
Patterns of Phonological Variations in the Standard Igbo and Ukwulu Variety of Igbo

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Abstract

This study hinges on the patterns of phonological variation in the Standard Igbo and Ukwulu variety of Igbo (hereafter S.I and U.V). The study was carried out to enhance the preservation of the U.V and to bring to limelight the phonology of Ukwulu. It highlights the differences perceived in the phonology of the S.I and U.V. The study adopts the descriptive approach. It employs the purposive sampling technique. The Ibadan 400 wordlist of basic items amongst other wordlists were adopted. Data were also drawn from the recorded speeches of the respondents of U.V which were collected through semi structured interviews and also through the recording and listening in their naturally occurring speeches during conversations. The study adopts the Classical phonology theory for the analysis of the data. The Green and Igwe's (1963) tone marking convention was adopted. The International Phonetic Alphabet was also adopted for the transcription of data. The findings of this study reveal that there are perceived differences and similarities in some aspects of the phonology of the S.I and U.V. In their differences, the U.V phonemes were established by the use of, basically the minimal pair

test. It was observed that the phonemes of S.I and U.V differ in quantity as the S.I has thirty-six phonemes comprising eight vowels and twenty - eight consonants, whereas U.V has a total number of thirty - two phonemes comprising eight vowels as in the S.I and twenty-four consonants. The difference in the quantity of their phonemes is as a result of the absence of /h/ /f/ /r/ and /y / in U.V which they substitute with /v/ /l/ and /j/. The findings of this work will serve as a reference material for further studies on the S.I and U.V of Igbo.

Keywords: Language, Phonology, Phoneme, Classical Phonology, Variation,

1.1 Introduction

Human language is very complex and sophisticated. Language is an indispensable means of expression, using spoken, written or signed words. It is structured with grammar and often involves a writing system. Language is a precious resource which is designed and endowed solely to human beings as a medium of communication (Ikegwuonu, 2014:1). Every human language has its phonology as well as its own way of organizing its speech sounds. That is, the distinctive system of patterns that makes up the phonological system of the language. This organization of speech sounds is the concern of phonology, which is a branch of linguistics that studies how languages systematically pattern or organize their speech sounds for the realization of meaning. Phonology, simply put, is the sound patterns of a language. It studies how pronunciation of sounds changes according to context. The smallest unit of sound in phonology is phoneme. The different organizational patterns of sounds in different languages constitute variations.

Variation is a shift from the recognized standard. The phonological variation of the Standard Igbo and its dialects is subject to considerable differences both at the segmental and suprasegmental levels.

This work studies the patterns of phonological variations in the S.I and U.V of Igbo, as no study, to the best of the researcher's knowledge has been done on it. Hence, the dearth of adequate reference material to that effect, which the researchers tend to create through this work.

2. Literature review

Classical phonology which is the theoretical framework for this study, is an earliest theory of phonology which makes reference to phonemes. It is a theory about how to describe the sounds of a language (and also for some scholars) how sounds are stored and processed. It believes that the phoneme which is the smallest unit of sound is the means by which a change can be effected in any language. There are three views of the phoneme as seen by some scholars: firstly, the phoneme as a phonetic reality. Here, phoneme is viewed as a physical reality, rather than a psychological concept. It is what is conveniently used to represent a number of phonetic units. Daniel Jones and Gleason belong to this school of thought. Secondly, phoneme as a psychological reality, which is a school of thought that views the phoneme as a mental reality. It views the intention of the speaker and the impression of the hearer or both. This view holds that when a speaker pronounces for example the sound segment [p], it can be realized as the aspirated [p^h] as in *pin* and the unaspirated [p] as in *spin* [spɪ n] which are all allophones of the same phoneme /p/ in English. Baudouin de Courtenay belongs to this school of thought. Thirdly, the phoneme as a phonological reality. This is the idea of the prague school of phonology, which

sees the phoneme as the sum of the phonologically relevant properties of a sound (Trubetzkoy, 1939:36). What is most important to this school is ‘function’. In other words, a phoneme is a phonological unit that can function to distinguish meanings. It is seen as an abstraction and not a sound or even a group of sounds. To them, it is a theoretical construct on the phonological level, which is defined in terms of its contrast within a system. This school of thought considered the concept of the phoneme extensively under the idea of phonemic overlapping, neutralization, distinctive features among others.

Ezenwafor (2017) in her study on patterns of variation in S.I and Ekwuluobia Igbo (EI) examines the phonological, lexical and syntactic variations and their patterns of existence in the S.I and Ekwulobia Igbo. At the phonological level, she identifies nine vowels in EI, of which eight are phonemic and one (ẹ) [ɛ] as phonetic, while the SI has eight vowels. In her analysis, she posits that phonological variation is evident in the vowels and consonants of these two varieties. Considering the variation patterns of the consonants, a regular pattern of variation where [h f] in SI are replaced with a voiced bilabial fricative [ɸ] in EI. She goes further to establish that the [r] of the SI is usually replaced with the alveolar lateral nasal [n] while the [l] is replaced with [n] or labialized alveolar nasal [ŋ^w]. The voiced alveolar trill [r] is replaced with the voiceless glottal fricative [h] and randomly with [l], while the voiced labiovelar approximant [w] and voiced velar plosive [g] in SI are replaced with [h] in EI.

She further states that the voiceless and voiced bilabial plosives [p b] in SI are replaced with the voiceless and voiced alveolar plosive [t d]. She goes on to explain that, though common patterns of variation existing in the SI and EI might not apply in all cases. She buttresses this by maintaining that vowels unlike the

consonants vary scantily in the SI and EI. It is evident in this her analysis, as in:

SI	EI	Consonant variation		Gloss
1.há	phhá [ɸa]	[h]	→ [ɸ]	they
ahà	áphhà [aɸa]	[h]	→ [ɸ]	name
áhíá	áphhíá [aɸɪ a]	[h]	→ [ɸ]	market
áfọ	áphhọ [aɸɔ]	[f]	→ [ɸ]	stomach
éfééré	éphhéré [eɸere]	[f]	→ [ɸ]	plate

In her other examples,

SI	EI	Consonant variation	Gloss
2.áru	áru [alu]	[r] → [l]	abomination
íré	ílé [ile]	[r] → [l]	tongue
ọ́rú	ọ́lú [ɔ lu]	[r] → [l]	work
ánùrị́	ánùlị́ [aɲu li]	[r] → [l]	joy
ńrí	ńní [nni]	[r] → [l]	food
lèé	nèé [nee]	[l] → [n]	look
ùlọ̀	únò [un ^w o]	[l] → [n ^w]	house
ághùghò	íhọ̀lọ̀ [ɪ hɔ lo]	[ɣ] → [hl]	deceit
éwú	éhú [ehu]	[w] → [h]	goat
gí	gú/hú [g u hu]	[g] → [hl]	you

In her conclusion, she stresses that the common pattern of vowel variation seen in these varieties reflect in the vowel [i] at the word initial position, especially for numerals where SI uses [a]. The ɪ [ɪ] of the SI is replaced with ɹ [ɹ] in the EI especially in two syllable words while the e [e] of the SI is replaced with the ɛ [ɛ] in the EI. Eme and Uwaezuoke (2015) in their study of issues in phoneme variation between Umuolulum Igbo and S.I observe that while S.I has

thirty-six phonemes, Umuolum Igbo has thirty-two (24 consonants and 8 vowels). They discover that the phonemes /f/, /z/, /ʃ / and /h / which are found in S.I do not exist in Umuolum Igbo. In their analysis, they establish that where /f/ and /h / appear in any S.I word, they are realized as /v/ in Umuolum. Wherever /z/ and /ʃ / are found in S.I words, they are realized as /r/. Some of the examples are:

	S.I	Umuolum	Gloss
	/f, h /	/v/	
3a.	àfò /afɔ /	àvò /avɔ /	the third market day
	òfè ñrù /ofe nru/	òvè ñrù /ove nru/	worship
	òhjá /ɔ fi ɪ a/	òvjá /ɔ vi a/	bush
	/z/, /ʃ /	/r/	
b.	ázù /azu /	árí /ari /	fish
	éziókwu □ /ezio↓k ^w u/	ériókwu □ /erio↓k ^w u/	truth
	ìshá /□□a/	ìrá /ɪ ra/	crayfish

They point out that the non-existence of /f z j h / in Umuolum would definitely constitute pronunciation and spelling problems for speakers of Umuolum learning the S.I as they would substitute them with other sounds. They conclude that this would result in pronunciation and spelling errors.

3. Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive research design which is a type of research design that aims to establish the patterns of the phonological variations, where and how these patterns are obtainable in both the S.I and the U.V of Igbo. Ukwulu is a community in Igbo land. It is one of the towns in Dunukofia Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. Nwaozuzu (2008:24-37) groups Dunukofia Local Government Area, alongside some other local government areas in Anambra state under East Niger

Group of Dialects (ENGD). Towns that make up Dunukofia are Umunnachi, Umudioka, Ukwulu, Nawgu, Ifitedunu and Ukpo (headquarter). Dunukofia shares boundaries with Awka North, Idemmili North, Njikoka and Oyi Local Government Areas. Ukwulu is bordered by such towns as Achalla, Nando, Ukpo, Urum, Awkuzu, Igbariam, Nawgu and a number of others. Ukwulu has five villages, which are Adagbe, Amaegbu, Enuagu, Iruzeagu and Umugama. U.V phonologically shares some similarities with Awkuzu and Nteje Igbo varieties which are both in Oyi Local Government Area. The research basically covered the five villages of Ukwulu town, which are Adagbe, Amaegbu, Enuagu, Iruzeagu and Umugama. However, the entire Ukwulu form the population of this study.

The purposive sampling technique was employed to select the respondents, taking into cognizance age, occupation, gender and social background. The sample consists of the U.V speakers within the age bracket of twenty to seventy years, resident in Ukwulu. They are the people the researcher has identified as belonging to those who have not been influenced much by modernization and/or other dialects. The identification was based on the fact that these speakers had lived in Ukwulu almost all, if not all their lives. The respondents were selected from the five villages in Ukwulu community. They were drawn from Adagbe, Amaegbu, Enuagu, Iruzeagu and Umugama. The researcher believed that using these respondents from the five villages of Ukwulu, she gained more comprehensive result through diverse opinion on the Ukwulu speech patterns.

In all the five villages, fifteen men, fifteen women, ten boys and ten girls were selected making it a total of fifty respondents. Data were collected from the native speakers using the Igbo wordlist of basic items developed by UCLA phonetics, the Ibadan 400 wordlist, and the Swadesh 207 wordlist. The researcher also

developed 117 word, phrase and sentence list, which enabled her to gather other data which were added to the data from the other wordlists. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources.

The researcher played the recorded speeches of the fifty respondents and found a lot of similarities in all their speeches. To avoid repetition of the same data which could make the presentation and analysis cumbersome and unnecessarily reduplicated, the researcher selected twenty speeches of five men, seven women, four boys and four girls for the presentation and analysis of data. The data collected from the speeches were written down and analyzed using the Classical phonology theory, comprising Jan Baudouin De Courtenay's Psychological/mentalist view of the phoneme, Daniel Jones' and Gleason's Physical view of the phoneme and Trubetzkoy's Functional/phonological view of the phoneme. These views of the phoneme were adopted to elicit and analyze the phonemes of the S.I and the U.V of Igbo.

The data were phonemically transcribed using the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and the transcribed data were tone marked in accordance with the Green and Igwe's (1963) tone marking convention, where the high tone is left unmarked and the low tones marked with grave accent [`]. The down step tone is marked with a macron [-]. The work provides the English gloss of the written data.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 The sound systems of the S.I and U.V.

The sound systems involve the speech sounds comprising the vowels and consonants of the S.I and U.V, their classifications and descriptions.

4.1.1 The S.I phonemes

S.I has a total of thirty-six phonemes comprising twenty-eight consonants and eight vowels.

4.1.1.1 The S.I vowels

Below are the Igbo vowels, their orthographic and IPA representation, their phonetic description and examples of Igbo words where they occur, example:

4. a /a/ Open front unrounded vowel
akwa /akwà/ ‘cloth’, agwa /àgwà/ ‘beans’
- e /e/ Half-open front unrounded vowel
egbe /ebè/ ‘gun’, eze /ezē/ ‘teeth’
- i /i/ close front unrounded vowel
isi /isi/ ‘head’, ikwe /ikwè/ ‘mortar’
- ɨ /ɨ/ Half-close front unrounded vowel
iga /ɨgà/ ‘chain’, ɨgba /ɨbà/ ‘drum’
- o /o/ Half-open back rounded vowel
òku /okù/ ‘call’, okwu /okwu/ ‘word’
- ɔ /ɔ/ Open back rounded vowel
ɔka /ɔkà/ ‘corn’, ɔkụ /ɔkụ/ ‘fire’
- u /u/ close back rounded vowel
ukwu /ukwù/ ‘waist’, ukwe /ùkwe/ ‘song’
- ɯ /ɯ/ Half-close back rounded vowel
ɯwa /ùwà/ ‘earth’, ɯkwa /ùkwà/ ‘breadfruit’

4.1.1.2 The S.I consonants

Below are the S.I consonants, their orthographic representations, the IPA symbols, phonetic description and examples of Igbo words where they occur,

5. p /p/ voiceless bilabial plosive
paa /pàa/ ‘squeeze’, pia /pià/ ‘flog’

b	/b/	voiced bilabial plosive ebe /ebē/ ‘beetle’, baa /bàa/ ‘enter’
t	/t/	voiceless alveolar plosive tara /tàrà/ ‘chewed’, tọọ /tùò/ ‘throw’
d	/d/	voiced alveolar plosive udara /udarà ‘African star-apple’, daa /dàa/ ‘fall’
kw	/k ^w /	voiceless labialized velar plosive kwuo /k ^w ùò/ ‘say’, kwapụ /k ^w apù/ ‘pack out’
gw	/g ^w /	voiced labialized velar plosive gwuo /g ^w ùò/ ‘dig’, agwa /àg ^w à/ ‘beans/character’
k	/k/	voiceless velar plosive kọọ /kùò/ ‘plant’, kee /kèe/ ‘tie’
g	/g/	voiced velar plosive gị /gị/ ‘you’, gaa /gàa/ ‘go’
f	/f/	voiceless labiodental fricative fere /fèrè/ ‘flew’, efere /efere/ ‘plate’
v	/v/	voiced labiodental fricative mvọ /mvò / ‘nails’, mevọọ /mèvò ɔ / ‘disgrace’
s	/s/	voiceless alveolar fricative sie /sie/ ‘cook’, sara /sàrà/ ‘washed’
z	/z/	voiced alveolar fricative zaa /zàa/ ‘sweep’, zee /zèe/ ‘dodge’
sh	/ʃ/	voiceless post-alveolar fricative ịsha /ịʃa/ ‘crayfish’, nshansha /nʃanʃa/ ‘drizzle - like’
gh	/ɣ/	voiced velar fricative ghaa /ɣàa/ ‘spray’, ụgha /ùɣa/ ‘lie’
h	/h/	voiced glottal fricative ha /ha/ ‘they’, hapụ /hapù/ ‘leave’
ch	/tʃ/	voiceless post-alveolar affricate oche /otʃe/ ‘chair’, uche /utʃè/ ‘sense’
j	/dʒ/	voiced post-alveolar affricate ji /dʒi/ ‘yam’, jide /dʒide/ ‘hold’

m	/m/	bilabial nasal mara /màrà/ ‘threw’, mụta /mùta/ ‘learn’
n	/n/	alveolar nasal napụta /napùta/ ‘collect from’, na /nà/ ‘and’
ñ	/ŋ/	velar nasal ñaa /ŋàa/ ‘roast’, ańara /ańàrà/ ‘garden egg’
ny	/ɲ/	palatal nasal nyaa /ɲàa/ ‘drive’, ọnya /ɔɲà/ ‘trap’
nw	/ŋ ^w /	labialized velar nasal nwa /ŋ ^w a/ ‘child’, nwaanyi /ŋ ^w aàɲì/ ‘woman’
kp	/β/	voiceless bilabial implosive kpụọ /βùɔ/ ‘mould’, ekpere /èβere/ ‘prayer’
gb	/b/	voiced bilabial implosive gbaa /bàa/ ‘dance’, agba /àbà/ ‘jaw’
l	/l/	alveolar lateral lọta /lòta/ ‘come back’, lọgọọ /lọgòò/ ‘bend’
r	/r/	alveolar trill rachaa /ràtʃ aa/ ‘lick’, rie /riè/ ‘eat’
y	/j/	palatal approximant ya /ja/ ‘s/he’, yiri /jìri/ ‘wear’
w	/w/	labiovelar approximant weta /wèta/ ‘bring’, uwe /ùwe/ ‘cloth’

4.1.2 The U.V phonemes

The U.V has a total number of thirty-two phonemes as against the thirty-six in the S.I. There are eight vowels and twenty-four consonants.

4.1.2.1 The U.V vowels

The vowels of U.V are eight in number as perceived by the researchers. They are: / a e i ɪ o ɔ u ʊ /, which are in consonance with the S.I vowels both in quantity and quality. The

S.I vowels have been classified, described and examples of where they are seen in words are provided in the S.I vowels. Let us give U.V examples of words containing the vowels using the minimal pair test.

Minimal pairs showing the vowels of U.V

	U.V	IPA	Gloss	U.V vowel sounds
6.				
i.	ushe	/u□è/	‘wisdom’	/u/
	ishe	/i□è/	‘different’	/i/
ii.	ọkụ	/ɔ kɯ /	‘fire’	/ɔ /
	ọkọ	/ɔ kɔ /	‘scratch’	/ɔ /
iii.	aka	/aka/	‘hand’	/a/
	akị	/akɪ /	‘kernel’	/ɪ /
iv.	oke	/oke/	‘male’	/o/
	eke	/eke/	‘python’	/e/

From the above minimal pair analysis, it shows both the S.I and U.V operate the same eight vowel sound system. The vowels are: / a e i ɪ o ɔ u ʊ /. The minimal pairs occur both at the initial and final positions. At the initial position, they are seen in 6(i and iv). At the final position, they are seen in 6(ii and iii).

4.1.2.2 The U.V consonants

There are twenty-four perceived consonant sounds in U.V. They are:

- 8 plosives: / p b t d k^w g^w k g /
- 2 implosives: / ɓ ɗ /
- 4 fricatives: / v s z ʃ /
- 2 affricates: / tʃ dʒ /
- 5 nasals: / m n ŋ ɲ ŋ^w /
- 2 approximants: / j w /
- 1 lateral: / l /

There is absence of / ɸ /, /r/, /f/ and /ɣ / sounds which are present in the S.I. The classification, description and exemplification of the S.I consonants are in consonance with the U.V as they are the same sounds in quality but not in quantity.

4.2 The Phonological differences in the phonemes of the S.I and U.V

There are consonants absent in the U.V. They are / ɸ f r ɣ /. In the following sections, we discussed the differences in the S.I and U.V in terms of sound combination. For instance, the substitution of S.I /ɸ / with /v/ in the U.V, /f/ with /v/, /r/ with /l/ and /ɣ / with /j/.

a. The voiced glottal fricative /ɸ/ and the voiced labiodental fricative /v/

It is observed that the voiced glottal fricative /ɸ / which is absent in the U.V is substituted with the voiced labiodental fricative /v/. The examples below show the manifestations of this alternation in personal names and other things.

Where they manifest in personal names:

	S.I	IPA	U.V	IPA	Gloss
7.					
i.	Iheoma	/ɸi eɔ ma/	Iveoma	/iveɔ ma/	‘good thing’
ii.	Ihesinachi	/ɸhesinàtɸi/	Ivesinashi	/ivesinàɸi/	‘things are from God’
iii.	Iheabunike	/ɸheābunike/	Iveabunike	/iveābunike/	‘things are not got by force’
iv.	Ihenkili	/ɸheŋkili/	Ivenkili	/ivenŋkili/	‘cynosure of all eyes’
v.	Ihenna	/ɸhèŋnà/	Ivenna	/ivenèŋnà/	‘father’s light’
vi.	Ihunanya	/ɸhùnapa/	Ivunanya	/ivùnapa/	‘love’
vii.	Ihechi	/ɸhechì/	Iveshi	/iveɸi/	‘God’s light’

viii. Iheyinwa	/ifejĩŋ ^w a/	Iveyinwa	/ivejĩ ŋ ^w a/	‘nothing resembles a child’
ix. Iheanyi	/ifeapɪ̀/	Iveanyi	/iveapɪ̀/	‘nothing is impossible’

Examples of where /f/ and /v/ manifest in the other things:

8.

i. ahĩa	/afɪa/	avĩa	/avɪa/	‘market’
ii. ahĩhĩa	/afhɪfɪa/	avɪvĩa	/avɪvɪa/	‘grass’
iii. oħĩa	/ɔfɪa/	ovĩa	/ɔvɪa/	‘bush’
iv. ehi	/efi/	evi	/evi/	‘cow’
v. ehĩhie	/efɪfɪhìè/	evivio	/evɪvìò/	‘afternoon’
vi. ihe	/ife/	ive	/ive/	‘thing’
vii. oħurũ	/ɔfɪurũ/	ovũlũ	/ɔvũlũ/	‘new’
viii. aha	/afhà/	ava	/avà/	‘name’
ix. ihere	/iferē/	ivele	/ivelē/	‘shame’
x. ha	/fa/	va	/va/	‘they’
xi. ahũ	/afhũ/	avũ	/avũ/	‘that’
xii. ìhũ	/ɪfhũ/	ìvũ	/ɪvũ/	‘to see’

In examples 7 and 8 above, the substitutions can be seen at both the initial and medial positions in the given examples. At the medial position, the substitution are seen in 7 (i - ix) whereas in 8, apart from (x) that occurs at the initial position, all other substitutions occur at the medial position.

b. The voiced glottal fricative /ɦ / and the voiced alveolar lateral /l/

The voiced glottal fricative /ɦ / in the S.I is also substituted with the voiced alveolar lateral /l/ in the U.V. Consider these examples where they appear in personal names and other things:

Personal names:

S. I	IPA	U.V	IPA	Gloss
9.				
i. Obiḡha	/obīḡhà/	Obiḡla	/obīḡlà/	‘the heart of the crowd’
ii. Ihuḡma	/ihūḡma/	Iluḡma	/iluḡma/	‘good fortune’
iii. Ḡhamaka	/ḡhàmaka/	Ḡlamaka	/ḡlàmake/	‘the crowd is beautiful ‘
iv. Hapuruḡchi	/hapùrūḡḡi/	Lapuluḡshi	/lapùluḡḡi/	‘leave it for God ‘
v. Ahunne	/àhūḡnē/	Alunne	/àlūḡnē/	‘mother’s body’
vi. Ḡhaegbuna	/ḡhàèbūna/	Ḡlaegbuna	/ḡlàèbūna/	‘the crowd should not kill’

Further examples of where /h/ and /l/ show alternations in other things thus;

10.				
i. ḡha	/ḡha/	ḡla	/ḡla/	‘a specie of vegetable for soup’
ii. hḡḡ	/hḡḡ/	lḡḡ	/lḡḡ/	‘select’
iii. hapu	/hapù/	lapu	/lapù/	‘leave’
iv. ḡha	/ḡhà/	ḡla	/ḡlà/	‘crowd’
v. ohi	/ohī/	oli	/olī/	‘stealing’
vi. ahū	/ahū/	alū	/alū/	‘fart’
vii. ahū	/àhū/	alū	/àlū/	‘body’
viii. ihu	/ihū/	ilu	/ilu/	‘face’
ix. ihḡ	/ihḡ/	ihḡ	/ihḡ/	‘to select’
x. ihū	/ihū/	ihū	/ihū/	‘to roast’
xi. hanye	/hàḡe/	lanye	/làḡe/	‘hand over’

The alternating variants are seen at the initial positions in 9 (iv) and 10 (ii, iii and xi), then, at the medial positions in number 9 (i, ii, iii and v, vi) and 14 (i, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, and x).

The voiceless labiodental fricative /f/ and the voiced labiodental fricative /v/

The U.V also substitutes the voiceless labiodental fricative /f/ in the S.I with the voiced labiodental fricative /v/. Consider these examples where they manifest in personal names and other things:

Where they manifest in personal names

S. I	IPA	UV	IPA	Gloss
11.				
i. Afooma	/afɔma/	Avɔoma	/avɔma/	‘good heart’
ii. Ofoḍire	/ɔfɔdirè/	Ovɔdile	/ɔvɔdilè/	‘fofo is potent’
iii. Obiefula	/ɔbiefulà/	Obuevuna	/ɔbuevunà/	‘homestead should not be lost’
iv. Ofoḡma	/ɔfɔmà/	Ovɔḡma	/ɔvɔmà/	‘authority knows’

Further examples of where /f/ and /v/ are in substitution as can be seen in these words below:

12. i. afɔ	/afɔ/	avɔ	/avɔ/	‘year’
ii. efe	/efè/	eve	/evè/	‘chance’
iii. afɔ	/afɔ/	avɔ	/avɔ/	‘stomach’
iv. ufɔḍu	/ufɔḍu/	uvɔḍi	/uvɔḍi/	‘some’
v. ofe	/ofe/	ove	/ove/	‘soup’
vi. fiḡ fiḡ	/fiḡ fiḡ/	viḡ viḡ	/viḡ viḡ/	‘Igbo local red beans’
vii. efere	/efere/	evele	/evele/	‘plate’
viii. afa	/afa/	ava	/ava/	‘sorcery’
ix. ofala	/ɔfalà/	ɔvala	/ɔvalà/	‘authority and land’

From the above examples, it could also be seen that the alternation of the voiceless labiodental fricative /f/ in the S.I with its voiced counterpart /v/ in the U.V occurs at both the initial position and medial position. At the medial position, data 11 (i-iv) are evident to that. Apart from 12 (vi) which has the substitution at the initial position, 12 (i-v and vii-ix) occur at the medial position.

c. The alveolar roll /r/ and the alveolar lateral /l/

The U.V substitutes the voiced alveolar roll /r/ in the S.I with the voiced alveolar lateral /l/ as the former is absent in the U.V. This substitution is evident in examples of personal names and other things as seen in 13 and 14, where they manifest in personal names:

S. I	IPA	U.V	IPA	Gloss
13.				
i. Oṛuoma	/ɔruoma/	Oḷuoma	/ɔluoma/	‘good work’
ii. Ebere	/èberè/	Ebele	/èbelè/	‘mercy’
iii. Amara	/àmàrà/	Amala	/àmàlà/	‘grace’
iv. Sọpuru	/sọpuru/	Sọpulu	/sọpulu/	‘respect (God)’
v. Oriaku	/òriàkù/	Oliaku	/òliàkù/	‘eater of wealth’
vi. Chizitere	/tʃizitèrè/	Chizitelì	/tʃizitèlì/	‘God sent’
vii. Arinze	/àrìnzè/	Alinze	/àlìnzè/	‘thank (God)’
viii. Rotanna	/ròtànà/	Lotanna	/lòtànà/	‘remember father’
ix. Chinyere	/tʃìnrèrè/	Chinyelì	/tʃìnrèlì/	‘God gave’

Other things the substitution of /r/ and /l/ can be seen in are:

14. i.	nri	/nri/	nli	/nli/	‘food’
ii.	iri	/iri/	ili	/ili/	‘ten’
iii.	rie	/rie/	lie	/lie/	‘eat’
iv.	aru	/arū/	alu	/alū/	‘abomination’
v.	ikpere	/iḽpèrè/	ikpele	/iḽpèlè/	‘knee’
vi.	unere	/unèrè/	unele	/unèlè/	‘banana’

vii.	ura	/ura/	ula	/ula/	‘sleep’
viii.	nari	/nari/	nali	/nali/	‘hundred’
ix.	ruo	/ruo/	luo	/luo/	‘build’
x.	eriri	/eriri/	elili	/elili/	‘rope’

Examples 13 and 14 show that alternations occur at the initial positions in 13 (viii) and 14 (iii and ix) and medial positions in 13 (i-vii and ix) and 14 (i, ii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, x).

d. The voiced velar fricative /ɣ / and the palatal approximant /j/

Another peculiarity of the U.V phoneme is the absence of the voiced velar fricative /ɣ / in the S.I which they alternate with the palatal approximant /j/ as evident in the words that follow:

	S. I	IPA	U.V	IPA	Gloss
15.					
i.	agha	/aɣa/	aya	/aja/	‘war’
ii.	ughere	/uɣerē/	uyele	/ujelē/	‘yawning’
iii.	oghere	/oɣēre/	oyele	/ojēle/	‘hole’
iv.	ghaa	/ɣaa/	yaa	/jaa/	‘spray’
v.	ghee	/ɣèe/	yee	/jèe/	‘fry’
vi.	gbaghara	/baɣàra/	gbayali	/bajàli/	‘forgive’
vii.	kwagharià	/k ^w àɣaria/	kwayalià	/k ^w àjalìa/	‘relocate’
viii.	ogbaghara	/òbaɣàra/	ogbayala	/òbajàla/	‘lie’

In the above examples in 15 (i-viii), it is evident that U.V also does not have the voiced velar fricative /ɣ / and as such, they replace it with the palatal approximant /j/, as can be seen at the initial position in examples 15 (iv and v) and at the medial position in 15 (i, ii, iii, vi, vii, and viii).

This study has examined the patterns of phonological variation in the S.I and the U.V, using the Classical phonology theory. It was carried out in order to ascertain the differences that exist between the phonology of the S.I and U.V of Igbo. In their

differences, the U.V phonemes were identified using the minimal pair test. It was established that the U.V operates a total of thirty-two phonemes (which comprise of eight vowels and twenty-consonants). The U.V phonemes differ from the S.I phonemes in quantity, as the S.I has a total of thirty-six phonemes (which comprise of eight vowels and twenty-eight consonants). It is observed that their difference is as a result of the absence of four S.I consonants in the U.V. These consonants are /h/ which is substituted with /v/ in the U.V, /f/ is substituted with /v/, /r/ with /l/ and /y / with /j/ respectively.

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