Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Babylon

Collage of Human Science

Department of English

Iraqi EFL Learners knowledge of Echo Utterances

A paper

Submitted to the Council of Department of English, College of Education, University of Babylon in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of B.A in English Language and Linguistics

By

Sanaria Hussain

Supervised by

Asst. Prof. Lihadh Mubarak, PhD

2021-2022

I

DEDICTION

To My Family, with Love

ACKNOWELEDGMENT

I would like to thank my professors for their help

and my friends for their support in my collage days

I am grateful for my father who gives everything and
made me who I am today

List of Tables

List of Figures

Table of Contains

Abstract

An echo utterance is a type of conversational sentence in which the speaker repeats, in whole or in part, what the previous speaker said. Occasionally shortened as echo. Major sentences are traditionally classified as statements, questions, commands, and exclamations. However, there is a fifth type of sentence that is used exclusively in dialogue and serves to confirm, contradict, or clarify what the previous speaker has just said. This is the utterance of the echo. The structure of the echo utterance is identical to that of the preceding sentence, which it repeats in whole or in part. Echoes can be of any type of sentence. A test is a procedure for determining a person's ability or knowledge in a particular area. The test is used to determine a student's ability to use the language. The test was conducted to 30 fourth-year students from the Department of English, College of Education for Human Sciences, and University of Babylon during the academic year 2022-2021 to assess their knowledge of Echo Utterances. The test consists of two types of questions: multiple choice and short answer. The results indicate that students' correct responses to the first question are significantly higher than their responses to the second question. Because the answer to the first question is simple, clear and completes the grammatical meaning, the correct choice can be guessed, whereas the answer to the second question requires both clear knowledge and careful consideration of the next part of the sentence. It is reasonable to conclude that the first question has more possibilities than the second, because Echo Utterances are words, phrases, and clauses that supplement the meaning of a text by providing additional information about it. This indicates that Iraqi EFL Learners' general knowledge of Echo Utterances is superior to their knowledge of them as a grammatical issue.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Problem

In linguistics, an utterance is a unit of speech. In phonetic terms, an utterance is a stretch of spoken language that is preceded by silence and followed by silence or a change of speaker. (Phonemes, morphemes, and words are all considered "segments" of the stream of speech sounds that constitute an utterance). In orthographic terms, an utterance is a syntactic unit that begins with a capital letter and ends in a period, question mark, or exclamation point. A phenomenon that is not extra communicative and still represents hardly an instance of meta-communication that's so-called **echo-utterance**, where the speaker echoes the preceding speaker by repeating some linguistic material yet giving a specific turn to it.

This study tries to answer the following questions:

1. What is mean by echo utterance?
2. What are the type of echo utterance?
3. What are the difficulties faced by Iraqi EFL Learners in   echo utterance?

1.2 Aims

 The aim of this study is to:

1. Explain what is meant by echo utterance.
2- Explain the types of echo utterance.
3- Do Iraqi EFL learners face difficulty in recognizing and producing level in echo utterance?

1.3 Hypotheses

The study hypothesizes that:

1. There are many definitions about the echo utterance.

2. There are many types of echo utterance

3. Iraqi EFL Learners face a difficulty in recognizing and producing sentences containing direct and indirect speech.

1.4 Procedures

To answer the questions of the study, accomplish its aims, and test the validity of its hypotheses, the following procedures are adopted:

1- Presenting a theoretical background about echo utterance.

2- Forming a test to be applied to a random sample of students.

3- Make a conclusion of the study.

1.5 Limits

This study is limited to the investigation of 30 students in the fourth stage in Department of English/ College of Education for Human Sciences/ University of Babylon in their recognition and production level in using echo utterance.

1.6 Value

It is hoped that this study will be benefit to anyone interested in linguistics and grammar. Also, the findings will help the students to understand how to express themselves using correct rules of echo utterance.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Definitions

Echo utterance is a type of conversational sentence, which repeats, in whole or in part, what has just been said by another speaker. Or it is speech that repeats, in whole or in part, what has just been said by another speaker. Sometimes called simply echo, For example:

A: Sit down here.

B: Sit down there?

