

UNIVERSITY OF BABYLON

**Problems University EFL Learners Encounter
in Mastering Connected Speech with RP**

A Thesis

Submitted to

the Council of the College of Basic Education, University of Babylon

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Master of Education

in Methods of Teaching English

as a Foreign Language

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ كُلُّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَى شَاكِلَتِهِ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ
هُوَ أَهْدَى سَبِيلًا { ٨٤ } وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ
الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا
أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا { ٨٥ }

صدق الله العظيم

سورة الإسراء/الآيات (٨٤-٨٥)

We certify that this thesis, entitled **“Problems Students Encounter in Understanding Connected Speech”** was prepared by **Hussein Ghanim Abid Nasir** under our supervision at the College of Basic Education, University of Babylon, as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language .

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Acknowledgements

Praise be to **Allah**, The Lord of All worlds, for this study has been finished under His mercy.

I would like to express my indebtedness and gratitude to my supervisors **Dr. Hameed Hassoon** and **Adil Abudil Ridha Al-Akkam** whose guidance, patience, advice, helpful discussions, and insightful suggestions have enabled me to carry out this study.

My enduring gratitude goes to all the teaching staff of the M.A. study in the Department of English , University of Babylon. I would like to thank Dr. Ahmed Mustafa Hussein, College of Education Ibn Rushed, University of Baghdad for his support and generosity.

I wish to express my thanks to Salwan Dhafar for programming and recording the items of the test.

My thanks go to my family for their support and help while I was carry out the study..

Abstract

This study deals with the problems learners encounter in understanding connected speech in terms of rhythm, assimilation, elision, and liaison. The rules that govern words in isolation (i.e. as citation form) differ from those of connected speech. Some words when pronounced in a connected way may hardly be heard; certain sounds are linked together, some sounds are intruded although they are not found in words; and above all these are words that are called rhythmical.

The ultimate aim of this study is to account for the difficulties learners face in understanding connected speech, to find out solutions for them and suggesting a remedial work for such difficulties. In addition, this work aims at presenting a theoretical work about aspects of connected speech and the ways the words are pronounced under their effect.

It is hypothesized that:

1. Most of Iraqi EFL university learners often do not distinguish connected speech from slow speech.
2. Such learners encounter problems in converting slow speech to connected speech and vice versa.
3. The learners' achievement at the level of recognition is expected to be better than that at the production one.

To verify these hypotheses, the researcher constructs a diagnostic test and applied it to a sample of 100 Iraqi EFL university learners at their third stage from the Departments of English, Colleges of Education, in Babylon and Al-Qadisiya Universities. The researcher uses a computer programme named

“Talk It” to record the audio items of the test. All the sentences insert in the system which reads them in correct pronunciation in English by a British native speaker. The researcher records by a sophisticated recorder and the learners ask to write what they hear from the recorder.

The linguistic analysis of the subjects’ responses of the items of the test yields the following conclusions:

1. Iraqi EFL university learners encounter difficulties in recognizing and producing connected speech as the greatest rate of their incorrect responses is (71.00%) for Babylon University and (74.17%) for Al-Qadisiya University; but they face more difficulties at the production level as the rate of their correct responses is (22.0%) against (47.4) at Babylon University and (26.0) against (40.0%) at Al-Qadisiya University for their correct responses at the production level.
2. At the production level, the great rate of subjects’ incorrect responses (77.0%) for Babylon University and (73.90) for Al-Qadisiya University also reflects their incompetence to change slow speech to connected speech.

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Abbreviations

Symbol	Description
Adj.	Adjective
Adv.	Adverb
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
FL	Foreign Language
FV	Facility Value
MT	Mother Tongue
N	Noun
V	Verb
RP	Received Pronunciation
→	Becomes
*	Unacceptable
/	Phonetic representation
/	

LIST OF PHONETIC
SYMBOLS

VIII

Vowels and Diphthongs

ɪ / i: / as in see / si: /	ʌ / ɜ: / as in fur / fɜ: /
ɪ / ɪ / as in sit / sɪt /	ʌ / ə / as in ago / ə'gəʊ /
ɪ / e / as in ten / ten /	ʌ / eɪ / as in page / peɪdʒ /
ɪ / æ / as in hat / hæʔ /	ʌ / əʊ / as in home / həʊm /
ɪ / ɑ: / as in arm / ɑ:m /	ʌ / aɪ / as in five / faɪv /
ɪ / ɒ / as in hot / hɒt /	ʌ / aʊ / as in now / naʊ /
ɪ / ɔ: / as in saw / sɔ: /	ɔ / ɪ / as in join / dʒɪn /
ʌ / ʊ / as in put / pʊt /	ʌ / ɪə / as in near / nɪə /
ɪ / u: / as in too / tu: /	ʌ / eə / as in hair / heə /
ʌ / ʌ / as in cup / kʌp /	ɪ / ʊə / as in pure / pjʊə /

Consonants

ɪ / p / as in pen / pen /	ʌ / s / as in sell / sel /
ɪ / b / as in bad / bæd /	ʌ / z / as in zoo / zu: /

٣ / t / as in tea / ti: / ١٥ / ʃ / as in she / ʃi: /

٤ / d / as in did / dɪd / ١٦ / ʒ / as in vision / 'vɪʒɪn /

٥ / k / as in cut / kʌt / ١٧ / h / as in how / hau /

٦ / ɹ / as in girl / ɹɜ:l / ١٨ / m / as in moon / mu:n /

٧ / tʃ / as in chin / tʃɪn / ١٩ / n / as in no / nəʊ /

٨ / dʒ / as in June / dʒu:n / ٢٠ / ŋ / as in sing / sɪŋ /

٩ / f / as in fall / f :l / ٢١ / l / as in leg / leg /

١٠ / v / as in vain / veɪn / ٢٢ / r / as in red / red /

١١ / θ / as in think / θɪŋk / ٢٣ / j / as in yes / jes /

١٢ / ð / as in then / ðen / ٢٤ / w / as in wet / wet /

/ represents secondary , / represents primary stress, / ' / stress.

IX

Roach (٢٠٠٠:IX) —

الخلاصة

تتناول هذه الدراسة المشكلات التي تواجه طلبة الجامعات دارسي اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية في فهم الكلام المتصل في ما يخص الإيقاع الكلامي، التماثل الصوتي، الحذف، والإضافة الصوتية. فالقواعد التي تحكم الكلمات المنفردة تختلف عنها في الكلام المتصل. في الكلام المتصل تلفظ بعض الكلمات (كلمات القواعد) بصيغة ضعيفة، بعض الأصوات تندمج مع بعضها، بعضها يحشر بين

الكلمات على الرغم من كون هذه الأصوات غير موجودة ضمن الكلمات، و أكثر من أي شيء آخر كونها إيقاعية.

إن الهدف الأساس لهذه الدراسة هو تحري الصعوبات التي تواجه طلبة الجامعات الدارسي اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية في فهم الكلام المتصل، و إيجاد الحلول المناسبة لها، و اقتراح طرائق لمعالجة هذه الصعوبات. و فضلا

عن ذلك تعرض الدراسة خواص الكلام المتصل والطرق التي تتأثر بها الكلمات في هذا النوع من الكلام.

ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة فقد وضع الباحث جملة من الفرضيات:

١. أكثر الطلبة الجامعيين العراقيين دارسي اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية لا

يستطيعون التمييز بين الكلام المتصل و الكلام البطيء.

٢. يواجه مثل هؤلاء الطلبة صعوبات في تحويل الكلام المتصل إلى الكلام

البطيء وبالعكس.

٣. يتوقع أن يكون إنجاز الطلبة على مستوى التمييز أعلى من إنجازهم على

مستوى الإنتاج.

وللتحقق من صحة الفرضيات قام الباحث بإجراء اختبار تشخيصي و نفذ على عينة مؤلفة من مائه طالب جامعي من ا لطلبة الجامعيين العراقيين الدارسي اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية في المرحلة الثالثة من أقسام اللغة الإنكليزية، في كليات التربية، في جامعتي بابل و القادسية. لقد استخدم الباحث أيضا برنامج في جهاز الحاسوب "Talk It" لتسجيل الجمل كافة التي يتضمنها الاختبار.

قام الباحث بتسجيل ما يقراه الحاسوب على جهاز تسجيل عالي التقنية.

و في ضوء تحليل الأجوبة، توصل الباحث إلى عدد من النتائج الاتية :

١. يواجه الطلبة الجامعيون العراقيون دارسو اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية صعوبات في تمييز الكلام المتصل و إنتاجه حيث كانت النسبة الأعلى لإجاباتهم هي خاطئة (٦٨.٥٥%) في جامعة بابل و (٦٤.١٧%) في جامعة القادسية، ولكنهم يواجهون صعوبات أكثر على مستوى الإنتاج حيث أن نسبة إجاباتهم الصحيحة هي (٢٢.٥%) في مقابل (٤٥.٥%) على المستوى التمييز لإجاباتهم الصحيحة في جامعة بابل، بينما هي (٢٦.٠٥%) في مقابل (٤٥.٥%) على مستوى التمييز في جامعة القادسية لإجاباتهم الصحيحة.

٢. نسبة الأخطاء على مستوى الإنتاج في جامعة بابل كانت (٧٧.٥%) بينما في جامعة القادسية كانت (٧٣.٩٥%). تبين هذه الأخطاء عدم تمكن الطلبة من تغيير الكلام البطي إلى الكلام المستمر.

٣. تعزى أسباب أخطاء الطلبة إلى ما يأتي:

أ. تأثير اللغة الأم عن طريق نقل أحكام التلفظ من اللغة العربية إلى اللغة الإنكليزية.

ب. استعمال الطلبة لاستراتيجيات التعلم السابقة من اللغة الإنكليزية في إنتاج الكلام المستمر.

ج. سياق الكلام حيث ينال مثل هذا النوع من الكلام القليل من الاهتمام في كتب تعلم التلفظ المستخدم في تعليم الطلبة.

د. استراتيجيات الاتصال المنتقاة من لدن الطلبة لملء فجوة معرفتهم.

في الختام، عرض الباحث بعض التوصيات و الاقتراحات التي يمكن ان تسهم في تقليل الأخطاء عند الطلبة فضلا عن الاستنتاجات المهمة في تعلم الكلام المتصل.

جامعة بابل

المشاكل التي يواجهها الطلبة الجامعيون في فهم الكلام المنصل

رسالة

تقدم بها إلى مجلس كلية التربية الأساسية-جامعة بابل

جزءاً من متطلبات نيل درجة ماجستير تربية

في طرائق تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية لغة اجنبية

حسين غانم عبد ناصر

باشراف

الأستاذ المساعد الدكتور حميد حسون بيجية الأستاذ المساعد عادل عبد الرضا العكار

آذار

٢٠٠٦

صفر ١٤٢٧

Appendix II

The Test Possible Answers

Q'\

ϑ. It was 'too 'expensive for them to 'buy that car.

ϒ. You always ought to earn an honest living.

ϛ. 'Send them to her by 'post.

ξ. 'Let us 'do it 'now.

ο. 'When does the 'train 'leave.

ϔ. The 'weather is 'nice today, isn't ?

ϕ. They'd left home quickly.

Ϡ. The day had been fine.

ϡ. How can I help?

10. I sent it from London.

Q2\

v It IZ tə preIZ ðəUz tʃ ɜ:t ʃIZ /. Slow speech. ʊ. / ðI aɪdɪə
/ ðI^jaɪdɪə əv It IZ tə preIZ ðəUz tʃ ɜ:t ʃIZ /. Connected speech.

/. Slow speech ɪz ðə bʊtʃIZ ʃp ʊ. /aɪ θɪŋk ðɪs ʃ

/. Connected speech p ɪz ə bʊtʃIZ ʃp ʊ /aɪ θɪŋk ðɪs ʃ

ʔ. /dəʊnt bi: leɪt fə wɜ:k, ɡʊd b ɪ /. Slow speech

/ dəʊn bi: leɪt fə wɜ:k, ɡʊb b ɪ /. Connected speech

ɛ. / wʊd ju ɔpli:z k :l ðem fɔr ə ʃ :t taɪm /. Slow speech

/ wʊdʒ ju ɔpli:z k :l ðm fɔr ə ʃ :t taɪm /. Connected speech

t ðæt mæn sez tu: hɜ: /. Slow speech ʊ. /aɪ dəʊnt bɪ' lɪ:v w

/aɪ dəʊn bɪ' lɪ:v wət ðəp mæn sez tə hə /. Connected speech

r ʌs /. Slow speech ɔju: θɪŋk ɪz raɪt f ʊ. /du: w

/du: wətʃ ju θɪŋk ɪz raɪt fər əs /. Connected speech

٧. /ʃi: hæd prə'naʊnsɪd ɡɪltɪ /.Slow speech

/ʃɪ hæb prə'naʊnsɪd ɡɪltɪ /.Connected speech

: ðə stri:t /. Slow speech ٨. / ɡʊd ɡɜ:ls help ə blaɪnd mæn kr

: ðə stri:t /.Connected speech ٩. / ɡʊb ɡɜ:ls help ə blaɪn mæn kr

dɪ hiə ɪn taɪm/. Slow ١٠. sʌm dɪfɪkʌltɪ ɪn ɡetɪŋ evrɪb ١١. / ðeə w
speech

dɪ hiər ɪn taɪm /. ١٢. ðeə wəz səm dɪfɪkʌltɪ ɪn ɡetɪŋ evrɪb

Connected speech

v frɛnds /.Slow speech ١٣. ə ɡʊd di:l ١٤. / hi: :lweɪz hæz ɡ

v frɛns /.Connected speech ١٥. ə ɡʊd di:l ١٦. hi: ːlweɪz hæz ɡ

Q٣\

١. Ten players moved back for difficult match.
٢. How old is that girl, would you say?
٣. That man was always asking for a good concert.
٤. They have to take some of them from that box.

◦. You're thinking about immigrating to London, aren't you?

