

A Contrastive Analysis of the Segmental Phonological Features of English and Twi (ɸwi)



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ABSTRACT

This study attempted a Contrastive Analysis study of English language and Twi /ɸwi/ sound systems i.e. the segmental phonological features, with a view to finding out areas of similarities and differences in order to be acquainted with the possible areas of ease and difficulty for Ashanti learners of English as a second language. Findings showed that areas of similarities would not pose any problem for Ashanti learners of English while areas of differences would pose problems in English as a second language. Based on the findings and the conclusion, it was recommended that teachers of English should be aware of the need to concentrate more on speech training, speak, and in turn encourage their students to often speak English, as well as carrying out exercises on error analysis. Similarly, students are advised to cultivate the habit of good listening and speaking habits. They should also listen to both local and international news such as on the British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC), Voice of America (VOA), among others with a view to making comparative analysis among them. It was also recommended that government should make oral English compulsory at all levels of academic institutions, among other recommendations.

Keywords: Contrastive analysis, Segmental phonological features, English, Twi and language family.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language as a global phenomenon is a creative system of arbitrary vocal symbol which allows members of a given culture or group to communicate or interact (Oladodo, 1999).

Language is one of the most important differences between man and animals, it is the medium through which man is able to speak and make others to understand him. Speech is possible because within each society people agree to understand particular patterns of sounds in particular ways. For example, the English speaking people understand the meaning of the word “water”, Swahili speakers understand the

same word as “Maji” while the Twi speakers (Ashanti people of Ghana) refer to the same substance as “nsu”.

It is often supposed that language spoken by technically underdeveloped societies will themselves be simple, but this is not at all true. Every language is able to express the ideas needed in that society, and it is able to change with the changing need of the society. It is through language that people enrich and sharpen their thinking and speech abilities (Bello, 1999).

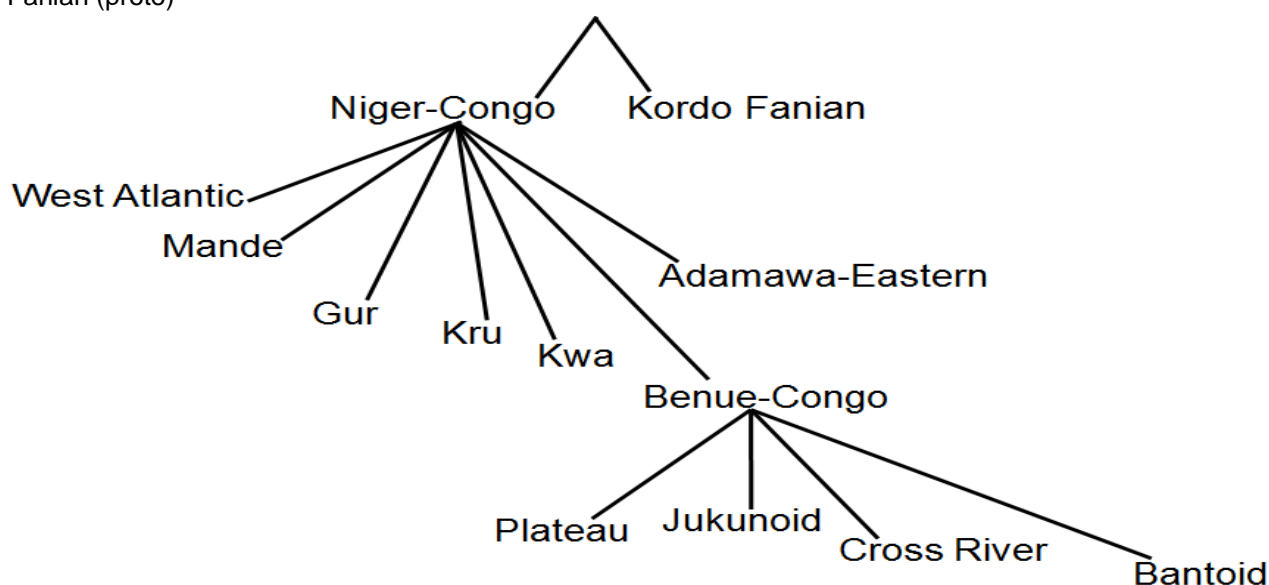
As men have families so also languages have families. It is assumed that all languages developed from one original language. This original language continued to split into different dialects which over the centuries became separate languages. Scholars of comparative and historical linguistics try to reconstruct relationship of different languages which might have developed from the same original language. By this, all the languages of the world are grouped into families.

