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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Influence of Mother Tongue on English Pronunciation: A Contrastive Analysis of Bogghom and English Phonemes

Modupe Olubunmi Onwochei[1] ✉ and Agnes Bako[2]
[12]Department of English, University of Jos
Corresponding Author: Modupe Olubunmi Onwochei, **E-mail**: pmodus@yahoo.com

| ABSTRACT
Speakers of English as a second language often transfer their native language sound systems in the pronunciation of English. This is more noticeable with semi-educated speakers of English. Using phonological structure in generative grammar under contrastive analysis theory, this study contrasted features of English segmental phonemes with those of Bogghom, a language spoken in Gar, Kanam Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria. The aim is to examine the extent of their differences/similarities, which present a cross-linguistic influence on English pronunciation. Twenty Bogghom speakers of English were selected. The respondents were given an excerpt with targeted phonemes to read; the speeches were recorded, translated, and analysed. Results showed the existence of phonemic and phonotactic disparities and similarities between the sound systems of the two languages. Differences in both languages' phoneme systems account for a high percentage of difficulties, resulting in 92% mispronunciation of English words. This implies that Bogghom speakers of English face challenges in their spoken English as a result of poor exposure to English phonemes. Phonemic/phonotactic similarities, on the other hand, enhanced better pronunciation. This research supports the claim that phonological disparities between two languages may impede effective communication. Thus, Bogghom bilinguals should make a deliberate effort to acquaint themselves with the English phonemes through self-drill and other academic means.

| KEYWORDS

Bogghom, contrastive analysis, mother tongue, phonological structure

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Language plays a fundamental role in human communication and is a useful tool to express thought (Pinker 1). Language is a set of sentences in which each carries an ideal phonetic system and an intrinsic semantic interpretation. Universal observation reveals that language, which is at the centre of human communication, has three related entities: language, users, and communication. This affirms that language is essential to human coexistence as it is a means of interaction for academic, economic, political, social, and religious purposes (Hockett 1). The English language is widely spoken in the world. More than half of the world, according to Encyclopedia Americana, uses English in scientific research and technical journals as well as in newspapers. It is stated that three fourth of the world's mail is written in English, and the same goes for the media (417). It is also said to be the 'sole official language' (Finegan 77) of some African countries, especially in West Africa. English has gained a prestigious status as the language of the world, because it is adopted as the language of expression in 'international communication' (Gimson 6, Campbell 145). Its recognition and usage have made it a national language of communication in education, politics, administration, and commerce in many countries with varied languages,

including Nigeria. Therefore, the need for proficiency in the use of language is emphasised in every sphere of life. Competence in the use of English requires correct knowledge and use of phonetics and phonology. Phonology, an entity of linguistics, "investigates the ways in which speech sounds are used systematically to form words and utterances" (Katamba 60). Phonological study is carried out both at segmental and supra-segmental levels.

Pronunciation in spoken English is as important as grammar and vocabulary. Mispronunciation is the lack of proper articulation of word(s), which may be a consequence of phonemic approximation, vagueness, the difference between English sounds and spelling, or the general ineptness of the language. The most common reason is a negative transfer from the mother tongue due to the differences in the sound systems of native and non-native phonology. The concept of mother tongue influence on second language proficiency has been viewed and evaluated from different angles (Dustan 1966, Jowitt 1991, Aina 2015, Varghese 2007, Ogah-Adejoh M, Alagh E I 2017). A person's second language (L2) is a language that is not native to the speaker but is used in the speaker's environment for interaction; it is the language learned and used in addition to the native language. Second language speakers, especially adults, are prone to reset the parameters of expression in the target language by consciously or unconsciously imposing the systems of their native tongue. This is done by bringing into the L2 the codes of the L1, which result in an interference. This act could facilitate or impair the use of a second language, depending on the similarities or differences of both languages. This research is undertaken to investigate the influence of the mother tongue on Bogghom speakers of English as a second language.

1.1 Research Problem

Researchers attest to the influence of the first language on English as a second language in Nigeria, which has multiple tongues (Pam 2018, Patrick et al. 2013, Bamidele 2019, and Iyere 2013). This means that the L1 acquired by an individual or group of persons and used as a natural instrument for expressing thought usually influences the second language spoken by bilinguals. This influence may manifest in the second language's grammatical or phonological aspect of speech. When a Hausa man pronounces security /sɪˊkjuəɹəti/ as /sekju:riti/, Yoruba pronounces church as /ʃɔs/ instead of /tʃɜ:tʃ/ and fifty /fɪfti/ is pronounced as /bibti/ by Bogghom, they pronounce these English words using their mother tongue phonemes. Bogghom native speakers find it difficult to articulate some English phonemes, such as /ʧ/θ/ð/ɜ:/ʌ/ɔ/, due to the unique differences in the structure of both languages. The Bogghom language, as noted by Bogghom Language Development and Bible Translation Committee, has twenty eight (28) consonant sounds, twelve (12) vowels, and four (4) diphthongs. Differences in the phonemic structure of the two languages, therefore, make Bogghom speakers of English resort to approximating similar sounds from their language or replace them with different phonemes. There is also the problem of vowel length reduction in words that have triphthongs because they do not occur in the said language. These ways of pronunciation compromise the phonological nature of words, resulting in utterances that are un-English. Though the languages have interacted for a long period of time, the contact has not totally erased these problems. This research, therefore, seeks to further investigate this assertion of mother tongue influence on English pronunciation using the Bogghom language, one of the minority languages in Nigeria.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The aim of this research is to examine the influence of the mother tongue on the English language among the Bogghom speakers of English. The objectives include:

a. To describe Bogghom phonemes, the syllable structure, and its effect on English.
b. To identify the phonological differences between Bogghom language and English.
c. Project reason(s) for phonemic approximation and substitution which result in mispronunciation of English words and
d. Suggest plausible way(s) out of the difficulties encountered in English pronunciation.

1.3 Research Questions

This research hopes to answer the following questions:

a. To what extent has phonology of Bogghom affected the English pronunciation?
b. What are the phonological differences between Bogghom and English language?

c. What are the factors responsible for phonemic approximation and substitution which result in mispronunciation of English words?
d. What are the solutions to the problems of mispronunciation of English words?