Q^ξ\

١. /teɪps ən ɪmɪgrəʊz :weɪz meɪk lesn ɪntrestɪd /

٢. /aɪ daʊn spəʊz fər ə mɪnɪt ðætʃ ju du: ^wɪt /.

٣. /dɪdʒ u evə faɪn ðæb pen ju lɒst/.

ξϩ/ wɪ :weɪz trɪ:t ðm əz mɛmbəz əv ðə fæmɪli /.

◦. /maɪ tʃi:p kæməərə si:m tə bi əz ɡʊd əz dʒɒnz

ɪkspensɪv wʌn /

٦. /ʃɪz ðə bes dres wʊmən ɪn ðə vɪlɪdʒ /

Appendix I

The Test

Q\ Divide the following sentences up into feet, using a single vertical line (|) as a boundary as in the following example:

| 'Walk | 'down the | 'path to the | 'end of the ca | 'nal.

1. It was too expensive for them to bay that car.
2. You always ought to earn an honest living.
3. Send them to her by post.
4. Let us do it now.
5. When does the train leave.
6. The weather is nice today, isn't ?
7. They'd left home quickly.

8. The day had been fine.

9. How can I help?

10. I sent it from London.

Q11\ The following example is transcribed in two ways (as a slow phonemic transcr⁹⁶ careful speech, and a rapid phonemic transcription, connected speech). Transcribe the following sentences in two ways. Follow this example:

She acts particularly well in the first scene.

/ʃi ækts pətɪkjələli wel ɪn ðə fə:st si:n/. Slow speech.

/ʃi ˈæks pətɪkjələli wel ɪn ðə fə:s si:n/. Connected speech.

12. The idea of it is to praise those churches.

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

13. I think this shop is the butcher's shop.

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

14. Don't be late for work, good boy.

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

ξ. Would you please call them for a short time?

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

ο. I don't believe what that man says to her.

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

ϛ. Do what you think is right for us, Don't you?

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

ϣ. She had pronounced guilty.

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

⋈. Good girls help a blind man cross the street.

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

Ϡ. There was some difficulty in getting everybody here in time.

/

/

/

/

ϡ. He always has got a good deal of friends.

/

/ Slow speech.

/

/ Connected speech

Q³ \ You will hear five sentences spoken rapidly. Each will be given three times. Write each sentence down in normal spelling.

(20 marks)

1. /tem pleɪəz mu:v bæk fə dɪfɪkəlt mətʃ /.

2. /haʊ əʊld ɪz ðæk ɡʊ:l , wʊdʒ ju sei /.

3. / ðæp mæn wəz :lweɪz a:skɪŋ fər əɡʊɡ kən'sət /.

4. / ðeɪ əv tə teɪk səm əv ðəm frəm ðæp bu:k /.

5. / juə θɪŋkɪŋ ə'bəʊt ɪmɪɡreɪtɪŋ tə lɒndn a:ntʃ ju /.

Q⁴ \ Listen to the following sentences and transcribe what you hear using phonemic symbols.

(30 marks)

1. Tapes and videos always make the lesson interesting.

2. I don't suppose for a minute that you'll do it.

3. Did you ever find that pen you lost?

4. We always treat them as members of the family.

5. My cheap camera seems to be as good as John's expensive one.

6. She's the best-dressed woman in the village.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The Problem

Language is viewed as a vehicle for communicating meaning and messages. Speech is the corner stone in natural human communication. The reason, it seems, is that speech is a continuous stream of sounds, without clear-cut borderlines between words. In spoken discourse, foreign speakers adapt their pronunciation to their audience and articulate with maximal economy of movement rather than maximal clarity (Giegerich, 1990: 284). Thus, certain words are lost, and certain phonemes are linked together as we attempt to get our message across (Gimson, 1989: 306). It is often noticed that native speakers' speech contains many assimilatory rules, elision of sounds, and the intrusion of sounds. Such speech is also rhythmical and that rhythm is detectable in the regular occurrence of stressed syllables. Lado (1964: 79) says:

Rhythm includes stress, time, and juncture. It is probably more effective to teach consonants and vowels within appropriate intonation and rhythm units than to teach the consonants and vowels in detail by themselves.

Therefore, speech contains the suprasegmental features of spoken English such as pause groups, pitch change, stressed words, and linked words. Learners need to identify, understand the importance of, and be able to produce the suprasegmental features of spoken English. Otherwise, they will fail to understand conversations said by native speakers.

There is a great deal of difference between the way words are pronounced in isolation and in the context of connected speech. Gimson (١٩٨٩:٢٨٧) says:

If the word is admitted as an abstracted linguistic unit, it is important to note the differences which may exist between its concrete realization when said (often artificially) in isolation and these which it has when, in connected speech, it is subject to pressure of its sound environment or of the accentual or rhythmic group of which it forms part.

Normally, there are two types of speech: slow speech and rapid (or connected) speech, and since connected speech is too difficult for Iraqi EFL university learners to understand and comprehend this causes problems to in evaluation and measurement. In fact, most Iraqi EFL university learners lack previous background knowledge about connected speech. The teaching of a language is, to a large part, still based on written language rather than on the spoken language (the concentration on the structure of the sentence rather than on speech pronunciation); therefore, connected speech will be investigated in this study.

“English people speak so fast” is a complaint often hear from EFL learners, and often from those at an advanced level, where ignorance of the used vocabulary is not the reason for their lack of comprehension (Lass, ١٩٨٤: ٢٩٥). When learners see a spoken sentence in its written form, they have no trouble in comprehending it . Since EFL learners are not familiar with connected speech, they might find it too difficult to understand. They cannot find out the rules concerning rhythm,

(١) 'Perhaps you can 'ring her to'night.

(ʌ) I 'wanted to 'meet him a'gain.

In addition, they are unaware of the English assimilatory tendencies governing words in context,

(ʌ) I've known her in this year.

/ aɪ v nəʊn ɜ: In ðɪʃ jə /

(ɛ) I can't find the right place.

/ aɪ kɑ:nt faɪn ðə raɪt pleɪs /

Sometimes learners think that the pronunciation of isolated words will not be affected by other words in the sentence,

(o) It is time to eat /ts taɪm tə^w i:t /

(ʌ) Have some more tea /hæv səm mɔ: ti: /

The pronunciation of words in isolation differs completely from that of their pronunciation in connected speech. Many of the sounds that learners expect to hear are not pronounced,

(ʌ) It must be here / It mʌs bi hiə /

Therefore, they fail to understand the speech of English-speaking people. EFL learners complain that English people mispronounce or swallow half of their words. This is due to their failure to understand accurate speech flow. They cannot even figure out the boundaries of words or find any justification for any new intrusive sounds,

(^) Media event /mi:diə rɪvent /

All these factors can hinder the understanding of connected speech and consequently the message the speaker intends to convey in his speech is completely changed.

١.٢ Aims of the Study

In connection with the preceding statements, the study aims basically at:

١. Identifying the Iraqi EFL university learner's performance in recognizing and producing connected speech.
٢. Presenting material about the processes of connected speech which can be of help to distinguish connected speech from slow speech.
٣. Finding out the causes of the learners' errors so that some solutions can be posited to help them overcome the problems they face in using such speech.

١.٣ Hypotheses

In view of the preceding aims, it is hypothesized that:

١. Most of Iraqi EFL university learners often do not distinguish connected speech from slow speech.
٢. Such Learners face problems in converting slow speech in connected speech.
٣. The learner's achievement at the recognition level is expected to be better than their achievement at the production one.

١.٤ Procedures

In the course of fulfilling the objectives of this study, the following steps are to be followed:

١. Introducing various theoretical points of view concerning English connected speech in particular. Throughout this description, the aspects of connected speech will be described.
٢. Selecting a sample of Iraqi EFL university learners as subjects and administering a diagnostic test to point out the difficulties that they encounter in using connected speech.
٣. Analyzing the results of the test, on the bases of which conclusions and pedagogical recommendations will be introduced.

١.٥ Limits

The sample of the study is confined to university students at their Third stage in the Departments of English at the Colleges of Education, in University of Babylon and University of Qadissiya during the academic year (٢٠٠٥-٢٠٠٦). The third year students have been chosen to apply the test as the topic under investigation has been taught to them in their second year of study. The present study is limited to those aspects of connected speech: rhythm, assimilation, elision, and liaison.

١.٦ Value

The findings of the present work are hoped to be useful in two aspects:

١. The theoretical aspect: the study will provide update information about connected speech which can be advantageous for the researchers as it can pave the way for further investigation on this topic.
٢. The practical aspect: as it will have a pedagogical value for teachers in that it can provide insights into the problematic areas concerning connected speech which can be of use to them in their effort to help learners perform more effectively. The study can also be of some help

to syllabus designers as it can serve as a step for the preparation of remedial teaching programmes.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Background and Previous Study of Connected Speech

٢.١ Introduction

The purpose of any language is very simple: to help its speaker to communicate to his followers complicated messages concerning every aspect of his activity (Steele, ٢٠٠٢: ١). Al-Hamash and Younnis (١٩٨٠: ٧) state that man needs to use a system of symbols including language to express his needs “Human beings share faculties that and to make others help in fulfilling them.” can achieve this exchange of information mainly of two types of sensory stimulation, auditory and visual.

This chapter deals with some important points related to aspects of connected speech which are rhythm, assimilation, elision and linking. The researcher will try to shed some light on the theoretical background of these aspects and on reasons that make the EFL learners face difficulties in English speech.

Rhythm is a common feature that all languages share. Every language has its own characteristic rhythm and one of the most difficult areas to master of the spoken form of an FL is that of rhythm (Crystal and Davy, ۱۹۷۵: ۴۵). It is important that learners should be encouraged to be aware of this characteristic. This is because rhythm in English is not an additional aspect added to the sequence of consonants and vowels, on the contrary it is the guide to the framework information in the spoken message (Allen, ۱۹۷۲: ۱)

All human physical activity that is extended in time tends to be a rhythmical activity like breathing, running, heart- beating, etc. These are powerful metaphors and what they bear in common is the regular repetition of some kind of pattern, some parts of which are strong and others are weak, and some are long and others are short. Speech is like these other activities. the rhythm of English is based on the contrast of “Brown (۱۹۷۸: ۴۲) says stressed and unstressed syllables.” The idea of rhythm in English is concerned with some repeated beats recurrent at the same amount of time.

a sequence of events in “ Rhythm is defined by Wachsmuth (۲۰۰۳: ۲) as which some elements are marked from others (accented); the accents recur with some regularity, regardless of tempo (fast, slow) or tempo changes

(accelerate, retard) within the pattern". Accordingly English is rhythmical and that its stressed syllables can be identified along the speech in the presence of other unstressed syllables by people. If we watch an English speaker talking, we will be able to see where the stressed syllables are. So rhythm in general means the regular repetition of beats happening at regular intervals of time. The stressed syllables tend to occur at roughly equal intervals of time but just as in other human activities , running for example, some beats will be little early , some slightly late . Brown (1978: 42) declares that "the rhythm may not be absolute, some strokes may be missing and may be mistimed, but there is a sense in which all activities can get into a rhythmical swing" that the time between stressed syllables is regular as a clock.

Tincoff (2004: 27) states that "every language in the world is spoken with one kind of rhythm or with the other". There are two main types of speech-rhythm. The first type is called "syllable –timed rhythm" in which the movement occurring at regular intervals, is supplied by the syllable – production, i.e. the syllables recur at equal intervals of time. French illustrates this mode where each syllable takes up approximately the same amount of time in an utterance when spoken at slow or rapid rhythm (Hartman and Stork, 1976:220). Pike (1983:34) shows that "it is the syllables ,instead of the stresses , which tend to come at more –or –less evenly recurrent intervals- so that as a result , a phrase with extra syllables takes proportionately more time , and syllables or vowels are less likely to be shortened and modified". Roach (2000:130) confirms the idea of syllable–time rhythm in which "all syllables, whether stressed or unstressed, tend to occur at regular time –intervals and

the time between stressed syllables will be shorter or longer in proportion to the numbers of unstressed syllables”.

stressed-timed rhythm” in which the “ The second type of rhythm is stressed syllables occur at regular intervals of time regardless of the number of the unstressed syllables between stressed syllables. English, Arabic, and Russian illustrate this mode where stressed syllables reoccur at approximately equal time intervals, irrespective of how many stressed syllables between them (Hartman and Stork, 1976:227). This can be illustrated in the following example:

(9) Turn on the fan if you feel hot today
/ 'tə:n ɒn ðə 'fæn ɪf ju 'fi:l 'hɒt tə'dei /

The existence of the two basically different kinds of speech rhythm was pointed out by Arthur Lloyd James (1940:20); he called them ‘machine-gun rhythm’ and ‘Morse-code rhythm’. Ward (1972:181) states that “English is a language of widely differing degrees of stresses; strongly marked stresses occur at more or less regular intervals of time separated by syllables bearing little stress”.

2.3 Stress

2.3.1 Word-stress (Simple Words)

Jones (1918: 230) describes stress as “the degree of force with which a sound or syllable is uttered.” Stress is defined in terms of energy of articulation for speaker and of loudness for the listener. A stressed syllable is associated with what is called a reinforced chest pulse, i.e. a chest pulse production with extra energy (Singh and Singh, 1977: 170). There are three degrees of stress distinguished by Jones (1969: 142) as follows:

When two degrees are distinguished, the syllables are said to be strongly stressed (or simply stressed) and weakly stressed (or unstressed). When three degrees are distinguished, the intermediate degree is called medium stress or secondary stress; the strong stress is then called primary stress.

Strongly-stressed syllables are shown in international phonetic transcription by the mark (') placed at the beginning of the syllables, for example the words **father**, **attend**, **opportunity** are thus phonetically

transcribed /ɒpə 'tju:nəti / , and the transcribed /'fa:ðə / , / ə'tend / , / sentences

(10) **What shall we do ?** ,

(11) **Its time to go home**

are phonetically transcribed /'wɒtʃəl wi: 'du: / ,

/ it s 'taim tə 'gəu 'həum /.