According to African Encyclopedia (2001) the family of the languages which descended from Latin is called the Romance language. This Romance language itself is a part of large Indo-European family with many branches: GERMANIC (INCLUDING English, German and African), Celtic (with Welsh and Irish); SLAVONIC (Russian); GREEK, ARMENIAN and INDO-IRANIAN (which include Sanskrit, Persian and most of the languages of Northern INDIA). Other language families are SEMITIC (include Arabic, Amharic and Hebrew). The BANTU languages –Malayo -Polynesia (include Malaysia).

However, there are four major language families in Africa, and genetically speaking, none of these four families is closely related to the other. They are.

- a. Niger–Kordo Fania
- b. Afro–Asiatic
- c. Nilo–Saharan
- d. Khoisan.

The Niger–Kordo Fanian group is the largest of all the four major language families while Khosian is the smallest. The Niger–Kordo Fanian is the proto-form of the family from which most of the African languages developed (Bello, 2004). The following is a tree diagram to illustrate the major sub-division under Niger-Kordo Fanian, the family that Twi (ɸwi), the language of investigation belongs. Niger-Kordo Fanian (proto)



Kwa, a sub-division of Niger-Congo sub-family, is otherwise known as Voltaic. The language of Kwa includes Bariba, Mossi, Dagomba, Togo and many of the languages spoken in Ghana which Twi is prominent.

Language as a global work force has placed man in the centre of universe. This means that the continued survival of any language depends largely on man, and because of the dynamic nature of man, he has to interact with his environment since every human environment is characterized by multilingualism, man as a social creature must adjust as such.

Ghana, formerly Gold Coast, a country in the West African sub-region is a multilingual nation as a result of its multi-ethnic composition. The only ethnic group to which Twi language belongs as native speakers is the Ashanti group in the Ashanti Region. Ghana as a geo-political entity has different ethnic groups characterized by different languages, and as such, Ghana is regarded as a multilingual nation. This multilingualism has made it difficult for the many different ethnic groups to communicate and interact with one another without English language which is the official language, as [Kwaku-Boye \(2001\)](#) asserts that non-existence of a national language in Ghana further compounds her problems linguistically. This is so because of all the languages in Ghana, none has been developed to the level of being acceptable to the generality of the Ghanaian people as a national language, as he further submits that:

to assert that a particular language out of all the languages in Ghana be developed and adopted as a national language is tantamount to impeaching the linguistic integrity of other languages, which means imposing that language on other languages (p 26)

While lending credence to the assertion above, [Emisah \(2003\)](#) argues that a language derives its usefulness and validity from the aggregate of its usage, and should a Ghanaian language therefore be picked and adopted as a national language, other languages will suffer anomie i.e. language inferiority (p 104)

During the scramble for and partition of West Africa resulting from the 1884 Berlin conference, Ghana, like some other countries in West Africa, fell prey to Britain as her colonial master. Britain thereafter introduced her own language, that is, the English language, to her colony to enable her communicate with the Ghanaians. Through a gradual, but a systematic schooling process trained, tutored and educated Ghanaians were able to communicate with their colonial masters and among themselves, and subsequently adopted the English language as a Lingua Franca for the nation (Ghana). The English language has since then been used as a language of commerce, politics, law, and as medium of instruction in schools and also as a second language to most Ghanaians.

With the status of English language in Ghana, it becomes imperative for Ghanaians to learn English language in order to interact, communicate and socialize fully with their fellow countrymen who are different by tribe and language. Even apart from the Lingua Franca status of English language to Ghanaians, it is also used as an international language therefore a Ghanaian needs the English language to communicate with non-Ghanaians who use English language. [Bello \(1999\)](#) posits that a child born in Ghana is born into a country with a multiplicity of languages; he is surrounded by a complex language situation, and in essence, an average Ghanaian is bilingual while some are multilingual. He states further that in a country with such complex language situation, apart from having a very good command of his mother tongue, a Ghanaian child must also have a good control of the English language in order for him to be accepted as an educated Ghanaian.