This research focuses on the Bogghom people's experience. Bogghom speakers are mostly bilingual; they speak Bogghom and either Hausa or English. The educated among them are multilingual due to exposure to other ethnic languages in Plateau and the country at large. The researcher centres the study on the experience of Bogghom students at all levels in the Federal College of Education, Pankshin, and reveals their L1 impact on English phonological usage. This research made use of twenty students selected randomly from those who use English as the language of communication in the institution.

2. Review of Literature

This section discusses the major concepts that underpin this study as well as the related works.

2.1 English Speech Sounds (Phonemes)

Speech is considered the primary medium of communication using language. It is also the aspect of language use that generally brings about differences known as accents. Thus, there are different accents of English, either as a native or non-native language. The English language is an intonation language. Intonation shows the attitude of the speaker in speech and can also show the level of emphasis, as well as serving grammatical and discourse functions. The intonation structure has a pre-head, head, tonic, and tail. The tonic is the most important syllable in the sentence. The intonation pattern begins on the tonic syllable and ends at the end of the sentence unit. The use of intonation is often a major cause of intelligibility breakdown between native and non-native speakers of English.

In terms of phoneme inventory, native English has about forty-four sounds, with some variation depending on accent and articulation. These comprise twenty-four consonants and twenty vowels (twelve pure vowels and eight diphthongs). Five 'controversial' triphthongs are also recognised by some scholars. This inventory is also a source of intelligibility failure. The pure vowel sounds are: the front vowel /i:/ i/ e/ æ/, the back vowels /u:/ u/ ɔ:/ɒ/ a:/, and the central vowels / ɜ/ə/ʌ/. The English diphthongs are eight (8) phonemic long sounds produced by a glide from one vowel to another in the process of articulation. These sounds are: /ɪə/aʊ/eə/əʊ/ɔɪ/aɪ/əɪ/ʊə/. Diphthongs change their quality in the process of articulation from one vowel quality to another without a break. They form "a glide within one syllable" (Gimson 134). They are categorised as centering and closing diphthongs. The centering phonemes are those whose glide ends with /ə/: /ɪə/eə/ʊə/. Closing diphthongs are further divided based on their ending phonetic quality. Those ending with /ɪ/ are /eɪ/ aɪ/ɔɪ/, and those ending with /ʊ/ are: /aʊ/əʊ/ (Roach 17). Consonant sounds are in contrast to vowel sounds in the sense that they have the characteristics of having an obstruction, either partial or total, in the airstream during articulation. There are twenty-four (24) consonant sounds in English classified, using the manner of articulation, as plosives: /p/b/t/d/k/g/; affricates: /ʧ/ʤ/; fricatives /f/v/θ/ð/s/z/ʃ/ʒ/h/; nasals: /m/n/ŋ/; approximant: /(w)/l/r/j/w/ (Gimson 157)

2.2 Syllable

Syllable is a phonological unit of sonority. Sonority here can be described by the degree of airflow obstruction and voicing that occurs during phonation. Syllable is related to a chest pulse or a pulse of air pressure, and it is the 'central point of any phonological investigation' (Ahidjo 37). A syllable comprises consonants and vowels classified as stressed or unstressed. The English syllable structure is made up of the onset/initial, nucleus, and coda/final, which is arranged as (C^{0-3}) V (C^{0-4}). It operates both closed and open syllable structures. The closed system has a CVC structure, where C at both onset and coda have consonant sounds: come/kʌm/, meet/mi:t/, half/ha:f/, mantle/ma:ntl/. The nucleus has vowel(s) or syllabic consonant. The open system has zero consonant both at the onset and coda. That is, it allows words with only vowel sounds: hour/auə/, ear/ɪə/, are/a:/. The English syllable has complex consonant clusters both at the onset and coda position. The onset/initial position has zero to three clusters (C^{0-3}): oil/ɔɪl/, owl/aʊl/, man/mæn/, coat/kəʊt/, space/speɪs/, slap/slæp/, stream/stri:m/, splendour/splendə/. The coda/final position has up to four consonant clusters (C^{0-4}): cow/kaʊ/, creature/kriʧə/ calm/ka:m/, hut/hʌt/, mount/ maunt/, agent/eɪʤənt/, text/tekst/, masks/ma:sks/, sixth/siksθs/, tempts/tempts/. The complexity of the English

consonant cluster poses difficulty for Nigerian users of English as it contrasts the consonant formation of most native tongues' structures.

2.3 Bogghom Speech Sounds

A language is identified as distinct when it has a body of sounds, signs, and/or signals by which communication takes place. Every given language is, therefore, identified by its set/distinct sounds, grammatical rules, and application. The Bogghom language is one of the minority languages spoken in Plateau state. Bogghom, as stated by some verbal rendition, belongs to the Afro-asiatic language family. Like it is generally characterised by this language family, Bogghom vowels have contrasting phonemes. Bogghom language development and Bible transmission committee document the language's phonemic structure as having five long contrasting vowels: /aa/oo/ii/uu/ee/, and seven short vowels: /a/e/i/o/u/ɬ/ə/, four diphthongs: /aɪ/oɪ/eɪ/aʊ/, twenty-eight consonant:/b/ɓ/d/ɗ/f/g/v/gb/k/kp/j/l/m/n/ny/ng/p/r/s/sh/t/v/w/y/z /kw/gw /h/. The Boggbom vowels, like that of most Nigerian languages, do not have the central vowel /ʌ/ɜː/. Bogghom language syllable structure has (C^{0-2}) V C. It operates open and close syllable structure of CVC similar to that of English but differs at the consonant cluster formation.

2.4 Description of Bogghom Phonemes

The two languages in this study have their distinct features but also share some similarities in sound systems. That is, there are shared similarities as well as aspects of differences based on their language sound systems. These differences/similarities are found at the segmental level of both languages. There are forty-four (44) phonemes in Bogghom language. These sounds are described, and examples are given for each below.

2.5 Phonological Differences between Bogghom and English Languages

Bogghom and English are two different languages that have two separate sound systems. A language is said to be different/distinct when it has its separate language system for communication. Tabulated below are the phoneme differences and similarities found in the sound systems of both languages.

