
Original Paper

Intelligibility of Nigerian English to the Cameroonian Consumers of Nollywood Audio-Visual Materials

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Abstract

The surge in Nigerian-made audio-visual materials (movies, music and sermons) have, in recent years, left several Cameroonians with the burning desire to watch them. Despite this, watching the movies or listening to Nollywood songs has been with some understanding difficulties due to pronunciation differences. This paper set out to identify and discuss the phonological features (vocalic and consonantal) that pose intelligibility problems, from the perspective of the Cameroonian audience, who fondly watch/ listen to Nigerian-made movies or musicals. Data for the paper came from administering two pronunciation tests framed from 200 selected and screen-recorded excerpts gleaned from 48 Nigerian-made audio-visual materials (24 movies and 24 songs). The tests were administered to 40 Cameroonians (from three regions); Test I was made up of words in isolation, gleaned from the corpus with NigE pronunciation. Test II constituted the same words in some paradigmatic and syntagmatic contexts and the words were drawn from suspected areas of vocalic and consonantal difficulties from the Cameroonian audience's point of view. The data were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively with the Cognitive Dissonance Theory and Hegel's Theory of Intelligibility in mind. Findings reveal that the Cameroonian audience watching Nollywood audio-visual materials had various intelligibility problems mostly caused by NigE vocalic processes such as vowel fronting, retraction, raising, rounding, vowel tensing/ laxing) and consonantal processes such as alveolarization, deaffrication of /tʃ/ and coalescence of /h/ and /j/ to yield /w/. The test scores reveal that more intelligibility problems occur with Test I rather than with Test II, implying that context, rather than pronunciation, helped to solve several intelligibility problems. The paper recommends that language teachers should focus on areas of untelligibility in order to ease communication between NigE and CamE speakers who naturally share socio-cultural and geographical similitude.

Keywords: Attitudes, intelligibility, Nigerian English, Nollywood audio-visual materials, Cameroon audience

Introduction

The past decades have known a surge in Nollywood movies and music and a burning desire in some Cameroonians to consume them (Ketcha, 2020). This, of course, has been particularly favoured by the proliferation of the cable network and different social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube. However, two major factors, aside technological advancements of the 21st century, should take credit for the wild spread; the cultural semblance between the two countries and Pentecostalism which is fast spreading, mostly from Nigeria to Cameroon (Ketcha, 2014). Not only have these factors left the Cameroonian audience with mixed attitudes towards Nigerian English, but they have also brought to light some intelligibility problems faced by the audience, especially the Francophone audience in Cameroon. In addition to pronunciation challenges, Cameroonians fondly use Nigerian-based expressions such as *wahala*, *four-one-nine*, *obgwangde*, *Igwe*, *oga* etc in their English or Pidgin English speech or to hear Cameroonians, particularly pastors of the 'new generation' churches, pronounce such words as *curse* /kɜs/ and *service* /sɜvɪs/ as /kɔs/, /savis/ instead of CamE /kɜs/, /sevis/. These nigerianisms further buttress the point of the proliferation or even invasion of Nollywood movies and music in Cameroon. The phenomenon which has been termed the 'nollywood craze' (Biscio, 2009 cited in Ugochukwu, 2013), has come with challenges of fully grabbing the messages and conversations in the movies or lyrics of the songs, mostly due to some vocalic pronunciation

differences in the area of the NURSE, TRAP, KIT, NEAR, SQUARE, PRICE, FACE, GOAT, CURE and MOUTH vowels. Similarly, some intelligibility problems exist, when listening to/ watching Nigerian-made music or movies, due to some NigE consonantal processes such as devoicing, vowel epenthesis for consonant simplification, /h/ insertion or deletion and yod deletion.

Background and Literature Review

In all, Nigerian audio-visual materials contain four varieties of English; the Pidginized/Indigenized NigE, Mainstream NigE, Near-RP NigE and Americanized NigE (Ketcha, 2014). On the part of Cameroonian audio-visual materials, there are five subtypes of CamE spoken therein, viz. the Pidginized/Nativized CamE, Mainstream CamE, Near-RP CamE, Americanized CamE and Francophone CamE, the first four depicting varieties of the ESL context while the last represents the EFL context (Ketcha, 2018). For the four NigE audio-lects, the basest variety is considered substandard (Akujobi & Umoh, 2022) and it is used in movies to depict roles of uneducated and unprivileged persons in the Nigerian society (Ketcha, 2014). The variety is principally fed by Nigerian Pidgin English and key Nigerian official indigenous languages such as Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. Variety II considered as the mainstream variety typically possess characteristics of the average speaker of NigE and the variety is used to roleplay Nigerians who are considered to be averagely educated / successful in society. The rest two varieties, variety III and Variety IV, which have been previously referred to as Variety III (Near-Native NigE), are the Rprised and Americanised NigE varieties of English, respectively (Ufomata, 1996; Gut, 2005; Ketcha, 2021).

