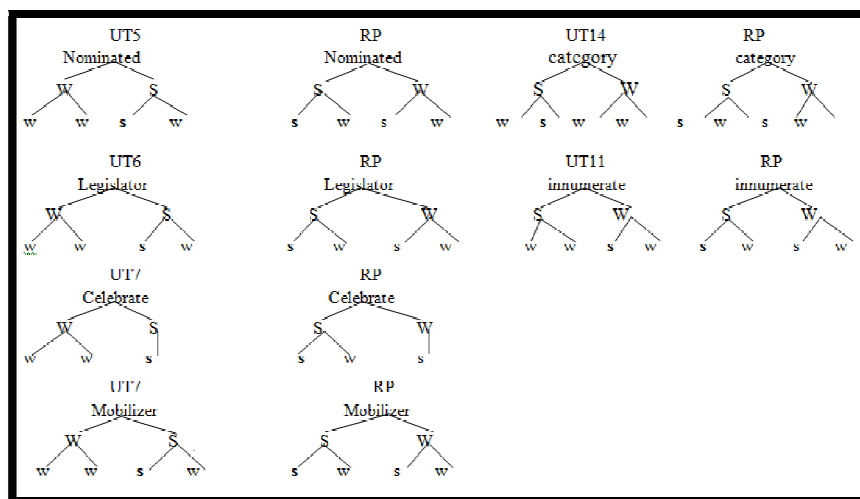


Figure 1

5.1. The Metrical Tree of Selected Wrongly Stressed Poly-syllabic Words

Illustrative on the trees above, the researchers observed that the primary stress in the subjects' utterances is delayed and shifted to the right. This is in sync with the proposal of Kujore (1985) that the most striking feature of Nigerian pronunciation is the delayed primary stress. On the trees, the S nodes on the mother node levels are shifted to the right in most of the poly-syllabic words produced in the utterances of the subjects. This is in contrast with what is obtained on the trees of the Control (RP). While RP takes cognizance of secondary stress in the words and thus produces a steady flow of melody resulting from sequences of (S)trong-(W)eak, (W)eak-(S)trong alternations among the sister nodes, subjects paid no attention to such property of the language. Apart from where the primary stress is placed, all other syllables in the subjects' words seem to carry equal emphasis, that is, they are produced with almost the same strength.

This shows the subjects' inability to realize poly-syllabic words in line with the standard of achieving rhythmic alternations of strong and weak syllables to avoid dis-rhythmic structure known as 'stress clash' - 'alignment of several rhythmic beats in a row' (Wennerstrom (2001, p.211)). In UT5, 6, 7 and UT11 the syllables are produced: W W S W, W W S W, W W S, and W W W S in that order in the words *nominated*, *legislator*, *celebrate* and *innumerate*. The W nodes on the metrical tree of the subjects would otherwise be labeled S S S S, S S S S, S S S, S S S S because almost all the syllables are articulated with almost the same emphasis except one syllable which is produced with a force slightly different from the others, and this greater force is placed contrary to RP. Double or multiple stress patterns are further shown on the metrical grid below:

UTT1				RP							
x		x		x							
x		x		x		x					
x	x	x		x	x	x					
pa	ra	mount		pa	ra	mount					
UTT4				RP							
x		x					x				
x		x		x			x				
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
des	ti	na	tion	des	ti	na	tion				
UTT10				RP							
x	x	x						x			
x	x	x	x		x			x			
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
sin	gle	-	hand	ed	ly	sin	gle	-	hand	ed	ly

Figure 2

In UTT10, the word contains five columns, each standing over a syllable. The first and third columns in RP are taller than the second, fourth and fifth. The third column, indicating the grid's culminating peak, is taller than the first. This particular grid shows a good rhythmic alternation, since the strong foot-level beats are separated each by a weak syllable-level beat. But in the subject's rendition, the first second, third and fourth syllables are taller than the fifth. The first three columns hence indicate the grid's culminating peak. While the fourth and the fifth would be secondary and tertiary stress in that order. English language strives towards a rhythmic alternation of strong and weak syllables to avoid 'stress clash'. However, in the subjects' performances, there is stress clash, thus altering the rhythm because subjects studied marked the flow of their conversation according to the number of syllables in a word disregarding the stress-timed pattern of the language. This result corroborates Fakoya (2006) who opines that the most remarkable feature of Nigerian English is its syllable-timed structure.