Speech is very central in man's communication system, so, in learning any language, the main problem is not at first that of learning the vocabulary items but of mastering the sound system (phonology), to understand the stream of speech, to listen to the distinctive sound features and to be able to approximate and equate them (Onuigbo, 1990). Onuigbo submits further that sound systems of language differ from language to language. What may be lacking in the sound system of one language may be present in the other language, and vice versa, this is the basis for interference in language learning. It is assumed that a second language learner will encounter some difficulties in producing the sounds that are absent in his own language sound system. To an Englishman there is a marked difference in vowel number one /i:/ and vowel number two /i/ as in feet /fi:t/ and fit /fit/ respectively. There is also a marked difference between voiced and voiceless interdental fricatives /ð/ and /θ/, and voiceless plosive /t/ as in father /fa:ðə/, thought /θɔ:t/ and taught /tɔ:t/ respectively, among other examples.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

An Ashanti child first comes in contact with his indigenous language (mother tongue) from birth because that is the language with which he interacts with the other members of his family and his immediate environment. The second language which is English is by no means his mother tongue, but as he grows older and begins to interact with people, he realizes the need to master the English language for him to be able to survive socially in the multilingual and complex sociolinguistic setting in which he finds himself. He then needs to learn English language, and since the sound systems of both languages (Twi and English) are not the same, there is bound to be difficulties in articulating the English sounds by a Twi learner of English. When both languages come in contact, there is every tendency for some English sounds that are not present in Twi sound system to be substituted with those sounds that are readily available in the Twi sound systems. There is therefore the need to look into the areas of similarities and differences in the vowel and consonant sounds of both languages and find possible solutions by reducing learners' errors of interference in order for an Ashanti learner of English to be able to speak and be understood by both Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to do a contrastive analysis (C.A) of the segmental phonological features of Twi (a language of the Ashanti Region of Ghana) and English language with a view to bringing out the similarities and differences so that teachers can predict and articulate areas of differences and the necessary pedagogical remedy for Ashanti learners of English as a second language.

1.3. Background Literature on Contrastive Analysis

The goal of contrastive analysis in two or more languages is to predict the errors that speakers of the first language (L1) will make in learning or producing sounds in the second language (L2). This concept would hang on the concepts of transfer and interference. Adebija (1998) posits that the principle of transfer and interference is based on the assumption that the previous learning affects subsequent learning either positively (when the forms and patterns are similar or identical), or negatively (when the forms and patterns are different), an indication that the differences between L1 and L2 are the learning tasks facing the learners.

Lawal (1989) lists different levels of difficulties or hierarchies of difficulty that is relevant to the prediction of problems as:

- a. A situation where there is convergence in the features of L1 and L2 is referred to as “Zero level of difficulty”. In other words, no difficulty is theoretically or practically expected.
- b. A situation where one language has more features than the other, the language with more features is said to “over generate”.
- c. A situation where one language has less features than the other, the language with less features is said to “under generate”.
- d. In some instances, a feature may be realized as two features in another language. When this occurs, it is referred to as a “split”.

The procedure of contrastive analysis is the sequential arrangement of elements to achieve the desired goal as shown below:

1. **Description:** Phonological aspect of Twi, a language spoken by a vast Ashanti people of Ghana and the English language.
2. Areas of focus: The segmental phonological features of the two languages i.e. the vowels and consonants.
3. Comparison and contrast
 - a. **Comparison:** Comparing Twi and English languages means showing the various features that are common to the two languages; the vowels in Twi are classified into two main groups namely: pure vowels (monothongs) and diphthongs, then the consonants; while the vowels in English language are classified into three i.e. pure vowels (monothongs), diphthongs and triphthongs.
 - b. **Contrast:** This linguistically means finding out the various features in one language that negate the features of other language.
4. **Prediction/Pedagogical Implications:** As the last stage of the procedure of contrastive analysis, it is to find implications of the similarities and the differences of the various features of the two languages.

In another developments Bello (2000) affirms that contrastive analysis as a linguistic enterprise aimed at producing inverted (i.e. contrastive, not comparative) two valued typologies (contrastive analysis is always concerned with a pair of languages) and founded on the assumption that languages can be compared.

Similarly, Adegbija (1998) argues that of special interest to the language is contrastive linguistics which compares the structures of two languages to determine the points where they differ. The differences are the chief sources of difficulty in learning a second language. In comparing two languages linguists take each phoneme in the native language and compare it with the phonetically most similar one in the second language. He will then describe their similarities and differences. The results of these contrastive descriptions form the basis for the preparation of language texts and tests, and for the correction of students learning English as second language (ESL).