Concerning literature review, though much has been written on the phonetics, phonology, morpho-syntax, semantics, pragmatics etc of real-life varieties, not much has been written on audio-visual NigE.

Okoh (n.d.) did a study on the influence of audio-visual materials on the teaching of English Language to Senior Secondary School students across Rivers State. After administering a questionnaire to 580 teachers in various schools in Port Harcourt and Omoku town, he concluded that the most present audio-visual materials are radios, and projectors the reason, according to him, senior secondary school students “graduate without speaking fluent English” (p. 2). Similarly, Iyorza (2015) concluded in his study that oral English-teaching in Nigerian secondary schools has not yielded enough fruits in Nigeria as students still graduate with numerous oral English problems and proposed the use of audio-visual language education as a panacea to this problem. Babatunde (2017) did a study on audio-visual translation and Nigerian Cinematography where he examined subtitling and dubbing from English and indigenous languages to French. In his paper he looked at the Nigerian film industry and its audio-visual identity, subtitling and dubbing as two main categories of translation, foreignization and domestication concepts of national identity and concluded that audio-visual translation of Nigerian films helps in popularizing Nigerian English and indigenous languages abroad as well as French in Nigeria. Ketcha (2014), on his part, identified four audio-lects of Nigerian English; the Nativized/Pidginized Variety, Mainstream NigE, Near-RP NigE and Americanized NigE, revealing that that these audio-lects hugely depend on film roles, social context and pronunciation styles rather than on real-life social status. Still on Nigerian audio-visual English, Ketcha (2020) discussed linguistic hybridity in Nollywood pop music in English and revealed that artists have the tendency to sway between Near-RP, Near-American, and different Nigerian English varieties to compose and perform their lyrics, causing artists’ realisations, many times, to be neither RP, GenAm nor NigE but are a blend of the three varieties. On NigE intelligibility, Tiffen (1974) remains one of the earliest works that tackled this issue. After administering several tests, her findings revealed that the major cause of intelligibility failure was from the rhythmic test which had a score of 38.2%, followed by segmental errors (33.0%), phonotactic errors (20.0%), and lexical/syntactic errors (8.8%).

This present paper deviates from all previous sources in that it tests the intelligibility of audio-visual NigE, rather than real-life NigE, on Cameroonian consumers of Nollywood products, instead of native English speakers. The paper focuses on the vocalic and consonantal processes that cause intelligibility breakdown, from the point of view of neighbouring Cameroonians who share, with Nigerians, several socio-cultural, linguistic and geographical features.

Methodology

Data for the paper constitute responses from two intelligibility tests administered to 40 CamE speakers after letting them watch / listen to a corpus of 200 utterances excerpted from 48 Nigerian-produced audio-visual materials. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the 40 Cameroonian respondents from the circa 29.879.337 million Cameroonians (Worldometer, 2025). Out of the sample of 40 Cameroonian respondents, 30 were Anglophones and 10 were francophones, representing the major varieties of CamE speakers and the consumers of Nollywood products. Irrespective of the region of residence of the 40 Anglophones, 15 hailed from the North West and 15 from the South West regions of Cameroon while the remaining 10 were francophone from the centre and Littoral regions of Cameroon. The bulk of respondents were purposively selected to be Anglophone Cameroonians because of the geographical proximity to Nigeria and cultural semblance with Nigerians which has greatly favoured a hike in the consumption Nollywood products. The 48 Nigerian-made audio-visual materials were purposively selected, after observation, to represent the two major forms of Nollywood audio-visuals (movies and films) as well as the major regional varieties of NigE. It is in this regard that out of the 48 audio-visual materials, 24 were movies and 24 were songs. In all, 08 audio-visual materials were Igbo-based, 08 were Yoruba-based and 08 Hausa-based. These audio-visuals were selected in order to represent the major regional varieties of NigE within Nigeria.