2.6 Differences in Vowel sounds

Bogghom	O	oː	ɬ	a	
English	æ	ɜː	ʌ	ɒ	ɔː

2.6 Difference in Diphthongs

Bogghom	oɪ				
English	ɪə	eə	ʊə	əʊ	ɔɪ

2.7 Difference in Consonant sounds

Bogghom	ɓ	ɗ	ɣ	ɲ	kp	gb	kw	gw
English	θ	ð	ʧ	ʒ				

2.8 Phonemic similarities in Bogghom and English languages

vowels	a	e	u	ə	ɪ	ɪː													
Consonants	p	b	t	d	k	g	f	v	s	z	m	n	ŋ	ʃ	ʤ	r	l	j	w	h
Diphthongs	eɪ	aɪ	aʊ																

2.9 Syllable Structure Differences

The Bogghom language, like many Nigerian languages, has a monosyllabic pattern, as argued by Tetsuo and Jeroen that most Nigerian languages are syllable-timed languages (159). In their argument, a syllable-timed language is one in which each syllable in an utterance bears an approximately equal rhythmic beat, and the amount taken for producing an utterance is proportional to the number of syllables. This is in direct contrast to the English language, whose syllable structure is stress-timed. Tetsuo and Jeroen further state that a stress-timed language has the stressed syllables occurring at approximately the same intervals, and the time taken for the utterance is proportional to the number of stressed syllables (156). This difference is the root on which other differences like vowel reduction, vowel epenthesis, and substitution are generated, among other variances, such as differences in syllable formation and the use of syllabic consonants.

2.10 Syllable Formation

The syllable of Bogghom is characterised as a tone-carrying unit with a vowel nucleus. The nucleus may be preceded or followed by consonant components. There are five types of syllable formation in Bogghom syllable structure: zero consonant V, open syllable at onset VC, open syllable at coda CV, close syllable CVC, and consonant clusters at onset CCVC

V –	ai	come
	au	sorghum
VC-	ob	open
	oon	smoke
CV-	sau	meat
	pi	do
CVC-	lok	wait
	tap	conceal
CCVC-	dwal	yam
	myep	road

Both Bogghom and English have the CVC pattern. The difference between these languages is in the consonant clusters. The English syllable structure is classified as (C^{0-3}) V (C^{0-4}), Whereas the English syllable structure operates clusters both at the onset: street /strɪ:t/, media: complex /kəm'pleks/, and coda: next /nekst/, the Bogghom language operates two-consonant cluster at the onset: servant /mwan/, door /ɓwal/, and at the media position: good human /bogghom/, /pangkhinah/. The Bogghom syllable structure is classified as having (C^{0-2}) V(C). In other words, the English syllable has complex consonant clusters both at the onset and coda position. The onset/initial position has two to three clusters: state/steɪt/, snail/sneɪl/, scratch/skræʧ/, squeeze/skwi:z/, splash/splæʃ/. The coda/final position has up to four consonant clusters (C^{0-4}): task/ta:sk/, wealth/weɭθ/, text/tekst/, masks/ma:sks/, sixth/siksθs/, tempts/tempts/. The Bogghom language, on the other hand, has simple consonant clusters, which allow two clusters to be majorly at the onset position. The sequence of consonants at the coda is, therefore, the major difference between the Bogghom syllable structure and that of English. Syllabic consonants occur in words 'in which no vowel is found' (Roach 68). The syllabic consonant /l/,/r/,/n/,/m/ used in place of vowels in some English words is not applicable in syllable-timed Bogghom language, which uses only vowel sounds as nucleus in words.

2.11 Vowel Reduction

English operates vowel reduction to differentiate between first, second, and unstressed syllables in words. Vowels of unstressed syllables are reduced to a schwa /ə/, /ɪ/, or /ʊ/ sound. Bogghom does not operate in this way. The same prominence is assigned to each syllable in words as they are pronounced as spelled. For instance, 'God help us' (Bapi tii mukmina), 'we appreciate God' (Mii zaak Bapi).

2.12 Mother Tongue

The term mother tongue, according to Edem, refers to the language that a group of people considers to be the inhabitants of an area acquired in their early years and that normally becomes their natural instrument of thought and communication. This definition underscores the fact that the term mother tongue not only denotes the first language one learns from his mother but also the dominant language used where and when one is raised (2). Skutnabb-Kangs, in choosing the criteria for defining mother tongue, consider origin, identification, competence, and function as key determining factors (12). By origin, she defined mother tongue as: the language one learned first. For identification, she classified the definition into internal and external. Internally, she defined mother tongue as the language one identifies with. And by external, she notes that mother tongue is: the language one is identified with as a native speaker. In terms of competence, the scholar defines the mother tongue as: the language one knows best; and by function, mother tongue is defined as: the language one uses most. Skutnabb-Kangs, however, cautions that the definitions of mother tongue she provided may not always apply in multilingual contexts; nevertheless, she notes that a combination of mother tongue definitions by origin and by internal identification is a good mother tongue definition for linguistic minorities that is, those who live and work where the majority language dominates (13). The Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE), in line with this view, stipulates that from Pre-Primary to the first three years of Primary education, mother-tongue should be the medium of communication or language of the immediate community. On the other hand, promoters of retroactive schools of thought, like Patrick et al., are of the opinion that the mother tongue has a negative impact/effect on the usage of a second language. They advocate the use of English in teaching and encourage users to master English speech sounds through constant practice (285).