) . Jones (1988: 247) says , Secondary stress is shown by the mark (“marking secondary stress is of particular value in transcribing English words which have three or more syllables preceding the principal stress.” The secondary stress is on the second syllable in the example:

zæmɪ 'neɪʃn/ , (12) 'examination' / ɪg

Roach (2000 : 109) states that “not all speakers agree on the placement of stress in the same words.” The manner of stressing may vary to certain extent from individual to individual . So different stressing may be heard from different people.” Ward (1972 : 168) says “ there is considerable divergence in “the stressing of certain compound words e.g.

is stressed as / 'krɪsməs 'preznt / and by some "(13) **Christmas present** other as / 'krɪsmə preznt /” .

He also gives some examples:

(14) **Hide and seek** is either / 'haɪd n 'si:k / or / 'haɪd n si:k/.

(15) **Shirt-sleeves** is either / 'ʃə:t 'sli:vz / or / 'ʃə:t sli:vz / .

Jones (1969 :144) gives some examples that shed light on word different stressing that may be heard from different people,

(16) /'hɒspɪtəl/ (hospital) /'hɒs 'pɪtəl /

(17) /'dʒʌstɪfaɪəbl / (justifiable) /'dʒʌstɪ 'faɪəbl /

Jones (ibid) adds that “those in the second column are probably of recent introduction in the south , some of them may be due to northern influence in Great Britain” It is clear now that different stressing of words comes from different people where some of them are living in the north and other living in the south who speak on the whole with RP.

Sometimes special stressing is needed to make the meaning clear to give emphasis for intensity or for contrast. To the degrees of emphasis, one wishes to give to particular words, Jones (1969: 144) illustrates the manner by which we can emphasize words. He says “when it is desired to emphasize words which have both a primary stress and a secondary stress , and in which the secondary stress precedes the primary(as is usually the case) , the secondary stress is often reinforced and becomes as strong as the primary stress.” Thus, words like

rekə (r^k) 'recommend and artificial' are normally pronounced as /
 a: tɪ 'fɪʃl / would be pronounced / 'rekə 'mend /, and / 'mend /, /
 'a: tɪ 'fɪʃl / for the sake of emphasis.

Robinett (1983 : 102) puts another rule for emphasizing a word for contrast . He says "when it is desired to emphasize (for contrast) a particular part of word which normally stresses that part may receive a strong stress and the normal primary stress may become a secondary stress." For example the word

(19) **reverse** is normally pronounced / rɪ 'vɜ:s / when it is used for
 , it is commonly pronounced / 'rɪ vɜ:s/. " **obverse** "contrast with

Similarly the word

(20) **demerit** / di: 'merit / is almost always pronounced
 / 'di:merit /.

Stress can work as a marker of grammatical differences . Ward (1972 : 160) remarks that "certain words differ in meaning according to stress : in some , the change in stress alters the vowels , others differ in stress and to a slight extent in vowel length", for example,

(21) **Subject** / 'sʌb dʒɪkt/n., adj. / sʌb 'dʒekt /v.

strækt /n., adj. / æb 'strækt / v. (22) **Abstract** / 'æb

O'Conner (1978 : 202) says " stress is an integral part of word-shape in English and other languages. It is the sole distinguishing factor in pairs like 'incite', 'insight' or 'import' v. , 'import' n. ". It is more often stress differences which are accompanied by differences of phoneme selection .

Roach (2000 : 98) says " the important point to remember is that although we do find unstressed syllables (as in the last syllable of 'dialect' / 'daɪə lekt /, only strong syllables can be stressed . Weak syllables are always unstressed " . It is clear now that stressed syllables carry vowel sounds which are generally longer than those in unstressed syllables . For example , if we compare in the sentences

(23) / 'weər əv ju 'bi:n / and / aɪ v bɪn tə 'taun /,

we can see the differences in the length of the vowel in the two types of pronouncing the word '**been**' .

Gimson (1989:224) states that “ any or all of four factors - stress , pitch , quality ,and quantity – may render a syllable more prominent than its neighbours” . Stress is a greater force exerted in the articulation of one part of an utterance compared with another , thus accentuation a certain part of the utterance, giving it more prominence .

Such intensity is perceived by the listener as great loudness associated with the sound or syllable . Thus , the greater in energy which the speaker feels is concentrated on the first syllable of ‘**answer**’ may be manifested for the listener as greater loudness . Stress and pitch variation combined may be said to constitute a complex which is most powerful in signaling the situation and degree of the accent in a word . Prominence of a part of an utterance is created by its differences in pitch (higher or lower) from its immediate surrounding. A change in pitch can be part of the structure of a word and can distinguish one word from another . When stressed syllables are said on a monotone and unexaggerated quantities , it is hard to understand well by stress alone the difference between

(24) ‘**insult**’(n.) from ‘**insult**’ (v.)

It is easily distinguished by pitch patterns e.g. with a falling intonation () or  with a rising intonation ().

Sound quality is also a factor added to the accentual pattern that contributes to the relative prominence of sound and syllables . In a sequence

of phonemes (said with the same length and stress) vowels will normally be more prominent than consonants .

Ladafoged (۱۹۹۳ :۲۰۲) says that “ among the vowels , prominence increases as the vowel becomes more open : among the consonants , those which are vowel – like e.g. /m ,n ,ŋ , l , r / stand out from the remainder while fricatives have a higher prominence than plosives” . In addition to the prominence of sounds , due to their nature , certain English phonemes are particularly associated with unaccented situations . Thus RP / ə / does not normally occur in accented syllables . Other vowels may also be associated in the speaker’s and listener’s mind with some degree of secondary stress (especially like / æ, ə /and the long vowels and diphthongs) by virtue of their greater qualitative prominence (Gimson , ۱۹۸۹ :۲۲۰) .

Vowels which have the greatest length will be judged most prominent despite their quality . Long vowels and diphthongs will always be associated with prominence by a listener however weakly stressed by the speaker and despite the fact that in (unaccented syllables) long vowels and diphthongs do not have the same length that they would in an accented syllable .

Ward (۱۹۷۲ : ۱۶۶) notes that “ in an ordinary statement , the most important words of the sentence are stressed, viz. nouns , principal verbs, adjectives, demonstratives and interrogative pronouns and adverbs” .

As a general rule, it may be said that the relative stress of the words in an utterance depends on their relative importance. The more important a word is, the stronger its stress is. Stressed words are content words that are independent lexical words and classified by Quirk et al. (1987: 82) under 'open-class words'. The sentence

(20) 'What do you think of the weather?' is usually stressed thus

/ 'wɒt dju 'θɪŋk əv ðə 'weðə /.

According to Jones (1962: 264), there are some exceptions to the general rule:

1. If it is desired to emphasize a word that normally has no stress, its stress is increased and the surrounding stressed words may be less stressed. The normal spelling for the sentence

(21) I never gave you that book is

/ aɪ 'nevə 'geɪv ju 'ðæt buk /, but if it were desired to emphasize the word 'I', the sentence becomes

/ 'aɪ nevə 'geɪv ju ðæt buk /.

٢. The stress on a final –stressed compound tends to move a preceding syllable, like,

(٢٧) **bad–'tempered** but a **'bad-tempered** 'teacher.

٣. When two nouns in sequence are felt as being very closely connected by the sense, the second is generally unstressed. For example :

⦿ (٢٨) **door handle** / 'd : hændl /.

٤. The word 'street' in names of streets is never stressed, example:

(٢٩) **Oxford Street** / 'ɒksfəd stri:t /

⦿.The parenthetical nature of words is often unstressed. Examples :

(٣٠) **yes , he said** / 'jes hɪ sed /,

(٣١) **How do you do, Mr. Smith?**

/ hau dju 'du: mɪstə smɪθ/

Where the phrases (Mr. Smith) and (he said) are of a parenthetical nature , i.e., a syntactic pattern is inserted into a sentence , modifying a particular part of the sentence without adding to or changing its basic structure .

٦. The verb ' **be** ' is unstressed in general except when it is final . Examples:

(٣٢) **Here we are** / 'hɪə wɪ 'a: /

(٣٣) **The reason being** / ðə 'ri:zn 'bi:ŋ /

(O'Connor: ١٩٩٦: ٩٣)

٧. When the verb precedes its subject, the verb is normally not stressed.

Examples :

(٣٤) ' **yes** ' , **said his father** / 'jes, sed ɪz 'fa:ðə /.

(٣٥) **After a storm comes calm** / 'a:ftərə 'st :m kʌmz 'kɑ:m/

(ibid: ٩١).

The phonological unit used for measuring rhythm in English is called 'foot' , which consists of a group of stressed and unstressed syllables . In a stress-

timed language an utterance can be divided into feet each of which , though they may contain a different number of syllables , takes approximately the same amount of time to pronounce ,examples:

(36) **but she is at home** / bət ʃi:z ət | 'həʊm /

(37) **John is the eldest son** / | 'dʒɒnz ðɪ | 'eldɪst | 'sʌn /

Roach (2000 : 130) states that “the foot begins with a stressed word and includes all the following unstressed syllables up to the following stressed syllable .”

2.3.2 Weak Forms (or unstressed syllables)

Ladefoged (1993 : 107) states that “words such as auxiliary verbs , conjunctions , prepositions , pronouns , relative pronouns and articles (form or grammatical words) , are more likely to be unaccented .”When grammatical words are pronounced alone, they are pronounced in their strong forms

ud /ʃ(38) **but** / bʌt / , **have** / hæv / , **should** /

However, when they come in an utterance they lose their stress. Sometimes weak forms are stressed in a sentence if the meaning requires them. Weak forms are an essential part of English speech (Trouvain, 2003:3). Almost all words which are pronounced in both ways (a strong and weak forms) are connected with what is called function words, i.e. words that do not have a dictionary meaning, words which do not carry full lexical meaning, but rather a grammatical or functional significance we tend to swallow non-essential words. Thus, conjunctions, pronouns, prepositions, auxiliaries and articles are often lost. Janssen (1983:190) states that "it is important to remember that there are certain contexts where only the strong form is acceptable." There are some simple rules for that :

1. When the weak form comes at the end of a sentence,

(39) **Chips are what I am fond of.**

ɪps ə 'wɒt aɪm 'fɒnd ɒv /] / 't

2. When it is used for contrast with other words,

(40) **I speak to her not for her**

ɔ / aɪ 'spi:k tu: ə nɒt 'f_r hə: /

3. When it is used for emphasis ,

(41) **You should hand me more money**

ud 'hænd mɪ 'm : 'mʌni /ɪ / ju

ξ. When it is being cited or quoted ,

(ξϒ) You mustn't put " but " at the end of the sentence .

/ ju 'mʌsnt put 'bʌt ət ði 'end əv ə 'sentəns /

Now , the most common weak forms will be listed .

Word	Strong Form	Weak Form
a	eɪ	ə
an	æn	ən

the	ði:	ði, ðə
some	sʌm	səm
that	ðæt	ðæt,
there	ðeə	ðə
am	æm	əm, m
are	a:	ə
be	bi:	bɪ
been	bi:n	bin
did	dɪd	did,
do	du:	du, də
does	dʌz	dəz
had	hæd	əd, d, həd
has	hæz, hæz	əz, əz
have	hæv	hæv, əv
is	ɪz	z, s
was	wɒz	wəz, z
were	wə:	wə
can	kæn	kən
could	kʊd	kəd, d

must	mʌst	məst , məs
shall	ʃæl	ʃɪ , ʃəl
should	ʃʊd	ʃəd , d
will	wɪl	'ɪ

Word	Strong Form	Weak Form
would	wʊd	wəd , d
at	æt	ət
from	fɹɒm	frəm
for	fɔː	fə
of	ɒv	əv , v
or	ɔː	ɔː
to	tuː	tu , tə
upon	ʌpɒn	əpən
he	hiː	hɪ , ɪ
her	həː	hə

him	hɪm	ɪm
his	hɪz	ɪz
me	mi:	mɪ
who	hu:	hu
my	maɪ	mɪ
she	ʃi:	ʃi
them	ðəm	ðə
we	wi:	wɪ
us	ʌs	əs
You	ju:	ju
your	ɔ j :	jə , jɔ
not	nɒt	nt
than	ðæn	ðən , ðn
but	bʌt	bət
and	ænd	ən , ən, n
as	æz	əz

These tables are taken from Roach (2000: 114-120), O'Connor (1997: 93-90) and Jones (1984: 40).

There are two crucial reasons for considering the learning to use weak forms as important. First, most native speakers find that not an “all strong forms” has used in daily life conversation . Second, which is more important, speakers who are not familiar with the use of weak forms are likely to have difficulty in understanding speakers who do use weak forms. Raising learners’ awareness of these forms, whenever they arise, is the first step towards helping EFL learners to speak a little more naturally(Steele, ٢٠٠٢:٢).

٢.٤ Elision

A common process in informal speech is elision, the “missing out” of a consonant or vowel, or both, that would be present in the slow colloquial pronunciation of a word in isolation.

Brown (١٩٧٨ : ٦٠)

Another phenomenon of connected speech is elision, the process by which sounds that would be pronounced in slow and careful speech seem to disappear. This is a topic which has had its place in the description of the pronunciation of languages for a long time . The name ‘elision’ refers to the disappearance of one or more sounds in connected speech that would be

pronounced in isolation (Gimson, ١٩٨٩: ٢٩٧). The effect is also found when we compare rapid speech with slow, careful speech. The omission of speech sounds within a word or in utterances is usually for the sake of making pronunciation easy . So native speakers may drop out phonemes that a foreigner might expect to hear in informal speech.

٢.٤.١ Types of Elision

١. Word internal elision .
٢. Reduction affecting particular words and syllables under weak accent in connected speech .
٣. Sounds may be elided in rapid speech especially at or in the vicinity of word boundaries .

The second type of elision is associated with weak forms and it has been dealt in the previous pages . The types (١ and ٣) will be discussed the following sections.

