

# Stressed and Unstressed Syllable Alternation in Educated Edo (Nigerian) English

**Julianah Akindele**  
Osun State University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Julianah Akindele, Department of Languages & Linguistics, Osun State University, Ikire Campus, Osogbo, Nigeria. 48424. E-mail: julianah.akindele@uniosun.edu.ng

Standard British English (SBE) rhythm is characterised by stressed and unstressed syllable alternation. Phonological investigations from non-native English such as Nigerian English (NE) have claimed that NE differs remarkably from SBE, especially in the area of rhythm. Existing phonological studies on Educated Edo English (EEE) – a sub-variety of NE – have been on word and variable stress while studies on stressed and unstressed syllable alternation have been rare. This study, therefore, investigated the extent to which Educated Edo English Speakers (EES) stressed and unstressed syllable alternation conforms to SBE rhythm. Prince and Liberman's (1977) metrical theory, which explains the alternation of strong and weak constituents in SBE rhythm units, served as a theoretical framework. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 150 (75 males and 75 females) EES while 2 SBE speakers served as Native Baselines (NB). Speech Filing System (SFS) version 1.41 was used to record the production of a validated instrument of 40 rhythm units, with stressed and unstressed syllable alternation. The recordings were transcribed and subjected to a perceptual analysis (frequency and percentages). Out of 6000 expected instances of stressed and unstressed syllable alternation, the participants had 694 (11.6%), while inappropriate use was higher, with 5,306 (88.4%). The performance of EES males showed 5.7% and the females 5.9%. The grids of EES showed proliferation of Strong/Strong (S/S) juxtaposition of stressed and unstressed syllables in rhythm units, compared to the NB alternation of Weak/Strong (W/S) or Strong/Weak (S/W). Results confirmed that EES alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in rhythm units differ 'markedly' from those of the SBE form.

*Keywords:* educated Edo English, stressed and unstressed syllable alternation, rhythm units, Standard British English, NE

Every human language has its own characteristic rhythm. One of the most difficult areas to master in the spoken form of a foreign language is its rhythm. Rhythm in English is not just something extra, it is not something that is added to the basic sequence of consonants and vowels, it is the guide to the structure of information in the spoken message (Odujibe, 2015). In Nigerian English (NE), rhythm is a major area where Nigerian spoken English has been observed to deviate from Received Pronunciation (RP). Various nomenclatures have been used to describe NE rhythm. Some linguists say NE is syllable timing (Akinjobi, 2004; Iloilo, 2013; Akindele, 2015; Akinjobi & Akindele, 2016) while others are of the opinion that it is full-vowel timing (Udofot, 1997, 2003) or in-elastic-timing

(Eka, 1993).

Eka (1993) argues that NE rhythm is in-elastic-timed due to NE speakers' use of prominent syllables and inability to 'squeeze-in' or 'stretch-out' the syllables in a rhythm unit as RP speakers do. However, NE has been observed to have many sub-varieties, with over 250 ethnic groups and 522 languages attested for Nigeria (Lewis et al., 2013).

The periodic recurrence of movement between stressed and unstressed syllables in connected speech constitutes the stress-timing rhythm of SBE (Abercrombie, 1967; Roach, 2010). Stress-timing rhythm implies that the time to produce each foot in a sentence is expected to be equal, regardless of the numbers of unstressed syllables in the foot. In other

words, in stress-timing rhythm, time is based on each foot while in syllable-timing rhythm; time is based on each syllable. For example, in the following sentence “father has bought a ‘car’”. The sentence has three feet. The first foot has three syllables, the second has two syllables and the last foot has one syllable; despite the fact that the number of syllables in each foot is unequal (Roach, 2000; Osisanwo, 2012). This means that stressed syllables tend to occur at relatively regular intervals of time whether or not they are separated by unstressed syllables. It takes roughly the same amount of time to produce one stressed syllable to another. There is a tendency to rush over the stressed syllables because of the need to maintain a kind of time regularity. As a rule, English stress avoids having stresses close together (Osisanwo, 2012. Odujebu, 2015).