6. PRAAT Analysis of Accentuation

The audio recordings were played through the software, and the selected utterances annotated according to individual speakers only specified UT1-15. In order to verify cues for accentuation, the recorded speeches were fed into a laptop computer. With PRAAT (Version 5.1.25), analyses were carried out to answer the following research questions in particular:

- Do Ibibio/English-bilingual politicians stress grammatical words in their manifestoes?
- Do the identified prosodic nuances have any relevance within the Ibibio socio-political context?

The researchers chose to discuss stress and rhythm together since the two are interrelated in a way that 'alternations between stressed and unstressed syllables provide connected speech with its rhythm' (Koenraad & Scott, 1989 p. 102). In acoustic analysis, the terms pitch, intensity (amplitude), duration (time) and frequency are important. According to Ladefoged (2006), the relationship between stress and pitch is that stressed sounds normally have a higher pitch.

6.1. Intensity (Amplitude) and Pitch

Intensity –the dark bands or sound waves on the spectrogram which signals amplitude, and used by some researchers interchangeably with amplitude, is a correlate of stress. According to Clark and Yallop (1993), the higher the intensity of the vocal folds vibration (pitch), the louder a speech sound is perceived to be. As a general rule, the greater the intensity, the larger the amplitude, the louder a speech sound is perceived. Nwaegbe (2015) opines that greater intensity ushers in loudness and loudness means prominence. The intensity (amplitude), according to Yavas (2011, p.101) 'is marked by the darkness of the bands; the greater the intensity of the sound energy present at a given time and frequency, the darker will be the mark at the corresponding point on the screen printout.

From the data analysed, the researchers found out that Ibibio/English bilingual politicians stress and tone to mark prominence in their utterances. The following spectrographic pictures suffice.

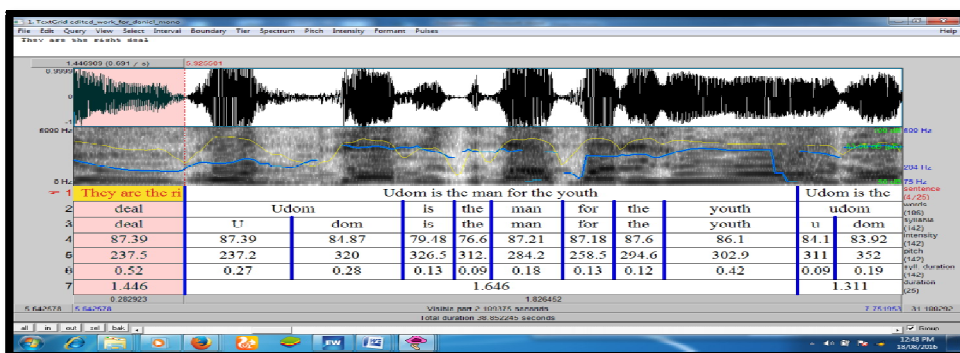


Figure 3: Spectrographic Display of Utterance 3 (UTT3)

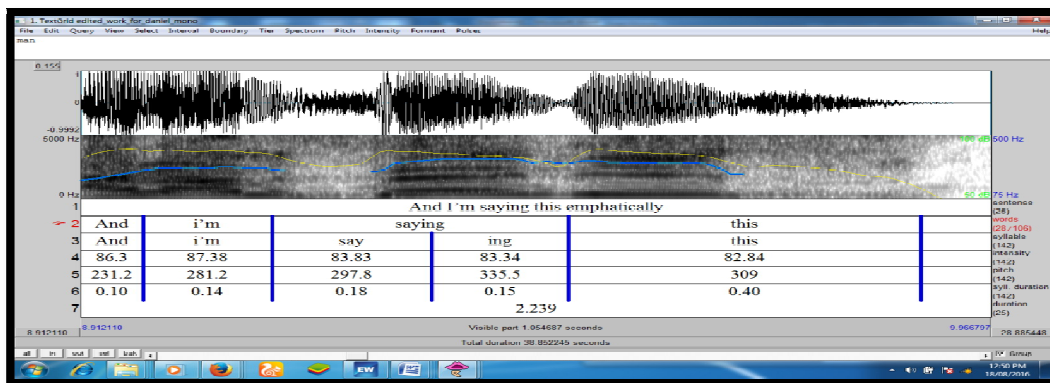


Figure 4: Spectrographic Display of Utterance 5 (UTT5)

