Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English - The Case of UEW Students

Cynthia Logogye & Dr. Amma Abrafi Adjei
Department of English Language Education
University of Education, Winneba, Ghana
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Abstract

This paper takes a look at Ghanaian English with its focus being towards the establishment of our-own variety of the English language. Our experience in the teaching of phonetics and phonology of English, and Spoken English in the University of Education, Winneba, has shown that students after going through such practical courses designed to enhance their pronunciation or help them achieve a near native-like competence in pronunciation, still do not speak with such competence. The aim of the paper is therefore to contribute to the already existing features of Ghanaian English and to draw more attention to these features and intensify the need for a standardized Ghanaian variety of the English language. The paper looks at the pronunciation of Ghanaian students studying English language at the tertiary level of education; students of UEW and brings to fore some of the features of educated Ghanaian English as a march towards standardization of Ghanaian English. The paper makes use of corpus linguistic methodology. An empirical approach to the analysis of language which relies on naturally occurring spoken and written texts. It was found out that consonant and vowel sounds that are not normally pronounced in native English, are heard clearly in the English of these students. In the area of stress, the study confirmed earlier studies where Ghanaian English is found as syllable-timed as against a stress-timed language, English.

Keywords: Ghanaian English, received pronunciation, standard pronunciation, educated Ghanaian pronunciation

Definition of Terms:

RP   received pronunciation

UEW   University of Education, Winneba

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Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   27

1.0 Introduction

It has been observed that English in Ghana is markedly different from English RP which is supposed to be the model especially in the area of pronunciation. These deviant pronunciations from RP are observed even among university teachers, media practitioners, the clergy, and among university students, yet some scholars stress the need for Ghanaian speakers of English to speak like the native speakers. This paper, therefore, uses the University of Education, Winneba students as a case study to find out whether this task is achievable.

This paper looks at the pronunciation of Ghanaian students studying English language at the tertiary level of education; students of the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) and brings to fore some of the features of educated Ghanaian English as a march towards standardization of Ghanaian English.

One of the most important things the British left us after more than a hundred years of colonization is, perhaps, their language which has, today, become a world language. English language is, arguably, the most unifying cultural element of our nation, given the fact Ghana is a multilingual country. Dako (1990) asserts that the neutrality of English language ensures its ready acceptance by all ethnic groups in the country.

Huber (2013) maintains that the Akan dialect (Twi) serves as the lingua franca in southern Ghana whilst English Language remains the 'de facto official language' since colonial rule.

This observation about Twi assuming a predominant role in Ghana as a lingua franca is evident but it is doubtful if it will ever replace English language as our principal official language because Ghanaians will still want to be fully integrated into the globalized village. What kind of English should the Ghanaian, then, speak? This paper is about the spoken, rather than the written, language since for the latter, many Ghanaians can reach quite a high level of excellence.

Anyone who has gone to school in Ghana is confronted with English language as the British speak it. We are supposed to use their spellings, constructions and when we speak, we should aim at the "Received Pronunciation" (RP).

Yet in our experience in the teaching of phonetics and phonology of English, and Spoken English in the University of Education, Winneba, we have observed that students after going through such practical courses designed to enhance their pronunciation or help them

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   28

achieve a near native-like competence in pronunciation, still backslide and go back to their old ways of pronunciation.

This phenomenon is observed not only among students but also among teachers of English in Ghana as stated by (Owusu-Ansah, 1991, 1997) non-native teachers of English often masquerade as native speakers of English when they are consciously teaching pronunciation to their students but make a quick switch to their „normal" localized accent in their day to day use of English outside the classroom.

It is upon this premise that we advocate the acceptability and standardization of our native variety of the English language especially in the area of pronunciation or spoken English. According to Kortmann & Lunkenheimer (2003), speech communities are diverse, socially and ethnically. It is also factual that the tango between language and culture, especially when they originate differently, leads to a kind of abrasive consequences on either side. The outcomes are always mutual though often lopsided. The product becomes part of the speaker's identity. This, coupled with Ngula (2011) assertion that as far as Ghanaian English is concerned much has not been done in the area of pronunciation to come up with enough features to establish this innovative feature of Ghanaian English.

At the secondary school level, attention is given to pronunciation where students take an oral examination paper as part of the core English paper and are expected to do well in it in order to get a good grade and qualify for the university. The question that comes to mind is how students stay in Ghana, receive tuition from teachers, who also perhaps had all their formal education in Ghana, be able to acquire nativelike pronunciation and speak just like the native speaker.