Two intelligibility tests, framed with words from the 200 excerpts, gleaned from Nigerian-made audio-visuals, constituted the key instruments of data collection for the paper. Test I was a dictation test of words in isolation which required that respondents listen to them as pronounced by Nigerians in movies/ songs before writing down the words. The respondents were also asked to write down *not understood* in cases where they did not make meaning from the pronunciation. Test II was also a dictation test, framed with phrases/ sentences gleaned from the audio-visual materials which respondents had listened to. Unlike Test I, Test II was made up of the same words of Test I but this time they were used in sentences/clauses/ phrases. The 40 Cameroonian respondents were divided into 04 groups of 10 persons. The 200 screen-recorded excerpts were merged using iMovie software and first played for the respondents to listen to before both Tests could be administered. Four Nigerians assisted in the dictation of the tests; two of whom spoke Igbo as their L1 (01 male and 01 female); one (female) who spoke Yoruba and the other a male who spoke Hausa.

Findings and Discussions

Feedback, from respondents for this research, reveal that generally understanding NigE speakers, several Cameroonians have some difficulties understanding some words in certain utterances of Nollywood artists or characters in Nigerian audio-visual materials. The findings reveal that the areas of intelligibility are mainly due to vocalic and consonantal differences between CamE and NigE. These are discussed in turns below.

Monophthongal Intelligibility Problems

Intelligibility problems caused by NigE monophthongal processes such as fronting, retraction, rounding and vowel raising, concern the NURSE, STRUT, TRAP and START vowels.

Intelligibility Problems Caused by Nigerianising the NURSE Vowel

First, several Cameroonian consumers of Nollywood products misunderstood some NURSE vowel words in a number of utterances where NigE actors, actresses and musicians either fronted, retracted or rounded the NURSE vowel to realise /a/ and /ɔ/, processes that have been attested in real-life NigE (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2003; Ugwanyi & Aboh, 2025). This realisation caused intelligibility problems to Cameroonian listeners as they rather fronted the NURSE to yield /ɛ/ in CamE. This is in line with existing findings on real-life CamE that the NURSE is mainly realised as /ɛ/ (Simo Bobda, 2008). The following examples prove this phenomenon:

Table 1. Intelligibility Problems from Pronouncing the NURSE as /a/

Word	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Speakers' Perception	Test I Scores	Test II Results
firm	/fɜm/	/fam/	Vowel fronting /ɜ/ → /a/	farm	18	10
				fam	02	00
				firm	20	30
sir	/sɜ/	/sa/	/ɜ/ → /a/	sir	18	28
				sour	16	09
				not understood	6	3
verse	/vɜs/	/vas/	/ɜ/ → /a/	verse	18	35
				Vase	13	0
				vast	9	5
sperm	/spɜm/	/spam/	/ɜ/ → /a/	spam	25	15
				sperm	15	25
curse	/kɜs/	/kɔs/	Vowel Retraction /ɜ/ → /ɔ/	cause	15	25
				course	15	10
				curse	10	5
hurt	/hɜt/	/hɔt/	/ɜ/ → /ɔ/	hot	17	30
				hurt	13	7
				halt	7	0
				not understood	3	3
curly	/kɜli/	/kɔli/	/ɜ/ → /ɔ/	cully	19	31
				curly	11	6
				not understood	10	3
burn	/bɜn/	/bɔn/	/ɜ/ → /ɔ/	born	21	8
				burn	14	30
				bond	4	1
				not understood	1	1
surf	/sɜf/	/sɔf/	/ɜ/ → /ɔ/	Soft	16	40
				solve	13	00
				surf	11	00
return	/rɪtɜn/	/rɪtɔn/	/ɜ/ → /ɔ/	return	15	35
				retorn	22	5
				not understood	3	00
murder	/mɜdɜ/	/mɔdɜ/	/ɜ/ → /ɔ/	Mother	30	14

				Murder	10	36
nurse	/nɜs/	/nɔs/	/ɜ/ → /ɔ/	Nurse	18	33
				Norse	12	4
				not understood	10	3
curve	/kɜv/	/kɔf/	/ɜ/ → /ɔ/	cough	25	10
				cuff	8	4
				curve	7	26