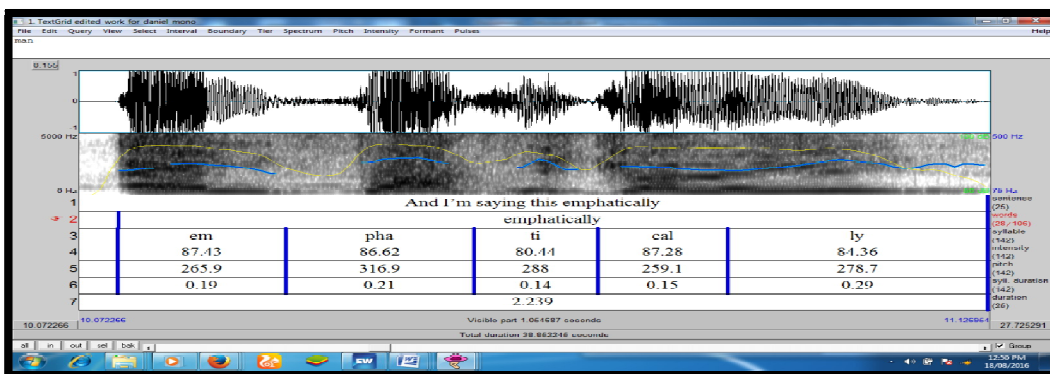


Figure 5

Readings under intensity which signals prominence of each syllable of the utterances on the above spectrogram show that subjects pronounced almost all the syllables with equal amount of emphasis. Grammatical words and content words are accented alike in most of the utterances. In UTT3: 'Udom is the man for the youth', each syllable is realized at between 84 and 87 decibel (henceforth dB) with the same prominence except 'is' and 'the' which are realized at 79.4 and 76.6 dB respectively. The two articles 'the' in the utterance which should normally not receive stress have higher pitch (312 Hz, 294.6 Hz) than the content words 'man' and 'youth' with 284.2 Hz and 302.9 Hz respectively. In UTT5: 'And I'm saying this emphatically', the speaker realizes the syllable 'ing' which is not the accented syllable with the pitch height of 335.5Hz against 'say' (297.8Hz) which is the accented syllable in RP. The acoustic information shows that strong (stressed) syllables correlate with high tones and weak (unstressed) syllables correlate with low tones to support previous researches in this field.

The reason for this conclusion is that the Ibibio/English-bilingual politicians did not use stress to mark prominence. They used tone more than stress, and this tone is explained in terms of larger amplitudes of the syllables and words on the spectrogram. Larger amplitude means prominence or loudness. The reading under intensity shows that subjects use tone putting emphasis on nearly all the syllables. The size of the dark waves on the screen below speaks for itself. For instance, high intensity and a corresponding pitch height should signal stress, but in most situations on the spectrogram, the researchers noticed a high frequency under intensity without a corresponding pitch height vice-versa. Take for instance UTT3 and UTT6. In UTT3, 'Udom is the man for the youths!', 'is' and 'the' are realized at the frequency of 79.48 and 87.2 dB with very high pitch of 326.5Hz and 312Hz. But 'man' in that same utterance is produced at the frequency of 87.2dB higher than the intensity of the preceding two syllables, but accompanied with a low pitch of 284.2 which does not correspond with the high intensity. The syllables were spoken in high tones leading to a superfluity of

strong syllables. 'The' (297Hz) in the utterance below shares the same pitch height with 'are' and 'right' realized at 299Hz and 298.3Hz respectively whereas 'the' being a grammatical word could have been hurried over by the speaker.