٢.٤.١.١ Word Internal Elision_

Al-Nassiri (١٩٧٧: ١١٤) says “it is important to distinguish between cases of elision which have been established in the language for some time and those

which have become current recently". In these latter cases, the forms exhibiting elision are typical rapid colloquial speech (Knowles: 1987, 129).

2.4.2.2 Elision of Vowels within Words

1. Gimson (1976: 237) states that "when a vowel comes under weak (or unstressed) syllable within a word, it is lost." This type of elision is called historical or established elision, like

Initially: **state**, **scholar**, **simple** (the loss of vowels under accent within the word has occurred at various stages of the language's development and is now established)

Medially: examples:

ednbrə /'fæmli /, Edinburgh /'(ɛɜ) family /

ɪnrəst /.' interest /

Finally: examples:

kʌzn/. 'i:tn /, cousin /'(ɛɛ) eaten /

٢ . Present colloquial . Gimson (ibid) states that “in present English elision is likely to take place especially in a sequence of unaccented syllables, in respect of / ə / and / ɪ / ” . The present colloquial comes under certain cases ; when a vowel comes under unstressed (weak) syllables , it is lost as in the following cases :

A. The vowel sound in unstressed syllables concerned with / ə / and / ɪ / . These sounds are elided whether they precede or follow a stressed syllable.

١ . / ə / or / ɪ / follows a stressed syllable like,

dɪfɪklt /'prɒbəbli / , difficult /'(ɛə) probably /

gʌvnmənt / 'næʃnl / , government /'(ɛʃ) national /

(Jones: ١٩٨٤, ١٤٠)

٢ . /ə / or / ɪ / precedes a primary stressed syllable like:

Examples:

bli:v /'pli:s / , believe /'(ɛv) police /

drekʃn /'blu:n / , direction /'(ɛʌ) balloon /

B. The sequence (consonant + /ə / + / r / + weak vowel) tends to lose the / ə /
 e.g. 'preferable', the syllable /fər/ is reduced to / fr / .Gimson (1989 : 238)
 states that "similar reductions affect / ə r / following other consonants,"

example:

tempri / 'reptri /, **temporary** /'(29) repertory/

The following examples involve the loss of unstressed / ɪ /, all lose an
 unstressed medial vowel in a word of the structure stress-unstress-stress

(Brown: 1978: 68).

Examples: (00)

kæbnət /.'sɪmlə /, minister /mɪnstə /, cabinet /' similar /

2.4.1.3 Elision of Vowels in a Sequence of Words

Apart from word internal elision, vowels may be elided in sequences of
 words.

tmi:t / , 'lʌndn / , To meet /'bækt '(01) **Back to London** /

θri: / .'tu:t ' **Two to three** /

Brown (1978 : 68) states that “ very many sentences beginning with (it’s) occurring in many data and in the majority of these the initial / l / is elided ”,

prɒbbli / . ' nɒt / , it’s probably / ts ' (02) it’s not / ts

Just as the form ‘ it’s ’ is often simplified to / ts / , so / lks / is often simplified to / ks / or / s / as in :

spləʊʒn / 'ksaɪtɪd / , explosion / ' (03) excited /

Mohanan (1986 : 26) states that “when an appropriate vowel precedes, word initial / ə / may coalesce with the preceding vowel, e.g. try

gə : wei / . ” 'again / tra : gen / , go away /

2.4.1.4 Elision in Consonants within Words

A . Established. The reduction of consonant clusters , for example,

Initial:

(04) write /raɪt / , know / nəʊ / , gnaw / n : /

Medial:

kæsl/'ɒfn /, castle / 'fɑ:sn /, often / '(ə) fasten /

Final:

(ə) **lamb** / læm /, **hymn** / him /

(Gimson: 1989, 239)

B . Present Colloquial . In present English , simplification of clusters continues to take place , especially in such cases where:

1. The alveolars (t , d) are lost when medial in a cluster of three consonants . In the following examples, retention of alveolar plosives is characteristic of careful speech :

zækli /, facts / fæks /, mostly / məʊsli /, '(ə) **Exactly** / Ig
ɪf /ʃhæŋkət' hænsʌm / and **handkerchief** /'handsome /

2. The loss of /θ, f, ð / as in:

æzmə /, **twelfths** / twelfs /, **clothes** / kləʊz / .'(ə) **asthma** /

3. In very rapid speech , the loss of / k / in ' asked 'and /l /

in ' **only** ' like :

a:stɪm /.'(ə) **I asked him** /

ξ. There is a tendency for /l/ to be lost when preceded by **ʃ** : /, for example:

○ redɪ **ʃ** ' :weɪz /, already / : '(60) always /

○ rait / . ' all right / :

ο. Whole syllables may be elided in rapid speech especially in the vicinity of /r

/ for example:

febri / . 'laɪbri /, February / ' (61) library /

(Schane, 1973: 60)

ϖ. In compounds, a combination of two consonants has been reduced to a

kʌbəd /". 'single sound, e.g. cupboard /

bəʊsn /, ' blæga:d /, boatswain / '(62) black guard /

gʌnl /. (Christophersen, 1966: 144)' gunwale /

ϖ.ϖ.1.ο Elision of Consonants in Connected Speech

Knowles (1987:129) states that “/ t / or /d / may be elided or ‘dropped’ when it occurs in the middle of a consonant cluster, usually when the next consonant begins the following word”. The most common place for elision is at the end of a syllable . The / t / and / d / are the most usual sounds to be omitted when they come between two consonants, for example:

θri: /, next day / neks deɪ /, 'fə:s ' (123) first three /
 a:ns /, bend back / ben bæɪk /. ʃ (124) last chance /læs t

Ladafoged (1993 : 207) states that “ elision of final / t / or / d / is
 l:st hæm / moved house / 'rare before initial / h /, e.g. East ham /
 mu:vd haʊs / .” Sometimes the sequence /-skt / , / k / rather than / t /
 is often elided, for example:

æ s ðəm / . 'prɪsn /, asked them / '(125) risked prison /rɪs

There are other sounds that may be elided in certain conditions . These
 involve / v , r , ð , n / and / k / . Here are some examples of the elision of
 / v /.

eəz ə bɪn /ʃ '(126) Shares have been /

nɪz ə ðə / . (Brown, 1978: 69) (67) **Needs of the /**

In these two examples, the /v/ is the lost consonant of the unstressed grammatical form followed by a consonant. It is often elided. (Knowles, 1987: 130)

sku:l /'li: 'ɪldrən ɪt' (68) **Children leave school /**

nju:z / 'em 'pi 'faɪ (69) **Five p.m. news /**

In the above examples, /v/ is the final consonant of a lexical form which is elided. They are less frequent but are by no means rare.

Examples of the elision of /ð/ are as follows:

stɔ:ri /'gɒtə 'ɪ (70) **She got the story /**

weɪ ə ðə /'wentə (71) **Went the way of the /**

Brown (1978: 64) states that “the form of the definite article being noticed as /ə/, in all cases the definiteness of the noun is clearly established and phonetic /ə/ can only be interpreted as realizing the form /ðə/.” The word (the) is usually pronounced as /ə/ for the simplification of speech.

Examples of elided /r/ are as follows :

gəu /'jə: '(ʏʏ) a year ago / ə

terist /'(ʏʒ) terrorist /

The above examples show the loss of /r/ immediately following a stressed syllable where /r/ is initial in an unstressed syllable/re/. In both cases not only does /r/ become elided but also the vowel /ə/. The preceding vowel is lengthened in each example (Baker , 1992 : 62).

membə /'kæntɪ '(ʏʒ) can't remember /

This example shows the loss of /r/ in an unstressed syllable in a lexical word .

This is common in words like 'remove' for example:

mu:v ɪm /,'(ʏʐ)Who can remove him / hu: kæntɪ

(ʏʒ)'resolve' A telescope can resolve a problem

sɒlv ə prɒbləm / . (ibid:63). ' / ə telɪskəʊp kæntɪ

Sometimes /r/ is elided when there is a sequence of /r/ sounds, for example,

lɪtrɪ /.' (ʏʏ) Literary/

Here are examples of elided / n / :

twi: ðətu /

(ʏʁ) ' (ʏʌ) **between the two** / bi

kɒstəntli /'constantly /

pʌblik /'(ʌʰ) **known to the public** / nəʊtð

The / n / is elided in a final position in stressed syllables .

ten /'ru:m 'mɪtɪŋɪ ' (ʌʌ) **meeting in room** ten /

eɪp /ɪ' (ʌʏ) **it's in the shape** / tʃɪ ðə

Harms (1968 :167) states a general rule for the elision / n /. “ the only requirement seems to be that / n / should be followed by another consonant either in the same syllable or in the next syllable ” .

2.0 Assimilation

Schane (1973 : 67) defines assimilation as “ the process of replacing a sound by another sound under the influence of a third sound which is near to it in a word or sentence ” . When a sound anticipates some feature of the features of the pronunciation of the following sound , continues some feature of a preceding sound , it is said to ‘ assimilate ’ to that sound . This adjustment

of each segment to its neighbours is a characteristic of all human speech . It is the main reason for the very wide variety of ‘allophones of each phoneme’ .

Malmberg (1963 : 60) asserts that “ the modifications to which sounds are subjected when in contact with other sounds are not of such a nature as to alter the essential qualities of these sounds ” .

He means that a labialized / l / and a velarized / t / remain / l / and / t / in spite of their secondary qualities . The plural -s is pronounced as / s / in ‘cats’ but a / z / in ‘dogs’ . But sometimes it happens that these modifications change more qualities . For example the / t / is changed into / m / as in

(13) let me / lem mɪ / .

There are two types of assimilation in English: ‘historical assimilation’ and ‘contextual assimilation’ .

Jones (1968 : 218) defines the historical assimilation as “ assimilation which has taken place in the course of development of a language and by which a word which was once pronounced in a certain way comes to be pronounced subsequently in another way ” . An example of historical assimilation is the change of / m / to / n / which has taken place in the word ‘ant’ / ænt / , For example,

(^{Λξ}) 'picture' is pronounced / 'pɪktʃʊr / some hundreds of years ago is now pronounced / 'pɪktʃə / .

(^{Λο}) 'opportunity' is pronounced / 'ɒpətʃʊnɪtɪ / some years ago but comes to be pronounced now as / 'ɒpətʃənɪtɪ / .

The other kind of assimilation is contextual assimilation , by which a word comes to have a pronunciation different from that which it has when said in isolation . An example of contextual assimilation is as follows:

(^{Λϛ}) the change of / s / to / ʃ / when 'horse' / h :s / and 'shoe' / ʃu: / are put together and form **horse –shoe** / h :ʃ ʃu: / .

(^{ΛϞ}) **this year** / ðɪʃ jə / .

Jones (1969 :131) states a third kind of assimilation which may be called 'negligent assimilation' . He says " it takes place when words are said carelessly and with modified pronunciation . Some of this assimilation may perhaps be regarded as particular causes of historical assimilation , on the assumption that the unassimilated forms are older " . Examples of this type are seen in the negligent pronunciations of

(^{ΛΛ}) / əʊpm / for / əʊpən / 'open'

(⁸⁹) / ʃ / for /s/ in / 'kwɛʃʃn / 'question' .

When a sound is changed under the influence of a preceding sound into one similar to it, this process is called 'progressive assimilation', for example,

(⁹⁰) 'It's a book' / it s ə 'buk /

(⁹¹) 'He's here' / hi:z 'hiə /

When a sound is changed under the influence of a following sound into one more similar to it, the process is called 'regressive assimilation' for example,

(⁹²) 'have to' / hæv tu / , 'this shirt' / ðɪʃ ʃə:t / ,

o

'horse-shoe' / 'h :ʃ ʃu: /

Roach(^{2000:139}) mentions three types of assimilation that occur between two consonants, which are "differences in place of articulation, differences in manner of articulation, and differences in voicing."

Assimilation of place can be seen in some cases where a word ends with an alveolar followed by a word beginning with an initial consonant (not alveolar) . For example , the final / t / of 'that' will become / p / before a bilabial consonant as in:

(93) **that person** / ðæp pɜ:sn / .

Sometimes / t / is changed to / k / as in:

(94) **that cup** / ðæk kʌp / , 'that girl' / ðæk gɜ:l / .

The following examples also have assimilation of place:

(95) / d / becomes / b / as in **good pen** / gʊb pen /

good man / gʊb mæn /

(96) / d / becomes / g / as in **good concert** / gʊg kɒnsət /

good girl / gʊg gɜ:l /

(97) / n / becomes / m / as in **ten players** / tem pleiəz /

ten boys / tem bɔɪz /

(98) / n / becomes / ŋ / as in **ten cups** / ten kʌps /

ten girl / ten gɜ:lz /

shop /ʃɒp / as in **this shop** / ðɪʃɒp / (99) / s / becomes /

ænl /ʃ tʃ jə / , **cross channel** / kɒskʌnəl / **this year** / ðɪ

(1.1) / z / becomes / ʒ / as in **those young men** / ðəʊʒ jʌŋ men /

ɪ /ʃ ʃɪ / or / hæʃtʃp / , **has she?** / hæʒ ʃi:ʒ / **cheese shop** / t

(Hawkins, 1984:188)

Complex operations may happen when more than one process of assimilation take place when consonants are adjacent in clusters, for example:

(1.1) **don't** / dəʊmp bɪ / **be late; he's found** / faʊmb /

both , red and black / reb m blæk / .

Assimilation in manner of articulation is less noticeable than assimilation of place . Roach (2000:140) states that “ it is thus possible to find cases where a final plosive becomes a fricative or nasal. ” For example :

(1.2) **that side** / ðæs saɪd / , **good night** / gʊn naɪt / .

The tendency of the assimilation of manner in English is towards regressive assimilation. In one case , there is a progressive assimilation of manner , when a word begins with / ð / preceded by a word which has a final plosive or a nasal, for example:

—————(→.ʔ) in the / ɪn ðə / / ɪn nə /

(1.4) get them / get ðəm / —————→ / get tem /

(1.5) read these / ri:d ði:z / —————→ / ri:d di:z / .