The examples in the table above reveal that NURSE vowel words in the *ir*, *er* and *ur* orthographies severally pose intelligibility problems to Cameroonian consumers of Nollywood audio-visual materials. The examples show that when the NURSE in AVNigE is pronounced as /a/, words like *sperm*, *verse*, *sir* and *firm* are perceived as *spam*, *vase*, *sour* and *farm* by CamE listeners. Similarly, when the NURSE is pronounced as /ɔ/, NigE *hurt*, *burn* and *return* are comprehended by the the Cameroonian audience as *hot*, *born* and *retorn*. Statistical results show that Test II was less problematic than Test I as the intelligibility scores were higher for the latter test than for the former. For instance, based on test I scores, 18/40 Cameroonian respondents (representing 45%) perceived NigE *firm* /fam/ as *farm* whereas 02/40 (05%) and 20 (50%) perceived the word as *fam* and *firm* respectively. Conversely, test II scores show that just 10/40 (25%) perceived NigE *firm* /fam/ as *farm* whereas the rest, 30/40 (75%) understood the word to be *firm*. The reason for this difference is that test II sentences/ phrases provided some contextual clues to understanding the words whereas test I comprised just the words in isolation. Again, results from the table show that the most misunderstood NURSE vowel word by the Cameroonian respondents is NigE /mɔdɔ/ for *murder* which was misheard by 30/40 (75%) of respondents as *mother*, while only 10/40 (25%) rightly perceived the word as *murder*. On the contrary, a larger number, 33/40 (82.5%) correctly realised NigE /mɔdɔ/ as *murder* as against just 7/40 (17.5%), based on test II scores.

Intelligibility Problems Caused by Nigerianising the STRUT Vowel

The pronunciation of the STRUT vowel as /ɔ/ (Aladeyomi & Adetunde, 2007) by Nollywood artists, actors and actresses led to the misperception of STRUT vowel words as THOUGH vowel words by CamE speakers who constituted the respondents for this study. The table below illustrates this occurrence:

Table 2. Intelligibility Problems Resulting from Perceiving the Nurse Vowel

Word	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Speakers' Perception	Test I Score	Test II Score
but	/bʌt/	/bɔt/	Vowel rounding /ʌ/ → /ɔ/	board	30	10
				Bud	08	30
				not understood	02	00
cut	/kʌt/	/kɔt/	/ʌ/ → /ɔ/	caught	20	10
				cot	10	00
				cut	10	30
hut	/hʌt/	/hɔt/	/ʌ/ → /ɔ/	hot	15	10

				hoard	11	00
				hut	09	22
				hurt	05	08
butt	/bʌt/	/bat/, /bɒt/	/ʌ/ → /ɔ/	bought	32	08
				board	04	02
				but	04	30
son	/sʌn/	/san/	/ʌ/ → /ɔ/	sand	25	4
				son	9	33
				sun	6	3

Table 2 illustrates that when NigE speakers pronounce the STRUT vowel as /ɔ/, intelligibility problems arise to several Cameroonian consumers of Nollywood audio-visuals. As on the table, RP *but* /bʌt/, *cut* /kʌt/, *butt* /bʌt/, *hut* /hʌt/, *cut* /kʌt/ and *son* /sʌn/ when Nigerianised as /bɒt/, /kɒt/, /bɒt/, /hɒt/, /kɒt/ and /sɒn/ respectively, were heard by several CamE speakers to be *but/board/bud*; *cut/caught/cot*; *hurt/hot/hoard/hut*; *bought/board/but* and *son/sun/sand*, respectively. Again, the test results show that Nollywood English is less intelligible with test I than test II. The main process responsible for these intelligible problems is vowel rounding; the STRUT is pronounced with a rounding quality so that it is perceived as CamE /ɔ/ by CamE speakers (Simo Bobda, 2008).

Intelligibility Problems Caused by Americanising the TRAP and START Vowels

Another monophthongal process, in Nollywood English, that causes unintelligibility, from the viewpoint of CamE speakers, is the Americanisation of the TRAP and START vowels to yield /ɛ/ (Gut, 2008). At this point, three processes are involved; one for changing the TRAP to NigE /ɛ/ and two for changing the START to NigE /ɛ/. To change /æ/ to /ɛ/, NigE speakers employ vowel raising and to realise /ɛ/ instead of /a/, the same speakers unconsciously employ vowel laxing and fronting. These processes are used in the Americanised Nigerian audio-lect which Akujobi and Umoh (2022) label as Variety 4. The following table provides test results for this singularity.