This is not to suggest that we are in any way advocating a compromise in spoken English in Ghana. In the words of Bamgbose (1998), there are two criteria non-native varieties ought to meet, maintaining international intelligibility and retaining local identities. Ghanaian English meets these criteria.

The best example of Ghanaian English on the international scene is, perhaps, Kofi Annan's clear diction. He maintains the Ghanaian features in his pronunciation and yet succeeds in being easily understood by the peoples of the world. Wolé Soyinka is another example of an African speaking distinctly without aping Americans or the English. His efforts

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940** **16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   29

are laudable given the strong influence his native Yoruba has on the pronunciation of English words and the cadence of the language generally.

It is less likely that a person born and bred in Ghana will speak like an Englishman. Psychologists have shown that after the critical ages of 13 to 15, a person will not be able to speak another language as fluently as a native speaker. Unfortunately, it is at this stage that most students see the need to speak English fluently.

It is in the light of this that the present paper seeks to add in support of the debate for the standardization of Ghanaian English and against extremist views as those of Gyasi (1990) who considers the English in Ghana as very ill.

2.0 Literature Review (Debate)

The spread of English language around the world has led to several issues, one of which is the question of ownership: Who owns English language? (Kachru, 1992; Widdowson, 1994; Pakir, 1997). This theme has attracted considerable attention in current literature, with some scholars arguing for the ownership to be open to all who use English language, either as native or as non-natives (e.g., Kachru, 1986, 1996, 1997; Owusu-Ansah, 1991, 1992; Bamgbose, 1997, 1998; Chisanga and Kamwangamalu, 1997; Anchimbe, 2007).

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940** **16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   30

Others argue that non-native Englishes are essentially manifestations of deficient and inadequate acquisition of the native form and are therefore illegitimate varieties that cannot claim a standard of their own. Thus, they pursue, in various dimensions, the argument that only native speakers can claim ownership of English language (Prator, 1968; Hocking, 1974; Quirk, 1985, 1990; Honey, 1997). These scholars think that a common standard in the use of English must be upheld in both Inner Circle countries and those outside the Inner Circle. Prator (1968) considers English language as the white man's linguistic burden. Quirk (1985: 6) maintains that tolerance for variation in language use was educationally damaging in Inner Circle countries.

In recent times, there has been a debate among scholars of English language in Ghana about the nativization of the English language. This debate was started by Sey (1973) in his paper titled Ghanaian English.

Sey's work has an error analysis orientation which shows that Sey (Ibid) does not recognize difference and innovativeness in educated Ghanaian English, He constantly refers to the features of Ghanaian English pronunciation as errors and deviant usage. The debate sparked up two groups: the pro-nativized and the anti-nativized. Among the pro-nativized are (Owusu-Ansah 1997, 2013; D'Souza, 1986; Nngula, 2011) among others and the anti-nativized group is (Sey,1973; Gyasi,1991; Ahulu, 1996; Nimako 2008) among others who concern themselves with usage and errors and doubt whether there can be anything as Ghanaian English as reflected in the titles of their papers.

This study attempts to critically examine the works of some of these scholars especially in the light of arguments by linguists like (Sey 1973, Ahulu, 1996, Gyasi, 1991, Nimako 2008) and a few others on the one hand, and (Owusu-Ansah,1994,1997; Huber 2003, and Dako 2003) on the other about the existence or otherwise of Ghanaian English.

In the conclusion to her introductory notes, Dako (2003) makes explicit her intention to provoke a debate on Ghanaian English as already stated. Such a debate was started by Sey (1973), then joined by (Ahulu 1996, Gyasi 1991, 1994, Owusu-Ansah, 1997), and a few others. She stokes the fires with choices of diction which are obvious markers of the Ghanaian variety of English.

Dako's (2003) compilation of 'Ghanaianisms' represents a broader volume of what many scholars have pointed out as deviations from British English (BrE). There are about 3000

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   31

entries of words and phrases commonly used by educated Ghanaian speakers and writers. Many of the Ghanaianisms are native to Ghana but the larger percentage of about 60 is of English origin. As discussed in the introduction, new Englishes are the results of language contact (Owusu-Ansah, 2013).