The Ford Foundation Survey of the teaching of English strongly recommends contrastive study of English and the vernacular as an important step towards the improvement of teaching and learning of English in Africa (Adegbija, 1998; Bello, 2000). The core assumption in contrastive analysis (C.A) as observed by Lado (1964) in Bello (2004) is that comparison between native and English language lays the key of ease or difficulty in foreign language learning. In other words, the concept of transfer in second

language learning is what determines ease or difficulty to the learner. When there are similarities between the previous experiences of the learner i.e. the native language and the target language, the transfer is said to be positive. If the sound which occurs in the native language e.g. /u/ occurs in the target language, the learning becomes easy, whereas, when a sound such as /ʌ/ occurs in the target language but is not present in the learner's mother tongue, the learner lacks the background to assist him in learning it easily. If this happens, the learner is said to be "blind to these sounds which are not present in his native language". As such, the learner would rather replace them with other sounds that are nearer to them in his mother tongue or native language. This is what [Chembow \(1974\)](#) describes as a "Trojan horse" in second language learning, because it poses serious impediment to the language learner.

The principle of C.A. is that foreign language teachers must take into consideration the structural and cultural difficulties in the child's native language and allow him to influence his methodology. It is believed as observed by [Lado \(1957\)](#) that, those elements that are similar in the foreign language the teacher is teaching to his native language learners will be simple for the learners while those elements that are different would be difficult for them.

While giving credence to the above, [Bello \(2000\)](#) posits that the schools as we know them are social inventions to give helping hands to parents on the growing individuals. At the same time, it is pertinent to note that, not all societies have schools, and even those societies that have schools, not all children attend school. Schools came into being in Europe just before the Industrial Revolution when it became clear that parents, families and communities could no longer cope with all round education of individual child, but to build on the foundation put in place by the home.

In Ghana, like any other African country, there are schools but not all children attend school, yet, children do receive education of a sort. The children that attend school have some language problems let alone children that do not attend school at all. During the nineteen-fifties and sixties, there was a great upsurge of enthusiasm among students of language and linguistics. There was a feeling of great optimism, and it was generally believed that many linguistic problems were being solved and a major breakthrough was imminent. Teachers of English believe that the "new" science of linguistics and the "new" grammars that were being developed would make the teaching and learning of languages easier.

Similarly, [Halliday \(1964\)](#) argues that educational enthusiasm and similar statements can be found all through the writing on linguistics:

Today ... millions of people of all ages are struggling to learn one, two or even more foreign languages and many others would like to know about how their own works; they have the right to benefit from what has been done in linguistics and phonetics to make their task easier (p. 96).

In the nineteen-seventies, we were really not optimistic about linguistics. Language, as we were coming to realize, was like the hydra, the ancient Greek mystical monster. If you cut off one head from this monster, another grew in its place. The same goes for the study of language, solve one problem and you create a number of others. These, therefore, have given rise to "Recent Trend in phonological problems of the Ashanti speakers of English as a second language" (p 56). The Ashanti speakers of English as a second language (ESL) have got some problems in all ramifications, but this study will limit the problems to the segmental phonological features only.

1.4. Research Questions

The following questions are asked to serve as insight to potential teachers and learners so that they will be able to observe, know what to look for, how to look for them and the solution that could be proffered to any potential problems that might be discovered to help teaching and learning processes:

1. What are the areas of similarities between Twi and English languages in the areas of segmental phonology?
2. What are the areas of differences between Twi and English languages in the areas of segmental phonology?
3. What are the pedagogical implications of these similarities and differences for the teaching of English language among Twi learners of English?

2. FINDINGS

Both languages (Twi and English) have the same classification of vowels except triphthongs that are peculiar to English as shown below:

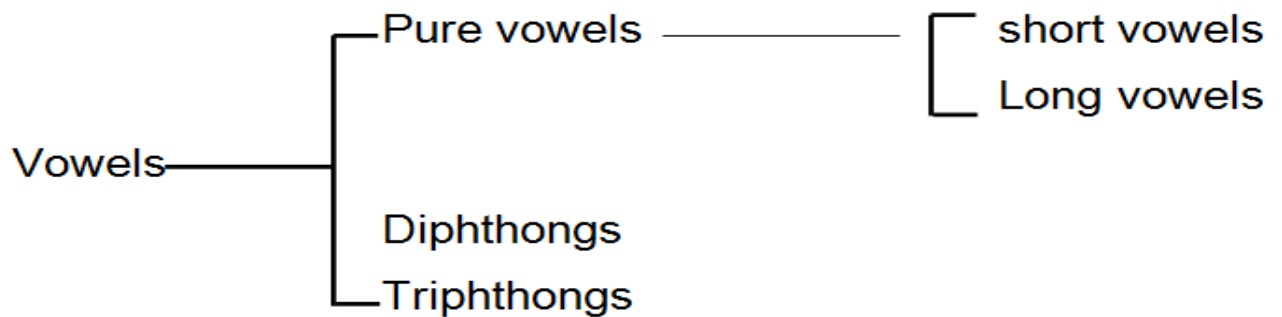


Fig-3. Bello (2000) Classification of Twi and English Vowel

The following are the vowels in Twi as exemplified below:

Vowel	Twi	Gloss
/a/ as in	asɛm	word
/e/ as in	ebia	may be
/ɛ/ as in	fɛfɛfɛ	beautiful
/i/ as in	didi	eat
/o/ as in	som	hold it
/ɔ/ as in	abɔfra	baby
/u/ as in	pue	move out

These vowels are further represented in the charts below:

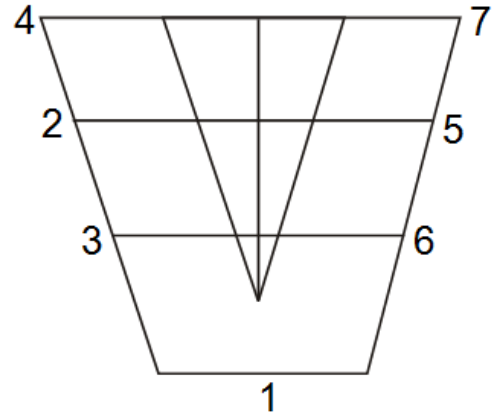
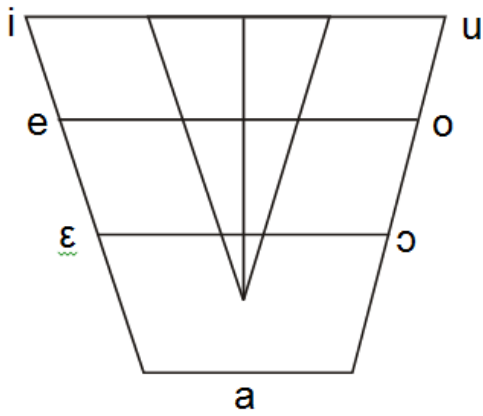


Fig-4. Kwaku-Boye (2001) Twi vowel charts

The English language has forty-nine (49) distinct phonemes out of which twelve (12) are pure vowels; they are as listed and exemplified below:

/i:/ as in	seat	/si:t/
/i/ as in	sit	/sit/
/e/ as in	bed	/bed/
/æ/ as in	cat	/kæʔ/
/a:/ as in	cart	/ka:t/
/ɔ/ as in	pot	/ɔʔ/
/ɔ:/ as in	port	/ɔ:t/
/u/ as in	good	/gud/
/u:/ as in	two	/tu:/
/ʌ/ as in	cut	/kʌʔ/
/ɜ:/ as in	girl	/gɜ:l/
/ə/ as in	above	/əbʌv/

These English vowel sounds are represented in vowel charts below:

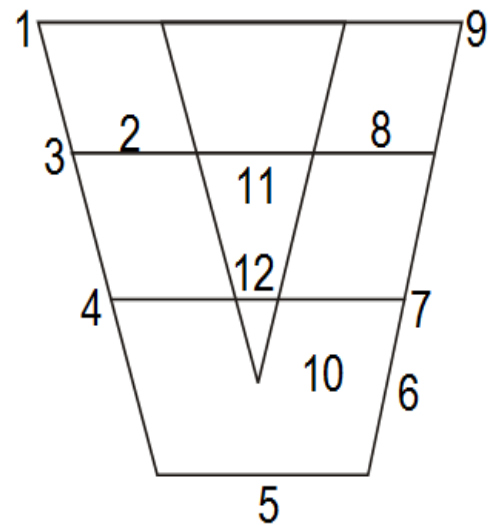
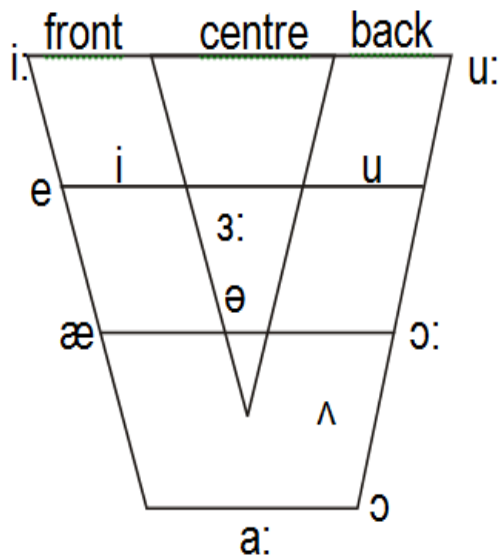