Table 3. Intelligibility Problems Resulting from Perceiving TRAP and START words

Words	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Speakers' Perception	Test Score I	Test Score II
hat	/hæt/	/het/	Vowel raising /æ/ → /ɛ/	head	20	11
				heard	12	10
				hat	08	19
cat	/kæt/	/ket/	/æ/ → /ɛ/	cut	24	12
				cat	16	28
fast	/fast/	/fes/	Fronting and vowel laxing /a/ → /ɛ/	first	32	11
				farce	02	00
				fast	06	29
mass	/mas/	/fes/	/a/ → /ɛ/	Mess	40	37
				Mass	00	03
cast	/kast/	/kes/	/a/ → /ɛ/	curse	23	33

				cast	17	07
craft	/kraʃt/	/kreʃt/	/ɑ/ → /ɛ/	crave	20	30
				craft	20	10

Table 3 above indicates that *hat*, *cat*, *fast*, *mass*, *cast* and *craft* are perceived as *head/heard/hat* (for *hat*); *cut/cat* (for *cat*); *first/farce/fast* (for *fast*); *curse/cast* (for *cast*) and *crave/craft* (for *craft*) because Nollywood speakers differently pronounce the words as /kɛt/, /fɛst/, /kɛst/ and /kreʃt/ instead of RP /kæt/, /fast/, /kɑst/ and /kraʃt/, respectively. This intelligibility problem is born from the desire to sound American and better suit tough guy roles or those of Nigerians who had some stays abroad, especially in the USA.

Diphthongal Intelligibility Problems

Apart from monophthongal intelligibility problems, several diphthongal processes particular to NigE caused intelligibility complications to Cameroonian consumers of Nollywood audio-visuals. The diphthongal intelligibility challenges were in the pronunciation of the FACE, SQUARE and MOUTH vowels.

Intelligibility Problems Caused by Nigerianising the FACE Vowel

Several Cameroonian consumers of Nollywood found some FACE vowel words confusing as they understood the FACE to be the PET vowel as NigE speakers variously monophthongised /eɪ/ and lowered it to yield /ɛ/ (Olaniyi & Ubong, 2013) instead of CamE /e/ for /eɪ/ (Kouega, 1999). This rendering which is a feature of mainstream NigE, otherwise referred to as Variety II (Akujobi and Umoh, 2022), is illustrated in table 4 below.

Table 4. Intelligibility Problems from the Perception of FACE Vowel

Word	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Speakers' Perception	Test Score I	Test Score II
sake	/seɪk/	/sek/	Vowel reduction /eɪ/ → /ɛ/	sect	23	29
				sake	17	11
amaze	/əmeɪz/	/amɛs/	/eɪ/ → /ɛ/	a mess	28	31
				amaze	12	09
waist	/weɪst/	/west/	/eɪ/ → /ɛ/	West	25	25
				ways	10	11
				waist	05	09
claim	/kleɪm/	/klɛm/	/eɪ/ → /ɛ/	claim	17	27
				Climb	06	01
				Clem	17	12
taste	/teɪst/	/tɛs/	/eɪ/ → /ɛ/	test	31	32
				taste	09	08
haste	/eɪst/	/hɛs/	/eɪ/ → /ɛ/	Hairs	27	38
				haste	13	02

pays	/peɪz/	/pɛs/	/eɪ/ → /ɛ/	Pairs	22	36
				pays	18	04

The foregoing table shows that due to the replacement of /eɪ/ with /ɛ/ by Nollywood characters/ stars pronounce RP *sake* /seɪk/, *amaze* /əmeɪz/, *waist* /weɪst/, *claim* /kleɪm/, *taste* /teɪst/, *haste* /heɪst/ and *pays* /peɪz/ as /sɛk/, /amɛs/, /wɛs/, /klɛm/, /tɛs/, /hɛs/ and /pɛs/ respectively. Due to this, CamE respondents heard the words as *sect/sake*; *a mess/ amaze*; *west/ways/waist*; *Clem/ climb/ claim*; *test/taste*; *hairs/ haste*; *pairs/pays*, respectively. The most unintelligible word, as illustrated by the table above is *taste* which was perceived, in test I, by 31/40 (77.5%) as *test* as against just 09/40 (22.5%) who understood the word to be *taste*. As for test II, there is a reversal as the majority, 32/40 (80%) rightly got the word as *taste* contrary to 08/40 (20%) who wrongly got *test*.

Intelligibility Problems Caused by Nigerianising the SQUARE Vowel

The pronunciation of the SQUARE vowel as /e/ and /ia/ prompted some respondents to misunderstand several words that have /ɛə/ as their base vowel. Due to this particularity, NigE Nollywood stars realised RP *there* /ðɛə/, *where* /wɪə/, *dare* /daɪə/, *bear* /beɪə/ and *wear* /weɪə/ as /dɪə/, /wɪə/, /daɪə/, /beɪə/ and /weɪə/, CamE speakers heard them as *their/ there*, *we're/where*, *beer/Biya/bear* and *we're /wear*, respectively.