Assimilation in voice is found in a limited way, and only regressive assimilation at morpheme or word boundaries is seen in RP (Reach, 1990: 140). The situation is like the following: When a word ends with a lenis (voiced consonants) and followed by a fortis (voiceless consonants), the voiced sound becomes voiceless. For example:

(1.6) was sent /wəz sent / —————→ /wəs sent /

(1.7) ~~good time~~ / ~~ɡʊd taɪm~~ / / ɡʊt taɪm /

(Gimson, 1976: 293)

The process above involves devoicing before voiceless consonants, the converse-voicing a final consonants before a voiced consonant-is unusual in RP. Students may allow regressive assimilation of voicing to change the final / s / into / z / in words like

(1.8) this village / ðɪs vɪlɪdʒ / —————→ / ðɪz vɪlɪdʒ /

On the other hand, the final / k / is changed into / ɡ / as in

ɡ / ɒ (1.9) ~~black dog~~ / blæk dɒɡ / / blæɡ d

(Hawkins, 1984: 18)

۲.۶ Liaison_

Knowles (۱۹۸۷: ۱۳۲) states that “a problem of a different order arises when two vowels come together across the boundary. The transition from one (/haɪ eltəz / from HIATUS vowel to the other is known as

a Latin word meaning ‘gap’). In connected speech, words should flow into each other naturally, smoothly and fluently without any clash between one word and the next. English avoids the clash of vowels as far as possible between words by using glides depending on the nature of the first vowel.

۲.۶.۱ Linking / r /

The pronunciation or elision of / r / depends on its surroundings. It is only pronounced before a vowel and only if that vowel follows without a pause. For example:

- intrəst /, ' () more interest / m :r
- four inches / f :r ɪntʃɪz /.

Kenworthy (۱۹۹۰: ۸۲) states that “those British speakers who don’t pronounce final / r / will reintroduce it when the next word begins with a vowel.” The / r / which exists at the end of a word if the next one begins with a

vowel is known as the linking / r / . It is a very common feature in English . Its purpose is to avoid a clash of vowels between words . The vowel endings to which / r / may be justifiably added are / a:, ɪ, ə, ə:, ɪə, eə, ʊə /, for example in

(1 1 1) far off /fɑ: rɒf /, four acres /f :eɪsɪz /, answer it /'ɑ:nsər ɪt /,
 /,
 said /, wear out /weər aʊt /. 'fur inside /f ɜ:r ɪn

This linking / r / is only used when there is / r / in the spelling.

2.6.2 Intrusive / r /

English people have a tendency to insert a linking /r/ even in cases where there is no / r / in the spelling, for example:

dɪər əv ɪt /. '(1 1 2) the idea of it / ðə aɪ

This type of / r / without any equivalent in spelling is known as the intrusive / r /. Such intrusive / r / is heard particularly in the case of / ə / endings, for example:

mju:zɪk/. 'dra:mər ən '(1 1 3) drama and music /

Roach (2000: 144) states that “BBC speakers often use /r/ in a similar way to link words endings with a vowel, even when there is no justification for it: /ju:lər eɪ / .” There is a general tendency among RP speakers to use intrusive /r/ as a link often with final /ə / , but some people object very strongly to it because it seems very strange to them (Katamba, 1989: 74). It is an established feature of British English, and must be considered as a characteristic of contemporary RP. Gimson (1989: 303) states that “words containing final /a: / or /ɔ: / without an earlier form with /r / are less common than those with /ə / .” The use of the intrusive /r / is extended to the following phrases ending with /a: / or /ɔ: / . There is of course no spelling justification. These words do not end in /r/ but end with long vowels, for simplification, native speakers use to insert /r/ at the end of them. These are rare cases.

ʃa:r əv pə:ʃə /, '() ʃ) Shah of Persia /

ɔ : də /.'law and order / l : r ənd

2.6.3 The Glides

٢.٦.٣.١ The / w / Glide

Kenworthy (١٩٩٠: ٨٣) states that “/ w / is added if the vowel at the end of the first word has a rounded lip position, i.e. / u: / ‘do’, / əʊ / ‘so’, / : / ‘saw’ and / aʊ / ‘now’

(١١٥) Please do it / plɪ:z du: ^wɪt /

In the following utterances, / w / is used to avoid a glottal stop or a clash of vowels with the next word, which normally starts with a vowel sound.

The / w / glide can be found in three groups of utterances:

١. Where words end in / u: /

(١١٦) You answer / ju: ^wɑ: nsə /,

Do eat / du: ^wi:t /, Who are you? / hu: ^wər ju: /.

٢. Where words end in / əʊ /

(١١٧) Throw it away / θrəʊ ^wɪt ə'weɪ /,

go in / gəʊ ^wɪn / ,co-exist / kəʊ ^wɪg 'zɪst /.

٣. When words end in / aʊ /

(118) **now and then** / nəʊ wənd ðən /,
how about it / haʊ wəb 'aʊt it /.

2.6.3.2. The /j/ Glide

The /j/ glide can be found in five groups of utterances. Kenworthy (ibid: 13) states that “ /j/ is added if the vowel at the end of the word has lip-spreading, i.e. /aɪ/ ‘I’, /eɪ/ ‘say’, /i:/ ‘we’, /ɪ/ ‘boy’.”

Therefore, this statement can be clarified in the following points :

1. Words ending in /i:/

(119) **see and hear** / si: jən hɪə /; **she and I** /ʃi: jən aɪ /.

2. Words ending in /ɪ/

twenty /tenti jɛɪt /; **'əʊpənɪŋ** /; **twenty-eight** /'tɛnti eɪt / (120) **the opening** /ðə 'ɔɪnɪŋ /

3. Words ending in /aɪ/

ʌŋkl /; **'ɒnə** /, **my uncle** /maɪ j'ʌŋkl / (121) **on my honour** /ɒn maɪ j'ɒnə /

4. Words ending in /eɪ/

(122) **say it again** /seɪ jɪt ə'geɪn /, **they advised** /ðeɪ jəd 'vaɪzɪd /.

o

e. Words ending in / : /

dʒ | jɪt / bɔɪ and gɜːl / bɔɪ : jən gəːl / .'(123) enjoy it / ɪn

The two linking sounds , the / w / and the / j / glides may be used together , for example,

(124) She asked me to do it / ʃiː jæskt mi tə duː wɪt / ,

You aren't very old / jəʊ wɑːnt veri jəʊld / ,

go away and play / gəʊ wɛɪ j ənd pleɪ / .

2.7 Previous Study

The researcher has found that few studies are in this field of study (concerning connected speech).

Ahmed Mustafa Hussein, (2000).(Ph.D)

“Phonetic and Phonological Aspects of Connected Speech in English and Arabic”

This piece of work is a study of connected speech processes in RP English and BA Arabic; with a view to find out more about their phonetic effects, their interaction, and the conditioning factors that trigger their application, as well as the ways these processes differ from other high-order substitution or morphophonemic phonological rules.

This study is limited to the patterns of speech modification observed in RP English and Baghdad Arabic. The data has been collected from Gimson (١٩٦٧) and Brown (١٩٩٦) for English and Al-Hanafi (١٩٨٧) for Arabic.

The study aims to investigate the phenomenon of connected speech with a view to finding out:

١. The types of processes operating in English and Arabic.
٢. The motivation and conditioning of these processes, especially as to speed, style, social factors and language structure.
٣. The systemic effects the processes bring about in each of the two languages and their implications for the ideal phonological system.

The following are conclusions arrived at :

١. RP leans more towards reduction and simplification while BA is richer in assimilation and this is a consequence of Arabic rhythmic and morphological structure.

۲. Motivating factor such as rate, style, social factors are equally manifested in determining speech variation in both languages.
۳. This language-specificity may be explained partly in terms of the nature of the structure of the language and concern partly in terms of general tendencies characterizing the speech habit of the speakers.

Chapter Three

The Test

۳.۱ Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce how the aims of the study can be achieved. It is meant to identify learner's strengths and weaknesses in understanding connected speech. In order to fulfill the aims of this study, the researcher has adopted a description of test with its practical steps. These steps are : the aims of the test , its material selection , its design , the subjects to whom the test has been applied and the procedures followed in the construction of the test which are validity , reliability , the pilot and the administration of the test with the statistical methods used for validating the test as well as analyzing the results .

۳.۲ The Aims of the Test

It is supposed that tests are necessary because of their effect on teaching and learning. Information about learners' language ability is very useful and necessary. Tests are needed in order to provide information about the achievement of groups of learners without which "it is difficult to see how rational educational decisions can be made" (Hughes, ۱۹۹۶:۴). A good test will help to locate the

precise area of difficulty encountered by a group of learners or by the individual learner. It is necessary for the teacher to diagnose his learners' weaknesses and difficulty and the learner gets opportunity to "show his ability to recognize and produce correct forms of the language" (Weir, ١٩٩٠: ٢).

This test has been structured to investigate to what extent Iraqi EFL university learners master those aspects of connected speech. It is a diagnostic test that aims not only at measuring and identifying the learners' strengths and weaknesses in using those aspects of connected speech but also the causes of their errors in order to find a remedial work and recommendations on the basis of the test results .

٣.٣ Selection of Material

Most of the items of the test have been selected from papers and books mentioned in Chapter Two. In addition, there are some practical books used to choose the test items. These books are A Practical Course of English Phonology by Gimson (١٩٨١), and Pronunciation Workbook for Student Teachers by Al-Hamash and et.al (١٩٨٣). These items cover as far as possible most of the forms of those aspects of connected speech. A Jury committee of nine experienced

university lecturers have approved of the selection of the test
items.

The test has been given to the following teachers

Prof. Abdul Latif Al-Jumaily (Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics),
College of Arts/ University of Baghdad.

Prof. Salih M. Hameed (Ph.D. in literature), College of
Education/
University of Babylon.

Asst. Prof. Abbas D. Darweesh (Ph.D. in Language and
linguistics)

College of Education/ University of Babylon.

Asst. Prof. Razzaq N. Mukheef (M.A. in English Language and
Linguistics), College of Education / University of
Babylon.

Asst. Prof. Riyadh Tariq Kadhim (Ph.D. in Linguistics and
Translation) College of Education / University of
Babylon.

Lecturer Ahmed Mustafa Hussein (Ph.D. in English Language
and
Linguistics) College of Education/ Ibn Rushd/
University
of Baghdad.

Lecturer A'sim A. Al-Dulaimi (Ph.D. in Methods of Teaching
English as a FL). College of Basic Education /
University of Babylon.

Lecturer Chassib Fannukh Al- Jubouri (PH.D in Method of Teaching English as a FL). Open Educational College.

Lecturer Fareed H. Al-Hindawi (Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics).College of Education/ University of Babylon.

٣.٤ Test Design

The test consists of two groups. The first group involves Questions One and Three. They are designed to measure the subjects' responses at the recognition level. Question One includes ten items intended to measure the subjects' ability to divide the sentences into feet (rhythmical units). The subjects have to know the words that are stressed and the others that are unstressed words to divide the sentences.

In Question Three, the subjects are supplied with five items and asked to state how they can recognize the spoken words. The subjects' responses to this question will reflect the extent to which they can distinguish the sentences. The researcher has used a computer programme named "Talk It" (Microsoft CO. 1996) to record the items of the test, which reads them in correct pronunciation in English, like a native speaker. The researcher has recorded them by a sophisticated recorder. The learners are directed to write the sentences as they are read by the recorder. This method has achieved success because the majority of learners realized what the recorder reads.

The other group contains two questions, which are Questions Two and Four. They are designed to measure the subjects' responses at the production level. Question Two contains ten items. All of the four basic processes are tested.

The subjects are asked to respond to two kinds of speech (which are slow speech and connected speech). In connected speech, the subjects have to respond correctly. These sentences contain the aspects of connected speech like assimilation, elision, linking, except rhythm. On the basis of the subjects' responses, their ability to produce correct transcription to connected speech can be measured.

Question Four contains six items. In this question, the subjects are requested to write phonemically what they hear from the recorder. Thus, their ability to do so can be measured. The learners must show the sounds assimilate, the reduction of sounds (whether vowels or consonants) and the processes of liaison. The aim is to know whether these learners are able to transcribe sentences by using connected speech processes or by merely using the citation form. This will help the researcher to know the extent to which they could differentiate between the two modes of pronunciation i.e. the citation form mode and the connected speech processes mode.

A good test, however, must have the features of validity, reliability, economy, scorability and administrability. These are to be discussed in some detail in the following sections.

۳.۵ Validity of the Test

Validity refers to whether or not a test measures what it claims to measure. A test can demonstrate validity if it measures just the ability which it is supposed to measure (Hughes, ۱۹۹۶, ۲۶). In order to accomplish the validity of the

test, two types of validity must be discussed which are face validity and content validity (Heaton, 1970: 104).

A test is said to have face validity if it looks as if it measures what it is supposed to measure. Face validity pertains to whether the test looks valid to the examinees who take it, the administrative personnel who decide on its use, and other technical observers (Anastasi, 1982: 136).

Anastasi (ibid: 131) defines content validity as “essentially the systematic examination of the test content to determine whether it covers a representative sample of the behaviour domain to be measure.” This kind of validity relies on a careful analysis of the language being tested and the objectives of a particular course (Underhill, 1987: 104). Thus, the items of the test are assumed to be valid since they are designed to satisfy the aims of the test.

To check face and content validity, the test has been submitted to a jury of experts. The jury members discussed the words and sentences carefully. Some of them gave some modifications. The researcher took their valuable notes into consideration and the necessary modification accordingly.

३.१ Reliability of the Test

Reliability of the test is a necessary characteristic of any good test. First, a test should be reliable as a measuring instrument. Lado (१९६२: ३१) states that “reliability is measured by a correlation between the scores of the same set of students on two consecutive administrations of the test. This is known as the re-testing coefficient of reliability.”