An echoic word is one formed to imitate the actual sound of something, unlike onomatopoeia. Echolalia means automatic repetition of all or part of what someone has said.

Another definition of an echo utterance, it is a type of spoken language that repeats, in whole or in part, what's just been said by another speaker, often with contrasting, ironic, or contradictory meaning.

An echo question is a type of direct question that repeats part or all of something which someone else has just asked and is one form of echo utterance. Echo questions are also referred to as "parrot" questions or "repeat, please" questions. The reason people generally echo or parrot a question they've been asked is that they have not fully understood or heard what was said—or they simply can't believe anyone would ask such a question. Using a rising or fall-rising intonation for an echo question allows us to clarify what we think we heard (N. Richard, 2019).

2.2 Characteristics of the Utterances

In spoken language analysis, an utterance is the smallest unit of speech. It is a continuous piece of speech beginning and ending with a clear pause. In the case of oral languages, it is generally, but not always, bounded by silence. Utterances do not exist in written language; only their representations do. They can be represented and delineated in written language in many ways (Candea, Maria, 2005).

Utterances that are portrayed in writing are planned, unlike utterances in improvised spoken language. In written language there are frameworks that are used to portray this type of language. Discourse structure (which can also be found in spoken language) is how the conversation is organized, in which adjacency pairs - an utterance and the answer to that utterance - are used. Discourse markers are used to organize conversation ("first," "secondly," etc.). Lexis denotes the words being used in a text or spoken; these words can create a semantic field. For example, a semantic field of love can be created with lexical choices such as adore, admire, and care (Benjamin, Spector, 2013).

An utterance found in spoken or written language, as in a script, which has several characteristics. These include paralinguistic features which are forms of communication that do not involve words but are added around an utterance to give meaning. Examples of paralinguistic features include facial expressions, laughter, eye contact, and gestures. Prosodic features refer to the sound of someone's voice as they speak: pitch, intonation and stress. Ellipsis can be used in either written or spoken language; for instance, when an utterance is conveyed and the speaker omits words because they are already understood in the situation. For example:

A: Juice?

B: Please.

A: Room temperature?

B: Cold.   (Level Up: English Language, 2016)

Non-fluency features also occur when producing utterances. As people think about what to say during conversations, there are errors and corrections in speech. For example, voiced/un-voiced pauses which are "umm," "erm," etc. in voiced pauses and in transcripts un-voiced pauses are denoted as (.) or (1) relating to the amount of time of the pause. Tag questions are also a part of non-fluency features; these are used by the speaker to check if the listener understands what the speaker is saying. An example is "Do you know what I mean?" False alerts occur when the speaker is voicing an utterance but stops and starts again, usually they do so to correct themselves

Fillers   The speakers mostly take time to think and gather their thoughts in order to continue their utterance; these include lexis such as, "like," "and stuff," Accent/dialect is also a characteristic included in utterances which is the way the words are voiced, the pronunciation and the different types of lexis used in different parts of the world. Deictic expressions are utterances that need more explanation in order to be understood, like: "Wow! Look over there!" Simple conjunctions in speech are words that connect other words like "and," "but," etc. Colloquial lexis is a type of speech that is casual in which the utterance is usually more relaxed (Griol D et al .2019).

2.3 Echo Utterances Types

The traditional classification of major sentences recognizes statements, questions, commands . . . and exclamations. But there is a fifth type of sentence, used only in dialogue, whose function is to confirm, question, or

clarify what the previous speaker has just said. This is the echo utterance. Echo utterance structure reflects that of the preceding sentence, which it repeats in whole or in part. All types of sentences can be echoes.

2.3.1 Statements

In linguistics, a sentence is what's called a textual unit. Linguistic sentences consist of groups of words that make a unit of meaning together. All sentences must end with a punctuation mark that signals their limit and in some cases, like with interrogative and exclamatory sentences, assigns their tone or meaning. In theory, a sentence should express a complete thought. However, more often, sentences act as only a part of a larger narrative, story or expression. (R. Rebecca .2019)

A statement sentence usually has a structure characterized by a subject followed by a predicate.

For example:

A: John didn't like the film
B: He didn't what?

