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The Accentual Patterns in the Interlanguage of Majors of English at Mentouri University, Constantine

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Dedications

I dedicate this work to:

My dearest ma, the fluffy-hearted, compassionate mother who sacrificed the spring of her life and resources to tenderly bring me up and soldiered on to make me the gentleman I am today.

The memory of my dearest papa, the sweetest father who instilled into me countless virtues and taught me how to dutifully fend for my nearest and dearest.

My brothers: Chouki (and his wife Sabrina), Soufiane, Ilyas and Hamza and sisters: Samira, Wafia (and her husband Elbahi), and Hiba and to the memory of my eldest sister Nassira.

My kind-hearted, sweet-spirited wife, Nourelhouda, and to the joy of my days: my cutie daughter: my Assil.

My nephews: Yasser, Mohammed, Salah and Adnane, and to my nieces: Hanine, Amina and Khawla, and to Rahaf and Ahmed.

My mother-in-law, Aysha Boudabza, my sisters-in-law, their husbands and kids, and my brother-in-law Abderrahman and his family.

All my relatives, friends and colleagues.

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Abstract

Grappling with the subtle nature of second-year Master of Arts students' interlanguage accentual patterns, unravelling its most salient, recurrent inducers and arriving at grounded assimilations of how to palliate the impact of expediting variables have been the overriding pursuit and ensuing theoretical and practical contributions of the present thesis. We hypothesised that failure to bring their accentual patterns with L2 settings would peripherally be ascribable to crosslinguistic influence as it is outstripped by that of intralinguistic factors. To gather different genres of data, we administered students' and teachers' questionnaires and a diagnostic test. The analyses of the data revealed that the students fell short of accommodating their prosodic phonology to quintessentially English parameters. Cross-linguistic influence from French, which is held accountable for many errors, seems itself to emanate from hyper-reliance on spelling-pronunciations fuelled by internalised French pronunciation well-established rules. Such errors mirror multi-tiered deficiencies in how learners have over the years coped with this prosodic component: little phonetic awareness of the correlates of English stress along with rudimentary guidelines regarding where accent falls along with overt naivety regarding utilisation of pronunciation-promoting strategies and accompanying habits, and sporadic deployment of dictionaries. Other variables pertain to infrequency of teacher-fronted feedback as well as absence in the Spoken Language Proficiency and Listening Comprehension module of research-based findings' outcomes, peculiarly those bearing on pronunciation-acquisition by English as a foreign language learners operating in instructed, multilingual settings, and traditional philological comparisons as well as contrastive analysis. The thesis terminates by setting up a plethora of linguistic and pedagogical guidelines and delineating how these could work in tandem with each other and how intertwined they may be for fostering a neater command of primary accentual structures that is more aligned with Anglo-Saxon norms.

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

CA: Contrastive Analysis

EA: Error Analysis

IPA: International Phonetic Association/Alphabet

IT: Interlanguage Transfer

LAD: Language Acquisition Device

LFPC: Lingua Franca Phonological Core

LMD: Licence Master Doctorat

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

RP: Received Pronunciation

SEE: Standard English English

SF: Standard French

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

UG: Universal Grammar

Phonetic Symbols

Owing predominantly to the phonological nature of the current research work, we have made use of quite a wide range of phonetic symbols. Tabulated below are the symbols deployed along with the vowels and consonants that they represent. We hereby acknowledge that all these symbols have been reproduced verbatim out of the International Phonetic Alphabet Association website; the examples, the descriptions as well as the transcriptions have been done by the author of the dissertation, though.

Modern Standard Arabic

a. Monophthongs (Pure Vowels)

Monophthong	Description	Example	Transcription	Meaning
/i/	close, front, unrounded, short	عِلم	/ʕalima/	to know
/i:/	close, front, unrounded, long	متين	/mati:nun/	Solid
/a/	central, front, unrounded, short	هرَب	/haraba/	ran away
/a:/	central, front, unrounded, long	حِمار	/h.ima:run/	donkey
/u/	close, back, rounded short	يَلعب	/yalʕabu/	plays
/u:/	close, back, rounded, long	مُلوك	/mulu:kun/	kings

b. Diphthongs (Vowel Glides)

Diphthong	Example	Transcription	Meaning
/aj/	بيْت	/bajtun/	House
/aw/	صوْت	/ ṣawtun/	Sound

c. Consonants

Consonant	Articulatory Features	Example	Transcription	Meaning
/b/	voiced, bilabial, stop	بَكى	/ baka:/	sobbed
/t/	voiceless, alveolar stop	تِلال	/tila:lun/	Hills