Heaton (१९७०: १०६) mentions that there are different methods for measuring the reliability of a test such as: Test / retest, two equivalent forms split, and Kurder-Richardson method. The reliability of the present test can be estimated by using the formula of Kurder-Richardson:

$$R = \frac{N}{N-1} \left(1 - \frac{M(N-M)}{NX^2} \right)$$

where N = number of items in the test

M = mean score of the test for all the testees

X = the standard deviation of all the testees' scores

R = reliability

The reliability coefficient of the present test is (.86) for the test is applied at Al-Qaddissiya University and for that at Babylon University which are positive correlations.

3.7 Subjects

The sample of the study contains 100 subjects of the third stage of the academic year (2004-2005) at the Departments of English at the Colleges of Education, at the Universities of Babylon and Al-Qaddissiya.

The sample represents about 40% of the total learners' population. They are native speakers of Iraqi Arabic who have similar EFL backgrounds and their average age is twenty-one years old.

Third year learners are preferred to apply the test because the topic under investigation has been taught in the second half of their second year of study at the university. Therefore, they are quite advanced learners of English since

they get a large amount of vocabulary and grammar. The textbook adopted is Phonetics and Phonology by Peter Roach (1990).

٢.٨ Pilot Administration

After constructing the test, a pilot study was required to find out exactly whether the test is practical to be constructed or not. A pilot study has been applied on ٢٠th/ April / ٢٠٠٥ to the learners at University of Babylon and on ٢١st/ April / ٢٠٠٥ to the learners at University of Al-Qadisiya.

Each test has been administrated to ten subjects selected from each university. They are randomly chosen from the third year learners and they are excluded from the main test.

The sample results of the pilot study can be a good indicator for making any necessary modifications in the final version of the test, to estimate the time allotted for answering all items of the test then to analyzed the items to determine their effectiveness in terms of their difficulty and their discrimination power.

The findings of the pilot study indicated that the time required to answer the four questions was about one hour and that some instructions needed some modifications. All

the findings gained from the pilot study of this test have been incorporated into the final version of the test.

3.9 Item Analysis

Before the designing of any test, careful specifications of objectives and test specification will be urged. The performance of test samples is of obvious importance in estimating how much information each single item of the test should contribute to the whole information of the test (Oller, 1993, 172). All items should be examined from the point of view of (1) their difficulty level and (2) their level of discrimination.

3.9.1 Item Difficulty

The index of difficulty (or the facility value) of an item simply indicates “how easy or difficult the particular item proved in the test” (Allen and Davies: 1977, 172). The index of difficulty or facility value (F.V) is expressed by using the formula:

$$F.V =$$

$$N$$

where F.V = Facility value

R= the number of correct answers

N= the number of the learners taking the test.

The application of this formula has yielded the item difficulty which ranges between 0.10 to 0.80 (see Table 1). In this respect, Bloom et al. (1981:90) point out that a good spread of results can be obtained if the items vary in difficulty from 0.20 to 0.80. Therefore, the item difficulty of the present test is satisfactory except for item (1) in Question (1), item (9) in question (2) and item (1) in Question (2) which have been replaced by others.

3.9.2 Item Discrimination

The discrimination index of an item shows “the extent to which the item discriminates between the testees, separating the more able testees from the less able” (Heaton: 1970, 173). The following formula has been used to find out the item discrimination power:

$$D = \frac{\text{Correct U} - \text{Correct L}}{N}$$

where D= the index of discrimination

U= upper half

L= lower half

N= number of the learners taking the test.

After carrying out of this formula, the discrimination power has been found to range between 0.2 and 0.8 (in Table One).

The following table shows the facility value and the discrimination index of each item.

Table (١)

The Facility Value and the Discrimination Index
of the Items

No. of Question	D	F V	No. of Item		No. of Question		
			D	F V	No. of Item	No. of Item	
١	٣	٠.٤٠	٠.١٠	١	١	٠.٨٠	٠.٦٠
		٠.٢٠	٠.٧٠	٢	٢	٠.٢٠	٠.٢٠
		٠.٦٠	٠.٧٠	٣	٣	٠.٤٠	٠.٤٠
		٠.٤٠	٠.٢٠	٤	٤	٠.٥٠	٠.٨٠
		٠.٤٠	٠.٤٠	٥	٥	٠.٦٠	٠.٤٠

•.ε. •.1.	1	ε •.2. •.ε.	6	
•.ε. •.2.	2	•.ε. •.3.	7	
•.6. •.3.	3	•.6. •.5.	8	
•.ε. •.2.	ε	•.ε. •.2.	9	
•.ε. •.2.	ο	•.2. •.ε.	10	
•.6. •.2.	6	•.2. •.ε.	1	2
		•.ε. •.2.	2	
		•.ε. •.5.	3	
		•.ε. •.3.	ε	
		•.2. •.ε.	ο	
		•.6. •.5.	6	
		•.2. •.ε.	7	
		•.ε. •.2.	8	
		•.2. •.1.	9	
		•.ε. •.2.	10	

3.1. Final Administration

The main test was applied on 25th and 26th April / 2000 to the sample at the two Universities of Babylon Al-Qaddisiya respectively. The time allotted for the test was an hour. The learners were informed that the test was simply for research purposes.

After introducing the test papers to the testees, the researcher clearly explained and illustrated examples for each question. The learners were directed to answer on the same sheet to save time and effort.

The learners were urged to respond to the questions of the test and ask any question about any vague points. They were told not to write their names on the test sheets so as to avoid embarrassment.

The process of marking the test was done by the researcher using the scoring scheme presented in the following section.

3.11 The Scoring Scheme

Aiming at obtaining objectivity and reliability of the test, the researcher has adopted a definite scoring scheme. The entire test has been scored out of (100). The scores have been distributed in such a way as to give each correct item in Question One two scores, three scores for each correct item in Question Two, four scores for each item in Question Three and five scores for each item in Question Four. Incorrect items or ignored items have been given zero.

The scoring scheme adopted for the present test is shown in the following table.

Table (2)

Distribution of the Scores of the Test

Percentage	Scores	No. of Items	No. of Question
20	20	10	1
30	30	10	2
20	20	0	3
30	30	6	4

Chapter Four

Result Analysis and Discussion of Results

۴.۱ Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is the presentation and discussion of the results of the test. The researcher will start with the identification of errors subjects have made in using connected speech and analyzing them statistically. This will help to correctly determine the possible sources of these errors so as to investigate the difficulties encountered by Iraqi EFL university learners in manipulating connected speech.

۴.۲ Discussion of Results

In this section, the researcher is trying to present the results of the subject's performance on each question of the test with regard to the recognition and production levels. The degree to which subjects master the connected speech is determined by their correct responses that are important to verify or refute the hypotheses proposed in the outline of this study.

٥٧

٤.٢.١ Subjects' Performance on the First Question

The first question has been constructed to measure the subjects' responses at the recognition level. The following two tables show the results obtained from analyzing the subjects' performance on each item in this question.

Table (٣)

Subjects' Performance at the Recognition Level,

Question (١), University of Babylon

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	١٦	٣٢	٣٢	٦٤	٢	٤
٢	٢٧	٥٤	٢٣	٤٦		
٣	٣٦	٧٢	١٤	٢٨		
٤	٣٠	٦٠	٢٠	٤٠	١	٢
٥	٢٨	٥٦	٢١	٤٢		
٦	٣٢	٦٤	١٨	٣٦		
٧	٢٩	٥٨	٢١	٤٢	١	٢
٨	٣٤	٦٨	١٦	٣٢		
٩	٢٤	٤٨	٢٥	٥٠		
١٠	٣٢	٦٤	١٨	٣٦		
Total	٢٨٨	٥٧.٢	٢٠٨	٤١.٦	٤	٠.٨

Table (٤)

Subjects' Performance at the Recognition level,

Question (١), University of

Al-Qaddissiya

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	٢٠	٤٠	٢٨	٥٦	٢	٤
٢	٢٢	٤٤	٢٤	٤٨	٤	٨
٣	٢٩	٥٨	٢٠	٤٠	١	٢
٤	٣٢	٦٤	١٨	٣٦		
٥	٢٧	٥٤	٢٣	٤٦		
٦	٢٨	٥٦	٢١	٤٢	١	٢
٧	٣١	٦٢	١٩	٣٨		
٨	٣٢	٦٤	١٧	٣٤	١	٢
٩	٢٨	٥٦	٢٢	٤٤		
١٠	٣٠	٦٠	٢٠	٤٠		
Total	٢٧٩	٥٥.٨	٢١٢	٤٢.٤	٩	١.٨

Tables (٣ and ٤) show that the total numbers of correct responses are (٢٨٨, ٥٧.٦ %) for Babylon University learners and (٢٧٩, ٥٥.٨ %) for Al-Qadisiya University learners. The total number of incorrect responses (including avoided ones) are (٢.٧, ٤١.٨ %) for Babylon University learners and (٢١٦, ٤٣.٤) for Al-Qadisiya University learners. The incorrect responses rate displays that the subjects are incompetent in distinguishing the rhythm of sentences.

٤.٢.٢ Subjects' Performance on the Second Question

Question Two is designed to measure the subjects' productive knowledge in transcribing sentences in two ways and the changes and modifications that occur in these ways. The following two tables show the results obtained from analyzing the subjects' performance of each item in this question.

Table (°)

Subjects' Performance at the Production Level,

Question (٢), University of Babylon

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	١٢	٢٤	٣٨	٧٦		
٢	٩	١٨	٤١	٨٢		
٣	١٠	٢٠	٤٠	٨٠		
٤	١٣	٢٦	٣٣	٦٦	٤	٨
٥	١٥	٣٠	٣٥	٧٠		
٦	٢١	٤٢	٢٩	٥٨		
٧	١٩	٣٨	٣١	٦٢		
٨	١١	٢٢	٣٥	٧٠	٤	٨
٩	١٨	٣٦	٣٢	٦٤		
١٠	٢٢	٤٤	٢٨	٥٦		
Total	١٥٠	٣٠	٣٤٢	٦٨.٤	٨	١.٦

Table (٦)

Subjects' Performance at the Production Level,
Question (٢), University of Al-Qadisiya

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	١٣	٢٦	٣٧	٧٤		
٢	٩	١٨	٣٩	٧٨	٢	٤
٣	١٢	٢٤	٣٨	٧٦		
٤	١٥	٣٠	٣٥	٧٠		
٥	١٤	٢٨	٣٣	٦٦	٣	٦
٦	١٩	٣٨	٢٩	٥٨	٢	٤
٧	٢١	٤٢	٢٩	٥٨		
٨	١٨	٣٦	٣٢	٦٤		
٩	١٢	٢٤	٣٨	٧٦		
١٠	١٩	٣٨	٢٧	٥٤	٤	٨
Total	١٥٢	٣٠.٤	٣٣٧	٦٧.٤	١١	٢.٢

It is clear from these two tables (٥ and ٦) that most of the subjects are incompetent in producing correct spelling of connected speech as shown by

the high rates of incorrect responses scored at both universities , (٣٥٠ , ٧٠%) for subjects at Babylon University and (٣٤٨ , ٦٩.٦%) for those at Al-Qadisiya University .

٤.٢.٣ Subjects' Performance on the Third Question

As far as the recognition level is concerned, the third question measures the subjects' ability to recognize sentences they hear from a recorder. The following tables show the subjects' responses to each item in this question.

Tables (٧)

Subjects' Performance at the Recognition Level in

Question (٣), Babylon University

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	٣٧	٧٤	١١	٢٢	٢	٤
٢	٢٠	٤٠	٢٣	٤٦	٧	١٤
٣	١٤	٢٨	٢٩	٥٨	٧	١٤
٤	١٢	٢٤	٣٠	٦٠	٨	١٦
٥	٥	١٠	٣٠	٦٠	١٥	٣٠
Total	٨٨	٣٥.٢	١٢٣	٤٩.٢	٣٩	١٥.٦

Table (A)

Subjects' Performance at the Recognition Level

In Question (٣), University of Al-Qadisiya

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	٣٢	٦٤	١٤	٢٨	٤	٨

٢	٢٠	٤٠	٢٦	٥٢	٤	٨
٣	١١	٢٢	٣٤	٦٨	٥	١٠
٤	١٥	٣٠	٢٩	٥٨	٦	١٢
٥	٨	١٦	٣٦	٧٢	٦	١٢
Total	٨٦	٣٤.٤	١٣٩	٥٥.٦	٢٥	١٠

These two tables reveal that more than half of the subjects have given incorrect responses. The rate of incorrect responses (including avoided items) scored by the subjects is high at both universities , (١٦٢ , ٦٤.٨%) for Babylon University and (١٦٤ , ٦٥.٦ %) for Al-Qadisiya University . This makes it clear that many subjects have encountered some kind of difficulty in recognizing the aspects of connected speech. Tables (٩ and ١٠) display the subjects' total performance at the recognition level.

Table (٩)

Subjects' Total Performance at the

Recognition Level, in Questions (١ and ٣)

Babylon University

No. of Question	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	٢٨٨	٥٧.٦	٢٠٨	٤١.٦	٤	٠.٨
٣	٨٨	٣٥.٢	١٢٣	٤٩.٢	٣٩	١٥.٦
Total	٣٧٦	٤٦.٤	٣٣١	٤٥.٤	٤٣	٨.٢

Table (١٠)

Subjects' Total Performance at the

Recognition Level, Questions (١ and ٣)

Al-Qadisiya University

No. of Question	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	٢٧٩	٥٦.٦	٢١٢	٤٢.٤	٤	٠.٨
٣	٨٦	٣٤.٤	١٣٩	٥٥.٦	٢٥	١٠
Total	٣٦٥	٤٥.٥	٣٥١	٤٩	٢٩	٥.٤

The results obviously show that , at the recognition level , the subjects have encountered difficulties in understanding connected speech since the highest rate of their incorrect responses was (٣٧٤ , ٥٣.٦%) for Babylon University and (٣٨٠ , ٥٤.٥%) for Al-Qadisiya University . Accordingly, the first hypothesis that most of Iraqi EFL university learners are not able to recognize or distinguish the rules of connected speech is verified.