The biggest controversy with the new Englishes is with the acceptability or otherwise of clear and flagrant aberrations which instead of being corrected become a part of the "new" language (Ahulu, 1995,1996; Gyasi, 1991). D'Souza (1986) points out that English everywhere gets "marked by the ecology of the contexts in which it is being used".

Among the entries in Dako's glossary of '*Ghanaianisms'* are words that are obvious aberrations and need to be corrected. Some of them are:

Attending to treatment (instead of receiving treatment)

Bias (as an adjective or verb, instead of as a noun)

Borrow me (instead of lend me)

If Owusu-Ansah's (1996) definition that "Nativization' in the context of new Englishes is a process of linguistic and sociolinguistic change through which an external language becomes part of the culture of a community that uses it as an additional language…" is anything to go by, then those words and phrases should not be considered as errors to be eradicated. D'Souza (1986) highlights a claim that English language now belongs to the world, hence the native speaker has lost "the sole prerogative to initiate changes and innovations in the language". Therefore, Dako's (2003) compilation reveals the extent to which Ghanaians are using that linguistic prerogative. D'souza (1986) further discusses how the language is made to function in non-native contexts under which it undergoes changes.

Owusu-Ansah (1996) suggests that "the new varieties of English will continue to evolve in the direction of nativization as more and more speakers in multilingual communities come to use them…" Ghanaianisms, as presented by Dako (2003), attest, to a large extent, to what these linguists have opined.

The Ghanaian community which is multilingual like others in the outer circle takes the language and morphosyntactically and phonologically adapts it to suit its local and cultural contexts

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   32

Owusu-Ansah (1996), theorizes that "for the non-native culture to make the new language a part of the culture, it must nativize it…" After all, what is a language for if not to satisfy one's needs regardless of place and time?

Gyasi cited in Dako (2003) asserts "English in Ghana is very ill. The cancerous tumours are countless: wrong collocation; false concord; poor spelling due to unfamiliarity with the word or to mispronunciation; inability to handle the third person singular in particular in tenses generally; wrong omission or insertion of the articles; misuse of prepositions; errors arising from mother tongue interference, paucity of vocabulary, etc."

According to Gyasi, the cancer has spread and is found everywhere: in the English language of teachers, journalists, other professionals, and also students from secondary school to the university.

Gyasi (1991) in his paper titled, 'Do Ghanaians have or even want, a distinctive Ghanaian English'? questions whether there is a variety of English that can be legitimately described as distinctly Ghanaian.

He goes on to say there is nothing like 'Ghanaian English ' if we base our judgement on the occurrence of such errors as equipments, we must voice out our views; I am going and come. Gyasi (ibid) is of the view that when a Ghanaian's attention is drawn to the above examples as errors, he will not intentionally use them again. He adds strongly that "we should not, therefore, elevate bastardization into the status of legitimacy and call it 'Ghanaian English.'

Making a case for a codification of the new Englishes, D'souza (1986) argues that BrE should not be the "norm-setter" for those in the outer circle, virtually rubbishing the influence of exonormative standards. He, therefore, suggests that through poetic license, non-native English writers be allowed to expand their Englishes like Shakespeare, Cummings, Hopkins, Joyce and other native speakers dared to. D'souza (1986) states his case rather forcefully:

> One cannot lay down boundaries for the creative artist. He may wonder
>
> where he will and the merits or demerits of his writing must
>
> be judged by the standards of literature, not the rules of grammar (p.5)

The words above suggest where our sources of non-native English expressions need be.

Nimako (2008) in his book "Mind Your Language": Educated Ghanaian English is of the view that in the use of English, Ghanaians show deviations from British English. According

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   33

to him, some semantic and syntactic rules have not been followed, he added that distinctive patterns of pronunciation have also appeared in the spoken form of English. He then argued that such features are described as Ghanaian English because they are common in educated Ghanaian English and are rare in target or standard English. The question we pose here is who sets the standards in the non-native context with speakers of different cultural backgrounds? Language as is known is culturally tied. Therefore, the language developing in a different cultural setting is bound to develop new norms of usage. In the words of Kachru (1992) the native speaker has lost control over the language.

Nimako (2008) adopts the attitude of stigmatizing Ghanaian English by insulting speakers as illiterates who according to him deviate from standard English. (Nimako, 2008, p. 77)

Kachru (1986, 1992) has already argued strongly about the need for non-native speakers of English to avoid aiming at a close approximation of these native varieties, especially RP. He draws our attention to the fact that these documented native models of English "have no authority of codification from a government or a body of scholars as is the case, for example, with Spanish or French" (Kachru, 1992: 49).