Table 5. Intelligibility Problems from Perception of the SQUARE Vowel

Words	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Respondents' Perception	Test I Score	Test II Score
there	/ðɛə/	/dɪə/	Vowel reduction/monophthongisation /ɛə/ → [ɪə]	their	39	11
				there	01	29
where	/wɛə/	/wɪə/	/ɛə/ → [ɪə]	we're	22	32
				where	18	08
bear	/beɪə/	/beɪə/	/ɛə/ → [ɪə]	beer	20	30
				Biya	12	02
				bear	08	08
wear	/weɪə/	/wɪə/	/ɛə/ → [ɪə]	we're	27	15
				wear	13	25

The first word on Table 4 illustrates that *care* which normally has the SQUARE vowel in RP is realised, in NigE, as the mid-high front tense vowel - /e/. To arrive at this, two processes are involved; monophthongisation of /ɛə/ to /e/ and then /e/ tensing to yield /e/. As for the rest of the examples, from the second to the last word in table 4, the SQUARE vowel is simply restructured to /ia/, suggesting restructuring by raising /e/ to /i/ and fronting as well as lowering /ə/ to yield /a/. Also, table 5 illustrates that according to test I results, the majority of CamE respondents misunderstood the words to mean something else whereas test II scores show that just the minority of CamE speakers misunderstood the words. For example, 39/40 (97.5%) misunderstood *there* to mean *there*, going by test I scores as opposed to just 01/40 (2.5%) who correctly perceived the word as *there* on the one hand. On the other hand, test II shows a reversal; 29/40 (72.5%) rightly heard *there* whereas 1/40 (2.5%) still misunderstood the word to be *there*.

Intelligibility Problems Caused by Nigerianising the MOUTH Vowel

Another interesting occurrence that caused intelligibility problems among CamE speakers is the realisation of the MOUTH vowel as /a/. This phenomenon which is vowel reduction of /aʊ/ to /a/ caused respondents to differently perceive NigE *sound* /san/, *bound* /ban/, *bound* /ban/, *round* /ran/, *found* /fan/, *count* /cant/, *loud* /lad/, *mount* /mant/ and *shout* /ʃat/ as *sand/sound*; *ban/bound*; *round/ran*; *fan/found*; *can't/ count*; *loud/lad*; *mount/manned* and *shat/shout*, respectively. The table below demonstrates this occurrence.

Table 6. Intelligibility Problems from Perception of the MOUTH Vowel

Words	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Respondents' Perception	Test I Score	Test II Score
sound	/saʊnd/	/san/	Vowel reduction/ Monophthongisation /aʊ/ → [a]	sand	25	33
				sound	15	17
bound	/baʊnd/	/ban/	/aʊ/ → [a]	ban	35	30
				bound	05	10
round	/raʊnd/	/ran/	/aʊ/ → [a]	ran	33	29
				round	07	11
found	/faʊnd/	/fan/	/aʊ/ → [a]	fan	30	31
				found	10	09
count	/kaʊnt/	/kant/	/aʊ/ → [a]	can't	37	27
				count	03	13
loud	/laʊd/	/lad/	/aʊ/ → [a]	lad	29	36
				loud	11	04
mount	/maʊnt/	/mant/	/aʊ/ → [a]	manned	25	32
				mount	15	08
shout	/ʃaʊt/	/ʃat/	/aʊ/ → [a]	shat	33	27
				shout	07	13

Table 6 above demonstrates that based on Test I scores, a whopping 35/40 (representing 87.5%) heard *ban* instead of *bound* which was rightly understood by just 05/40, representing 12.5%. Similarly, the table shows that, going by test II, 30/40 (75%) correctly understood the word as *bound*, probably because of contextual clues in sentences and phrases that enhanced understanding.

Consonantal Nigerianisms that Caused Intelligibility Problems

Four major consonantal processes caused intelligibility difficulties to respondents for this paper. They are the alveolarization of the velar nasal, the deaffrication of /tʃ/ to yield the alveole-palate /ʃ/, the alveolarization of the bilabial nasal and the coalescing /h/ and /j/ to get /w/.

Intelligibility Problems from Alveolarisation of the Velar Nasal

The first noticeable consonantal Nigerianism that caused intelligibility problems is alveolarization of the velar nasal, /ŋ/, to yield /n/, mostly in word-final position, a phenomenon attested in real-life NigE

(Babarinde & Ahamefula, 2020). Table 7 illustrates this phenomenon.