Lubega (1989) and Katsiavriades (2002, p. 1) note that the English language is accepted and used in all the corners of the globe in a linguistically and culturally diverse communities where it serves a wide range of functions. It is estimated that there are over 300 million native speakers, and 300 million use English as a second language (L2) while about 100 million use it as a foreign language. It is listed as the official and co-official language of over forty-five countries and it is spoken in other countries where it has no official status. Davidson (2007) remarks that 90% of the world’s 6,000 languages are currently threatened by the domination of English. Below is a brief analysis of the status of the English language in the world:

Table 1.1  
*The Status of the English Language in the World*

	ENL	ESL	EFL	TOTAL
BC: E 2000	350	350	100	800m
Crystal	320-380	150-300	100-1000	570-160m
Graddol	375	375	750	1,500m

Sources: (McArthur, 2006 and Akindele, 2015)

Table 1 overleaf, apparently shows that different roles have been assigned to English in the different nations in which it is used. Some nations use the English language as their mother tongue, that is, the native speakers while the non-native speakers use it either as a second language or as a foreign language. In Nigeria for instance, it is assigned the role of an official language and second language (McArthur, 1999; Katsiavriades, 2002, p. 2; Oyeniyi, 2006; Davidson, 2007). The term “non-native English”, therefore, reflects the existence of observable variation in the use of the language by its non-native users as a result of its contact with various indigenous languages. The origin of the term “non-native English” can be traced to two

conferences on English as a world language which took place in 1978 in Haiti, and the second which took place in June-July at the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign, where Kachru and Larry played a major role in the conferences (Smith, 1981; Kachru, 1982, 2008; Bolton, 2004). Kachru’s model of ‘non-native Englishes’ identified three concentric circles: The Inner Circle, the Outer (or Extended) Circle and the Expanding Circle. These circles represent the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition, the range of functional domains, and the social penetration of the language. Hence, the term ‘non-native English(es)’ is presently seen as a reality, as varieties of Englishes have been noticed in the various fields of language study - grammar, morphology, lexis, semantics, discourse, syntax and phonology. Therefore, we can talk of Indian English, Ghanaian English, Nigerian English, of which Educated Edo English is a sub-variety, and lots of other non-native Englishes (Kachru, 2008).

Earlier studies investigated Nigerian English rhythm from the perspective of reduction in the quality of English vowels but this research intends to find out whether Educated Edo English Speakers alternate stressed and unstressed syllables in a rhythm unit from the practical sense. Moreover, the study considers Edo spoken English from a ‘geo-ethnic approach’ - an ethnic minority group of South West Nigeria, out of the multifarious linguistic groups in Nigeria - since there could be areas of convergence and divergence within a language variety.

This paper aims to address the following research questions:

- Do Educated Edo English Speakers appropriately alternate stressed and unstressed syllables in rhythm units?
- Is there any significant difference in the conformity of Edo males and females to Standard British English in stressed and unstressed syllable alternation of English rhythm units?
- To what extent does Educated Edo English Speakers’ rhythm pattern conform to earlier description of other Nigerian English sub-varieties rhythm description as syllable or inelastic timed?

## Method

University undergraduates who are assumed to have relative proficiency in spoken English, due to years of training and exposure to spoken English in ESL environment were purposively sampled for this research. A short English passage segmented into forty rhythm units of 150 stressed and unstressed syllables in alternation as typically used in SBE constituted

the instrument, while Prince and Liberman’s (1977) metrical grid which explains strong and weak alternation in rhythm unit in a hierarchical order was adopted as the theoretical framework. Segmentation of passage was made into phrases of 40 rhythm units in order to provide a solid scientific platform for studying rhythm, stress and the peculiar patterns of Educated Edo English speakers, as remarkably different from SBE form. The informants comprised one hundred and fifty (75 males and 75 females) were asked to produce each English rhythm unit into a computerized speech laboratory (SFS), version 1.41. Speech production of each of the informants was later played back and transcribed. Frequency count of the appropriate alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables of each rhythm group of each of the informants was tracked; with each rhythm unit allotted 1 mark and converted to simple percentages. To determine the extent to which Educated Edo English Speakers alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables of English rhythm unit conform to Standard British English form, the number of correctly alternated stressed and unstressed syllables of the rhythm group was reckoned as a percentage of the total frequency of the occurrence of correctly alternated forms. That is, the number of

correctly alternated stressed and unstressed syllables in each rhythm units is divided by the total items in instrument, and multiplied by 100.