Fig-5. Onuigbo (1990) English vowel charts

Similarities between Twi and English Vowel Sounds

Sound	Twi	Gloss	English
1. /a/ as in	apem	thousand	/æ/ as in cat /kæt/
2. /ɛ/ as in	me pɛ	I like (it)	/e/ as in bed /bed/
3. /i/ as in	di	eat (it)	/i/ as in pit /pit/
4. /ɔ/ as in	kɔ	go	/ɔ/ as in pot /pɒt/
5. /u/ as in	akutu	orange	/u/ as in put /put/

From the similarities in the vowel systems of Twi and English as indicated above, it may be predicted that the Twi learners of English will not encounter problems with these vowel sounds of English. Therefore, there is not likely to be mother tongue interference in pronouncing words that have these vowel sounds.

Difference between the vowel sounds of Twi and English

Sound	English	Twi	Gloss
/i:/ as in	peel /pi:l/	∅	∅
/a:/ as in	car /ka:/	∅	∅
/ɔ:/ as in	court /kɔ:t/	∅	∅
/u:/ as in	pool /pu:l/	∅	∅
/ʌ / as in	love /lʌv/	∅	∅
/ɜ:/ as in	bird /bɜ:d/	∅	∅
/ə/ as in	ago /əgəʊ/	∅	∅

These sounds are practically absent in the Twi language. As such, a Twi learner of English may have problems in articulating these sounds.

2.1. Similarities among Twi and English Consonant Symbols

Table-1. The vowels common to the two languages and those that are not present in Twi. Where Twi does not have an English phoneme, the closest phoneme is put in parentheses:

Table-1. Similarities between Twi and English Consonant

Sounds

English	Twi
/i:/	– (i)
/i/	/i/
/e/	– (ɛ)
/æ/	/a/
/a:/	– (a)
/ɔ:/	– (ɔ)
/ɔ/	/ɔ/
/u/	/u/
/u:/	– (u)
/ ʌ /	– (a)
/ɜ:/	– (ɛ)
/ə/	– (ɛ).

Source: Bello (2000)

Table-2. Twi and English Vowel Sound Substitution Table

	Keyword	Phoneme Transcription	English	Approximate Twi Phoneme
1	She	/ʃi:/	i:	ɪ
2	Sit	/sɪt/	ɪ	
3	Bat	/bæt/	æ	a
4	Cart	/kɑ:t/	a:	
5	Come	/kʌm/	ʌ	ɔ
6	Pot	/pɒt/	ɔ	
7	Court	/kɔ:t/	ɔ:	u
8	Pool	/pu:l/	u:	
9	Put	/put/	ʊ	ɛ
10	Girl	/gɜ:l/	ɜ:	
11	Ten	/ten/	e	ə
12	again	/əgeɪn/	ə	

Source: Bello (2000)

The substitution table above shows approximate phonemes used in place of those English phonemes that are absent in Twi.

