

Introduction

- Emotion recognition plays a critical role in social communication, including the ability to form and maintain interpersonal relationships.
- In an increasingly multicultural society, perception and understanding of emotions expressed by talkers across different languages are important for meaningful and effective social communication.
- Listeners rely on both sentence content and voice expression to identify the emotion conveyed by a talker.
- This study examines the perception of emotions in sentences spoken in Yorùbá and English.
- Yorùbá is a language primarily spoken in West Africa, particularly in Nigeria, Benin, and Togo. It is a tonal language characterized by more variance in pitch compared to stress-based languages such as English (Grayshon, 1975).

Objectives

- To examine language effects on listeners' ability to recognize emotions, specifically in individuals who speak English as their first language.
- We predict that English monolinguals will identify emotions more accurately in sentences spoken in English than sentences spoken in Yorùbá.

Methodology

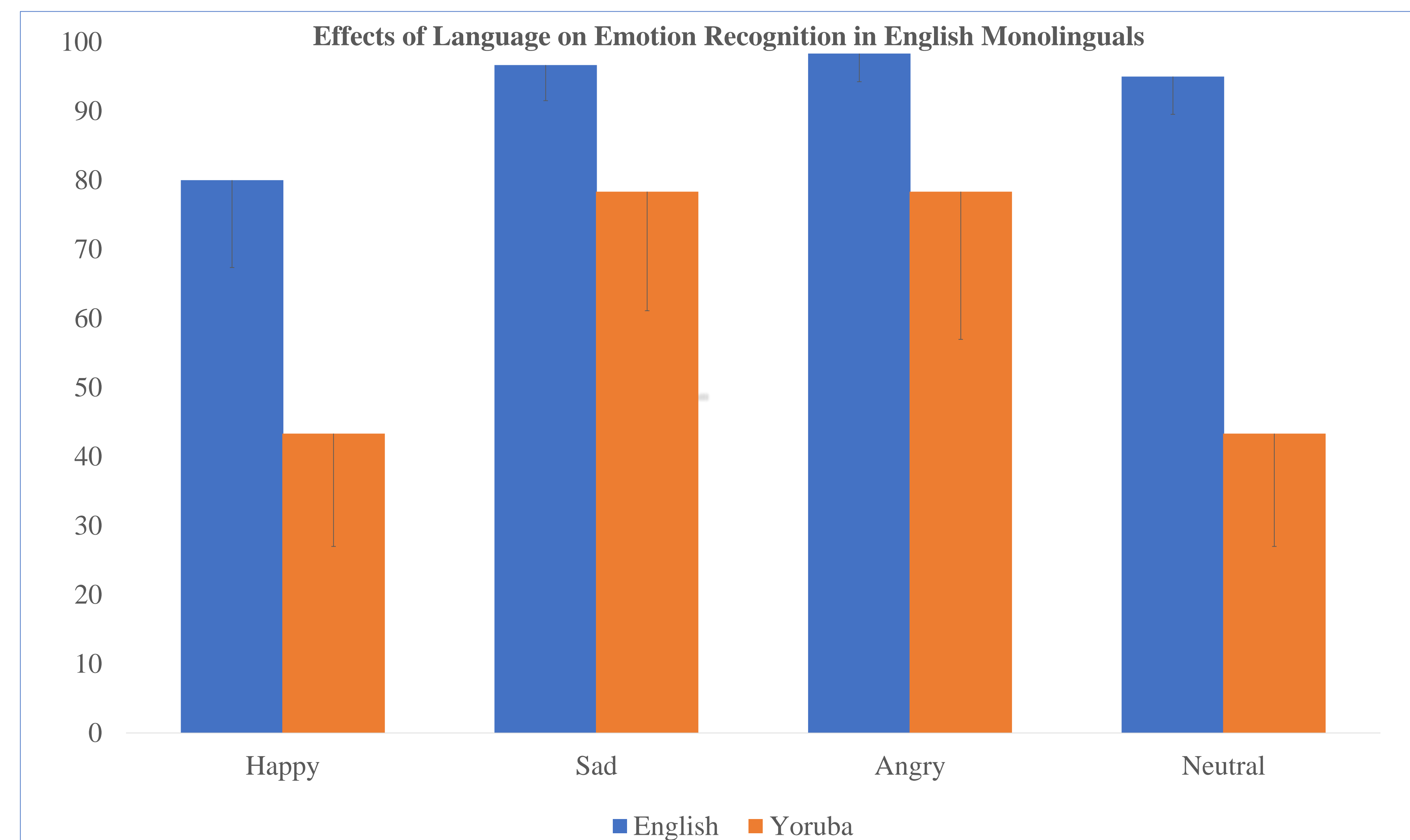
- Adults ($n = 6$; ages 17- 24) listened to sentences spoken in both English and Yorùbá, and identified the emotion in a four-alternative forced choice task: happy, sad, angry, or neutral.
- Sentences were blocked according to language.
- Language order were counter-balanced across participants.



Results

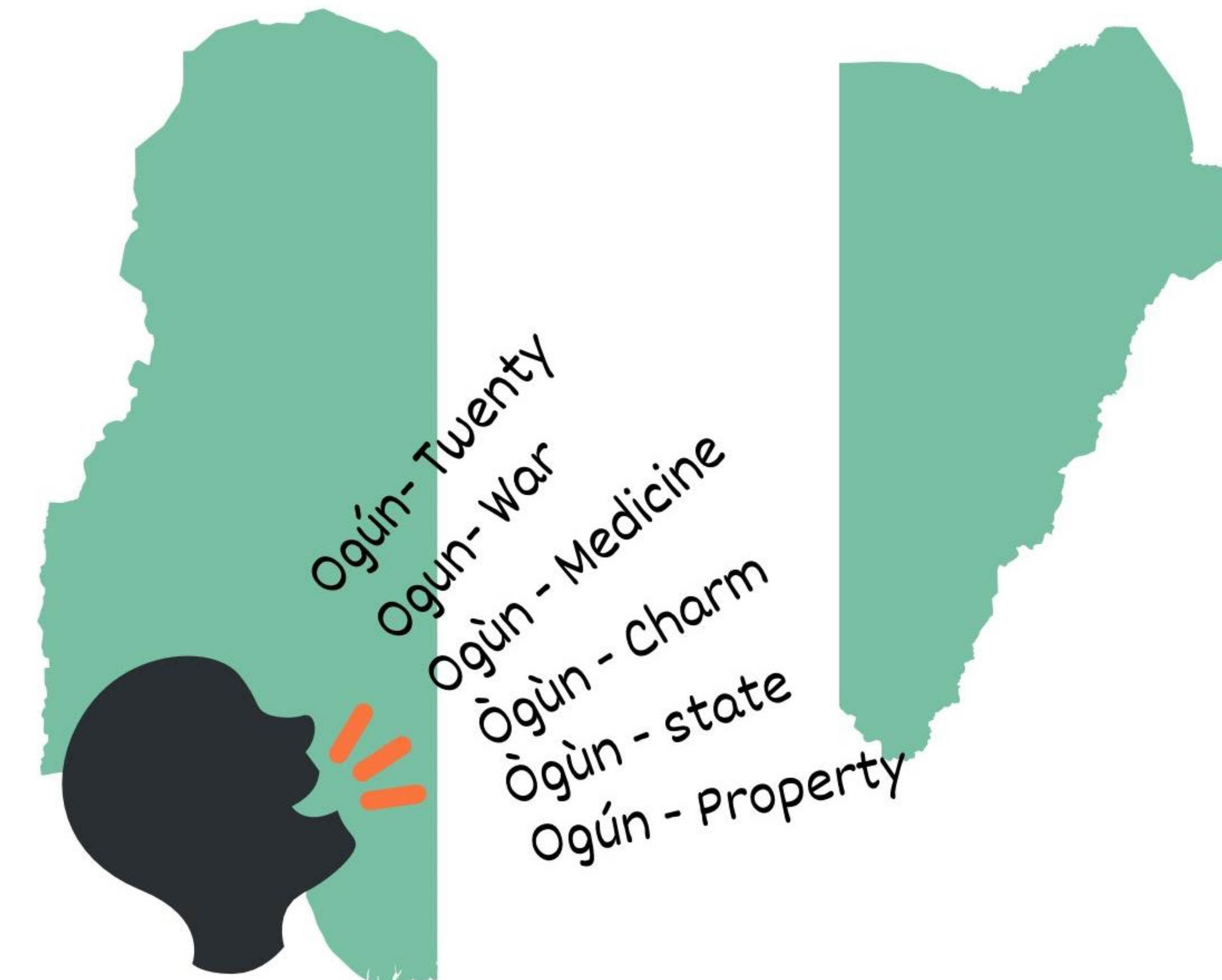
TOTAL STIMULUS-RESPONSE MATRIX

	English Sentence Condition				Yoruba Sentence Condition			
	Happy	Sad	Angry	Neutral	Happy	Sad	Angry	Neutral
Happy	48	2	0	10	26	8	7	19
Sad	0	58	1	1	3	47	2	8
Angry	1	0	59	0	7	2	47	4
Neutral	2	0	1	57	9	22	3	26



Conclusions

- English monolinguals have more difficulty recognizing emotions in sentences spoken in Yorùbá than in sentences spoken in English, but their accuracies were well above chance.
- The findings of this study will help us to better understand the perception of emotions in multicultural contexts and its implications for effective social communication.
- Future research can examine language effects on emotion recognition in other special populations, including children impacted by hearing loss.



References

Emoticons created using [Canva](#)
 Grayshon, M. C. (1975). Some aspects of social grammar features of one type of question in English and Yoruba. *Language in Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047404500004474>

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