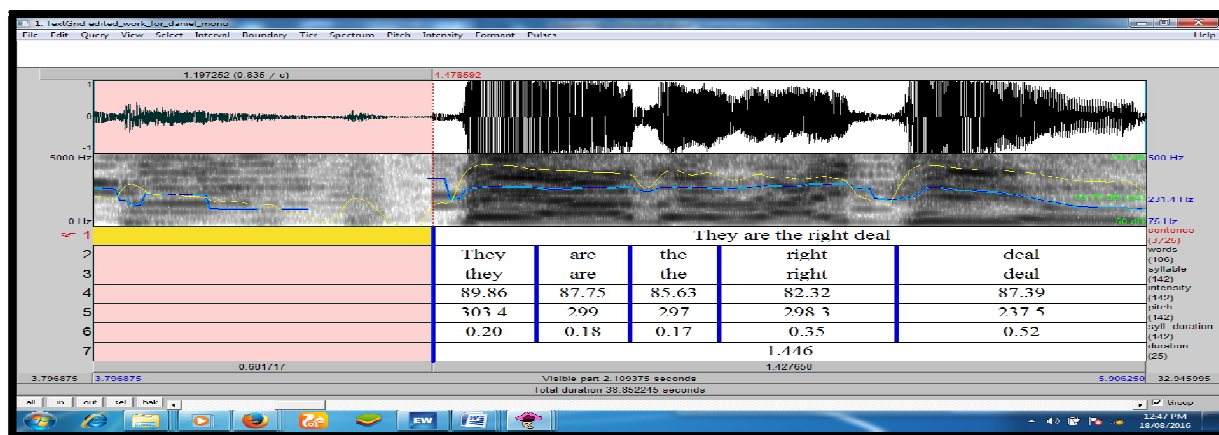


Figure 6: Spectrographic Display of Utterance 2 (UTT2)

6.2. Duration

Duration constitutes an important acoustic cue for stress (John Benjamins, 2004). Longer duration for stressed syllables denote higher pitch or larger amplitude. In the study, the beats, in terms of duration, are irregular. Syllables taken to be stressed in the subjects' performances showed higher pitch in some situations, and in other situations, larger amplitude. Time duration assigned to each syllable as shown on the syllable duration tiers on the spectrograms do not conform to the rule that stressed syllables should have longer duration. Whereas the native speaker would assigned more time to stressed syllables while unstressed syllables would be uttered with less time (Udofot 1997, Eko 2013, Nwaegbe 2015), subjects in the study even spent more time in articulating some syllables that should usually not receive stress. The syllable 'ly' in 'emphatically' is read in 0.29 milliseconds (henceforth ms) longer than 'pha' (316.9Hz) which is the accented syllable in RP articulated by the speaker in 0.21ms. 'ver' in 'wherever' in UTT7 in the following spectrographic display is produced in 0.67ms, followed by 'where' 0.36ms whereas 'e' which should receive primary accent in RP is produced in 0.22ms

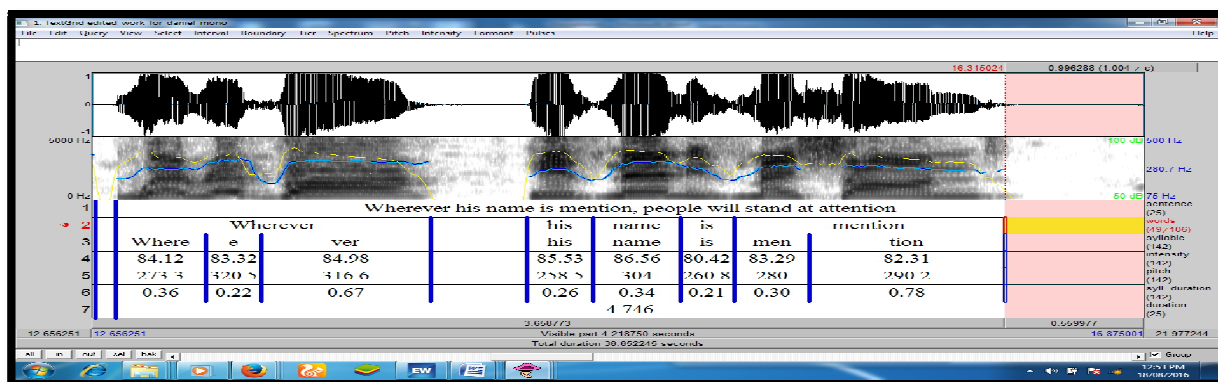


Figure 7: Spectrographic Display of Utterance 7 (UTT7)