## Results

Table 1 represents the performance of EEES in the appropriate alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in English rhythm units. Out of 6,000 expected instances of occurrence, the participants alternated stressed and unstressed syllables of the English rhythm units appropriately in 694 (11.6%) instances, while inappropriate use was higher, with 5,306 (88.4%).

Table 2 depicts the performance of EEES in the appropriate alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables by sex. The male participants alternated stressed and unstressed syllables appropriately in 344 (5.7%) instances, with inappropriate use of 2,576 (44.3%) while EEES females’ appropriate use was higher, with 351 (5.9%) instances, and inappropriate use of 2,649 (44.1%). Figure 2 below further gives this illustration:

Table 1  
*Educated Edo English Speakers alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables*

S/N	English Rhythm units	Participants	Appropriate Alternation	% of Appropriate Alternation	Inappropriate Alternation	% of Inappropriate Alternation
Native Baselines 1			100	100%	0	0%
Native Baselines 2			100	100%	0	0%
1.	it has been said that several // it həsbɪ:nseɪdθætEsevrəl//	150	0	0%	150	100%
2.	educated // 'edʒʊkətɪd//	150	79	52.7%	71	47.3%
3.	as well as parents and em //əsweləs'peərəntsændɪm//	150	0	0%	150	100%
4.	ployers of // 'plɔɪəzəv//	150	0	0%	150	0%
5.	labour are be // 'leɪbərəbɪ//	150	0	0%	150	100%
6.	ginning to // ɡɪnɪŋtə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
7.	get // get//	150	150	100%	0	0%
8.	worried a // 'wʌrɪdə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
9.	bout the// 'baʊtðə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
10.	quality of // 'kwɒlɪtiəv//	150	0	0%	150	150%
11.	graduates from these // 'grædʒʊeɪtsfrəmði:z//	150	0	0%	150	100%
12.	universities. the // ,ju:nɪ'vɜ:sɪtɪzðə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
13.	fact re// 'fæktɪ//	150	150	100%	0	0%
14.	mains that the // meɪnzðætði//	150	0	0%	150	100%
15.	issue of // 'ɪʃu:əv//	150	0	0%	150	100%
16.	quality// 'kwɒlɪti//	150	150	100%	0	0%

STRESSED AND UNSTRESSED SYLLABLE ALTERNATION IN EDUCATED EDO (NIGERIAN) ENGLISH

17.	cannot be de// 'kænətbið//	150	0	0%	150	100%
18.	terminated by the // 'tɜ:mɪndbaɪðə//	150	0	0%	150	62%
19.	universities a // ,ju:nɪ'vɜ:sɪtiə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
20.	lone. it // 'ləʊnɪt	150	0	0%	150	100%
21.	also de // 'ɔ:lsoʊdɪ//	150	0	0%	150	100%
22.	pend on a // 'pendzənə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
23.	/number of // 'nʌmbərəv//	150	0	0%	150	100%
24.	factors which in // 'fæktəzwtʃɪn//	150	0	0%	150	100%
25.	include the a // 'klu:dðiə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
26.	bility of the // 'bɪlətiəvðə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
27.	student, the // 'stju:dntðə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
28.	level of // 'levləvəkə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
29.	mmitment to// 'mɪtməntə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
30.	reading, as well as the // 'ri:dɪŋzweɪləzðə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
31.	physical, // 'fɪzɪkl//	150	15	10%	135	90%
32.	psychological and e // ,saɪkə'lɒdʒɪkəlndɪ //	150	0	0%	150	100%
33.	motional// 'məʊʃnəl//	150	0	0%	150	100%
34.	factors. // 'fæktəz//	150	0	0%	150	100%
35.	all these help to de // 'ɔ:lði:zhelpɪdɪ//	150	0	0%	150	100%
36.	termine, fa // 'tɜ: mɪnfə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
37.	silitate and en // 'sɪlɪteɪəndɪn//	150	0	0%	150	100%
38.	hance the/ 'hɑ:nsðə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
39.	quality of a // 'kwɒlɪtiəvə//	150	0	0%	150	100%
40.	graduate. // 'grædʒoʊɪt//	150	150	100%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,000</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>5,306</b>	<b>88.4%</b>