2.13 English Pronunciation and Mother Tongue Interference

Each language is the best manifestation of the culture of the people. It is a culture preservative as well as culture transmitting essence; every language is unique in its own way as it addresses the needs of the people whom it represents. It is, therefore, expected that as different languages interact with one another, cultures interact as well, and as such, friction is inevitable since it is not possible to learn a second/foreign language without relying, to some extent, on one's mother tongue. The impulse to look for similarities and to draw conclusions based on them is also strong in second language usage. Language in contact creates room for language interference. According to Dill, "the individual who speaks two languages is almost certain to have his/her performance, in one language affected by interference from habits employed in speaking the other" (6). Interference is derived from the root verb 'interfere', meaning to "get involved or cause disturbance (Advanced Learner's Dictionary). Language interference in learning pronunciation of the second language has to do with the effect language learners' mother tongue (first language) has on their production of the target language, that is, the language intended to be learned. Olaofe describes interference as the obstruction that the learning of the subsequent list of languages has on the retention of the original learned list and the detrimental effects on the retention of the subsequently learned list resulting from prior knowledge of learning. This is identified as proactive and retroactive influences. These effects can be found in any aspect of language, be it grammar, vocabulary, semantics, pragmatics, or pronunciation. In some cases, language interference is simply referred to as L1 interference, linguistic interference, cross-linguistic interference, or transfer. Language interference has most often been argued to be a source of errors in terms of negative transfer (12). However, if the significant features of both languages are the same, the produced language tends to be correct (Iyere 219; Al-Zayed 87). This interference usually comes from unfamiliarity with the second language's structure. As affirmed by Imoleoyo (12) and Sutra (5), the language structure of the native language is usually transferred to the second language (L2); hence, it poses difficulty for the L2 user of the English language to attain foreign accents. Therefore, a mispronunciation of words by a user of L2 reflects the influence of the sounds, rules, stress, and intonation of their native language. For example, Wenk (5), Machizuki-Sudo, and Kiritani (56), based on the results of several earlier studies on non-native speakers' production of English rhythm, conclude that the transfer from the learners' native language influenced their production of English-like stress alternation across a phrase.

In a newspaper article, "Nigerian Broadcasters and Mother Tongue Interference," Onwubiko notes that the influence of the mother tongue on the English language is a result of some ethnic groups' over indulgence in their primitive cultures in addition to a misguided passion for creating the impression that they cherish their supposedly 'rich cultural heritage'. What is more worrisome is the fact that children within such groups are molded to have such a

mind-set. Onwubiko, however, advises that what is important to do in order to fit into the contemporary norms of the global language of instruction and communication is to dissuade the irrational pasturing of mind-set and perception in children. Besides, it is important to note that every word, whether in the mother tongue or in a target second language, is meant to be articulated properly. Relating these concepts to the study, it is expected that because Bogghom and English are two different languages, their sounds will definitely defer as they are unique to the particular language they represent. Therefore, the Bogghom language is very likely to influence the English usage of its speakers either positively or negatively, as this study intends to examine.

2.14 Contrastive Theory

The term contrastive is an offshoot of the word contrast, which, in the context of this theory, is used to refer to a notion of central importance in traditional phoneme theory (Roach 20). Its emphasis is on determining what a phoneme is in terms of its sound quality/articulation and what it is not; that is, what other sounds it is in contrast with. In English, for example, /t/ contrasts with /p/ and /k/, in place of articulation; with /d/ in voicing or force of articulation; /n/ in plosive rather than nasal. Contrastive theory, therefore, is a theory concerned with finding cases where the difference between two words is dependent on the difference between two phonemes (Roach 63). This theory accounts for the difference between 'pin' and 'pan', which depends on the vowel. It also proves that descriptively, /i/, and /æ/ are two different phonemes. The same goes with the fact about the plosives /p/ and /b/ as in 'pin' and 'bin'. Though the two phonemes are bilabial plosives, their qualities are different. /p/ is voiceless while /b/ is voiced. Contrastive theory is sometimes referred to as 'contrastive hypotheses. Its analysis focuses on the method of implementation of the hypothesis. The main idea behind the contrastive hypothesis, as propounded by Robert Lado in his book, "Linguistics across Cultures", was to explore the possibility of identifying the areas of difficulty a particular foreign language will present for native speakers of another language by systematically comparing the two languages and cultures. By implication, where the two languages and cultures are similar, learning difficulties will not be expected; where they are different, learning difficulties are to be expected, and the greater the difference, the greater the degree of expected difficulty. This means that, for instance, the teacher who compares the foreign language with the native language of his students will know better what the problems are and can better provide effective teaching.

Dost and Bohloulzadeh submit that contrastive theory is only one of the two general hypotheses concerning second language acquisition. They cited Klein, who says that the second hypothesis is the identity hypothesis (32-33). While they corroborate Lado's view of the contrastive, noting that the structure of the first language affects the acquisition of the second language, they, however, argue that the acquisition of one language has little or no influence on the acquisition of another language in view of the identity hypothesis. The choice of contrastive theory in this study, despite the controversial arguments on it, is based on the fact that the theory has been used by researchers who got the expected results and helped in the study/teaching of English as a second or foreign language. The relevant proposition drawn from the contrastive theory that underpins the current study, therefore, lies in the argument that not all interferences are errors. In other words, not all the interferences of the mother tongue (L1) make the learning of the target language (L2) sounds pronunciation difficult. As a matter of fact, Pam (45-46), AL-Zayed (89-90), and Mabyou (72) all agree that adequate knowledge through the use of contrastive theory of the phonological systems of L1 and L2, as well as sufficient memorization of the symbols of the sounds, rhythms, tunes and stress patterns of any foreign language and their application in speech would help overcome the influence of mother tongue.

2.15 Related Studies

A significant number of related empirical studies involving the interrelationship between the mother tongue and the second language (English) pronunciation have been reported in Nigeria and globally; hence, the works of Pam (43-47), Senam and Senam(27-41), Al-Zayed (86-90), Dhillon (121-31), Yasir (44-50), Iyere (217-21), are among other earlier studies reviewed. Pam undertook a study to examine the interference of mother tongue on the spoken English of Berom speaking students at Plateau State Polytechnic. The study adopted oral interviews involving the use of sounds, which are best understood when pronounced as the method for data collection. The data collection instrument used was a pronunciation reading test. The result of the study indicated that in the production of eighteen (18) English sounds, that is, six (6) consonant sounds: /b/, /v/, /z/, /θ/, /ð/ and/ʒ/; and twelve vowel sounds: /i:/, /a:/, /ɔ:/ , /u:/, /əu/, /iə/, /eə/, /uə/, /ə/, /ə:/, /ʌ/ and /æ/, there was the interference of mother tongue (Berom).

The study also showed that of the eighteen (18) English sounds in which some difficulties were identified in the pronunciation of the respondents, only three sounds /b/, /v/ and /z/ were found to be common to both the English and Berom sound systems, indicating that the pronunciation of fifteen (15) English sounds that are absent in Berom are accompanied with some phonological problems. Pam's investigation is similar to our current study in theory, instrument, and data analysis. Our investigation is validated by Pam's work, which acknowledged the problem in English pronunciation due to phonological structural differences between Berom and English. The difference between the current work and Pam's work, however, is that our research uses data from Bogghom users of English who exhibit problems in pronunciation.

In a similar study on the Nigerian language, Ucheoma researched the impact of the mother tongue on the learning and proficiency of the English language. Using JSS 1 & 2 students from selected secondary schools in Emohua, Rivers state, she found out that phonemic differences, wrong stress placement, interference of Ikwerre vowel harmony, nasalisation, and vowel insertion on consonant clusters were responsible for the improper pronunciation of words among this ethnic group. A similar problem is being investigated here, though with users, not learners, in Plateau state among the Bogghom ethnic group. In a related study, Senam and Senam studied the pronunciation of English vowels among selected secondary school students in the Uyo metropolis. Data was collected from 100 students from five secondary schools in Uyo metropolis, Nigeria. The data collection technique consisted of a set of word lists containing 20 English vowels, and a short paragraph was administered to the respondents. In the analysis, simple percentages, multiple bar charts, and the chi-square were employed. The main finding reveals that 12 vowel sounds were troublesome to the students: /iː/ɪ/æ/ɔː/uː/ɜː/ə/ʌ/əu/ɪə/eɪ/uə/.

3. Methodology

The respondents used for data collection for this study are students of the Federal College of Education, Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State, who are of the Bogghom ethnic group studying in different disciplines and different levels of studies in the institution. The focus of this research is to examine the extent of interruption caused by the first language on the proficiency/pronunciation of the second language. In order to effectively carryout and achieve the objectives of this work, twenty (20) Bogghom indigenes across most departments met the basic requirements of the research by the use of simple random sampling to select them out of two hundred and thirty students of Bogghom ethnic group in the institution. These students were interviewed to obtain their personal data and were subsequently given to read the adapted passage with marked phonemes perceived by observation to be problematic to the people who were carefully chosen, considering their ability to speak their mother tongue fluently and their levels of education, which exposed them to the use of English. These students were adopted as respondents after a discussion and basic test using the interview method.

Data for analysis include voice recordings of speech that were collected from Bogghom speakers of English in the College of Education and the phonological structures of both Bogghom and English languages collected from secondary sources. The passage text was administered to respondents who were asked to read out as loudly as possible for a good recording. The passage for reading was formulated to contain about a hundred (100) words. The language is simple enough for easy understanding, as it is adapted from a secondary school textbook and has stories of interest. The passage is drafted to contain modern English with all the phonemes of English Received Pronunciation (RP), which differed from Bogghom phonemes.

3.1 Research Procedure

All voice recordings of the respondents were done at Government Secondary School, Gar. This aimed to obtain the best recording results from a quiet and serene atmosphere conducive to this kind of exercise. Participants took turns to read the passage individually after they were allowed to read to themselves for some minutes. This helped the individual to be relaxed and familiarised with the passage given for examination. Their readings were tape recorded to serve as data for analyses of the plausible cause of phonemic approximation and substitution, which resulted in the mispronunciation of English words.

The methods of data analysis used in this study are descriptive in nature. In the descriptive analysis, the two languages, in contrast, are analysed using secondary data. Description and comparison of phonological structures are made on the similarities and differences between the Bogghom and English languages. Areas of difficulty are

identified from the analysis of data through simple percentages. For instance, there are twenty words marked for analysis in the passage, and each word is scored 5 marks. The scores of each respondent are multiplied by 100. That is, where a respondent correctly pronounced 5 out of 20 words, the 5 was put over 20 and multiplied by 100; this gave a 25% score. This scoring procedure also applies to wrongly pronounced words. Mean scores, calculated total scores of respondents divided by the number of scores added of the twenty respondents, were obtained, and the extent of mispronunciation was discussed and analysed, as well as the causes of divergence.

4. Findings and Discussion

Data obtained for the study are presented and discussed in this segment. To achieve these, the recorded readings of respondents were translated using the English Received Pronunciation. The data generated created room for general assumption in the form of explanations of the influence of the Bogghom language on its speakers of English as a second language user. To calculate the score of each speaker, the number of wrongly pronounced words scored out of the total pronunciation test was converted into percentage form. For instance, when a respondent mispronounces 5 words out of the 20 marked phonemes, the 5 is divided by 20 and multiplied by 100, and the score becomes 25% to arrive at the score for the respondent.

4.1 The Effects of Bogghom Phonological Structure on the English Pronunciation

The extent to which the differences in the two languages affected English pronunciation was examined using an encoded passage adapted from the New Oxford Secondary English Course, Book 2, page 33. This aimed to assess the type of effect the marked out sounds have on the Bogghom- English bilinguals when they communicate in English. Phonemes /æ/ɜ:/ʌ/θ/ð/ɔ:/əʊ/ are examined in the following passage given to respondents for data collection:

> My hometown is situated in a valley completely **encircled** by hills. It is a large town in which many people live. You **ought** to climb the hills on which **the** new **hotel** has been **built** to see how large it is. You will be able to view how many **schools**, **hospitals, churches**, and **mosques** we have. My hometown **records influx** of people during **yuletide**. Quite a number visited last year. **Goats** were **slaughtered** for **Christmas** celebration. There were food and drinks in **surplus**. **Those** who couldn't afford **anything** were helped by **philanthropists**. It was a **splendid** period of reunion'.

Vowel insertion or consonant deletion was also considered from the same passage using the following words: schools, hospitals, mosques, philanthropists, yuletide, splendid, hospitals.