٤.٢.٤ Subjects' Performance on the Fourth Question

Question Four is constructed to measure the subjects' productive knowledge in transcribing the sentences they hear from the recorder. The following two tables display the subjects' responses to this question.

Table (١١)

Subjects' Performance at the Production

Level, Question (٤), Babylon University

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	٨	١٦	٣٤	٦٨	٨	١٦
٢	١١	٢٢	٢٤	٤٨	١٥	٣٠
٣	٧	١٤	٣١	٦٢	١٢	٢٤

٤	٣	٦	٣٢	٦٤	١٥	٣٠
٥	٣	٦	٣٠	٦٠	١٧	٣٤
٦	١٣	٢٦	٢٠	٤٠	١٧	٣٤
Total	٤٥	١٥	١٧١	٥٧	٨٤	٢٨

Table (١٢)

Subjects' Performance at the Production

Level, Question (٤), Al-Qadisiya University

No. of Item	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
١	١٠	٢٠	٢٧	٥٤	١٣	٢٦
٢	١٥	٣٠	٢٣	٤٦	١٢	٢٤
٣	٨	١٦	٢٩	٥٨	١٣	٢٦
٤	١٣	٢٦	٢٧	٥٤	١٠	٢٠
٥	٩	١٨	٢٧	٥٤	١٤	٢٨
٦	١٠	٢٠	٣١	٦٢	٩	١٨
Total	٦٥	٢١.٧	١٦٤	٥٤.٦	٧١	٢٣.٧

Tables (١١) and (١٢) indicate that the learners clearly fail to produce accurate phonetic symbols transcribing sentences spoken rapidly. Thus, the subjects of

Babylon University gave (٢٠٠, ٨٥%) incorrect responses, and the subjects of Al-Qaddisiya University gave (٢٣٥, ٧٨.٣%).

The following tables sum up the subjects' performance at the production level in questions (٢ and ٤):

Table (١٣)

Subjects' Total Performance at the Production Level, Questions (٢ and ٤), Babylon University

No. of Question	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
٢	١٥٠	٣٠	٣٤٢	٦٨.٤	٨	١.٦
٤	٤٥	١٥	١٧١	٥٧	٨٤	٢٨

Total	١٩٥	٢٢.٥	٥١٣	٦٢.٧	٩٢	١٤.٨
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Table (١٤)

Subjects' Performance at the Production

Level, Questions (٧ and ٤), Al-Qadisiya University

No. of Question	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoide d Items	%
٧	١٥٢	٣٠.٤	٣٣٧	٦٧.٤	١١	٢.٢
٤	٦٥	٢١.٧	١٦٤	٥٤.٦	٧١	٢٣.٧
Total	٢١٧	٢٦.٠ ٥	٥٠٦	٦١	٨٢	١٢.٩ ٥

As shown by subjects' scores at both universities , subjects show low recognition knowledge when it comes to distinguishing rules of connected speech from slow speech and proved to be very incompetent in transcribing connected speech . This is illustrated in Tables (١٥ and ١٦) below.

Table (١٥)

Subjects' Performance at the Recognition

and Production Levels, Babylon University

Levels	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
Recognition	376	47.4	331	40.4	4	0.8
Production	190	22.0	513	62.7	92	14.8
Total	566	28.0	844	52.0	96	10.0

Table (16)

Subjects' Performance at the Recognition

and Production Levels, Al-Qadisiya University

Levels	No. of Correct Responses	%	No. of Incorrect Responses	%	No. of Avoided Items	%
Recognition	367	40.0	301	49	29	0.4
Production	217	26.0	507	61	82	12.9
Total	584	30.7	808	50	111	9.17

		٧		٥		
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٤.٣ Error Analysis

٤.٣.١ Sources of Errors

Error analysis is the domain that falls within the field of applied linguistics (Corder, ١٩٩٣:١٩). Teachers and linguists have a great interest in it. This is because error analysis has relevance to the measuring and grading of achievement in language teaching. In addition, error analysis has a considerable contribution to psychology of learning because errors provide the linguist and the psychologist with evidence of how language is learnt. Accordingly, it contributes to the designing of teaching materials since “staging, sequencing and grading rely to a certain degree upon error analysis” (Nickel, ١٩٧٣: ٢٥).

It is agreed upon that traditional error analysis is an attempt to deal with the needs of the teacher since it involves a collection of common errors, their classification into categories and is concerned with a practical goal of correcting and eradicating errors. The data of traditional error analysis involve the observable deviations or errors, that is, the errors that are superficially ill-formed and unacceptable.

Recently, many linguists such as Corder (1967) have revolutionized the concept of traditional error analysis. Instead of considering error analysis as an obstacle to the learning process, the new look at errors is that they are an inevitable feature of the learning process. This recent notion is expressed by Jain (1974: 208) who regards errors as “an essential condition of learning.” Corder also sees learners’ error as indicative of the rules a learner is using and of the strategies in which second language is learned. He (1967: 10) states that learners’ errors are significant in three ways:

First to the teacher, in that they tell him how far towards the goal the learner has progressed Second, they provide the researcher with evidence of how language is learnt or acquired, what strategies the learner is employing in learning the language. Thirdly, they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn.

This section is concerned with identification of the strategies learners use in learning the FL in the analysis of their errors. In accounting for learners’ errors, Brown (1987: 178) states that “errors made by the learners can be attributed to four factors: interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning and communication strategies”.

ξ.ζ.η.η Interlingual Transfer

Some errors may be due to the interference of expressions from the MT. The errors are made by carrying over the speech habits of the native language into FL. Yule (1988: 100) says “some errors may be due to the interference of expressions or structures from the MT.” Learners are not willfully distorting the native system; “they are inventing a system of their own” (Cook, 1991: 7). The learner depends on his native language to solve problems of FL because of the deficiencies of his knowledge of the FL (Corder, 1987: 48).

Part of the errors at the production level displays clues of the influence of the native language. Some of the subjects’ responses to items (0) and (9) in Question (7) can reflect this influence:

Item (0) I don’t believe what that man says to her.

/aɪ dəʊm bi' li:v wət ðəp mən sez tə hə /

* / aɪ 'dəʊn bi'li:v 'wɒt ðæt mæn 'sez tə hə /

Item (9) There was some difficulty in getting everybody here.

dɪ hɪər ɪn taɪm / ɒ / ðeə wəz səm 'dɪfɪkəltɪ ɪn ɡetɪŋ evrɪb

* / ðeə wɒz səm dɪfɪ'kəltɪ ɪn ɡetɪŋ 'evrɪbədɪ hɪə ɪn taɪm/

In Arabic, placement of stress in words is determined by the number and order of consonants and by the quality of the vowel (Kenworthy, 1990: 120). Learners tend to transfer this habit by putting stress on the final syllable of English words ending in a vowel followed by two consonants as in 'difficult'. In addition, learners tend to place stress on the last syllable of a word ending in a diphthong or a long vowel plus a single consonant as in 'believe'. Interference seems also true in relation to items (١), (٣) and (٦) in Question (٢):

Item (١) The idea of it is to praise those churches.

/ ði 'aɪdɪə əv ɪt ɪz tə preɪz ðəʊz tʃɜ:tʃ ɪz /

* / ðə aɪ'dɪər ɪv ɪt ɪz tu: preɪz ðəʊz tʃɜ:tʃ /

Item (٣) / Don't be late for work, good boy?

/ dəʊn'bi: leɪt fə wɜ:k, ɡʊd b ɪ /.

ɔ* / dəʊn bi: leɪt f :r wɜ:k ɡʊd b ɪ /

Item (٦) Do what you think right for us.

/ du: wətʃ ju θɪŋk ɪz raɪt fər əs /

* ɸdu: wɒt ju: θɪŋk raɪt f :r əs /

Subjects' responses to these functioning words are by keeping the vowels in these words in their 'full' stress. This happens because Arabic does not have

two forms like English (there are no weak forms in Arabic) i.e. vowels in unstressed positions are reduced to 'schwa' in English (Cutler, 1984: 11). The same influence can be seen clearly in items (٧, ٩, and ١٠) in Question (٢) connected to interlingual transfer or interference.

Item (٧) She had pronounced guilty.

/ʃɪ hæb prə'naʊnsd ɡɪltɪ /
 naʊnst ɡɪltɪ / ' * / ʃɪ hæd prəʊ

Item (٩) There was some difficulty in getting everybody here .

/ ðeə wəz səm dɪfɪkəltɪ ɪn ɡetɪŋ evrɪbɒdɪ hɪə ɪn taɪm /
 * / ðeə wɒz sʌm dɪfɪkəltɪ ɪn ɡetɪŋ evrɪbədɪ hɪə ɪn taɪm /

Item (١٠) He always has got a good deal of friends.

ɔ v frenz /ə / hɪ^j :weɪz hæz ɡʊd ə ɡʊd di:l
 :lweɪz hæz ɡʊd ə ɡʊd di:l əv frendz/ . ' * / hɪ

Subjects' responses to these forms of auxiliary verb are by using full forms of auxiliary verbs when the weak form should be used. Thus, subjects transcribe (was, had, has) in their full forms instead of their weak forms (ɪz, 'd, wəz). It will sound as if the speaker is denying something in the sentence

when this meaning is not intended. For example in: 'He always has(hæz) got instead of he always has (IZ) got, there is an emphasis on the auxiliary verbs, making the sentences look as if they are said in a denying manner ('He always has got a good deal of friends even if you say he always hasn't).

The researcher has noticed that the total number of such errors is about (10.1%) for learners at University of Babylon and (10.2) for learners at University of Al-Qadisiya ,of the total number of the subjects' errors. In this respect, Brown (1987: 177) states that "interlingual transfer signifies the early stage of previous linguistic system upon which the learner can rely." Thus, learners' reliance on the native language will decrease when learners proceed in learning the FL. This can justify the high rate of the subjects' interference errors because EFL learners rely heavily on their first language. This expresses the cause of their high rate of errors.

٤.٣.١.٢ Intralingual Transfer

Intralingual errors originate from the structure of the FL itself. They express the features of rule learning of that language. Such errors may belong to certain factors, one of which is of 'overgeneralization' or analogical errors (Yule, 1988: 143). These errors result from the learning process itself. Overgeneralization points to the wrong use of early-learned materials to a present foreign context category. Other factors include processes like 'ignorance of rule restrictions' which directs the learner to use some rule to a

Item (ʏ) They'd left home quickly.

| |

They'd left home quickly

|

* They'd left home quickly.

Item (ʏ ·) I sent it from London.

| |

I sent it from London.

|

* I sent it from London.

Most of the subjects have recognized the first word of a sentence to be a stressed word and they put the first boundary (the vertical line that divides sentences into rhythmic feet) at the beginning of sentences. Subjects do not notice that they are said with weak and speedy way.

Similarly, subjects think these pronouns (like 'her', 'them', 'it', and 'us') are also stressed even when they come inside the sentences like these in items (ʏ) and (ξ) in Question One.

Item (ʳ) Send them to her by post .

| |

'Send them to her by 'post.

| |

* Send 'them to 'her by post.

Item (ʒ) Let us do it now.

| | |

'Let us 'do it 'now.

| |

* Let 'us do 'it now.

Subjects ignore the fact that these words cannot be stressed because they are pronouns and can be reduced to a lesser form.

The subjects' ignorance of rule restrictions, as mentioned earlier, is one of the factors that can lead to make learners commit errors. For example, let us look at the errors in items (°) and (¹) in Question (¹).

Item (°) When does the train leave?

| |

'When does the 'train 'leave?.

| | * When does the 'train 'leave?

Item(9) How can I help?

| | How can I help?

| * How can I 'help?

Item(6) The weather is nice today, isn't it?

| | | The 'weather is 'nice today, 'isn't ?

| | | *The 'weather is 'nice to 'day, isn't it?

Subjects have not realized that the tag question will receive a stress on the word (isn't) because it carries the main tone of the tag question. Thus, subjects fail to stress this word and accordingly they have not put a boundary at the beginning of the tag question.

Errors attributed to incomplete application of rules are mostly found in items (1), (2), (4) and (6) in Question (2) and item (9) in Question (3).

Item (1) The idea of it is to praise those churches.

/ ði 'aɪdɪər əv ɪt ɪz tə preɪz ðəʊz tʃɜ:tʃɪz /

* / ðə aɪ 'dɪə əv ɪt z tə preɪz ðəʊz tʃɜ:tʃɪz /

Item (2) I think this shop is the butcher's shop.

/ . p ɪz ðə butʃəz ʃɒp ɒ /aɪ θɪŋk ðɪʃ ʃ

* / aɪ θɪŋk ðɪs ʃɒp ɪz ðə butʃəz ʃɒp /

Item (3) Would you please call them for a short time?

/ wədʒ u: pli:z k ɔːkɔːm fɔr ə ʃ :t taɪm /.

* / wɒd ju: plɪz k :ɔːkɔːm f :r ə ʃ :t taɪm /

Item (4) Do what you think is right for us, Don't you?

tʃ u: θɪŋk ɪz raɪt fər ʌs dəʊntʃ u / . ɒ / du: w

t ju: θɪŋk ɪz raɪt f :r ʌs dəʊnt ju: / ɒ * / du: w

kæənədə ə:ntʃ u: / . 'ɪmɪg'reɪtɪŋ tə 'baʊt 'θɪŋkɪŋ ə 'Item (5) / j :r

You're thinking about immigrating to London, aren't you?

* You are thinking about implaying to London are cue.

It is noticed that learners fail to make the necessary coalition of sounds between words, especially in rapid speech. The subjects have only transcribed the sentences without any change for words that have undergone a pressure of changing the sounds between words like (those churches), (butcher's shop) and (this shop). In all these examples, the / s / should be changed into / ʃ / to make speech easier and faster. Similarly, learners haven't either changed the sounds between words in (would you , what you , don't you , aren't you) . They only describe these words without any change at the boundaries of these words . Subjects pronounce these expressions because they have learnt them first in slow speech. They try to apply what they have learnt on how they pronounce these sentences. Therefore, it is intralingual. There is another type of sound change occurring in items (ʳ), (°),(Υ) and (Λ) in Question (Υ) related to this type of error .