/ţ/	voiceless, dental, emphatic, stop	طالِب	/ţa:libun/	student
/d/	voiced, dental, stop	دَلْو	/dalwun/	bucket
/ɠˁ/	voiced, dental, emphatic, stop	مَرَض	/maraɠun/	disease
/k/	voiceless, velar, stop	كَرَز	/ karazun/	cherries
/m/	voiced, bilabial, nasal, stop	مَطَر	/matarun/	Rain
/n/	voiced, alveolar, nasal, stop	نُور	/nu:run/	light
/f/	voiceless, labio-dental, fricative	فجْر	/fadjrun/	dawn
/s/	voiceless, alveolar, fricative	سَليم	/sali:mun/	healthy
/ş/	voiceless, alveolar, emphatic, fricative	صلْب	/şalbun/	solid
/θ/	voiceless, inter-dental, fricative	مَثَل	/maθalun/	example
/ð/	voiced, inter-dental, fricative	ذوْد	/ðawdun /	defence
/ɗˁ/	voiced, inter-dental, emphatic, fricative	ظَلام	/ɗˁala:mun/	darkness
/z/	voiced, alveolar, fricative	زَار	/za:ra/	visited
/ʃ/	voiceless, palato-alveolar, fricative	شهِد	/ʃahida/	witnessed
/dʒ/	voiced, palato-alveolar, fricative	جَلال	/dʒala:lun/	glory
/r/	voiced, post-alveolar, fricative	رِيف	/ri:fun/	countryside
/l/	voiced, alveolar, lateral	لَبَن	/ labanun/	buttermilk
/j/	voiced, palatal, glide	يسْقي	/jasqi:/	to water
/w/	voiced, bilabial, velar, glide	ولَج	/waladʒa/	entered
/h/	voiced, glottal, fricative	رَهيب	/rahi:bun/	horrific
/ʔ /	voiceless, glottal, stop	اجَّاص	/ ʔidʒa:sun /	pear
/ʕ/	voiced, pharyngeal, fricative	عِنب	/ʕinabun/	grapes
/χ/	voiceless, velar, fricative	خُلد	/χuldun/	eternity
/q/	voiceless, uvular, plosive	قَمر	/qamarun/	moon

/ɣ/	voiced, uvular, fricative	غَاب	/ɣa:ba/	was absent
/h./	voiceless, pharyngeal, fricative	حُلم	/h.ulmun/	dream

2. Standard French

a. Monophthongs (Pure Vowels)

Consonant	Description	Example	Transcription	Meaning
/i/	close, front, unrounded	dix	/di/	ten
/y/	close, front, rounded	jus	/ʒy/	juice
/e/	Half-close, front, unrounded	Et	/e/	and
/ø/	half-close, front rounded	ceux	/sø /	those
/ɛ/	half-open, front, unrounded	treize	/tʀɛz/	thirteen
/ɛ̃/	half-open, front, unrounded, nasal	pain	/pɛ̃/	bread
/œ/	half-open, front, rounded,	club	/klœb/	club
/œ̃/	half-open, front, rounded, nasal	Un	/œ̃/	one
/ɑ-a/	open, front, unrounded	La	/lɑ/a/	the
/ɑ̃/	open, front, unrounded, nasal	example	/ɛgzɑ̃mpl /	example
/u/	close, back, rounded	vous	/vu/	you
/o/	half-close, back, rounded	faux	/fo/	false/fake
/ɔ/	half-open, back, rounded,	alors	/alɔr/	So
/ɔ̃/	half-open, back, rounded, nasal	Bon	/bɔ̃/	good
/ə/	half-close, central, rounded	regard	/rəgard /	look

b. Consonants

Consonant	Articulatory Features	Example	Transcription	Meaning
/p/	voiceless, bilabial, plosive	page	/pɑʒ/	page
/b/	voiced, bilabial, plosive	bon	/bɔ̃/	good
/t/	voiceless, dental, plosive	Ta	/tɑ/	your
/d/	voiced, dental, plosive	dix	/di/	ten
/k/	voiceless, velar, plosive	cas	/kɑ/	case
/g/	voiced, velar, plosive	gaz	/gɑz/	gas
/m/	voiced, bilabial, nasal	mal	/mɑl /	male
/n/	voiced, dental, nasal	non	/nɔ̃/	name
/ŋ/	voiced, velar, nasal	camping	/kɑ̃piŋ/	camping
/ɲ/	voiceless, alveo-palatal, nasal	vigne	/viɲ/	vine
/f/	voiceless, labio-dental, fricative	film	/film/	film
/v/	voiced, labiodental, fricative	vite	/vit/	quick
/s/	voiceless, dental, fricative	sac	/sɑk /	sac
/z/	voiced, dental, fricative	rose	/ʀoz/	rose
/ʃ/	voiceless, palatal, fricative	chat	/ʃa /	cat
/ʒ/	voiced, palatal, fricative	gène	/ʒɛn /	annoy
/ʀ/	voiced, velar, fricative	rouge	/ʀuʒ/	red
/l/	voiced, dental, lateral	Le	/lə/	the
/j/	voiced, palatal, glide	oeil	/œj/	eye
/ɥ/	voiced, bilabial, glide	nuit	/nɥi/	night
/w/	voiced, bilabial, velar, glide	boire	/bwaʀ/	drink
/tʃ/	voiceless, palate-alveolar, affricate	match	/matʃ /	match