2.3.2 Questions

Echo questions are in some sense repetitions. They are generally claimed to repeat what has been said, whatever its sentence-type (Quirk et al. 1985).

Echo questions can be:

a) re-capitulatory simply repeating what the speaker said with rising tone, possibly because it was unexpected and the listener wants more information ,For example:

David's in Lancaster. In ↗LANcaster?

What's he doing there?

b) Use a Wh- word with rising tone, to indicate lack of understanding and to ask for repetition. The Wh- question may be in its usual initial position, or in the position of the queried information, For example:

He's gone to London.

↗WHERE has he gone?

He's gone to London.

He's gone ↗WHERE?

c) Use a Wh- word with falling tone to indicate the speaker heard but didn't understand an item, and that it needs explanation, For example: Look at that, over there!

Look at ↘WHAT?

They're doing it again.

↘WHO'S doing ↘WHAT again? (Barbara Green, 2007)

2.3.2 Echo-Exclamations

Echo exclamations show understanding but surprise, and therefore use a rise fall tone. Again, the utterance may involve simple repetition or use a Wh- word .For example:

A: She's an astronaut.

B: An ↗↘ ASTronaut!

A: What a lovely day!
B: What a lovely day, indeed!

2.4 Echo Questions

Echo questions have been claimed to have the following properties:

1-They repeat/echo what has been said.

2- They relate to a previous utterance in the discourse context.

3- Morphologically and syntactically, they seem to have more in common with the echoed sentence-types than with standard interrogatives.

4- They are different from other questions in that they are used to question the actual words uttered, rather than the content of previous utterances.

5- They are interrogative in the sense defined in Relevance Theory, though they represent desirable thoughts (Blakemore, 1994:90).

2.5 The context of echo questions

In connection with the definition of echo questions as repeating what has been said, echo questions are claimed to occur in a restrictive context in which the echoed utterance is contained. Echo questions are distinguished from other questions by their restricted context. An echo

occurs in dialogue as a reaction to a prior utterance and is interpretable only with respect to it, while other questions may be the first or the only utterance in a discourse (Banfield 1982: 124).

Echo questions generally require a linguistic context in which the original utterance (be it a declarative, an imperative, or itself a question) has been previously uttered within the discourse (Horn 1989: 381) .

A: Yesterday I met the doctor I told you about.

B: So, he gave you the treatment?

2.6 Insensitivity to Syntactic Constituency

Both polar and constituent echo questions can ask about units smaller than a word, and units larger than a word including non-constituents. For example, the echo questions in the following examples are questions about a subpart of the word epidemiologist. (G. Janda, et al. 1985)

A: Have you met the epidemiologist?

B: Have I met the epidemic-OLOGIST?

The echo questioned part can be as small as a syllable that is not even a morpheme, as in the following example (Janda .1985:175).

A: Try our new chajitas!

B: Cha-WHAT-as?

Furthermore, other states illustrate that a non-constituent can be echo-questioned. That is, WHAT replaces non-constituents in these examples,

namely, *dog wanted to eat* and *his laissez-passer into tiny* respectively.
(Bolinger 1987:263)

A: The dog wanted to eat the cat

 B: The WHAT?

Chapter Three

The Test

3.1 Testing

According to Skehan (1999:203), a language test is a systematic method and a means of checking the student's performance through the elicitation of a certain behaviour to make inferences about certain characteristics of an individual. According to Brown (1987: 219) "A test is a method of measuring a person's ability or knowledge in a given test ". The test is used as means of checking what student can do with the language (Al-Juboury, 1999:1)

3.2 The Features   of a Good Test

A good test should have the following features:

3.2.1 Validity

According to Al-Juboury (1999:84), validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure and it can be used successfully for the purpose for which it is intended (Ibid:24).

The most important types of validity are:

A . Content Validity

This type of validity refers to the extent to which a test adequately covers the syllabus to be tested (Ibid: 25).

B. Face Validity

It means the way the test looks to examines, supervisors or in general to the people concerned with the education of the students.

3.2.2 Reliability

Reliability is the stability of the test scores. If the same test is given twice to the same group of students under the same condition, it will give the same results. (Ibid.)