Dako's glossary of 'Ghanaianisms' is a giant leap forward but I suggest it be subjected to more scrutiny even as more attempts are made to enrich it.

Ngula (2011) in his paper spelling pronunciation maintains that spelling pronunciation has become an innovative feature in Ghanaian English not only because of its widespread nature but also because it satisfies two criteria any New English variety ought to meet – maintaining international intelligibility and retaining local identities.

Ngula (2011, 2012, and 2014) supports strongly the establishment of a variety called Ghanaian English and suggests that a vital first step towards the development of Ghanaian English lies in the initiation of large-scale electronic corpus projects as this will enhance the features for codification. We however maintain that until then studies continue in the area to bring out more of the features for codification.

This paper argues in favour of establishing a Ghanaian variety of the English Language and provides further evidence from Ghanaian English to demonstrate that the non-native varieties, especially Outer Circle countries, can as well claim ownership of English especially in the area of pronunciation where the Ghanaian accent in English is inevitable.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   34

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Corpus Method

The present study employs a corpus method to derive the data. A corpus method is an empirical approach to linguistic description which relies on actual usage. In the words of Baker (2010: 94), "corpus linguistics is firmly rooted in empirical, inductive forms of analysis, relying on real-world instances of language use…". A corpus consists of a systematic collection of naturally-occurring language text, meant to characterize a state or a variety of a language to be used for linguistic analysis (Sinclair, 1991; McEnery and Wilson, 1996). The corpus method begins with compiling and designing a corpus with which to investigate a topic and finish with the retrieval, extraction, and interpretation of information from the corpus to help the investigator address his research concerns (McEnery and Wilson, 1996)

3.2 The Corpus (Data)

This study makes use of a spoken corpus. The source of data for the present study was a collection of recorded spoken texts compiled from 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 academic years of UEW students.

Specifically, the total size of the corpus was 80 words.

The corpus comprised spoken exercises from three courses: phonetics and phonology of English, Spoken English, and Extensive Reading. While a much larger corpus preferably electronic would be more valuable and revealing, the collected corpus was thought to be a good starting point to determine features of spoken English in Ghana as we wait for the larger and electronic one as proposed by Ngula (2011).

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940** **16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   35

3.3 Data

The aim of the present paper was to show that the pronunciation of some English words in Ghana have become unmarked features of the English language of educated Ghanaians. To strengthen and confirm this claim, we selected 80 words of English based on observation of their use by students of UEW and also among educated Ghanaians not leaving out university lecturers media practitioners, politicians, and members of the clergy. We chose particularly students of UEW level 100 first because we feel we, teachers of English are just making fun of ourselves when we try to teach students such causes as phonetics and phonology of English and spoken English, to achieve nativelike or near native-like competence.

Similar courses are taught all over the universities of Ghana. Although some of our data have been collected from usage on the media as all the others who contribute to the data are seen every day on the media, the majority of the data was collected from the classroom because they represent all the others we see on the media; educated Ghanaians. The reason for using students is to establish the fact that those students have been taught the courses that are designed to enhance their pronunciation skills not long ago but still right under our noses they backslide. One then wonders what happens to our effort in the lives of these students in the near future. Owusu-Ansah (1991, 1997), for instance, has suggested that non-native teachers of English language often masquerade as native speakers of English language when they are consciously teaching pronunciation to their students, but make a quick switch to their „normal" localized accent in their day to day use of English outside the classroom.

In the course of teaching, students were taken through word and sentence drills and it was found that students after being taught these courses still found the pronunciation of some words problematic. They also failed to pronounce some words with the appropriate stress pattern.

Students' pronunciations of words and readings were recorded and later transcribed. This has been part of our lesson delivery as we always informed students that whatever we do in class would be recorded and played back so that they get to know their performance so they can improve, and it became normal since it was the practice every day and so students participated naturally without feigning any false attitudes. This enhanced the naturalness of the data.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   36

The corpus was collected within two years from three classes with a total of 55 students each: phonetics and phonology class, spoken English, and Extensive Reading class.

Students were given word and sentence drills before and after the courses were taught to find out whether there was an improvement at the end of the course and so two sets of data were collected and compared to find out the level of improvement in the area of pronunciation. A vast majority of words were found to be problematic, but our attention was drawn more to words in which some speech sounds that are supposed to be silent in English RP but are given prominence.