/dʒ/	voiced, palate-alveolar, affricate	adjoint	/adʒwɛ̃/	assistant
/h/	voiced, glottal, fricative	hop	/hop/	hop

Standard English English (Received Pronunciation 'RP')

a. Monophthongs (Pure Vowels)

Monophthong	Description	Example	Transcription
/ɪ/	short, close, front, unrounded	wit	/wɪt/
/iː/	long, close, front, unrounded	wheat	/wiːt/
/e/	half-close, front, unrounded	bet	/bet/
/æ/	half-open, front, unrounded	mat	/mæt/
/ə/	half-close, central, unrounded	alive	/əˈlaɪv/
/ɜː/	long, half-close, central, rounded	bird	/bɜːd/
/ʌ/	open, central, unrounded	lull	/lʌl/
/ʊ/	short, close, back, rounded	book	/bʊk/
/uː/	long, close, back, rounded	pool	/puːl/
/ɒ/	short, open, back, rounded	cot	/kɒt/
/ɔː/	long, open, back, rounded	sought	/sɔːt/
/ɑː/	long, open, back unrounded	arm	/ɑːm/

b. Diphthongs (Vowel Glides)

Diphthong	Example	Transcription
/ɪə/	Fear	/fɪə/
/eə/	Wear	/weə/
/aʊ/	Pound	/paʊnd/
/əʊ/	Know	/nəʊ/
/eɪt/	Bait	/beɪt/
/aɪt/	Site	/saɪt/
/ʊə/	Sure	/ʃʊə/
/ɔɪ/	Toy	/tɔɪ/

c. Triphthongs

Triphthong	Example	Transcription
/eɪə/	Layer	/ˈleɪə/
/aɪə/	Wire	/waɪə/
/aʊə/	Sour	/saʊə/
/əʊə/	Mower	/ˈməʊə/
/ɔɪə /	Lawyer	/ˈlɔɪə /

d. Consonants

Consonant	Articulatory Features	Examples	Transcription
/p/	voiceless, bilabial, plosive	pale	/peɪl/
/b/	voiced, bilabial, plosive	bronze	/brɒnz/
/t/	voiceless, alveolar, plosive	timid	/ˈtɪməd/
/d/	voiced, alveolar, plosive	deride	dɪˈraɪd/
/k/	voiceless, velar, plosive	kind	/kaɪnd/

/g/	voiced, velar, plosive	guard	/gɑːd/
/s/	voiceless, alveolar, fricative	sister	/ˈsɪstə/
/z/	voiced, alveolar, fricative	zealous	/ˈzeləs/
/f/	voiceless, labio-dental, fricative	father	/ˈfɑːðə/
/v/	voiced, labio-dental, fricative	vase	/vɑːz/
/ʃ/	voiceless, palatal, fricative	ashamed	/əˈʃeɪmd/
/ʒ/	voiced, palatal, fricative	treasure	/treʒə/
/θ/	voiceless, inter-dental, fricative	thin	/θɪn/
/ð/	voiced, inter-dental, fricative	this	/ðɪs/
/h/	voiceless, glottal, fricative	heroine	/ˈherəʊɪn/
/tʃ/	voiceless, palate-alveolar, affricate	chin	/tʃɪn/
/dʒ/	voiced, palato-alveolar, affricate	ginger	/ˈdʒɪndʒə/
/m/	voiced, bilabial, nasal	mother	/ˈmʌðə/
/n/	voiced, alveolar, nasal	neither	/naɪðə/
/ŋ/	voiced, velar, nasal	long	/lɒŋ/
/l/	voiced, alveolar, lateral	lap	/læp/
/r/	voiced, alveolar, retroflex	rice	/raɪs/
/w/	voiced, bilabial, glide	whisper	/ˈwɪspə/
/j/	voiced, velar, glide	yoghurt	/ˈjɒgət/

Contents

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Scope of the Study

Studies about interlanguage phonology have been striving to tease out which constituent components thereof are worth being set as the primary locus of learners' scholastic endeavour. Theoreticians and practitioners are split into three clear-cut camps. Whilst the first one alleges that segmental accuracy should be sought and adherents of the second claim that if success is to be ultimately accomplished, there is no inductive pathway other than attempting to achieve suprasegmental accuracy, proponents of the third one are adamant that both phonological levels ought to get equal amounts of attention. Members of the last camp, who indeed endorse a moderately reasonable stance, postulate that although the two salient components of the phonological spectrum bear different labels, they do not, in actual phonological reality, operate in utter seclusion of one another (Dalton & Seidhofer, 1994; Kelly, 2000; Kenworthy, 1987). Hence, they argue that if interlanguage phonology is to get to a state of maturity wherein it could justifiably be dubbed wholly accurate, namely comfortable intelligibility, strain-free comprehension of the natives is to be attained, and equally importantly heavy foreign accents are to be expunged, learners ought to perforce get the hang of the segmental and the prosodic properties of the target language. They put this essentially down to the rule of thumb stipulating that internalised rules of these two levels would not only have immediate bearing on the productive end of the language spectrum; the receptive end is prone to debilitate, if one's productive aptitude lacks the requisite constituent elements of the processed code. For instance, failure to abide by lexical stress placement rules does impinge upon comprehension of the produced output even if proper segmental production is available (Caspers, 2010; Field, 2005).