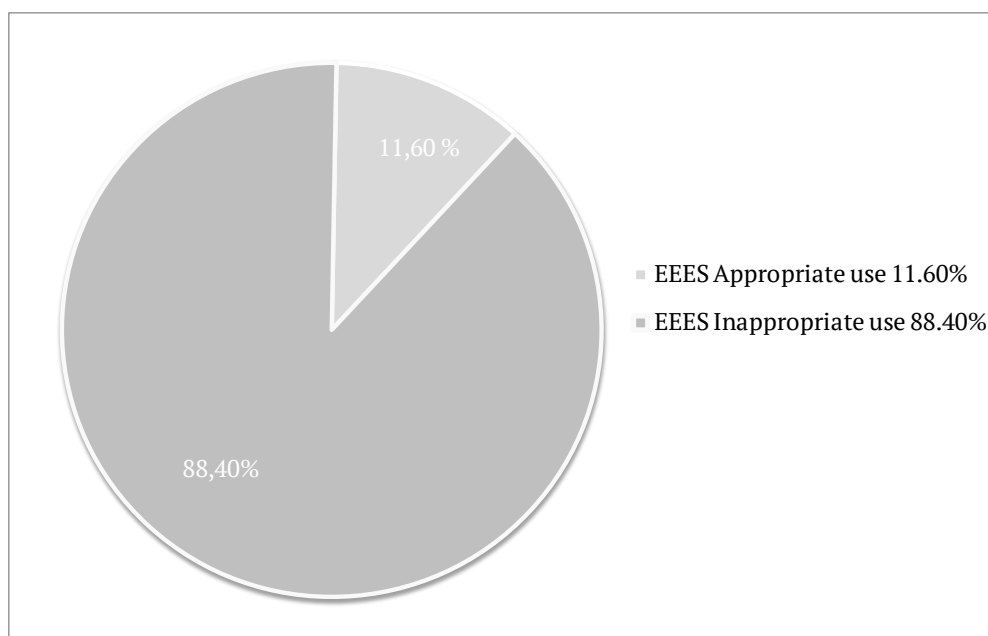


Figure 1. Educated Edo English Speakers alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in Rhythm Units.

Table 2

*Male and Female Educated Edo English Speakers' alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in Rhythm Units*

S/N	English Rhythm units	Participants		Appropriate Alternation				Inappropriate Alternation			
		M	F	M	%	F	%	M	%	F	%
1.	it has been said that several // it həsbi:nsədət@sevɾəl//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
2.	educated // 'edʒəkertɪd//	75	75	35	23.3	44	29.3	36	24	35	23.3
3.	as well as parents and em // əsweləs'peərəntsəndɪm//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
4.	ployers of // 'plɔɪəzəv//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
5.	labour are be // 'leɪbərəbɪ//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
6.	ginning to // ɡɪnɪŋtə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
7.	get // 'get//	75	75	75	50	75	50	0	0	0	0
8.	worried a // 'wʌrɪdə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
9.	bout the// 'baʊtðə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
10.	quality of // 'kwɒlɪtiəv//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
11.	graduates from these // 'grædʒʊeɪtsfrəmði:z//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
12.	universities. the // ,ju:nɪ'vɜ:sɪtizðə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
13.	fact re// 'fæktɪ//	75	75	75	50	75	50	0	0	0	0
14.	mains that the // 'meɪnzðətði//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
15.	issue of // 'ɪʃu:əv//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
16.	quality// 'kwɒlɪti//	75	75	75	50	75	50	0	0	0	0
17.	cannot be de// 'kænətbɪdɪ//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
18.	terminated by the // 'tɜ:mɪndbaɪðə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
19.	universities a // ,ju:nɪ'vɜ:sɪtiə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
20.	lone. it // 'ləʊnɪt	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
21.	also de // 'ɔ:lsoʊdɪ//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
22.	pend on a // 'pendzənə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
23.	/number of // 'nʌmbərəv//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
24.	factors which in // 'fæktəzwtɪŋɪn//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
25.	include the a // 'klu:dðiə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
26.	bility of the // 'bɪlɪtiəvðə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
27.	student, the // 'stju:dntðə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
28.	level of // 'levləvke//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
29.	mmitment to// 'mɪtmənttə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
30.	reading, as well as the // 'ri:dɪŋəzweɪzðə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
31.	physical, // 'fɪzɪkl//	75	75	8	5.3	7	4.7	71	47.3	64	42.7
32.	psychological and e // ,saɪkə'lɒdʒɪkləndɪ //	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
33.	motional// 'məʊʃnəl//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
34.	factors. // 'fæktəz//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
35.	all these help to de // 'ɔ:lði:zhelptədɪ//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
36.	termine, fa // 'tɜ: mɪnfə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
37.	silitatate and en // sɪlɪteɪtəndɪm//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
38.	hance the/ 'hɑ:nsðə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
39.	quality of a // 'kwɒlɪtiəvə//	75	75	0	0	0	0	75	50	75	50
40.	graduate. // 'grædʒʊeɪt//	75	75	75	50	75	50	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>3000</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>2657</b>	<b>44.3</b>	<b>2649</b>	<b>44.1</b>