4.2 Scores of Respondents' Pronunciation of each Marked Word in the Passage

S/No	Marked Word	Respondents' correct Realisation%	Respondents' wrong Realisation%	Comment
1	Encircled /ɪn's**ɜ:**kəd/	0	100	All substituted /ɜ:/
2	Ought /ɔ:t/	45	55	9 out of 20 articulated correctly
3	The **/ð**ə/	0	100	All switched phone/ð/
4	Hotel /h**əʊ**'tel/	0	100	All mispronounced/əʊ/
5	Built /b**ɪ**lt/	0	100	All replaced /ɪ/ with/u/
6	Schools /sku:l**z**/	15	85	14 out of 20 realised /z/ as /s/, 3 omitted /z/

7	Hospitals /hɒspɪ**tlz** /	5	95	All mispronounced the word except 1 by insertion of phoneme in the place of syllabic consonant /l/
8	Churches /ʧ**ɜ:**ʧɪz/	0	100	All exchanged /ɜ:/ in the first syllable, and /z/in the second syllable
9	Mosques /mɒs**ks**/	45	55	9 out of 20 respondents articulated correctly
10	Records /r**ɪ**kɔ:ds/	0	100	All realised /ɪ/ as /e/ in the first syllable thereby changing the word class
11	Influx /ɪnfl**ʌks**/	0	100	All respondents replaced /ʌ/ with /ɔ:/, /ɒ/ or /ʊ/
12	Yuletide /ju:ltaɪd/	10	90	18 out of 20 inserted a vowel to pronounced the word as three syllable word instead of two as pronounced in RP
13	Goats /g**əʊ**ts/	5	95	1 out of 20 pronounced correctly
14	Slaughtered /slɔ:tɪd/	0	100	All did spelling pronunciation
15	Christmas /'krɪsməs/	15	85	3 respondents articulated correctly
16	Surplus /'s**ɜ:**pləs/	0	100	All respondents mispronounced the word
17	Those ð**əʊ**z/	0	100	Consonant/ð/ and vowel/əʊ/ changed
18	Anything /'en**ɪθ**ɪᵑ/	0	100	All produced /θ/ as /t/
19	Philanthropists fɪ'læn**θ**rəpi**sts**/	0	100	All switched /θ/ and omitted /ts/ to remove cluster at coda
20	Splendid /'**spl**endɪd/	20	80	16 out of 20 either simplified cluster at onset by vowel insertion or exchanged /e/
Total scores		160	1840	2000
Mean scores		8%	92%	100%

The outcome of the analysis above showed a high score of mispronunciation of marked phoneme at 92%, while only 8% attained correct RP pronunciation.

4.3 Factors Responsible for Mispronunciation of English Words

There are several factors identified by researchers of second language studies as being responsible for mispronunciation. Such factors include: substitution, vowel epenthesis, mental pronunciation, spelling pronunciation, phonemic differences, simplification/under–differentiation, intonation, stress placement, overgeneralisation, weak decoding ability, etc. This work examines some of these factors as tabulated below.

Table 1: Phonemic substitution

Phoneme	**Accurate realisation%**	**wrong pronunciation %**	**Cumulative accuracy%**
/ɜ:/ encircled(ɪn'sɜ:kəd)	0% accurate realisation	90% substituted /ɜ:/ for /a/, 10% as /e/	Accurate pronunciation = 14.28% Wrong pronunciation = 85.72% Substitution rate is very high
/ʌ/ influx('ɪnflʌks)	0 % accurate realisation	25% realised/ʌ/ as /ɔ/, 35% as/ʊ/, 20% as /o/, and 20% as /e/	
/əʊ/goat (gəʊt)	95% vowel substitution, 1 out of 20 accuracy	others pronounced /əʊ/ as /ɔ:/, / o:/ or /ɒ/	
/θ/anything ('enɪθɪᵑ)	All respondents were inaccurate	100% replacement of /θ/ with /t/	
/ð/ the (ðə)	0% accurate realisation	100% realisation of /ð/ as /d/	
/ɪ/built (bɪlt)	100% vowel substitution	100% substituted /ɪ/ for /u/	
/ɔ:/ ought(ɔ:t)	90% accurate pronunciation	10% wrongly inserted /a/ to pronounce as /auta:/	
/ɜ:/ surplus(sɜ:pləs)	0 % accurate realisation	90% realised /ɜ:/ as /ɔ:/, 10% as /u:/	

Table 1 above shows 85.72% high rate of vowel substitution. Vowel /ɜ:/ was substituted for /a/, ai/or / a:/ respondents thereby substituted this vowel absent in their first language with the nearest vowels as conceived to be a right replacement. This realisation of the word 'encircled' as /ensakul/ insaikəd, /ensa:kəd/ resulted in mispronunciation since they are all a complete deviation from the RP realisation. Also noted in the table are the same substitutions for /ʌ/, əʊ/, /θ/, /ð/. These vowels were switched with the nearest vowels in mother tongue phonemes. Open central vowel/ʌ/ was realised by 25% of respondents as /ɔ/, 35% as/ʊ/, 20% as /o/, and 20% as /e/. Closing diphthong /əʊ/ was produced as monothong; replaced with either /ɔ:/, / o:/ or /ɒ/. In the same way, voiceless dental fricative /θ/, and voiced dental fricative /ð/ were switched for voiceless and voiced alveolar plosives /t/d/ respectively.

Table 2: Consonant deletion/elision of plural markers

Phoneme	**Accurate realisation%**	**Respondent's Accuracy%**	**Mean score**
Churches /ʧɜ:ʧɪz/	80% pronounced the plural marker, but realised as /s/ instead of /z/	20%(4 out of 20) pronounced as single syllable /ʧɔ:ʧ/	Accurate pronunciation = 17% Inaccurate pronunciation = 83%
Mosques /mɒsks/	30% realised the plural markers	55% deleted /ks/ and pronounced as /mɒs/, 15% realised as/mɒsk/	
Hospitals /hɒspitlz/	15% (3 out of 20)	85% (17 out of 20)	

	articulated correctly	deleted (s)	
Schools /sku:lz/	25% (5 out of 20) pronounced accurately	75% (15 out of 20) do not pronounce the plural markers	Consonant deletion rate is above average
Philanthropists /fɪ'lænθrəpists/	Only 15% (3 out of 20) articulated plural marker/s/	85% deleted the plural marker/s/ or deleted cluster/ts/ at coda	

Table 2 indicated consonant deletion/elision in plural noun words such as mosques, churches, hospitals, and schools. These words were produced by 83% of respondents as singular nouns. This high rate of mispronunciation of plural markers is related to lexical differences between Bogghom and the English language. Plurals are realised as adjectives in the studied language.

Table 3: Vowel epenthesis

Phoneme	**Accurate realisation%**	**Respondent's Accuracy%**	**Mean score**
Splendid/splendɪd/	20% (4 out of 20) pronounced accurately	15% inserted /ʊ/ to pronounce as /suplendɪd/	Accurate pronunciation = 15% Inaccurate pronunciation = 52.5%
Yuletide/ju:ltaɪd/	10% accurate realisation as /ju:ltaɪd/	80% inserted /i/, 10% inserted /e/o/ to realised as /ju:litaɪd/, /ju:letaɪd/ and /ju:lotaɪd/	
Hospitals /hɒspitlz/	1 out of 20 realised correctly as pronounced in RP /hɒspitlz/	95% replaced syllable consonant/l/ with either /u/o/a/ or /ə/	

Table 3 recorded 52.5% vowel insertion to simplify consonant clusters at onset for the word 'splendid', and insertion of a syllable in the word 'yuletide' to realised two syllable word/ju:ltaɪd/ as /ju:litaɪd/, /ju:letaɪd/ or /ju:lotaɪd/ in the production of the word 'hospitals' 95% replaced syllable consonant/l/ with either /u/o/a/ or /ə/ to articulate the word as /hɒspɪtas/, /hɒspɪtos/, /hɒspɪtʊs/ or/ hɒspɪtəs/.

Table 4: Lack of vowel length reduction

Phoneme	Accurate realisation%	Respondent's Accuracy%	Cumulative accuracy
Slaughtered	0% pronounced /slɔ:tɪd/	30% pronounced as /slɔ:tad/ & 70% pronounced as /slɔ:ta/	Accurate realisation = 0% Inaccurate realisation = 100% All respondents pronounced as spelled
Christmas /krɪməs/	All respondents pronounced as /krismas/ instead of /krɪsməs/	20 out of 20 do not realise the RP pronunciation as first and second syllable carry equal length vowels/i/a/	
Records /rɪkɔ:dz/	100% (all) inaccurate realisation. It was realised as noun/recɔ:ds/ instead of verb /rɪkɔ:dz/	This inaccuracy is due to spelling pronunciation. Respondent didn't bother to check the word class.	

This table shows respondents' attitude towards pronunciation as they pronounce the above words without observation of the English rule of vowel length reduction. This rule does not apply in their acquired first language. This explains the reason for their lack of identification of strong and weak vowels in pronunciation.

Table 5: Simplification of consonant clusters

Phoneme	Accurate realisation	Respondent's accuracy	Mean score
Mosques /mɒsks/	45% articulated the consonant clusters at coda	40% deleted consonant clusters /ks/at coda, 15% deleted /s/	Accurate pronunciation = 46.67% Inaccurate pronunciation = 53.36% Deletion of consonant clusters is a little above average
Splendid /splendɪd/	80% (16out of 20) articulated the consonant clusters at onset	15% (3 out of 20) inserted vowels to simplify the consonant clusters at onset, 1 deleted /s/at onset	
Philanthropists /fɪ'lænθrəpists/	15% (3 out of 20) articulated the consonant clusters at coda	85% (17 out 20) deleted consonant clusters at coda	

53.36% of respondents device means to simplify consonant clusters at both the onset and coda either by deletion or insertion of vowel sounds to pronounce the words in the above table, which resulted in mispronunciation.

This study set out to examine the phenomenon of the influence of the mother tongue on the use of English as a second language among bogghom native speakers. The objectives were to (a) describe Bogghom phonemes and the syllable structure, (b) identify the phonological differences between the Bogghom language and the English, (c) project reason(s) for phonemic approximation and substitution which result in mispronunciation of English words,

and (d) suggest a plausible way(s) out of these difficulties. These objectives were carried out using Lado's contrastive theory hypothesis, which states that where two language systems are different, difficulties are to be expected, and the greater the differences, the greater the degree of expected difficulties. In view of the findings of this work, it is noted that all mispronounced words analysed in the investigation are a result of phonemic differences, segmental differences, and lexical differences.

4.4 Other Factors Considered were:

4.4.1 Segmental Differences

The analysis of data collected indicates that the main factor responsible for the mispronunciation of English words by Bogghom respondents is the disparity of phonemes in the two language systems. About 85.72% cumulative average percentage of inaccurate pronunciation was recorded in respondents' passage reading due to phonemic substitution. Respondents exchanged sounds /ɜː, ʌ, ð, θ, əʊ/ examined in the passage, which was not found in their mother tongue's system, with the closest sounds found in their L1 features /a, ɔ, o, t, d/. This phonemic substitution accounts for a high rate of mispronunciation. Vowel shortening was recorded as respondents reduced closing diphthong / əʊ/ to open back rounded monothong /ɒ/, and /oː/in 'hotel' and 'those'. It is also noted that respondents pronounce words as spelled with no observation of strong and weak vowels in pronunciation

4.4.2 Phonotactic Differences

About 52.5% of mispronunciation registered in the analysis was due to vowel epenthesis caused by differences in syllable structures of both languages. Respondents simplified the English words that contained consonant clusters as this is alien to the practice in their L1. The investigation further revealed 83% consonant deletion. Consonant /s/ k/ ks/ t/ were deleted from words both at onset 'splendid' realised as 'plendid', 'mosques' realised as 'mɒs', and at coda position 'philanthropists' as 'philantropis'.

4.4.3 Lexical Differences

Study analysis shows only 17% correctly pronounced plural nouns marked out in the passage. Respondents' high rate of plural markers' deletion is traceable to the fact that Bogghom vocabulary do not differentiate between singular and plural nouns.

4.4 Summary of Findings

This study was carried out to understudy the influence of mother tongue on the use of English as a second language among the Bogghom ethnic group in Plateau state and was premised on contrastive analysis theory, which posits that the source of mispronunciation in second/foreign language lie in the areas of differences with users' native language. It is assumed that an individual who is conversant with the rules of the mother tongue's language system could transfer existing knowledge into L2 when faced with the challenge of disparity in other language(s).

Using the above as the basis for data analysis, this research findings showed that the segmental phonological differences between Bogghom and English constitute the source of difficulties in the utterances of Bogghom speakers of English as a second language. These difficulties are seen in the following areas:

Phonotactic differences: result shows syllabic differences in both languages were responsible for the deviant pronunciation put at 73.33% due to vowel epenthesis and deletion by respondents.

Segmental differences: respondents' cumulative inaccurate articulation percentage is placed at 85.72%, caused by phonemic approximation/substitution.

Lexical differences: high rate of 77% under-pronunciation of plural nouns by respondents resulted from the disparity in plural indication in noun word class of both languages.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research, the study establishes the existence of phonemic disparities and similarities between the sound systems of the two languages studied. Differences in both language systems account for the

high percentage of difficulties, which resulted in mispronunciation of English words. Similarities, on the other hand, aided accurate pronunciation recorded with respondents.

Description of Bogghom segmental phonology and subsequent discovery of variances between the studied languages have linguistic and educational implications. Linguistically, it is shown by the poor performance of respondents' wrong realisation of the examined features that Bogghom speakers of English face challenges in their spoken English. These challenges varies substantially based on the respondents' exposures and academic levels. Those who are in level one performed poorly as their pronunciation was heavily influenced by their mother tongue sound behaviours. Alphabet pronunciation generally accounts for about 90% of wrong pronunciation of the passage reading, which is traceable to ways words are pronounced in most mother tongues. This habit impearled their realisation of correct native English mode or RP accent, which is not based on word spellings.

Educationally, the finding of this work places a huge task on English teachers, particularly for those in contact with Bogghom indigenes, curriculum developers, and textbook writers. Teachers should adopt effective approaches and methodologies in teaching Bogghom-English bilinguals. Linguistic scholars/writers are to equally provide materials that are helpful to Bogghom users of English in their verbal challenges.

5.1 Recommendation

This study recommends that Bogghom users of English make deliberate efforts to study the area of phonological differences found between English and their native language. Self-drill exercises on English segmental phonology will be of great help in becoming conversant with or mastering such features in order to attain accurate pronunciation according to the English standard. In other words, conscious effort on self-drill exercise in areas of disparities will provide a solution to their poor performance in spoken English.

There is also a need for a mentality change from spelling pronunciation, which realizes English phonemes as mental entities, to recognising them as physical entities distinguished by phonological properties/symbols. Respondents' inaccurate articulation of marked words in passage reading was basically due to modification of the word "from its traditional form to reflect the spelling of the word in question" (AED). Pronouncing English words using sound symbols instead of letters of the alphabet will enable speakers to achieve high accuracy performance that is regarded as Standard English pronunciation.

Furthermore, to minimise or eradicate pronunciation problems among the studied group, English phonology should be taught at all levels of education only by qualified English teachers who are experts in this field of discipline. Teachers should "make deliberate effort", and dedicate ample attention to the language's phonological features, which are "sources of confusion" (Nwoke and Maisamari 127) to Bogghom speakers of English, and acquaint themselves with current and accurate teaching methods on spoken English. The effort to master/teach spoken English can be achieved through the use of CD-ROMS/internet sources, textbooks containing valuable information on pronunciation, and by attending training programmes.

5.2 Limitation to the Study

This study for time constraints concentrated on segmental features of both languages. Therefore, the scope of this research is not comprehensive enough to generalise all aspects of the sound systems of the languages understudied. This limitation or inability to cover the supra-segmental phonology of the Bogghom language impedes the generalisation of the findings of the study. Hence, the researchers could not say conclusively that phonemic differences are reasons for Bogghom's poor performance in English pronunciation.

The alphabet and orthography of Bogghom language have been identified by Bogghom Language Development and Bible Translation Committee. This work is yet to be established by all Bogghom people as the acceptable structure of the language when verified in the course of this research. This posed some drawbacks to the work.

5.3 Suggestion for Further Studies

Research into the phenomenon of interference seems unending as languages continually come into contact with one another. The researcher suggests further study on the supra-segmental phonology of the Bogghom sound system. In this study, segmental phonological difference is the parameter used to probe the cause of the influence

of the first language on bilingual Bogghoms. Other factors, such as stress pattern and intonation under supra-segmental phonology, are needed to proffer an all-inclusive solution to the problem of pronunciation faced by Bogghom-English bilinguals.

Secondly, the orthography of the Bogghom language is at a stage, like English, before the advent of the dictionary, where people spell differently. It is observed that writers in the Bogghom language use different spellings for the same word(s) as they may seem appropriate/perceived. For instance, the word 'child' is spelled as 'pəɪ', 'peɪ', 'she' as 'ha', 'har', 'thanks' as 'zarai', 'zaghai' etc. It is necessary that the language's spellings be developed, invented where necessary, and documented for future reference. This is in line with Paine's suggestions such as Pam (45-46), AL-Zayed (89-90), Al-khrasheh (330-338), and Mabyou (72), who posit that adequate knowledge through the use of contrastive analysis of the phonological systems of L1 and L2, as well as sufficient memorization of the symbols of the sounds of any second/foreign language and their application in speech would help overcome the influence of mother tongue in bilinguals. Current research, therefore, adds to other literature that upholds Lado's stands on the use of contrastive analysis of languages in contact for a better understanding of students' backgrounds in order to proffer a solution to the problem of the influence of the mother tongue on a second language.

On the other hand, this study refutes the line of thought of Chiatoh Blasius A. and Akumbu Pius W., who argue that the use of the mother tongue as a language of instruction, including teaching English language, enhances the efficiency of second/foreign language learning.

This work will be an added help for English teachers in contact with native speakers to be more operative as findings of this contrastive investigation give knowledge of their pupils/students' linguistic background. The study was based on an analysis of phonological differences between the Bogghom language and English.

This descriptive analysis of a segmental aspect of Bogghom phonology is a step further in the effort to document the Language's sound system and groundwork for future researchers in this field.

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