Item (ʳ) Don't be late for work ,good boy.

/ dəʊn bi: leɪt fə wɜ:k, ɡʊb b ɪ /

* / dəʊnt bi:leɪt f :r wɜ:k ɡʊd b ɪ /

Item (°) I don't believe what that man says to her.

/aɪ dəʊn bi' lɪ:v wət ðæp mæn sez tə hə /

t ðæt mæn sez tə hɜ: / ɒ * / aɪ dəʊnt bɪlɪ:v w

Item (Y) She had pronounced guilty.

/ʃi hæb prə'naunsd ɡɪltɪ /.

naunst ɡɪltɪ /' * / ʃi: hæd prə

Item (^) Good girls help a blind man cross the street.

:s ðə stri:t / / ɡʊd ɡɜ:lz help ə blaɪn mæn kr

:s ðə stri:t / * / ɡʊd ɡɜ:lz help ə blaɪnd mæn kr

It is noticed that subjects fail to make the appropriate change for the sounds in the items between words (good boy), (that man), (had pronounced), and (good girls). The subjects only transcribed the words in a slow speech and copied them in rapid speech .

The researcher has found that the total number of error possibly due to the intralingual transfer is (٧٢٣, ٥٣.٤ %) of the total number of errors at Babylon University and (٧٦٦, ٥٦.٦ %) at Al-Qadisiya University.

٤.٣.١.٣ Context of Learning

The most important factors that may influence the subjects' performance in connected speech are the classroom (situation of learning), the teacher, and

textbooks . For the teacher , he may give a misleading explanation for the subject and this will lead to error by subjects or, he may use slow speech as a prevailing characteristic for his instruction. For the textbook writer , he may give more illustrations and explanations for some aspects and neglect the others according to his experience and beliefs (Richard , 1974 : 170) . All these factors may have the undesired effect of motivating the learner to make wrong hypotheses about the language .

Since recognition precedes production in language learning , the researcher observes that learners commit a large number of incorrect responses for Question (1) at the recognition level . This high rate of erroneous responses has its effect at the production level . The most obvious case that reveals the influence of the context of learning is found in items (1), (2), (3) , (4) , and (5) in Question (3) .

Item (1) /ten pleɪəz mu:v bæk fə dɪfɪkəlt mætʃ /.

Ten players moved back for difficult match.

* Ten players row back for different match.

Item (2) /haʊ wʊld ɪz ðæk ɡɜ:l , wʊdʒ u sei /

How old is that girl, would you say?

* Hallo is the want you say.

sæt / ' :weɪz æ:skɪŋ fɔr ə ɡʊŋ kən'Item (3) / ðəp mən wəs

That man was always asking for a good concert.

* Fat mən wall ask in for good concerned.

Item (ξ) / ðei əv tə teik səm əv ðm frəm ðæp buks /

They have to take some of them from that box.

* They had two type some plain from that parks.

bəʊt ɪmɪgrɛɪtɪŋ tə lɒndn a:ntʃ u /'Item (°) / juə θɪŋkɪŋ ə

You're thinking about immigrating to London, aren't you?

* You are taken about every thing to London are true.

The subjects' errors are justifiable because they have not applied correctly the same rules on Question (Υ) . This is an indication that the subjects really face a serious difficulty in understanding rules of connected speech . This high rate of incorrect responses at the recognition level has its effect on Question (ξ) which examines the production level . Learners fail to give the right phonemic discrimination for words in sentences . They write uncertainly what they have heard from the recorder , or they write wrongly the phonetic symbols that represent words in sentences or they sometimes avoid them. All these are shown clearly in items (Υ) , (Ψ) and (ϒ) in Question (ξ) .

Item(Υ) I don't suppose for a minute that you'll do it.

/ aɪ daʊn spəʊz fər ə minit ðætʃ ju du: ^wɪt /.

* / ai nəʊ səpəʊz fɔːrment ðæt win du It /

Item (٣) Did you ever find that pen you lost .

/ dɪdʒ u evə faɪn ðæb pen ju lɒst/

/ dɪgs you evrɪ taɪm peɪn læst /

Item (٤) We always treat them as members of the family.

o / wɪ :weɪz tri:t ðəm əz membəz əv ðə fæmɪli /.

* / wɪðeə :lweɪz tri:t taɪm memberz ɒv ðə fæmɪli /

Item (٦) She is the best-dressed woman in the village.

/ ʃɪ z ðə bes dres wʊmən ɪn ðə vɪlɪdʒ /

* / ʃɪ ɪz ðə bɪz drɪz wʊmən ɪn ðə vɪlɪdʒ /

Broughton et al. (١٩٩٤: ٦٢) state that “recognition practice should precede production practice. But since production reinforces recognition, there is no need to wait for perfect recognition before asking for production”. Since learners’ performance on Question Three is of high rate of errors, this has its real effect on Question Four because subjects fail to answer correctly the items mentioned previously. The total number of such errors in the subjects’

performance is (170, 10.3 %) for Babylon University and (104, 13.4%) for Al-Qadisiya University.

4.3.1.4 Communication Strategies

Communication strategies illustrate the way by which we express our messages. They are potentially conscious plans used by the learner to find an answer to what presents itself as a problem in reaching a very specific communication goal (Farch and Kasper, 1983: 14).

Such strategies start from “avoidance” at one extreme (i.e. not saying what one wants to say, so resolving the problem of how to express it) to “appeal for repair and “confirmation” (i.e. seeking help from a person or other information sources on how to say what one wants to say). Between these lie “self-achievement options” such as circumlocution (i.e. saying in many words what may be said in few words), coinage (i.e. making up a new word to communicate the desired idea, such as paper holder for notebook), guessing (i.e. using clues that are language based, such as knowledge of a context, world, or text structure, in order to guess the meaning, in the absence of complete knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, or other target language elements), and approximation (i.e. using a word for a related meaning to that intended) (Oxford, 1990:20)

The use of communication strategies has led to a number of errors. The examples below from Question Three items (ʔ and °) and Question Four items (ˆ, ξ, °, and ʔ) can illustrate this:

sət /.' :weiz æ:skɪŋ fəpə ɡʊɡ kən'Item (ʔ) / ðæp mæn wəs

That man was always asking for a good concert.

* Fat man wall asking for good answer

bəʊt ɪmɪɡreɪtɪŋ tə kænədə ə'ntʃ u / 'Item (°) / juə θɪŋkɪŋ ə

You're thinking about immigrating to London, aren't you?

*You are thinking about plaining to London are cue.

always make the lesson interesting.'videos 'Item (ˆ) Tapes and

/teɪps ən vɪdɪʊz :weiz meɪk ðə lesn ɪntrestɪŋ /

* / taɪp or mæni ju:sɪŋ :lwəz listən evərθɪŋ /

Item (ξ) We always treat them as members of the family.

° / wɪ :weiz tri:t ðəm əz membəz əv ðə fæmɪli /.

* / wɪ əlweɪz θri: tri: memberz ɒv fæmli: /

Item (°) My cheap camera seems to be as good as John's expensive one.

/ maɪ tʃi:p kæmərə si:mz tə bi əz ɡʊd əz dʒɒnz ɪkspensɪv

wʌn /

nd / ɒ * / naɪnten kæmɪrɪ semd bi əz ɡʊd əz exæpænsɪ w

Item (ʿ) She is the best-dressed woman in the village.

/ ʃɪ z ðə bes dres wʊmən ɪn ðə vɪlɪdʒ /

* / kɪdz pesnes dɪspærs wɪn ɪntər vɪlɪdʒ /

In such items, it seems that the subjects have used the guessing strategy.

Finally, the avoidance strategy has also been used and represented by the items that were left by the subjects with no answers. These are put under “No. of Avoided Items” columns in the previous tables.

The total numbers of errors that might relate to using such strategies are (23.4%, 384) at University of Babylon and (20.4%, 416) at University of Qadisiya of the total number of the subjects' errors.

Chapter Five

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions

๑.๑ Introduction

This chapter gathers the conclusions arrived at through the theoretical work of this study as well as the results of the test. The researcher can draw certain conclusions in the light of findings obtained from the test. These conclusions are used to work as a ground for the pedagogical recommendations and suggestions for further investigations in the area of understanding the connected speech spoken by foreigners.

๑.๒ Conclusions

๑.๒.๑ Theoretical Conclusions

The theoretical work of the present study has yielded the following conclusions:

1. Consonants and vowels are generally assumed to be the basis of pronunciation, but rhythm, assimilation, elision, and liaison prove to be an equally important part of the sound system. If learners concentrate only on the individual sound segments of a language, they may produce accurate renditions of the individual sounds but be grossly misunderstood if the 'tune' of the language is missing.
2. Word stress and sentence stress are meaningful. Major stresses in an English sentence tend to produce a kind of rhythmical beat in the language. In order to illustrate the essential characteristics of word stress, three degrees of stress must be stated: primary stress, secondary stress, and weak stress. Through these degrees, words can function in a sentence.
3. The natural, ordinary spontaneous speech is opposed to the production of words spoken in isolation. Connected Speech is more important than single words spoken carefully and explicitly. It is noted that such a careful pronunciation is something of an ideal (unnatural) speech that differs mostly from natural, conscious conversational speech.
4. Every consonant and every vowel will be affected by its neighbouring consonants and vowels and by the rhythmic structure in which it occurs. This adjustment of each segment to its neighbours is a characteristic of all human connected speech only while slow speech holds or keeps all its vowels and consonants in their strong form.

٥.٢.٢ Practical Conclusions

The empirical work of the study has come up with the following conclusions:

١. Iraqi EFL university learners at the third stage have been found to face difficulties in recognizing and producing the aspects of connected speech. This is indicated by their low performance in the main test as the rate of their correct responses (٣٤.٦%) for Babylon University and (٣٥.٧%) for Al- Qadisiya University which are significantly lower than that of their incorrect responses (٦٥.١%) for Babylon University and (٦٤.٤%) for Al-Qadisiya University.
٢. At the production level, the findings of data analysis for questions (٢ and ٤) show that subjects' incompetence in transcribing phonetically the connected speech in correct responses (concerning these two questions) is (٧٧.٥%) for Babylon University and (٧٣.٩%) for Al-Qadisiya University.
٣. The subjects' performance in the whole test has also shown that EFL university learners encounter more difficulties in transcribing connected speech at the production level than the recognition one. The subjects' performance at the recognition level has obtained a mean of (٢٣.٣) against a mean of (١١.٢) at the production level for

Babylon University, and (٢٢.٧) against a mean of (١٣.٢) at the production level for Al-Qadisiya University.

٤. The plausible cases underlying the subjects' poor performance can be considered as belonging to the following factors arranged hierarchically according to the frequency of errors attributed to each:

I. Intralingual transfer that constitutes the majority of subjects' errors as it accounts for (٧٢٣, ٥٣.٤%) for Babylon University and (٧٦٦, ٥٦.٦%) for Al-Qadisiya University of their total errors. The subjects' reliance on their prior knowledge of the target language rules to recognize or produce connected speech regardless of their acceptability is due to incomplete understanding of such speech that encourages overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, and failure to learn conditions for rule application.

II. Context of learning since the connected speech has not been given due attention in the phonological books in general, and in the subjects' textbooks in particular. Errors attributed to this factor constitute (١٧٥, ١٥.٣%) for Babylon University and (١٥٤, ١٣.٤%) for Al-Qadisiya University.

III. Interlingual interference whereby the subjects use the rules of their native language production of rapid speech. In this respect, the use of native language rules is the most common phenomenon. The rate

of interference error is (١٠.١%) for Babylon University and (١٠.٢%)
for Al-Qadisiya University.

٥.٣ Recommendations

In the light of the present study and the conclusions arrived at in this study, the following points are recommended:

١. Since teaching foreign speech is crucial to university learners learning English as a FL and since a good teaching programme can be highly effective in reducing the errors of learners, more developed devices and materials should be devoted for speech activity that is a problematic case for Iraqi EFL learners.
٢. It is remarkable how little is known about pronunciation and phonetics. It takes very little time to present the main deficits and make them known. Spending a few hours to explain some articulatory basics in order to come to the main difficulties of pronunciation seems worth the effort. It makes sense not just to point to differences in the phoneme inventory of both languages, as is usual in contrastive phonology. Explaining phonological phenomena (such as assimilation), phonemic reductions (such as the weak forms), and especially suprasegmental phenomena such as lexical stress and the location and realization of pitch accents should be included. However, not only explanation, correction should also be common use in the classroom.

Giving learners feedback is a necessary follow-up to making them aware of questions of pronunciation.

- ۳. Teachers should pay more attention to carrying out communication because having a command of linguistic rules can be perfect, but this perfection does not preserve them from failing to communicate properly in the FL. Mastering these suprasegmental features of speech are important for recognition and production in a FL. FL laboratories must be reactivated in Departments of English. This will help learners to understand FL speech and its exceptions. It is important that in addition to teaching the linguistic competence, the communication competence and the cultural competence be addressed as a goal in language teaching.**

- ۴. Motivating and encouraging learners to use dictionaries as a spelling aid to them will improve their foreigner speech.**

- ۵. The results of this study can be of use to teachers and syllabus designers as they can provide the necessary information for the preparation of remedial teaching programmes that can enhance the learners competence in understanding and using connected speech, and thus helping them overcome the difficulties they encounter in this area.**

٦. **Constructing courses for improving the beginner teachers for developing their speaking ability is needed.**

٥.٤ Suggestions for further research

١. **A study can be conducted to investigate the role of rhythm in English speech in teaching and learning a FL.**
٢. **A similar study can be constructed on intonation since it is an integrated part of speech that has its effective role with rhythm.**
٣. **These paralinguistic features reflected especially by pitch level and pitch range are important. Although a few studies have started to investigate the field of cross-cultural differences from the phonetic perspective, there is enough space and much need to widen this line of research.**