Our attention was also drawn to word stress. A total of 20 recordings were selected from students with different ethnic backgrounds from each class.

The words that constituted our corpus were the same words heard on the radio and television with the same pronunciation by Ghanaian speakers of English.

The recordings were transferred into the computer through a USB cord to enhance clarity for a better analysis. The entire recording procedure was in line with Crystal's (1987) observation that a researcher investigating language needs to record each sound. This recording practice is essential as more insights can be gleaned from naturalistic data rather than data collected from controlled settings.

3.4 Procedure of Analysis

A sample size of 80 words was analyzed by replaying each recording and transcribing phonetically the words of focus as well as their stress pattern the way they were pronounced. Thus, the pronunciations of informants were tested and measured using the traditional method of auditory perception. While we are aware of the value and worth of instrumental analysis, which is often thought to be more objective and scientific in the analysis of speech (Roach, 2001), this traditional method proved adequate in determining whether or not the words of focus were similar to English RP or not.

The transcriptions were then compared with the RP versions of the words obtained from Daniel Jones'' (1997) English Pronunciation Dictionary.

4.0 Analysis

Tables 1 and 2 below display the selected words that serve as a basis for the study. Table 1 contains standard pronunciations (RP) and table 2 contains educated Ghanaian

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   37

pronunciation of the selected words of focus. The discussion is centered on a comparison between the words of focus comparing their educated Ghanaian pronunciation and the standard or received pronunciation and a justification is made in support of the establishment or otherwise of Ghanaian English.

Table 1. Words of Focus and their Standard Pronunciation

(RP) Words	Standard Pronunciation	Word	Standard Pronunciation
plumber	[plʌmə]	tough	[tʌf]
corps	[kɔ:z or k kɔ:rz]	thumb	[θʌm
sachet	[sæʃeɪ]	Christmas	krɪsməs]
hustle	[hʌsl]	Whistle	[wɪsl]
hasten	[heɪsn]	King	[kɪŋ]
bustle	[bʌsl]	Combing	[kɒmɪŋ]
castle	[ka:sl]	Bombing	[bɒmɪŋ]
apostle	[əpɒsl]	Subtle	[sʌtl]
rapport	[ræpɔ:]	Tongue	[tʌŋ]
hounour	[ɒnə]	Example	[igza:mpl]
honesty	[ɒnəsti]	Police	[pəli:s]
honourable	[ɒnərəbl]	Thorough	[θʌrə]
often	[ɒfn]	Women	[wɪmɪn]
listen	[lɪsn]	Oranges	[ɔrɪnʤ]
south	[saʊθ]	Culture	[kʌltʃə]
debris	[debrɪz]	Village	[vɪlɪʤ]
noisy	[nɔɪzɪ]	Ticket	[tɪkɪt]
vision	[vɪʒn]	Tomb	[tu:m]
double	[dʌbl]	Trouble	[trʌbl]
song	[sɒŋ]	singing	[sɪŋɪŋ]

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   38

Table 2. Words of Focus and their Educated Ghanaian Pronunciation

word	Educated Ghanaian Pronunciation	word	Educated Ghanaian Pronunciation
plumber	[plɔmba]	Tough	[tɔf]
corps	[kɔps]	Thumb	[tɔmb
sachet	[sæʃet]	Christmas	kristmas]
hustle	[hʌstil]	Whistle	[wistil]
hasten	[hæstin]	King	[kiŋg]
bustle	[bʌstil]	Combing	[kɔmbin]
castle	[kæstil]	Bombing	[bɔmbin]
apostle	[apɔstil]	Subtle	[sʌbtil]
rapport	[ræpɔ:]	Tongue	[tɔŋg]
honour	[hɔnə]	Example	[egzampl]
honesty	[hɔnəsti]	Police	[poli:s]
honourable	[hɔnərəbl]	Thorough	[tɔrɔf]
often	[ɔftin]	Women	[wumen]
listen	[listin]	Oranges	[ɔrandʒis]
south	[sa:f]	Culture	[kɔltʃə]
debris	[debris]	Village	[viladʒ]
noisy	[nɔisi]	Ticket	[tiket]
vision	[viʃn]	Tomb	[tumb]
double	[dɔbl]	Trouble	[trɔbl]
debt	[debt]	singing	[singin]