The research we conducted a couple of years ago in collaboration with a fellow colleague of ours into the nature and inducers of ill-performed pronunciations of English closing and

centring diphthongs truly nourished our academic fervour about studying in far more profundity and systematicness the interlanguage phonology of Algerian learners of English. This has, accordingly, kindled our interest for poking more avidly over phonetic and phonological studies for the sake of gleaning an adequately fuller picture of the subject matter at hand. We have found out, much to our academic amazement, that Algerian learners' approximative phonology, of paramount importance though it is, has received heretofore but scanty large-scale scholarly attention. What we have discerned whilst flicking through a number of research dissertations and theses (by no means all) is that this dearth does not particularly pertain to the segmental aspects; it predominantly concerns the suprasegmental ones. However, this does not preclude the existence of a number of research undertakings, albeit rather limited in scale, most of them being master's studies into the acquisition of segments.

The most exhaustive research work we got hold of and which really dissected in details the interlanguage phonology of undergraduate students is the one undertaken by Beghoul (2007). Nonetheless, here again, the bulk of the prolonged analyses revolved fundamentally around segmentals, the learning difficulties they give rise to along with the underlying reasons fuelling their materialisation. There is, additionally, an investigation into the extent to which the targeted respondents produce English weak form words in compliance with the target norms, albeit not thorough. As regards the accentual pattern, though the researcher set out to investigate it at the outset of the study, he fell short of tackling it half as systematically as he tackled segmental aspects. By the same token, it is noteworthy that the study tracked down solely the production of segments and weak form words without any overt attempt to explore the perception of the components at stake. Of course, we are by no means pinning the blame on the researcher proper: the overwhelmingly multi-layered and laborious task of analysing segments production (which was done in a laudably in-depth, fine-grained manner) rendered it virtually impossible to track

down non-segmental ones in a comparably similar fashion. In a multilingual speech community as our own, one cannot help but get bogged down into how learners' diverse background linguistic knowledge, amongst other variables, would pervert the learning of the all-too-elusive sound system of English. This inevitable reality, intricate as it is, took the researcher a great deal of efforts to incorporate into the investigation scrutinising how vocoids and contoids are articulated (to use a purely phonetic label coined by Pike, 1943) and how grammatical words manifest themselves in their interlanguage phonology. Hence, what we are trying to underscore herein is that the Algerian learners' interlanguage phonology has got to receive a further scrutiny at the suprasegmental level. A quick exploratory journey through the range of phonological linguistic research of second and foreign language phonology would reveal that studies of this genre in the Algerian academic sphere are still lagging behind. Arguably the lexical, morpho-syntactic and even the pragmatic aspects of their transitional dialects (a name coined by Corder, 1967) research has captured far more attention than the phonological one, particularly the suprasegmental and reception bit of it. This, nonetheless, does not imply that the paucity (not to say the non-existence) of such research is exclusive to the Algerian academic community alone: production and perception of prosody is an under-researched topic up and down the globe.

Statement of the Problem

The foregoing discussion has tacitly alluded to some of the aims underpinning the present doctoral research undertaking and has demonstrated how so timely a scholarly endeavour the researcher deemed this present research enterprise right at the inception thereof. Under this heading, we will consider more patently some of the overriding aims the research work has set out to achieve.

First and foremost, this study is a scientific endeavour conducted to fill up some slots our predecessors have failed to attend to owing predominantly to the enormity of the task. That is, we

have attempted to scrutinise the interlanguage phonology of Algerian learners at the tertiary level in terms of how they cope with the production of lexical English stress. As stress is not a uni-layered phenomenon, the investigation is split up into a number of phases determined by the varied types of accentual patterns the Anglo-saxon tongue deploys. We have, by implication, striven to get down to the roots of how successfully or otherwise learners cope with the oft-challenging task of stress assignment. By the same token, the reasons lying underneath the amassed distortions have been sought: the study would indubitably suffer serious flaws, if the examination fell short of teasing out the inducers of errors. After all, the kernel of any error analysis procedure is error explanation (Corder, 1981; Ellis, 1997; Gass & Selinker, 2008).

As regards the significance of the research work, it will be of relevance to three main members of the academic community: learners, teachers and syllabus designers. The nature of the errors spotted together with their causes will conceivably bring to the forefront of the syllabus planners' attention that introducing some changes to the syllabi of Phonetics and Phonology and more crucially to that of the Spoken Language Proficiency and Listening Comprehension module is a genuine must. Concerning Phonetics and Phonology, it may contribute in the sense that the ordering as well as the teaching of this theoretically-oriented module would have some tangible effects on the learners' interlanguage developmental routes. On the other hand, the investigation has pinpointed a plethora of teaching avenues for teachers of the latter module. It has also tried to spell out how teaching speaking could be partly reformulated so that learners might get further empowered to overcome a range of learning hurdles notoriously associated with acquiring the accentual pattern trappings of the spoken medium.