Table 7. Intelligibility Problems from Perception of the Velar Nasal

Words	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Speakers' Perception	Test I Scores	Test II Scores
something	/sʌmθɪŋ/	/sɒntɪn/	Alveolarization of the velar nasal /ŋ/ → [n]	sun tin	11	03
				sun thin	10	12
				something	17	24
				not understood	02	01
sing	/sɪŋ/	/sɪn/	/ŋ/ → [n]	sin	23	09
				seen	07	04
				sing	10	27
thing	/θɪŋ/	/θɪn/, /tɪn/	/ŋ/ → [n]	thing	18	27
				thin	11	07
				tin	11	06
wings	/wɪŋ/	/wɪns/	/ŋ/ → [n]	wins	17	30
				wings	23	10
hang	/hæŋ/	/hans/	/ŋ/ → [n]	Han	02	01
				hand	17	13
				hang	21	26
pangs	/pæŋz/	/pans/	/ŋ/ → [n]	pans	14	11
				pangs	14	29
				pants	12	00
bang	/bæŋ/	/ban/	/ŋ/ → [n]	ban	24	10
				band	10	03
				bang	06	27
sang	/sæŋ/	/san/	/ŋ/ → [n]	sang	32	38
				sand	08	02

Due to the alveolarization of the velar nasal /ŋ/, to yield /n/, several CamE speakers perceived NigE *something* /sɒmtɪn/, *sing* /sɪn/, *thing* /tɪn/, *wings* /wɪns/, *hang* /hans/, *pangs* /pans/, *bang* /ban/ and *sang* /sand/ as *sun tin*/*sun thin*/*something*; *sin*/*seen*/*sing*; *thing*/*thin*/*tin*; *wings*/*wins*; *hang*/*Han*/*hand*; *pangs*/*pans*/*pants*; *bang*/*ban*/*band* and *sang*/*sand*, respectively. The table shows that just 17/40 heard the word as *something* in test I and that up to 24/40 (60%) understood the word in test II. However, table 7 also illustrates that up to 21/40 (52.5%) misunderstood *something* as *sun tin* or *sun thin* and 02 (5%) did not understand the word at all, going by test I. Test I also shows that 30/40 (75%) misunderstood *sing* as *sin* or *seen* whereas with test II, 27/40 (67.5%) correctly perceive the word.

Deaffrication of /tʃ/ to yield the alveole-palate /ʃ/

When NigE speakers variously de-affricated /tʃ/ to yield /ʃ/ (Simo Bobda, 2007), CamE speakers misunderstood several words in Nollywood audio-visuals. The phonological realisation which is typically a mainstream NigE feature, variously caused Cameroonian respondents to perceive several *ch* words as *sh* words. The words below are examples.

Table 8. Intelligibility Problems from Perception of /tʃ/ as /ʃ/

Words	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Speakers' Perception	Test I Score	Test II Score
Cheap	/tʃiːp/	/ʃiːp/	Depalatalization /tʃ/ → [ʃ]	ship	24	30
				cheap	16	10
charm	/tʃɑːm/	/ʃɑːm/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	sham	27	33
				charm	13	07
Chimney	/tʃɪmni/	/ʃɪmi/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	shimmy	15	07
				chimney	13	26
				not understood	12	07
choke	/tʃəʊk/	/ʃok/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	shook	18	10
				choke	17	28
				not understood	05	02
chap	/tʃæp/	/ʃap/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	sharp	35	15
				chap	04	25
				not understood	01	00
chant	/tʃɑːnt/	/ʃant/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	shan't	23	13
				chant	16	27
				not understood	01	00
chip	/tʃɪp/	/ʃɪp/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	ship	19	08
				sheep	18	07
				chip	03	25
chew	/tʃu/	/ʃu/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	shoe	36	10
				shew	02	05
				chew	02	25
check	/tʃɛk/	/ʃɛk/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	shake	21	10
				check	18	30
				not understood	01	00
chair	/tʃɛə/	/ʃia/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	share	18	11
				chair	16	29
				Not understood	06	00

choose	/tʃuz/	/ʃus/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	shoes	22	12
				choose	17	28
				not understood	01	00
chill	/tʃil/	/ʃil/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	she'll	25	07
				chill	15	33
child	/tʃaɪld/	/ʃaɪl/	/tʃ/ → [ʃ]	shy	19	11
				Child	17	28
				not understood	04	01