Table 2 displays the Ghanaian pronunciation of the selected words for the study. The innovative features that characterize the pronunciation of Ghanaian English are vast; including the substitution of /a/ for /æ/, /ɑ:/, /ʌ/; absence of the schwa /ə/; replacement of dental fricatives with stops among others. We are concerned however with speech sounds that are not heard in

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   39

English RP which are heard loud and clear in Ghanaian English and also word stress. We must add quickly that our compilation of these words which constitute the way educated Ghanaians pronounce those words is not to stigmatize Ghanaian English as this paper is not concerned with error analysis. Our attempt is not to determine how deviant Ghanaian constructions depart from standard British English but to add to innovative features of Ghanaian English as in the words of Bamgbose (1998), there are two criteria non-native varieties ought to meet, maintaining international intelligibility and retaining local identities.

As we can see from table 2 the consonant sounds /b/ as in bomb, subtle, plumber /t/ as in hasten, castle, /g/ as in king, tongue, singing /p/ as in corps, prompt are not pronounced in English RP whereas in Ghanaian English they are made prominent.

From the data, some vowels in some words are also pronounced just as they are spelled. Ngula (2011) calls this feature spelling pronunciation /ʌ/ in trouble, won, double become /ɔ/, /ɪ/ in example, exam, ticket has become /e/, the schwa is most often replaced by /ɔ/, and /a/ in most words as police, money about and again respectively. Sey (1973) identifies features of Ghanaian English pronunciation such as RP /ə/ becoming /a/.

In the two sets of data that we collected before and after teaching the courses; phonetics and phonology and spoken English, there was no significant improvement upon students' pronunciation of the words selected for the study.

At the verification stage, a total number of 20 students were selected and asked to pronounce 10 words which we presented in table 2 and the results are as follows:

Table 3. Verification Stage After Teaching Sounds

words	Number of students that pronounced words correctly	Number of students that pronounced words wrongly
Press corps	12	8
plumbing	14	6
honour	12	8
hasten	8	12
listen	10	10
tough	10	10

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   40

won	8	12
culture	14	6
bombing	12	8
combing	14	6

We present the above as markers of our sociolinguistic and cultural identities but not to condemn them simply because they diverge from a foreign standard, RP. While many prescriptive-minded critics would prefer to see the above pronunciation in Ghanaian English as errors to be eradicated we see them as innovative features emerging from non-native speakers in our context: Ghanaian English.

Although from table 3, the number of students that got the pronunciation right outnumbers the number that got it wrong, Kachru (1986, 1992) has already argued strongly about the need for non-native speakers of English to avoid aiming at a close approximation of these native varieties, especially RP. He draws our attention to the fact that these documented native models of English "have no authority of codification from a government or a body of scholars as is the case, for example, with Spanish or French" (Kachru, 1992: 49).

We now present a table of our word stress of the selected words used for the study

Table 4. Words of Focus and their Stress Pattern in Standard Pronunciation (RP)

1ST Syllable Stressed	2nd Syllable Stressed	3rd Syllable Stressed
Photograph	Photography	Photographic
Internet	Comedian	Reproduce
Agriculture	Performance	Demonstration
Matrimony	Facilitate	Afternoon
Educated	Dramatic	Electrician
Capital	Executive	Entertain
fertilizer	impossible	controversial

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   41

From our perception of the selected recorded words above produced by students, we realized that every syllable is capable of being stressed in Ghanaian English and all the syllables were produced at equal intervals. This speech pattern is a transfer from Ghanaian speakers into their English language speech. Yankson (1994) refers to this feature as syllable isochronicity. According to him, most West African languages are syllable-timed; in an utterance, the syllables occur at almost equal intervals of time; English is, on the other hand, stressed timed. our pronunciation has become fossilized and has become resistant to change. (Selinker, 1972). This feature of stressing every syllable is becoming typical of educated Ghanaian English. This situation occurs because we have already acquired our first language before learning the new one; English and so there is bound to be an influence. Nobody born and brought up in Ghana can speak English with a native accent unless the person makes a conscious effort to go FELA – Foreign Experience Locally Acquired.

This situation leads Owusu-Ansah (1991, 1997) into saying that non-native teachers of English often masquerade as native speakers of English when they are consciously teaching pronunciation to their students but make a quick switch to their „normal‟ localized accent in their day to day use of English language outside the classroom.