Table-3. Twi and English diphthongs, showing those that are common to the two languages and the English ones that are absent in Twi: Where Twi does not have a corresponding English phoneme, the closest phoneme is put parentheses:

Table-3. Twi and English Diphthongs

English	Twi
1. /ei/	/ei/
2. /əʊ/	– (o)
3. /ai/	– (æ)
4. /au/	/au/
5. /ɔi/	/ɔi/
6. /iə/	– (iɛ)
7. /eə/	– (ɛɛ)
8. /uə/	– (uɛ)

Source: Bello (2000)

Table-4. Twi and English Diphthongs sound Substitution Table

Keyword	Phonetic Transcription	English Phoneme	Approximate Twi Phoneme
pay	/pei/	/ei/	/ei/
home	/həʊm/	/əʊ/	/o/
bite	/bæɪt/	/æɪt/	/æ/
cow	/kəʊ/	/əʊ/	/ao/
toy	/tɔɪ/	/ɔɪ/	/ɔɪ/
ear	/iə/	/iə/	/iɛ/
hair	/heə/	/eə/	/ɛɛ/
poor	/puə/	/uə/	/uɛ/

Source: Bello (2000)

The diphthong substitution table above shows the approximate Twi phonemes used in place of the English phonemes that are not present in Twi. It also shows those phonemes that are common to the two languages.

Table-5. Twi and English Triphthongs, showing those that are common to the two languages; and the English ones that are absent in Twi: Where Twi does not have a corresponding phoneme, the closest phoneme is put in parentheses:

Table-5. Twi and English Triphthongs

English	Twi
1. /eiə/	– (ei)
2. /aiə/	– (ae)
3. /ɔiə/	– (ɔa)
4. /əʊə/	– (ɔa)
5. /aʊə/	– (aa)

Source: Bello (2000)

The triphthong substitution table above shows the approximate Twi phonemes that are used in place of the English phonemes that are not present in Twi.

The table shows the consonants common to the two languages and those English ones that are absent in Twi. Where Twi does not have English phonemes the closest phoneme is put in parentheses.

Table-6. The Twi and English Consonant Table

/b/	/b/
/d/	/d/
/f/	/f/
/g/	/g/
/h/	/h/
/ʒ/	/gy/
/k/	/k/
/l/	– (r)
/m/	/m/
/n/	/n/
/p/	/p/
/r/	/r/
/s/	/s/
/t/	/t/
/tʃ/	/ky/
/j/	/hy/
/θ/	– (t)
/ð/	– (d)
/v/	– (f)
/w/	/w/
/z/	– (s)
/ŋ/	– (ng)
/dʒ/	– (j)
/j/	/gy/

Source: Bello (2000)

Table-7. The Twi and English Consonant Sound Substitution Table

Keyboard	Phonetic Transcription	English Phoneme	Approximate Twi Phoneme
dog	/dɒg/	d	d
father	/fɑ:ðə/	ð	d
ferry	/feri/	f	f
fever	/fi:və/	v	f
Tin	/tin/	t	t
thirsty	/θɜ:sti/	θ	t
soon	/su:n/	s	s
zoo	/zu:/	z	s
blue	/blu:/	l	r
roll	/rəʊl/	r	r
king	/kiŋ/	ŋ	ng
seen	/si:n/	n	n

Source: Bello (2000)

Due to the absence of some Twi phonemes in Ashanti alphabet, the table 7 above shows the approximate Twi phonemes used in place of those English phonemes that are not present in Twi.

3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Analyses and results have shown that there are similarities and differences in the segmental phonological features of Twi and English. As a result of the similarities, it is predicted that learning would be facilitated while it is also predicted that a Twi learner of English as a second language (ESL) could be faced with problems articulating a few English phonemes due to their non-existence in Twi, and he is therefore forced to make do by substituting certain phonemes in his native language with those close to these phonemes in English.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Q1: What are the areas of similarities between Twi and English languages in the area of segmental phonology?

The comparison of the segmental phonology of Twi and English has shown that there are similarities in the vowel and consonant sounds of the two languages as shown below:

Vowel Sound	Twi	Gloss	English
/a/ as in	aboa	beast	apple /æpl/
/ɛ/ as in	ɛkyɛ	cap	ten /ten/
/i/ as in	di	eat	pit /pit/
/ɔ/ as in	abrɔɛ	pineapple	pot /pɒt/
/u/ as in	nsu	water	foot /fut/

On contrastive analysis and mother tongue interference, Bello (2004) asserts that learning can be facilitated wherever similarities exist. This implies that, the Ashanti learners English will not have any problem learning the words that have sounds that are familiar to them because they are present in their L1. Similarly, Wilkins (1982) asserts that where the structures of the two languages are the same, no difficulty is anticipated and teaching is not necessary, and that exposing the children/learners to the languages will be enough.