3.3 The Sample of the Test

The test is applied to (30 students) as a sample of fourth year students of Department of English, College of Education for Human Sciences, University of Babylon during the academic year 2022-2021.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis

4.1 Data Analysis

The present study claims to assess the Iraqi EFL Learners knowledge of Echo Utterances, However the test has been tackled in previous chapter has been examined 30 students in the fourth stage in "Babylon University / Department of English".   Table 1 shows the students' performance in recognition level for the first question of the test.

Table 1 The performance of the students at the recognition level. (Question 1)

Items	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage
1	8	26,66%	22	73,34%
2	16	53,33%	14	46,67%
3	5	16,66%	25	83,34%
4	14	46,66%	16	53,34%
5	21	70%	9	30%
6	4	13,33%	26	86,67%
7	5	16,66%	25	83,34%
8	16	53,33%	14	46,67%
9	8	26,66%	22	73,34%
10	5	16,66%	25	83,34%
Total	102	33.98%	198	66.02%

In terms of the first question, Figure 1 shows the percentages of correct answers for the student test. It can be seen the highest percentage is 70% when the student answered the fifth item which is stated

 A: Sit down here

--------------- 　　 B:

I think this is a regular request, and the majority of students are familiar with it.
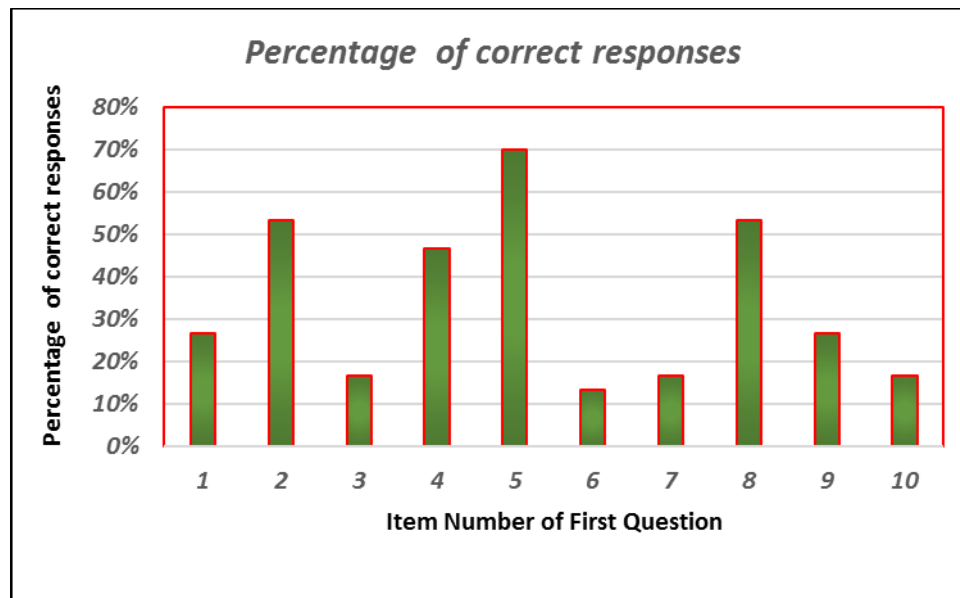

Percentage of correct responses

Figure 1 Percentage of correct reponses of the first question

The percentages of incorrect responses on the student test are shown in Figure 2. As can be seen, the greatest percentage achieved was 86.67 percent when the student responded to the sixth item. Which it is:

A: It cost $5,000

---------------B:

This question has a range of possible answers, depending on the student's perspective and style of living. Some consider $5000 to be a large sum, while others believe it is worthless. As a result, the correct answer was scattered, and the highest percentage was incorrect.
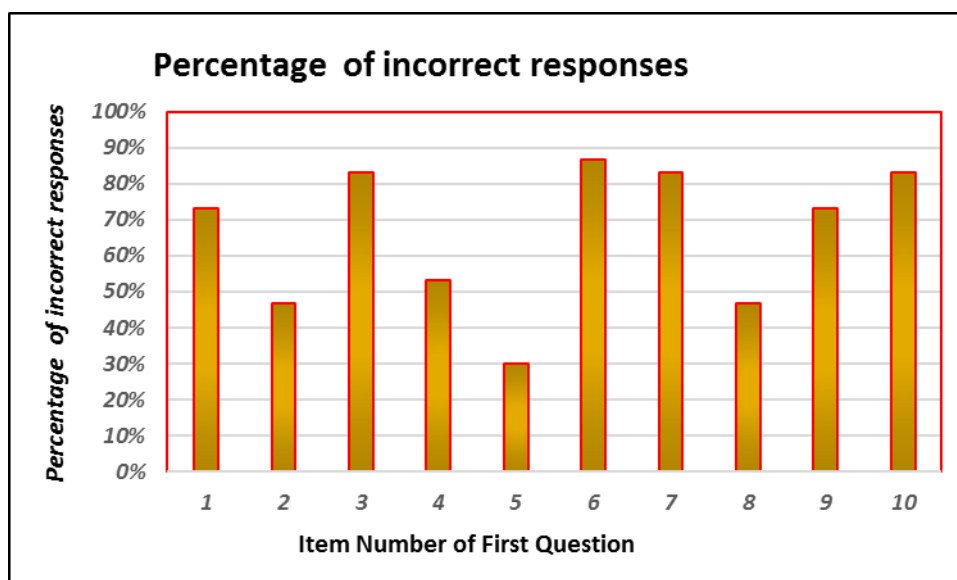
Figure 2 Percentage of incorrect reponses of the first question

Table 2 shows the performance of the students at the production level. (Question 2)

Table 2 The performance of the students at the production level. (Question 2)

Items	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage
1	15	50%	15	50%
2	17	56,66%	13	43,34%
3	20	66,66%	10	33,34%
4	18	60%	12	40%
5	20	66,66%	10	33,34%
6	15	50%	15	50%
7	17	56,66%	13	43,34%
8	17	56,66%	13	43,34%
9	18	60%	12	40%
10	15	50%	15	50%
Total	172	57.33	128	42.67%

In response to the second question, the greatest percentage of right responses was 66.66 for the third and fifth items, as follows:

3. Ali : "Where are you going "

Adel:-------------------------------------- ' Home

5. "A: 'Are you tired?' ------------------ ' Of course no"

B: --

I believe that the answer to these two expressions is simple and logical for the majority of students.
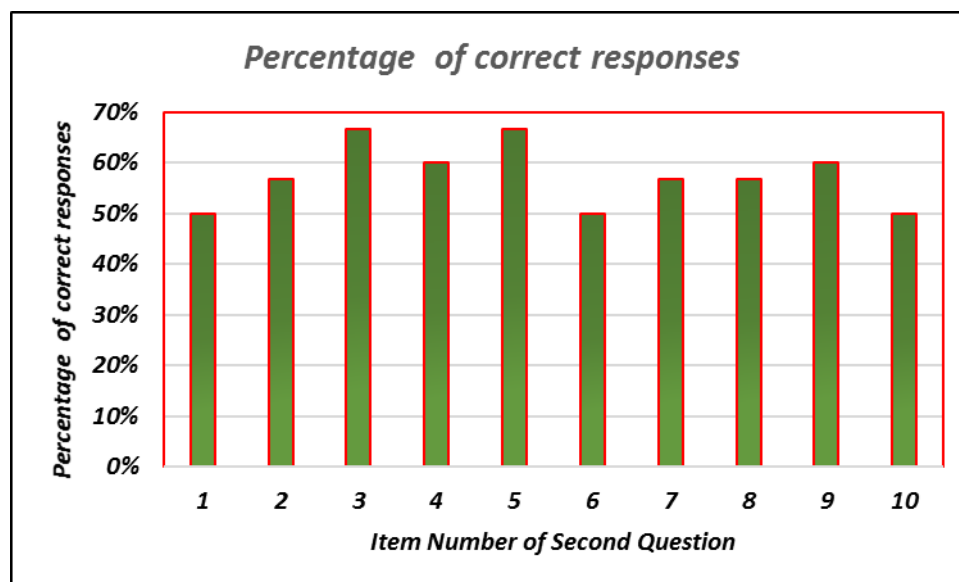

