

Table 12
Stereotypes

| Phoneme | Spelling | Stereotypes elicited | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------|--|------------------------|
| /ɜ:/ | { <u>bird</u> <u>herd</u> <u>heard</u> <u>word</u> } | 85% [ɛ.ɪ] | | |
| | | 95% [a.] | | |
| | | /əe/ | { <u>poor</u> <u>usual</u> <u>pure</u> } | 100% [y _a] |
| | | | | 100% [ɔ̄ɔ̄] |
| 100% [i-w _a] | | | | |

Table 13

Comparison of the findings of Kassulamemba (K)
and those of the present study (JBM)¹⁰

| K's Findings | RP Phoneme | JBM's Findings |
|------------------|------------|---|
| i | /ɪ/ | [e] most frequently, also [ɛ], [ei], [i], [ɪ], [a] |
| ʌ | /a/ | [e] or [ɛ] for 'a', [ei] for 'ai' |
| u | /o/ | [ɔ̄] or [u] for 'u', 'oo', 'ou', [ɔ̄] for 'o', [a] for 'u', [ɔ̄ɔ̄] for 'ou' |
| ɑ | /ɜ:/ | [e] for 'er, ear, or, ir', [a] for 'ur', [ɔ̄] for 'our' |
| e | /ei/ | [e] for all spellings, also [e.ɪ] for 'ei, ey, ay', [i] for 'ea' |
| ɔ | /əo/ | [ɔ̄] generally, also [ɔ̄ɔ̄] for 'ou, ow' |
| ʌ ɑ ɒ ɔ | /ə/ | [a] most frequently |
| | | [e] for 'e, a, ai, io, er' |
| | | [i] for 'ir' |
| | | [ɔ̄] for 'or, oar, ou, o', vowel + r/l |
| | | [y] for 'u, ou' |

differing circumstances, although one or two of these are more frequently heard for that phoneme. The phonetic variants elicited were generally predictable from the spellings presented for a given phoneme. They tended to be the result of analogy spelling-pronunciation and stereotype pronunciation. The two findings are juxtaposed for easy comparison in Table 13.

Section 5 CONCLUSION

5.1 It has been demonstrated at length for the seven vowel phonemes focussed upon in this paper, and briefly for the remaining 13, that the sample did not produce a small list of phones for RP vowel phonemes. When analysed with some precision, the pronunciations elicited from a Tanzanian speaker of English shows a rich inventory of phones produced for English vowels. This, therefore contradicts such earlier research as Kassulamemba's which suggests that only a limited list of phones is elicited for RP vowel phonemes from a sample similar to that on which this study is based. However, none of the diverse phones elicited was a central vowel. The nearest to a central vowel was a centralized front or back vowel.

5.1.2 The rich phonetic inventory of elicited phones is not distributed systematically with respect to the vowel phonemes of RP, unlike that of the native speaker. Compared with the description of RP vowel phonemes and their realization by the native speaker, the elicited pronunciation is generally deviant. The variants elicited for each phoneme differ significantly from those of the native speaker of RP for corresponding

phonemes. This therefore corroborates suggestions put forward in previous literature on spoken English in Tanzania - that its pronunciation is deviant from RP (which is the official target for pronunciation teaching).

5.1.3 The findings presented in Section 3 also verify the hypothesis advanced at the beginning of the study: that the deviance (reported in previous literature and corroborated by this study) is probably related in certain ways to spelling. It has been shown that the distribution of the phones elicited for each phoneme is generally predictable from the spellings presented for it. Normally, for any given spelling of a given phoneme, one or two phones were most frequently elicited. These seemed to be the result of one of three tendencies: (a) analog, (b) spelling-pronunciation, and (c) stereotype pronunciation. The first frequently leads to a non-deviant pronunciation, but more frequently to a deviant one. The second, as a rule, leads to deviant pronunciation. The last tendency results in both non-deviant and deviant phones. If the findings attribute the deviance in pronunciation primarily to spelling, they do not exclude other causes - such as those suggested in earlier literature (1.1).

5.2 More studies are required for a better and more complete understanding of spoken English in Tanzania. Consonant pronunciation is not expected to produce any startling results. Only the phonemes /ʒ/ (and perhaps /r/ and /l/) are likely to produce significantly deviant phones. Therefore, there remains a study on RP sounds in sequence, and another one on the rhythm of connected English

speech and intonation. Apart from the vowels, these are areas in which the greatest degrees of deviance could be elicited. In a future study, the sample ought to be made more inclusive to represent different categories of Tanzanian speakers of English.¹ Such a relatively more comprehensive study is a prerequisite if the teaching and learning of English in Tanzania is to be enhanced by making it more meaningful and realistic to its speakers.

5.3 The primary role of spelling in the pronunciation of English vowels by Tanzanian speakers is doubtless due to overdependence on spelling for the pronunciation of English vowels. The overdependence on spelling is, in turn, due to too much emphasis upon the visual medium rather than the aural-oral medium in the teaching and learning of English in Tanzania. There is too little spoken English in the learners' environment within as well as outside the school. Reading and writing are therefore the main skills acquired with some proficiency. There is a need to increase drastically the opportunity for learners to hear as much spoken English as possible, and also to encourage them to speak English as much as possible. This not only means that the opportunity of the English class must be maximised.¹¹ There is also an urgent need to simulate an aural-oral English environment outside the English class.¹² But by far the most crucial step is to choose the most rational and realistic target for spoken English in Tanzania; once such a choice is made (be it the retention of RP or otherwise), it is necessary to stick to it with all possible rigor.¹³ That entails a genuinely adequate preparation of the teachers

who go to the Colleges of National Education to teach future teachers of English in schools.¹⁴ Finally, from the findings of this study, it is imperative that the beginning of English in the Primary schools be delayed (at present in the first year) to distance it from the beginning of the reading and writing skills - introduced in Swahili in the first year.¹⁵ All this is tied to the fact that Tanzania still needs and will continue to need English - just as other nations of the world do - not only for its interaction with the outside world, but also for many of its development endeavours. The Government's persistent efforts to revitalise the teaching of English at all levels is witness to this.

NOTES

- 1 See Institute of Education 1974
- 2 It was therefore similar to the sample of Kasulamemba
- 3 These were termed 'experiments' because 'tests' seemed more appropriate for the error analyst, who evaluates and then makes value judgment as to 'correct' and 'incorrect'.
- 4 Any part of the findings can be corroborated by making even casual observation of Tanzanian speakers of English (especially within the category of the sample).
- 5 Swahili for: 'we/us, you brother, bat, hen' respectively
- 6 For both /ɜ/ and /ə/ it is permissible to vary considerably the height of the tongue within the central position because, apart from /ʌ/ in the fully open central position, there are no other vowels that come into contrastiveness with /ɜ/ and /ə/.
- 7 The word 'colonel' was included in some experiments despite the fact that 'olo' as spelling for /ɜ/ occurs only in that word. However, the word was commonly known by the sample.
- 8 The findings presented here are from Experiment 4 only.

- 9 The findings presented here are from Experiment 8. They are, however, quite representative of all the results for this phoneme.
- 10 K's findings are reproduced here exactly as they appear in the original (1977 p 31). JBM's findings shown in Table 13 are a summary of both those presented in Section 3 as well as those for experiments not included in this paper; the phones are presented in order of frequency.
- 11 Many teachers of English in Tanzania are known to conduct their classes bilinguslly, presenting new material in English, but giving the explanations in Swahili.
- 12 There was a time when s hools had a regulation requiring pupils to speak English only, within the school. If they flouted it, they were punished. They learned and used the language, albeit from fear of penalty. That strategy cannot perhaps be invoked today; But schools could, for instance, oblige their pupils to speak no other language but English at school on certain days of the week or at certain times of the day. The teachers should provide the model.
- 13 At present, although the official target is Received Pronunciation, no one really cares what target the teacher is prepared in and what he actually teaches in the classroom. Since no local standard for spoken English has been evolved in Tanzania, it is essential we select one target dialect and stick to it. If it is RP we choose to retain as target, perhaps there is need to modify the vowel system to make it rational and realistic for Tanzanians, (in the light of Section 3). Learners may not need to be able to produce [eə] in ['ri:əd] or [ə] in [ri:əd] and [ɒ] in ['rɒd] as distinctly as the native speaker of RP. But they do need to recognize that in English it is necessary to recognise three different kinds kinds of 'o' sound, as opposed to the single one of Swahili and many of their own languages. They must also be able to produce three different 'o' sounds for the native speaker's RP 14, 7, and 6. It is not important what exact phonetic features these will have, provided they are not confused with any of the remaining phonemes, and they are distributed systematically.

This will enable them to recognise and produce distinctly without confusion:
/hi left ðə rɒd ɒn ðə rɔ:d wen ðə laɪən rɒd/.

- 14 With the introduction of U.P.E. (Universal Primary Education) the rate of increase in the number of schools exceeds that of teachers. Standard seven leavers are therefore being recruited as a panacea for the shortfall in teachers. Should these continue to be permitted to teach English, the consequences are easy to predict.
- 15 This has in fact happened already. The Ministry of National Education has announced the delaying of the beginning of English until the third year of Primary School. (See Daily News, 17th December 1979.)

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