Again, 'is' which should receive stress is produced in 0.21ms (260.8 Hz), but 'his' which should come in its weak form and not stressed is articulated in 0.26ms (258.5 Hz); 'tion' unstressed syllable in RP is produced in 0.78ms (290.2 Hz) against 'men' which should be stressed but realized in 0.30ms (280 Hz). Based on this result, the researchers are of the opinion that time or duration of syllables, words or utterances does not constitute an important cue to stress for Ibibio/English-bilingual politicians. The implication here is that the length of time used by the subjects in realizing syllables, words and utterances had no effect on the production of either the strong or weak syllables. Contrary to Fry (1955), Adam and Munro (1978), Cutler and Darwin (1981), Peng and Jean (2001) whose works proved that duration might be an important cue to stress, duration of time in the study was only found to be a cue for prominent syllables, but it was tone that marked the syllables that were observed to be prominent by the researchers. More so, the researchers noticed that Ladefoged's (2006) opinion that the relationship between stress and pitch is that stressed sounds normally have a higher pitch was not always the case in the subjects' performances. There were erratic results in a way that weak syllables could be realized as the strong ones by the subjects, and that attracted high tone, high pitch and large amplitude. For instance, in UTT1, the speaker had high tone in the words 'in' with high amplitude (intensity) of 82.6dB and high pitch of 336.9Hz, and 'the' with high amplitude of 84.6dB and high pitch of 326Hz.

Accenting unstressed syllables led to the proliferation of accented syllables which characterized utterances in the study. The tendency for subjects to stress more syllables than necessary in their speeches which corroborates Udofot (1997) affected the general tempo and rhythm of the speeches. The researchers discovered that, though the subjects of

study communicated to the electorates in English, the rhythm produced was not stress-timed. Effiong, Ekah & Isok (2015) opine that stress-timed rhythm is produced when the speaker spends in succession an equal amount of time to realize one accented syllable and the next irrespective of the number of unaccented syllables in the utterance. Subjects in the study lacked the ability to tactically manipulate their voices with such dexterity that would enable them to skip or swallow weak syllables while stretching their breath in an elastic manner to catch up with subsequent accented syllables.

Consequent upon the proliferation of strong syllables in the utterances, the rhythm produced was that typifying the Ibibio native language of the speakers because subjects equated stress with tone. Strong (stressed) syllables correlated with high tones, and weak (unstressed) syllables correlated with low tones. The rhythm, therefore, was that in which the syllables were evenly spaced and produced in a steady flow which resulted in a 'tat tat tat tat tat' machine gun kind of effect.

In terms of utterance duration, the researchers observed that there were a lot of unnecessary pauses in the utterances. This was, however, expected since the data were drawn from impromptu speeches. A case in this point is UTT13 on the spectrographic diagram bellow.