Figure 3 Percentage of correct reponses of the second question

The largest percentage of incorrect responses was 50% for the tenth sentence. Which was

A: She's an astronaut.10

------------------------B:

The response to this question was incorrect, and I think that some students did not understand the concept, while others did not respond in the manner required.
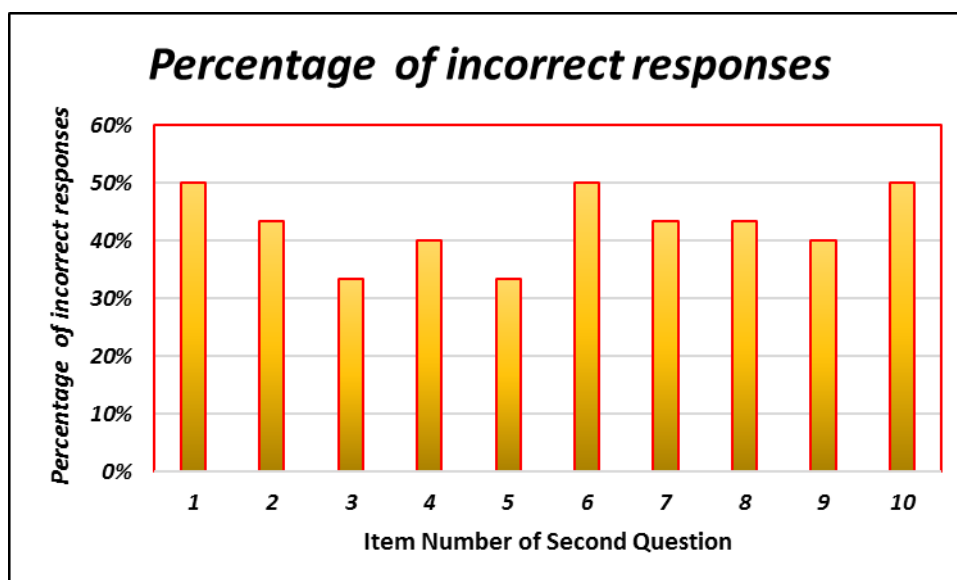
Figure 4 Percentage of incorrect reponses of the second question

4.2 The Analysis

The data presented in the preceding tables and figures, Iraqi EFL Learners' knowledge of Echo Utterances is considered to be on par with the national average. This test was predetermined by 30 university students, all of whom were expected to be familiar with this type of complement. If we notice that the results of the first question are better than the results of the second question, we can conclude that the first question, on the other hand, has more possibilities than the second, because Echo Utterances are words, phrases, and clauses that complete the meaning of a text and provide additional information about it. Despite the fact that it is easier to consider through speech and choices, In addition, Iraqi EFL Learners' knowledge of Echo Utterances in general, rather than as a grammatical issue, as evidenced by the results above, we find that the answer to the first question is very clear and completes the grammatical meaning, and the correct choice can be guessed, whereas the answer to the second question

17

necessitates clear knowledge as well as careful consideration for the next part of the sentence .

Chapter Five
Conclusions

5.1Conclusions

An echo question is a Meta - linguistic question regarding linguistic expressions, according to the claim made in this article. Natural language has enough expressive power to express quantificational statements about itself, which we formally recognized with the aid of variables spanning a wide range of linguistic expressions. Despite the general tendency in the literature to regard echo questions as occupying a peripheral position in grammar, this result, to the extent that it is correct, is not at all theoretically inconsequential in its implications. We consider it to be a highly intriguing fact that natural language is equipped with distinct forms for expressing questions about itself that are distinct from forms for expressing questions about other things in the universe.

According to the results of the test at both levels, the number and percentage of incorrect responses for the whole test are more than those of correct responses. These results of the whole test indicate, that the students face difficulty in echo question. The reason behind their performance in some items is the lack of knowledge about the topic.

5.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that some additional exercises about echo question are added to the subject of grammar of the fourth _year stage of the department of English in order to give the students the opportunity to practice this language aspect.