4.1. Similarities between the Consonant Sounds

Consonant	SoundTwi	Gloss	English
/b/ as in	bra	come	<u>b</u> rass
/d/ as in	da	sleep	<u>d</u> ay
/f/ as in	fa	take	<u>f</u> at
/g/ as in	agoru	play (Noun)	a <u>g</u> o
/h/ as in	ohene	king	<u>h</u> ere
/gy/ as in	agyou	yam	<u>g</u> ug
/k/ as in	kɛntɛn	basket	<u>k</u> ept
/m/ as in	mofra	children	<u>m</u> an
/n/ as in	hana	grandparent	<u>n</u> ow
/p/ as in	mpaboa	shoes	<u>p</u> art
/r/ as in	agyeramoa	cat	<u>r</u> ail
/s/ as in	nsu	water	<u>s</u> oon
/t/ as in	tafrɛ	cockroach	<u>t</u> ar
/w/ as in	wene	weave	<u>w</u> omen
/ky/ as in	khe	arrest (Verb)	<u>ch</u> air
/hy/ as in	hye	burn	<u>sh</u> e

The Ashanti learners of English will not be posed with any problems learning the words that have consonant sounds listed above because they are present in Twi language with similar manners of articulation, and as such, learning will be facilitated.

Q2: What are the areas of differences between Twi and English in the area of segmental phonology?

Even though there are similarities between Twi and English languages, some marked differences are also noted as listed out with examples:

Differences in the Vowel Sound Symbols of English Different from those of Twi:

- English Vowel 1 /i:/ as in peel /pi:l/
- English Vowel 5 /a:/ as in last /la:st/
- English Vowel 7 /ɔ:/ as in caught /kɔ:t/
- English Vowel 9 /u:/ as in fool /fu:l/
- English Vowel 10 /ʌ/ as in blood /blʌd/
- English Vowel 11 /ɜ:/ as in confirm /kʌnfɜ:m/
- English Vowel 12 /ə / as in many /mɛni/

English Consonant Sounds Different from those of Twi:

- /l/ as in love /lʌv/
- /θ/ as in theft /θɛft/
- /ð/ as in that /ðæt/
- /v/ as in vote /vɔt/
- /z/ as in zeal /zi:l/
- /ŋ/ as in loving /lʌvɪŋ/

Lado (1964) in Bello (2004) posits that the differences in language learning are the chief source of difficulties in learning a second language. He goes further that where there is a difference, the learner will find it difficult to learn the target language. The learner would not find it easy placing his lips, tongue and the entire speech mechanism in the new positions which he is not used to. This will therefore make him to transfer items from his mother tongue to the target language, thereby leading to faulty pronunciation.

Dankwa (1975) also claims that if a learner is learning to speak a new language (L2), the already internalized patterns of his first language (L1) will intervene with those of his L2. When a situation like this occurs, the stronger associations of the L1 will unconsciously prevail. This is the cause of much difficulty in learning to speak a second language.

Q3: What are the pedagogical implications of these similarities and differences for the teaching of English as a second language by the Twi speakers?

The comparison and contrast done on the segmental phonological features of Twi and English languages revealed that the two languages have some features in common while a few features of each of the languages differ from the features of the other language. Different languages use different features in different ways, as no two languages can be said to be similar in all features, therefore the pedagogical implications of these similarities and differences for the teaching of English as second language (ESL) among Twi speakers of English should by now be easy to identify. The concern of a contrastive analyst after identifying where the languages is similar and where they differ is to know the possible causes of mother tongue interference and finds out a way of reducing this problem of interference. If this problem is remedied it will in no small way facilitate teaching/learning process.

5. CONCLUSION

As a result of the findings, it was concluded that phonemes of the two languages found to be similar would not pose any problem or difficulty for the learners, whereas the differences that are discovered between them lead to one difficulty or the other in articulating the features of the L2. The similarities will therefore help the learners and the teachers alike. It will help the teachers because they will find the features of the L2 easy to impart to the learners. Since an average Ghanaian is a bilingual, he is able to speak the mother tongue as well as English, thus forming the basis for interference.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion, it was recommended that teachers of English should be aware of the need to concentrate more on speech training. Teachers of English are advised to speak, and in turn urge their students to often speak English, as well as carrying out exercises on Error Analysis with their students. Similarly, students are advised to cultivate good listening and speaking habits, listening to both local and foreign news such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Voice of America, among others. Government should make oral English compulsory in primary and post-primary schools and enough time be allotted for it so that oral English teachers would have enough time to practise speech work with the students.

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