

Linguistic and Extra-linguistic Correlates of English Palato-Alveolar Fricatives in Educated Nigerian English

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Introduction

Nigeria is a multilingual nation with more than 500 different local languages (Simons & Fennig, 2017), out of which Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are regarded as major languages. Over and above this myriad of indigenous languages is English, a colonial legacy, which now occupies a prime place in the country's national and international affairs. It functions as a language of inter-ethnic communication and the official language in education, governmental administration, law courts, business and commerce, and the media amongst others (Adetugbo, 2004; Awonusi, 2004). In view of its co-habitation with native languages and cultures, it has been subjected to marked interference and severe changes (Akindele and Adegbite, 1999), resulting in a local variety of world Englishes known as Nigerian English (henceforth NigE), which is different at all linguistic levels (syntax, phonology, lexical, discourse and pragmatics) from Standard British English, her model variety.