Based on the illustrations on Table 8, *cheap* /tʃip/, *charm* /tʃam/, *chimney* /tʃimni/, *choke* /tʃok/, *chap* /tʃæp/, *chant* /tʃant/, *chip* /tʃip/, *chew* /tʃu/, *check* /tʃek/, *chair* /tʃeə/, *choose* /tʃuz/, *chill* /tʃil/ and *child* /tʃaɪld/ which Nollywood speakers realise as /ʃip/, /ʃam/, /ʃimni/, /ʃok/, /ʃap/, /ʃant/, /ʃip/, /ʃu/, /ʃek/, /ʃia/, /ʃus/, /ʃil/ and /ʃail/, were perceived as *ship/cheap*; *sham/charm*; *shimmy/chimney*; *shook/choke*; *sharp/chap*; *shan't/chant*; *sheep/chip/ship*; *shoe/shew/chew*; *shake/check*; *share/chair*; *shoes/choose*; *she'll/ chill* and *shy/child*, respectively. Like with other vocalic and consonantal processes, table 8 statistics reveal that more intelligibility problems arose with test I rather than with test II. For example, test I shows that RP *chew* /tʃu/, when pronounced as NigE /ʃu/, was perceived as *shoe* by 36/40 (90%) of respondents; as *shew* by 02/40 (5%) of respondents and as *chew* by another 02/40 (05%) of CamE respondents. As concerns test II scores, 25/40 (62.5%) correctly perceived *chew* although 15/40 (37.5%) still understood something else.

Intelligibility Problems due to Coalescent Glide Formation of /w/

The last consonantal phenomenon that caused intelligibility problems is coalescing of the glottal fricative plus the yod to yield a rounded /w/. This phenomenon, mostly heard in the utterances of the lower lect of mainstream NigE speakers (Ketcha, 2020) caused misunderstanding on the part of respondents for this paper. The following examples attest to the phenomenon.

Table 9. Intelligibility Problems from Coalescing /h/ and /j/ to form /w/

Words	RP	NigE	Phonological Change(s)	CamE Speakers' Perception	Test I Score	Test II Score
human	/hjumən/	/wuman/	glide coalescence /h/ + /j/ → [w]	Woman	40	26
				Human	00	14
humanise	/hjumənaɪz/	/wumanais/	/h/ + /j/ → [w]	womanise	40	31
				humanise	00	09
human being	/hjumənbiŋ/	/wumanbin/	/h/ + /j/ → [w]	Woman being	33	29
				Human being	07	11
humankind	/hjumənkaind/	/wumankain/	/h/ + /j/ → [w]	Womankind	31	27
				Humankind	09	13
humanity	/hjumænəti/	/wumaniti/	/h/ + /j/ → [w]	Womanity	24	35
				humanity	16	05

Table 9 demonstrates that as Nollywood stars realised /hj/ as /w/, several CamE respondents had problems making meaning of such words. In this case, RP *human* /hjumən/, *humanise* /hjumənaɪz/, *human being* /hjumən biŋ/, *humankind* /hjumənkaind/ and *humanity* /hjumænəti/ which, realised by NigE speakers as /wuman/, /wumanais/, /wumanbin/, /wumankain/ and /wumaniti/, caused respondents to largely perceive them as *woman*, *womanise*, *woman bin*, *womankind* and *womanity*, respectively. This realisation proved to be one of the areas with the most intelligibility problems, especially as regards test I scores.

Conclusion

The paper has illustratively discussed monophthongal, diphthongal, and stress patterns of Nigerianisms that caused intelligibility problems to Cameroonian consumers of Nollywood audio-visual materials. The paper has demonstrated that the monophthongal NigE processes that pose intelligibility difficulties to CamE respondents are vowel fronting, retraction, rounding, raising, and laxing and that these are particular to the realisations of the NURSE, STRUT, TRAP and START vowels in the different NigE audio-lects. Apart from monophthongal processes, the paper has also confirmed that the major diphthongal processes affecting intelligibility of NigE to Cameroonian respondents is monophthongisation/ vowel reduction in a NigE way. These problems were heard in the pronunciation of the FACE, SQUARE and MOUTH vowels. The discussions in the paper have also proven that some consonantal processes contribute to intelligibility breakdown. These are alveolarization of the velar nasal, deaffrication of the voiceless palatal affricate and glide coalescence, of word-initial /h/ and /j/. The scores from tests I and II attest that more intelligibility problems abound with test I, much more than with test II. This is simply because test I was with words in isolation whereas test II was constructed with the same words in phrasal, clausal or sentential contexts where listeners could deduce contextual meaning as the words had syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations. The implication is that though intelligibility problems from NigE are relatively in a few sounds (four out of twelve monophthongs, three out of eight diphthongs and three out of twenty-four consonants), much work has to be done, first, to harmonise all NigE varieties and, second, to focus on the teaching of the problematic aspects of NigE in order to foster international intelligibility.

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