

**SOCIO - PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF ACCENTUAL VARIATION AMONG  
STUUDENTS OF FACULTY OF SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN**

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### **Certification**

This is to certify that Ameen Ademola ISMAIL with matriculation number LCU/PG/005181 carried out this research work titled “Socio-Phonological Analysis of Accentual Variation among Students of Faculty of Science, University of Ibadan” in the Department of Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, for the award of Master of Arts Degree (MA) in English and that this has not been previously submitted for any other degree.

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### **Dedication**

This research is dedicated to Almighty Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful for His guidance and undiluted love towards me throughout my programme.

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## ABSTRACT

The multilingual nature of Nigeria connotes that no uniform English accent is spoken throughout the country. This study investigated accentual variation among students in the Faculty of Science, University of Ibadan, from a socio-phonological perspective. These students were chosen because much research has been conducted on the phonological features of Nigerian English, particularly in arts and humanities faculties, while relatively less attention has been paid to students from science-based disciplines. The research was guided by four objectives: to identify common phonological elements that vary in students' speech; to examine the influence of social factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, and language background on these variations; to assess how such variations contribute to identity construction; and to explore patterns of accentual variation among students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. A mixed approach adopting quantitative and qualitative research designs was adopted. 30 students were selected by purposive random sampling across six departments within the Faculty of Science, University of Ibadan. Data were collected through recorded speech samples, questionnaire and observations, and analysed using auditory phonetic analysis in conjunction with sociolinguistic profiling. Based on the data, the study reveals significant phonological variations among Nigerian English speakers, heavily influenced by tribal affiliation and gender. Monophthongisation of /əʊ/ and /eɪ/ were the most challenging, with 96.7% and 93.3% of respondents monophthongising them, respectively. Conversely, the diphthong /aʊ/ in "plough" was correctly produced by 100% of respondents. The dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, were frequently replaced by /t/, /f/, or /d/. The study found that one hundred percent (100%) of female and sixty percent (60%) of male respondents reported they change their pronunciation depending on the situation. Vowel substitution was common across all groups, with Igbo males exhibiting the highest rate (84%) and Yoruba females the lowest (48%). It was concluded that accentual variation is not merely a phonetic phenomenon but also a reflection of broader social identities. It is recommended that workshops, seminars, and public speaking be organized to encourage clarity and intelligibility in students' spoken English.

**Keywords:** Accentual variations, sociophonology, consonant variations, vowel variations, Source-Filter Theory

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