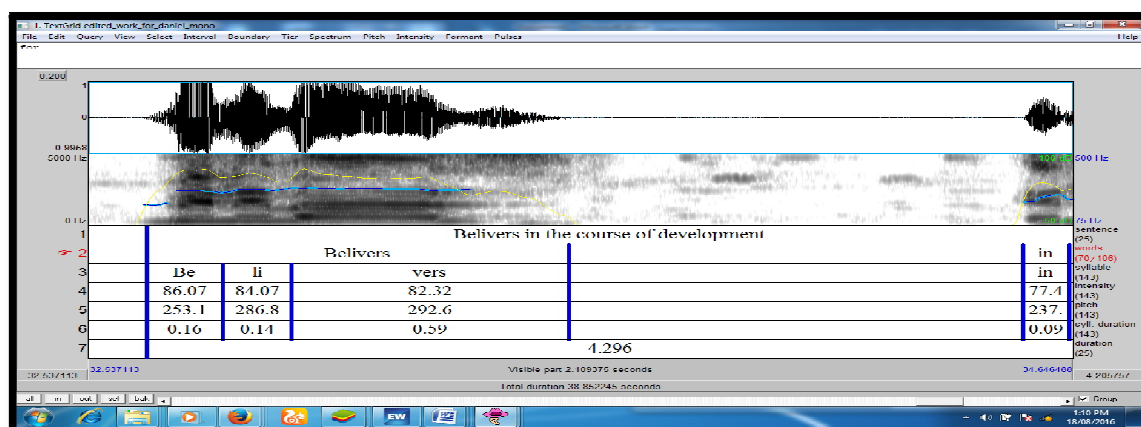


Figure 8: Spectrographic Display of Utterance 14UTT14

There is a long pause after 'believers' has been uttered, and another long pause after 'course' (see spectrographic detail on the appendix). Noted too on the information above is the fact that the duration of the syllable 'vers' which should not be stressed is 0.59ms longer than 'lie' (read in 0.14ms) which should be the accented syllable. The speaker in the above utterance left a long irrelevant pause between 'believer' and 'in'. These pauses within and between utterances which the researchers observed as an intervening variable, were responsible for the long duration of utterances as well as the slow tempo.

7. Implications for the Use of the Prosodic Nuances

Though the researchers found no specific meaning implications of the subjects' use of accentuation that could be attributed particularly to the Ibibio socio-cultural context in the study, there exists a wide array of socio-political implications for the ways the Ibibio/English bilingual politicians used stress/accentuation in their address to the electorates. The analysis of the data paints a picture of a mixed system of stress and tone with the former playing a subordinate role to the latter. It appears therefore that the zeal to adapt oneself to and be seen as speaking 'good' and 'polished' English is naturally sidetracked or hampered by events that gave birth to the tonal based voice/accent of the subjects. Hence, the first excuse that could be given for the way the subjects in the study used the prosody of English language is the truth that one cannot run away from oneself just as even the sophisticated speaker of English as a second language cannot boast of speaking with the exact prosodic nuances of the native English speaker irrespective of the degree of dexterity, tutelage and years of specialization in the field of the English language.

Second, an attempt by any political candidate to switch to the native-like accent of English language, which Udofot (2003) looks at as the affected and arrogant, to communicate with the electorates (a mixed crowd of educated, semi-educated and the illiterate) would be tantamount to self-alienation. The electorates are interested in and can give their votes to candidates they trust who have lived with them, understood their plight and not only shared qualities with them, but also shared in their suffering. An attempt therefore to be sophisticated and 'too' fluent in English while addressing the electorates would be an attempt to be who they (the electorates) are not –an attribute voters dislike in their candidates. A typical case in point is the popular Nigerian Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon who represented Oredo Federal Constituency of Edo State whose love for English jargon incurred him the wrath of politicians nationally and within his constituency, as a result of which he lost his second term election into the House of Representatives in 2011.

Therefore, this study discovered that for the subjects of the study to win the trust of the electorates, they had to domesticate themselves by speaking largely in Ibibio language. Where the candidates used English, they ensured that they were understood. The implication, hence, could be that subjects of the study condescended to the level of the electorates they addressed, the reason for which they used the prosodic nuances the way they did. Even an attempt by any of the politicians who might have lived and acquired the language abroad to speak with the right nuances would equal Hon

Patrick's 'cataleptic parakpoism', 'hocus-pocus pooh pooh', and 'tweedle dum and tweedle dee', all jargon which spells doom to politics.

8. Conclusion

The findings of the study are in sync with our presumptions and earlier studies that variations exist in the way the prosodic features of English language are used by the Ibibio/English bilingual politicians and the way the native speakers of the language would use the features. While the native speaker of English acquires the spoken form alongside the intuition of appropriate and inappropriate usages naturally, the Ibibio speaker as well as Nigerian speakers generally, learn everything about it making the issue of linguistic competence in a second language context, as Akinjobi (2012) confirms it, irrelevant. While the conclusion is that the Ibibio/English bilingual politicians do not correctly stress and accent words in utterances and thus speaking the English language in Ibibio, as it were, with the inherent attributes of the native Ibibio language, the study recommends that researchers should no more over dwell in finding out whether the Ibibio and Nigerian speakers of English speak the language with native-like intuition or not, but in extracting the peculiar characteristics of the Nigerian English that make the language Nigerian and adoptable for both political and academic purposes.

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