5.3 Suggestions

The following topics are suggested to be investigated by other researchers because they are beyond the limits of the present study:

1. Echo question in English and Arabic: A contrasting study

2. Echo question in some literary texts.

References

Al- Juboury, N., (1999). *Language Teachers Guide to Assessment.* Baghdad: University of Baghdad Press.

Banfield, A., (1982). *Unspeakable Sentences.* London; Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Barbara, G.L., (2007). *Notes on the description of English questions: The role of an abstract question morpheme.* Foundations of Language 6, 1977219.

Benjamin, S., (2013). *Meaning and the Structure of Language.* Chicago; The University of Chicago Press.

Blakemore, D., (1994). *Echo question: A pragmatic account*, in Lingua 94 No 4, 197-211.

Bolinger, D. (1987). *Echoes reechoed. American Speech* 62:262–279.

Horn, L., (1989). *A Natural History of Negation.* Chicago; Chicago University Press.

Janda G., Richard D., (1985). *Echo-questions are evidence for what*? In Chicago Linguistic Society, volume 21, 171–188.

Griol, D., Molina, J.M. and Callejas, Z., (2019). Combining speech-based and linguistic classifiers to recognize emotion in user spoken utterances. *Neurocomputing*, *326*, pp.132-140.

Richard N., (2019). *Metalinguistic negation and echoic use*, in UCL Working Papers in Linguistics 6. 321-339. Revised version to appear in Journal of Pragmatics.

Quirk, R. et al., (1985). *A comprehensive Grammar of the English Language.* London; Longman.

Rebecca R., (2019). *Intonation in interaction, in R. Dirven (ed.)*. A User's Grammar of English: Word, Sentence, Text, Interaction. Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York; Lang.

Skehan, P., (1999). *A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning*. Oxford University Press.

Appendix

The Test

Q1 / Choose the correct answer for the following questions:

" use different color"

Claire : All right, everybody back to work. 1

   ………………… Nina

a- It too late to stay here

b- Everybody back to work

c- You need to work hard

d- I can't work here any more

 He: It's a lovely day for a picnic.2

   She : -------------------- in deed

a- It's a lovely day for a picnic

b- it's such a good weather to spend out

c- this time is wonderful

A: John didn't like the film.3

------------------   B:

a- me too it was boring

B- Why it was wonderful?

c- No one does

d- He didn't what?

4. A: Have you got my knife?

----------------   B:

a- Have I got your wife?!

b- What should I do with it?

c- Do you think I have taken it?

d- You need to be careful that's

A: Sit down here.5

--------------- B:

a- is this seat booked or what?

b- Down there?

c- Thank you, I am good here

d- I need to go somewhere thank

A: It cost $5,000.6

------------------- B:

a- that's very expensive

b- I don't think its worth

c- How much did it cost?

d- Very cheap one

A: His son's an osteopath.7

----------------- B:

a- then, does he study medicine?

b- His son's a what?

c- So difficult job

d- is that true

8. Mary: "What do you want?"

   George Bailey: ……………

a- Nothing, I just getting warm

b- What do you think?

c- Looking for you

d- What do I want?

A: Alice worried about the price of the tickets.9

-------------B:

a- why doesn't she bring money with her?

b- She forget her wallet

c- Alice, worry?

d- Don't worry, I will help her

A: I got a Tamagotchi from eBay.10

------------------------   B:

a- You got a what from where?

b- It looks very strange

c- I think it is very expensive

d – I have got one last year

Q2/ Complete the following sentences:

1. Telemachus: "We're waiting for Odysseus to come home"

Antinuous :……………………….

"2.Holden: "I used to play checkers with her all the time

Stradlater :……………………..

 "   Holden: "Checkers

   3. Ali : "Where are you going " ?

Adel:-------------------------------------- ' Home

4. Jake :What does he want ?

'   Money as usual ----------------------------------- 'Nora:

"   A: 'Are you tired?' ------------------ ' Of course not.5

...……………………B:

6. A: 'Do squirrels eat insects '?

B: ------------------------------ I'm not sure

   A: Bring me the axe.7

----------------------B:

   A: She's totally bankrupt.8

------------------------   B:

   A: He's gone to London.9

---------------------- B:

   A: She's an astronaut.10

----------------------B: