

Perception and production problems: To what extent is Sudanese English intelligible to the native British and American listeners?

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## Abstract

This study addresses the pronunciation and perception problems experienced by Sudanese university learners of English. Specifically, the study examines how intelligible these learners are to British and American listeners. The whole work was done on the basis of segmental analysis of the English speech sounds, which included vowels, consonants and SPIN sentences in three different experiments. Single-item (word) stimuli were constructed on the basis of the Modified Rhyme Test (MRT) but with a few potential improvements. The target stimuli above were recorded from ten Sudanese-Arabic learners of English as foreign language (EFL). On the basis of a pilot test, one male speaker was then selected as the optimally representative Sudanese Arabic-accented English speaker. The same stimuli were recorded from a male native speaker of RP English. Results revealed that vowels are the most difficult sounds to pronounce and the English dentals produced by Sudanese speakers are strongly influenced by their L1 equivalents. Native English speakers are more intelligible to British and American listeners, while they are less intelligible to Sudanese speakers.

*Key words:* segmental measurement, intelligible, interference, merge