## STRESSED AND UNSTRESSED SYLLABLE ALTERNATION IN EDUCATED EDO (NIGERIAN) ENGLISH

Table 2 depicts the performance of EEES in the appropriate alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables by sex. The male participants alternated stressed and unstressed syllables appropriately in 344 (5.7%) instances, with inappropriate use of 2,576 (44.3%) while EEES females' appropriate use was higher, with 351 (5.9%) instances, and inappropriate use of 2,649 (44.1%). Figure 2 below further gives this illustration:

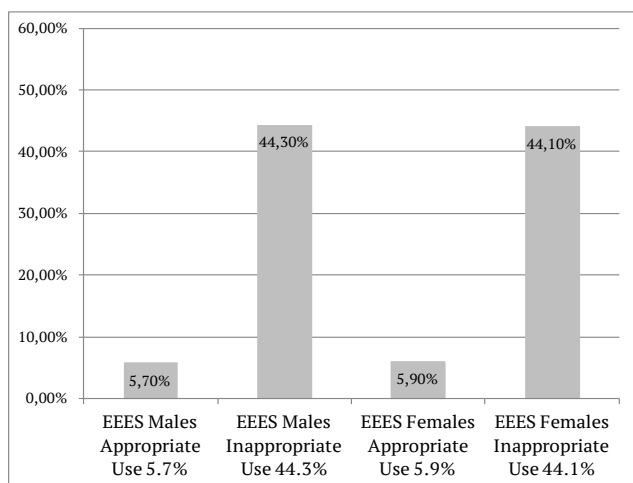


Figure 2. Male and Female Educated Edo English Speakers' alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in English rhythm groups.

### 7 Metrical Grid Analysis of Native baselines and EEES stressed and unstressed syllable alternation

NB I  
 X  
 X X X X  
 // 'e dʒʊkɛrtɪd//  
 'Educated'

NB II  
 X  
 X  
 X X X X  
 // 'e dʒʊkɛrtɪd//  
 'Educated'

From the native baselines' grids above, the first syllable of the English rhythm group // 'e dʒʊkɛrtɪd// is more prominent than the other syllables. This is because in SBE, a polysyllabic English word such as the one above is expected to have one of the syllables carrying the primary stress.

EEES I  
 x\* x\* x\* x\*  
 X X X X  
 // 'ɛ du kɛrtɪd//  
 ' Educated'

EEES II  
 x\* x\* x\* x\*  
 X X X X  
 // 'ɛ du kɛrtɪd//  
 ' Educated'

EEES III  
 x\* x\* x\* x\*  
 X X X X  
 // 'ɛ du kɛrtɪd//  
 ' Educated'

EEES IV  
 x\* x\* x\* x\*  
 X X X X  
 // 'ɛ du kɛrtɪd//  
 ' Educated'

EEES V  
 x\* x\* x\* x\*  
 X X X X  
 // 'ɛ du kɛrtɪd//  
 ' Educated'

The grids of Educated Edo English Speakers differ completely from that of the Native Baselines. All the syllables of the English rhythm group // 'ɛ du kɛrtɪd// were made prominent with indication of x\* clashes. This account for why earlier scholars (Eka, 1993; Akinjobi, 2004; Ilolo, 2013) claim NE rhythm should be best described as syllable-timed.

NB I  
 X  
 X X X X  
 // 'peərəntsændɪm//  
 'Parents and em'

NB I

NB II  
 X  
 X X X X  
 // 'peərəntsændɪm//  
 'Parents and em'

The Native Baselines' grids // 'peərəntsændɪm// recognised the Lexical Category Prominence Rule (LCRP), where prominent nodes are allowed to swap in a bi-direction manner, once the branching does not lead to a strong node. Only the first syllable /'peə/ of the rhythm group receives more prominence as shown through the height in the grid above, which is in accordance with Standard British English rhythm.

EEES I  
 x\* x\* x\* x\*  
 X X X X  
 // 'peɪrɛntsændɛm//  
 'Parents and em'

EEES II  
 x\* x\* x\* x\*  
 X X X X  
 // 'peɪrɛntsændɛm//  
 'Parents and em'

EEES III  
 x\* x\* x\* x\*  
 X X X X  
 // 'peɪrɛntsændɛm//  
 'Parents and em'

EEES IV	x* x* x* x* X X X X //peirɛntsændɛm// 'Parents and em'
EEES V	x* x* x* x* X X X X //peirɛntsændɛm// 'parents and em'

EEES grids //peirɛntsændɛm// differ from those of the native baselines. There is a proliferation of strong syllables as shown by the x\* in the syllables of the rhythm group with unresolved clashes for stressed and unstressed syllables in the rhythm units as compared to the native baselines' metrical grids, where alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables was observed.

### Discussion

For English rhythm units with stressed and unstressed syllable alternation, the statistical analysis of Educated English Speakers' utterances revealed that the participants' alternated stressed and unstressed syllables appropriately in 694 (11.6%) instances, bringing inappropriate use to 5,306 (88.4%). More so, Educated Edo English Speakers' performance by sex revealed males' appropriate use of stressed and unstressed syllables at 344 (5.7%) and the females' at 351 (5.9%). Sex performance in stressed and unstressed syllable alternation of EEES does not show any significant difference, as the difference was very negligible (2%). Succinctly, Educated Edo English Speakers' statistical and metrical findings for stressed and unstressed syllables of English rhythm units showed that EEES stressed and unstressed syllable alternation does not conform to Standard British English form. The grids of the participants revealed a proliferation of strong syllables (x\*), indicating unresolved clashes for both the supposedly stressed and unstressed syllables in the rhythm units as opposed to the native baselines' metrical grids where alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables was eminent; with strict adherence to Nuclear Stress Rule (NSR) and Lexical Category Prominence Rule (LCPR) of SBE rhythm. The results re-confirm earlier scholars' (Akinjobi, 2004; Iloilo, 2013) claim that Nigerian English is syllable-timed and not stress-timed.

### Conclusion

Educated Edo English stressed and unstressed syllable alternation statistical and metrical findings established inability to appropriately alternate

stressed and unstressed syllables in English rhythm units; thereby making it different from SBE forms. Like other L2 speakers of English, stressed and unstressed syllable alternation is not a phonological feature of Educated Edo English Speakers. The "marked" difference in stressed and unstressed syllable alternation of the informants, compared to SBE form could be as a result of the linguistic background of the participants. Most of the participants' came in contact with English in the formal setting as confirmed through oral interview. Therefore, the fact that the informants were already exposed to their mother tongue - Edo language, could clearly account for the reason why variation exists in Edo English stressed and unstressed syllable alternation as compared to the Standard British English form. It is therefore important to note that proficiency in English rhythm in L2 context may depend greatly not only on educational attainment but early exposure to good and Standard English. Since, the English language is used as a medium of instruction in Nigerian schools (i.e. upper primary to tertiary), L2 users should be made to understand that if stressed and unstressed syllables are not applied appropriately, the rhythm of English utterance would be distorted and comprehension becomes difficult. Therefore, it is very crucial for language teachers to pay special attention to learners from tone language backgrounds, especially Edo English speakers.

This study sampled one hundred and fifty Educated Edo English Speakers, a sub-variety of Nigerian English speakers. This purposive sampling method was carried on university undergraduates who are assumed to have relative proficiency in spoken English, due to years of training and exposure to English in the second language (L2) context. It is, however, assumed that there could be some variations for Educated Edo English Speakers' who are professionals (language teachers, broadcasters, lawyers, academics). Hence, other aspects of English suprasegmentals especially intonation, could be investigated in the light of their usage in Edo English. Furthermore, investigations on Edo English rhythm can be extended to other Educated Edo English speakers who are professionals like English language teachers, academics and broadcasters.

### References

- Abercrombie, D. (1967). *Element of general phonetics*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
- Akindele, J. A. (2015). *Duration as a determining factor in educated Edo English rhythm description* (Unpublished PhD thesis). Department of English, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Akinjobi, A. A. (2004). *A phonological investigation of vowel weakening and unstressed syllable obscuration*

- in educated Yoruba English* (Unpublished PhD thesis). Dept. of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Akinjobi, A. A., & Akindele, J. A. (2016). Measuring the speech rhythm of educated Edo variety of Nigerian English speakers. *Papers in English and Linguistics*, 17, 69-87.
- Bolton, K. (2004). World Englishes. In A. Davies & C. Elder (Eds.), *Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 367-420). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Davidson, K. (2007). The nature and significance of English as a global language. *English Today*, 23(1), 48-50. doi.org/10.1017/S0266078407001095
- Eka, D. (1993). Timing in educated spoken Nigerian English. *Journal of Humanities*, 3, 1-11.
- Kachru, B. (Ed.). (1982). *The other tongue: English across cultures*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Kachru, B. (2008). The first step: The Smith paradigm for intelligibility in world Englishes. *World Englishes*, 27(3-4), 293-296. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-971X.2008.00567.x
- Lewis, M. P., Gary, F. S., & Charles, D. F. (Eds.). (2013). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Retrieved from <http://www.ethnologue.com>
- Liberman, M., & Prince, A. (1977). On stress and linguistic rhythm. *Linguistic inquiry*, 8, 249-336.
- Lubega, S. (1989). English as an international language - the concept and misconception. *Journal of English as a Second Language*, 1.
- Iloilo, A. (2013). *Vowel reduction in Isoko English* (Unpublished PhD thesis). Dept. of English, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
- McArthur, T. (1999). World English. *Encarta World English dictionary*. London, UK: Bloomsbury. Retrieved from <http://journals.cambridge.org>
- McArthur, T. (2006). Twenty years on Tom McArthur. A 1980s interview re-visited, and up-dated. *English Today*, 86(22), 62-64. Retrieved from <http://journals.cambridge.org>
- Odujibe, A. M. (2015). The significance of the syllable to English prosodies. BA Project, Department of Languages and Linguistics, Osun State University, Nigeria.
- Osinsanwo, A. (2012). *Fundamentals of English phonetics and Phonology*. Lagos, Nigeria: Femolus-Fetop Publishers.
- Oyeniya, G. I. (2006). *A study of English word-stress patterns of selected senior secondary three students in Osun State, Nigeria* (Unpublished M.A. thesis). Dept. of English, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.
- Roach, P. (2000a). *English phonetics and phonology: A practical course* (3rd ed.). Cambridge, UK: CUP.
- Roach, P. (2010b). *English phonetics and phonology: A practical course* (4th ed.). Cambridge, UK: CUP.
- Smith, L. E. (1981). *English in cross-cultural communication*. New York, NY: St Martin's Press.
- Udofot, I. (1997). *The rhythm of spoken Nigerian English* (Unpublished PhD thesis). University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- Udofot, I. (2003). Stress and rhythm in the Nigerian accent of English. *English World-Wide*, 24(2), 201-220.