According to Yankson (1994) even graduates of English who have been taught RP by native English lecturers over 3 to 4 years or even more fail to speak English with a native-like accent.

The reason is that learning a new language involves some kind of identification on the part of the learner with the members of the new culture; language, it must be known is culture tied.

To speak exactly like native speakers demands a surrender of part of one's identity which most West Africans are not ready to do because of loyalty to their mother tongue.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940** 16:9 September 2016
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   42

The best example of Ghanaian English on the international scene is, perhaps, Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General as already stated in the introductory part of this study. He maintains the Ghanaian features in his pronunciation and yet is understood by the peoples of the world.

Wolé Soyinka is also mentioned as an African speaking distinctly without aping Americans or the English. His efforts are laudable given the strong influence his native Yoruba has on the pronunciation of English words and the cadence of the language generally.

New Englishes are heavily influenced by the first language of the speakers through direct translation and imitation of linguistic norms and speech (Crystal, 2003; Owusu-Ansah, 2013)

Achebe, cited in Huber (2013) says 'New English must be able to carry my African experience'.

5. Conclusion

It is argued in this paper that several factors that account for the innovative features of pronunciation in Ghanaian English among others have been the gap between spelling and pronunciation in standard British English where there is no one to one correspondence between letter and sound, unlike the Ghanaian languages in which there is a somewhat one to one correspondence between a sound and its orthography.

Language loyalty also accounts for the innovative features. It is as a result of this loyalty that came the acronym FELA; 'foreign experience locally acquired' when one tries to speak with a native English accent. There is therefore a communal pull, and one has to speak in like manner in other to conform to societal norms of usage.

The fact that language and culture are intertwined has been known and discussed long ago (Drohan and Freeman, 1998). According to Kortmann & Lunkenheimer (2003), speech communities are diverse, socially and ethnically. It is also factual that the tango between language and culture, especially when they originate differently, leads to a kind of abrasive consequences on either side. The outcomes are always mutual though often lopsided. The product becomes part of the speaker's identity.

This paper argues in favor of establishing a Ghanaian variety of the English Language and provides further evidence from Ghanaian English to demonstrate that the non-native

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   43

varieties, especially Outer Circle countries, can as well claim ownership of English especially in the area of pronunciation where the Ghanaian accent in English is inevitable.

Certain systematic divergences in this area by educated Ghanaians in their day-to-day use of English as seen in other studies such as Sey (1973), Dako (2003), Owusu-Ansah (1991, 1997), Ngula (2011) attest to the fact that English pronunciation in Ghana has taken a new shape and needs to assert itself by vigorously pursuing the agenda of developing its own models to guide usage. This paper suggests that since non-native Englishes such as Singaporean English, Indian English, Nigerian English serve the communicative purposes and needs of the people irrespective of even the regional accents in the English of those countries, there is no problem if they own the English language. This way, the non-native varieties can be more realistically described in their own right in terms of localized linguistic, cultural, and literary norms (Kachru, 1997).

We, therefore, suggest that these innovative features as identified which are seen by others as deviations and errors be codified and standardized as a variety of the English Language used in Ghana.

Making a case for a codification of the new Englishes, D'souza (1986) suggests that through poetic license, non-native English writers be allowed to expand their Englishes like Shakespeare, Cummings, Hopkins, Joyce, and other native speakers dared to. D'souza (1986) states his case rather forcefully:

> One cannot lay down boundaries for the creative artist. He may wonder
> where he will and the merits or demerits of his writing must
> be judged by the standards of literature, not the rules of grammar (p.5)

The words above suggest where our sources of non-native English expressions need be. (Kachru, 1992: 49) argues that since English does not have "an organized agency which undertakes the job of providing direction toward a *standardized* model, and toward controlling *language change* linguistic etiquette in English should be discussed in culturally specific contexts; thus, English in institutionalized contexts, and the changes that occur in such contexts, for example, need to be looked at in terms of their own socio-cultural and linguistic environment.

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   44

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   45

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Cynthia Logogye & Dr. Amma Abrafi Adjei
University of Education, Winneba
Department of English Language Education
Email Addresses:
Cynthia Logogye clogogye@yahoo.com
Dr. Amma Abrafi Adjei abrafigh@gmail.com

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 16:9 September 2016**
Cynthia Logogye and Amma Abrafi Adjei, Ph.D.

Towards Standardisation of Ghanaian English – The Case of UEW Students   46