Research Questions

Due primarily to the novelty of the research avenue of the present study as such, we found ourselves virtually besieged by a diverse range of puzzling queries and the more we looked

ahead, much to our dismay, the more compound things got. This is, in fact, true for virtually all new undertakings since there are always far too many stumbling blocks which were not erased by the researcher's scholarly predecessors than there are properly-paved terrains. Being amidst such a new academic venture, we strove to pin down as many tentative questions as the linguistic enterprise saw fit for the demystifying of, at least, some other components of the study as a whole. The present doctoral work has endeavoured, therefore, to answer a number of questions. The most salient ones are formulated in what follows:

a) What are the various defining characteristics of the learners' accentual pattern?
b) What are the strata of stress that are most problematic and those which are least problematic?
c) Do distorted accentual patterns have any repercussions on the intelligibility, the foreign accentedness and the smooth conveyance of the learners' communicative purports?
d) What could be the reasons underlying the spotted errors in their performance?
e) Would the findings reveal that one of the error-inducing variables are gaps in the learners' knowledge as to what it is that makes a syllable stressed and on what premises would one rely for stressing the syllables that abide by some canonical patterns?
f) Do the targeted learners have at their disposal decently well-tailored and devotedly adhered to learning strategies?
g) Do dictionaries consultation receive their fair share of learner's attention when matters concern phonological aptitude gains and expansion?

h) Would it be prudent if we were to surrender to the belief endorsed by Jones (1962) and others that rules about stress placement are inherently misleading and that the only way out of the ordeal is to treat stress as a characteristic of individual words?

i) Would the erroneous conceptualisation and use of stress be legitimately ascribable to cross-linguistic influence from some or all of the linguistic systems known to the learners?

Research Hypotheses

For the ultimate conception of this doctoral work, a number of hypotheses have germinated:

The accentual pattern is one of the most distorted prosodic components of the learners' interlanguage phonology potentially partly because learners have not come to full grips with the various articulatory and acoustic characteristics of stressed syllables, and partly because they lack some cues on the grounds of which informed decisions would be made about the accentual pattern of a large profusion of highly frequent lexemes. Hence, we have hypothesised that if learners are sufficiently well attuned to the various components inherent to stressed syllables and facilitative cues are mastered, the learning of English stress would likely become less burdensome and better success would be eventually accomplished

The lack of concurrence between the accentual patterns of the languages known to the learners and English, particularly regarding lexical stress placement, would be one of the contributory factors inductive of the difficulty experienced by the learners and the partial success attained. However, we would conjecture, a bit vehemently, that this would be of a lesser impact than the dearth of knowledge about stress placement. We have, likewise, hypothesised that cross-linguistic influence, peculiarly when it is strongly present at later stages of interlanguage growth, is presumably an immediate by-product of partly successful learning.

Knowledge about the phonemic make-up of words would determine to a certain extent success in stress assignment. We have hypothesised, based on this presumption, that if learners did master the segmental components, then the chances would be relatively high that the likelihood of producing deviant stress patterns would go down.

Appropriate learning strategies do play a substantially empowering role in aiding the learners to get the hang of language as a whole. We have hypothesised that if the targeted learners do not have at their disposal an elaborate mastery of pronunciation-fostering strategies, they will continue to remain apprehensive of learning pronunciation.

Methodological Procedures

For carrying out the current research work, we have gone for triangulation of research tools. It is argued that the usage of more than one means of data compilation would quadruple ensure that one can amass far bigger amounts and more diverse data than the usage of solely one means. Hence, the reliability and validity of the research findings as a whole will be consolidated. The first research means this enterprise deployed is a students' questionnaire. Incorporation into the methodological procedural mix of this data-collection tool could under no circumstances be dubbed remotely dispensable. Although this is an essentially phonological study and part of its rationale lies in the recognition and categorisation of the stress-allocation errors, the overall aim does well and truly exceed such frontiers. We have attempted to put research-fed interpretations into the nature and inducers of errors. It would be intuitively un-productive (if not utterly counterproductive) to try to make satisfactorily grounded sense of what has lied behind the manifestation of errors if only what the investigator has at their disposal are learners' goofs. This holds true more saliently when the state of affairs under scrutiny is not properly well-documented and about which no ample enquiry has heretofore been accomplished. Hence, encompassing properly delineated sets of questions, the questionnaire has enabled us to build up a sturdy

foundation for a sound assimilation of the most recurrent error-inducing variables. To put it in a more comprehensible nutshell, meeting many of the intrinsic objectives of the study would have been a myth if no such tool had been deployed.

The second research tool that we have used is a teacher's questionnaire. In fact, this questionnaire works in parallel tandem with that of the students. The questionnaire was administered to nearly all the teachers of Spoken Language Proficiency and Listening Comprehension module. We wanted to get to the bottom of the conception and actual act of teaching speaking and listening through their own teacherly lenses. No one can legitimately deny the role such members of the language learning academic community play. Moreover, experts in the field, pioneering and contemporary, do hold teachers partly to account for how triumphant or otherwise learning ultimately turns out to be (Gass & Selinker, 2008; Selinker, 1992). An additional utility of this tool lies essentially in its being capable of enlightening us about some key components of the targeted syllabus as such. This could eventually allow us to gauge the extent to which this syllabus caters for a portion of the students' needs and paves the way for continuous self-training.

The third research tool used by this linguistic undertaking is an oral production test. The test was administered to 51 students all of whom reading for a master's degree in Applied Linguistics. The recording took place when the students had already embarked on their research and most of them had already made considerable progress. Opting for this particular subject population pool was done, amongst other things, to gauge how successful or otherwise the tuition they have received over the years has been. We also sought to work out whether cross-linguistic influence is still maintaining resilience as a powerful error-causing variable at this highly advanced level of linguistic growth judging by the intensity of the learning programmes the students have received and the number of years spent at university. The stimuli words making up

the test items were diversified in a number of different ways. In other words, the test contained mono-morphemic di-syllabic, tri-syllabic and four-syllable words belonging to different word classes and abiding by different accentual patterns. Syllable weight and moraic composition were, likewise, determining variables for inclusion into the test of some token words stimuli. The test also contained affix-words belonging to different classes set apart by essentially the accentual pattern influence of the affixed morphemes. Put more lucidly, sets of words terminating in stress-bearing suffixes, others ending in stress-neutral suffixes and a third set containing stress-shifting suffixes were incorporated into the test wordlist. There is yet a further category of affix words used, namely stress-neutral prefixes (virtually all English prefixes fall neatly into this type). Another equally pivotal factor according to which the many test stimuli words were selected bears on the relative frequency of the words and their presumed familiarity to the participating students.

Structure of the Thesis

The present thesis comprises five chapters. The first two dwell on the exploration of the subject matter through the lenses of the literature on offer. Literature review does not only suffice with defining the terms that recur throughout the thesis together with theoretical accounts about the issues at stake; it covers as many studies akin in nature and scope to our own as is possible. This will, we hope, make the integration into the wider literature of our study relatively easy to follow by the potential readership. It will, by the same token, enable them to judge more readily the strengths or otherwise of the results yielded, the recommendations put forth and, equally importantly, will demonstrate the potential weight of the study's contributions to the advance of knowledge regarding the varied issues under scrutiny. The remaining three chapters are devoted to the empirical components of the study. They provide as lucid a coverage as possible about the

entire methodological procedure adopted for the systematic, consistent realisation of the study along with the inferences made and accompanying recommendations.

Underpinning the present linguistic maturity and fertility of conceptualisation regarding how languages are learnt lie quite a number of wide-ranging pioneering theories and approaches. The first chapter of this thesis dwells, in some length, on four landmark revolutionary phases within the field of interlanguage studies. What is noteworthy of these phases is that although they have been demarcated as such owing fundamentally to when they came into the linguistics' agenda, they are indeed in a relationship of patent complementary distribution since they have all worked in conjunction with one another towards a commonly unified goal. The four theories, which this chapter addresses, are Error Analysis, Contrastive Analysis, Transfer Theory and Interlanguage Theory. Discussions of all these theories, upon the whole, constitute of 1) furnishing a pithy account on the hallmarks of the theory and the main causes behind its emergence as such; 2) delineating its major premises and promises and 3) incorporating into the discussions at many junctures illustrative examples and/or research findings which bear on the acquisition of second language phonology be it at the segmental level or the suprasegmental one.

The second chapter is devoted to an exploratory review about the various aspects pertaining to the lexical accentual pattern systems of the three linguistic codes known to the participants. We have also interpolated segmental accounts when clarity calls for that. The first headings look at the stress assignment modes in English. Due essentially to the fact that the model variety taught at the university where the participants have received their tertiary tuition is Standard English English (SEE), all the descriptive discussions revolve around properties of this prestigious accent. Parallel discussions about Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Standard French (SF) are covered afterwards. It is worthy of mention that we have not taken for granted reader's familiarity with each and every term used: we made every attempt to define any novel,

language-specific jargon words particularly those elements about which the co-text does not appear to furnish sufficient clues. Prior to addressing the trappings of the sound systems' accentual patterns, however, a general overview bearing on the various correlates of stress as a linguistic phenomenon is spelt out. Moreover, some of the contentious terminological issues inherent to the stress-related jargons and hallmarks are brought into the discussion scene and demystifying, clarification accounts are furnished. The third chapter is the first practically-oriented chapter of the present thesis. It is devoted wholly to the various facets and components of the first research tool: students' questionnaire. Why usage of such a tool was deemed indispensable is addressed right at the outset of the chapter. A set of questions branching out from the research work main questions are enumerated. Discussions move afterwards onto addressing the rationale for subject pool selection, the participants and the conditions under which the questionnaire was eventually administered. The subsequent heading is devoted to the tabulation along with analyses of the various items of the questionnaire. Towards the ending of the chapter, a summary of questionnaire findings is addressed.

The fourth chapter has common grounds with the third one in the sense that it is also a questionnaire. This questionnaire, however, was administered to teachers of Spoken Language Proficiency and Listening Comprehension. Due essentially to the inextricable linkage holding between students' phonological output and the teachers' own academic convictions and actual quotidian practices regarding how to best manage and oversee the process of spoken language institutional tuition, deployment of this survey was rated of paramount relevance. Although a great deal of what learners end up internalising seems to go on beyond the classroom walls, what goes on within does shape in a number of diverse ways how learning unfolds. In other words, how students are made to conceive of learning, what success is and how it could be better gained and not least what procedural frameworks to adopt are chiefly classroom-instilled. This

questionnaire was, therefore, formulated in such a way that we could eventually get a clearer, bigger picture of how teachers teach and how this bears on learners' command of primary English accentual patterns. The chapter starts off by giving a detailed account on the main reasons behind opting for usage of the questionnaire proper together with a number of questions which it was tailored to attempt to answer. Setting questions at this phase would, likewise, further disambiguate the sought relevance of the questionnaire as a whole. The second main heading addresses issues bearing on subject pool selection as well as participants and administration matters. The third heading encompasses the kernel of the chapter: data tabulation, analyses and interpretations of results. Accompanying the overwhelming bulk of the interpretations are pedagogical recommendations figuring at the end and stemming fundamentally from results of the question under scrutiny or a number of interrelated questions. For this chapter also, what marks the endings is the summary of findings.

The preceding two practically oriented chapters have manifested a diversified range of issues that are of immediate relevance to the analyses and interpretations of the error-analysis-based prosodic interlanguage study whose various components are amply reported on in the fifth and the last chapter of our thesis. Under this chapter, the oral production diagnostic test is dwelt upon. The main objectives underpinning the overall contribution of this test are elucidated right at the outset in the form of questions. The stimuli token words are looked at afterwards. Under this heading, the parameters in accordance with which the test items, structure tokens, have been selected are looked at in detail. The chapter then proceeds onto taking up the manifold analyses of the participants' phonemically transcribed productions of members of each stimulus structure in turn. The analyses incorporate two major crucial stages: error recognition and classification, and error explanation. For error explanation, we have tried our utmost to bring the findings of the other research tools to bear on those of this present one; we have, likewise, demonstrated how

indispensably harmonious and saliently interdependent the three data-gathering tools are. The thesis terminates in an extended general conclusion wherein the landmark contributions of the thesis are blended together. Incorporated herein are, by the same token, the principal pedagogic recommendations and guidelines for future research.

CHAPTER 1: Four Landmark Evolutionary Phases of Interlanguage Studies

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Introduction

Intriguingly, notwithstanding the glaring fact many decades in a row have elapsed during which span the admittedly ever-expanding linguistic province has been being noticeably hit by top-notch technological advancements, linguistic conservatism, as it were, has relentlessly persisted in embracing and promoting those once novel ideas and insightful practices put forward by Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis and Transfer Theory early pioneers and later staunch advocates. Nowadays, computer-assisted language learning is a tangible reality in the sense that it has robustly made its way onto some of our quotidian classroom practices, and reshaped, at least slightly, several of our teaching conceptualisations and imposed newer modes of teaching. One of the language tuition oddities is that, counterproductive and potentially hazardous though it may strike faithful conservatism, face-booking and twittering are being looked upon as potentially fertile platforms for fostering the learners' interlanguage development and empowering them to come to full grips with some aspects of foreign languages the acquisition thereof has defied the many pedagogical endeavours. The surge of these tools has not, much to the dismay of those who placed big confidence in their curative properties, subsumed or morphed into many of our practices, though. To date, reliance on the traditional practices fuelled by Contrastive Analysis (CA), Error Analysis (EA) and Transfer Theory (TT) holds sway on a big portion of everyday endeavours and is indeed the very tenet of this chapter to delve into these three approaches and reveal their on-going pedagogical appeal. The chapter, hence, traces the emergence and growth of each of these theories and dwells on the scholarly attention they have inspired over the decades.

The chapter's opening is marked by a sweeping overview of Contrastive Analysis. Thereafter, the psychological bases of the theory is addressed. To give this review more sense, the procedure of Contrastive Analysis is sketched out together with the two facets thereof. The

rebuttals framed against some assumptions of the theory (peculiarly those bearing on pronunciation learning) are taken up. The chapter looks at yet another crucial point: how Contrastive Analysis has informed the practices of phoneticians and pronunciation-teaching experts over the years. The rubric coming afterwards looks at a notion of significant value in the applied linguistician's parlance: interlanguage.

Once this discussion is finished, a major heading of this chapter, delineating a theory of immediate relevance to our research begins: Error Analysis. The concept of *error* is elucidated and the procedure of Error Analysis is embarked on. Towards the ending of this chapter, an equally relevant theory comes up: Transfer Theory. The theory as such is defined and several notions rooted in our research topic are thrown light on, viz. transfer and segment perceptibility, and prosodic transfer. Afterwards, the interrelatedness of Transfer Theory and Universal Grammar along with transfer and access to Universal Grammar mark the end of the first chapter of the literature review.

1.1 Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis is amongst the long-standing theories in the province of second language acquisition research. What are the premises upon which Contrastive Analysis was founded and what are the defining hallmarks intrinsic to this theory? The Applied Linguistics literature is replete with theoretical procedures all aiming to provide viable explanations to the all-too-subtle learning process and come up with viably applicable solutions to the many and varied cumbersome problems that constantly crop up therein. Contrastive Analysis started out as an array of theoretical assumptions promising a novel prospective outlook to be integrated into the very core of the second/foreign language learning enterprise (Richards, 1974). These assumptions, most of them sparked off by the tenets of behaviourism, hold that language learning is at heart a mere accumulation of new habits which are immediately dependent for their

materialisation and growth on old habits. The habits CA pioneers referred to are essentially linguistic ones. Contrastivists presumed that for a better, faster and more comprehensive mastery of any new language, structural and systematic comparisons between the learners' mother tongue and the language being learnt must be carried out a priori. Subsequently, areas of divergence and those of convergence can be outlined. Practitioners of CA contend that it is this knowledge of where the two languages converge and where they diverge that is bound to eventually back us up to better envision how to help learners out in their continuing learning challenges.

Contrastivists' main premise behind establishing pair-wise language comparisons is that difficulty and easiness experienced by second language learners is essentially induced by one overriding factor, their native language and the second language interferences (Bussmann, 1996; Richards & Schmidt, 2002). For contrastivists, any difficulty that may arise in the learning process is ascribable to the differences between the second and the native language. Hence, they steadfastly believe that the more differences there are, the more difficulties will be encountered. For them, similarity between the second and the native language is projected to play a facilitative role. Whenever similarities are discerned between the languages under scrutiny, learning will be easy and mostly error-free. The facilitative influence of similarity addressed here is exclusively what the early proponents believed to be the case. In a later section of this chapter, however, we will tackle the issue of similarity in a bit more depth and unearth how not all the early assumptions in relation to the learning-boosting weight of similarity withstood the test of time for so long.

CA, as is conceived and practised in interlanguage studies and applied linguistics research, owes its very existence to Lado (1957). It is in his seminal work *Linguistics across Cultures* where the totality of the theory's early founding assumptions are delineated. Perhaps the

following oft-cited quote encapsulates one of the major underpinnings of the theory that this pioneering scholar tried to elucidate back then:

> Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture both productively and when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practiced by natives. (Lado, 1957, p. 2)

It is patent from this quote that the linguistic influence does not operate only at the productive end of the linguistic pole; the receptive one is equally susceptible to such an impact. In Lado's own account, we can straightforwardly observe that he couples language and culture in the sense that both at the linguistic level and the cultural level influence may come out. It is, nonetheless, worth pointing out right at this juncture that part of this assumption did not see the light of day till a bit later. A great bulk of the early contrastive analyses that were undertaken under the influence of CA predominantly operated at the micro-linguistic end of the linguistic spectrum (Corder, 1973; Gass & Selinker, 2008; James, 1980). Most of the studies in the early sixties, during which phase CA witnessed its heyday, focused on the morpho-syntactic and phonological comparisons of languages. Years later, when pragmatics and sociolinguistics started to emerge and gain credibility as worthwhile disciplines in linguistics in and of themselves, cultural elements started to be seriously and insightfully considered in language acquisition research spheres. To testify that CA is likewise concerned with predicting stress and rhythm problems, Lado wrote, 'We tend to transfer to…[foreign] language our phonemes and their variants, our stress and rhythm patterns, our transitions, our intonation patterns and their interaction with other phonemes' (1957, p. 11).

Lado (1957) was, we must append herein, overtly overambitious for the potential contributions and the tangible merits CA would gain when put to the meticulously tough pedagogic test. This was, we would surmise, primarily due to his theory being devoid of accounts of the other elements that may get into the language learning process.

Before we go any further, it is worthy of mention that before CA managed to secure its permanent outlook, it had appeared in a less clearer guise bearing less distinct dimensions over a decade earlier. Indeed, the first ideas as well as the first tentative building blocks out of which CA grew were postulated by Fries in the mid-forties. What Fries (1945) did not do, however, is that he did not put into actual practice the hypotheses he propounded and became later on the groundwork for what is now commonly known as Contrastive Analysis, 'The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learnt carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner' (Fries, 1945, p. 06). Irrespective of his moderately sound ideas, Fries never conducted any contrastive analysis to test the robustness of his theory that is why Lado harvested all the credit associated with the theory. This idea is what Selinker tries to get out here, 'Fries is not known for having undertaken detailed CAs himself and that is most likely why histories of CA and SLA usually fail to mention him'(1992, p. 09).

Furthermore, this methodological procedure came into being after the sharp need felt after the Second World War for coming up with new ideas for language-teaching instructional tools. It was, by the same token, during this period that bilingual research was commenced (Weinreich, 1953; Haugen, 1956).

CA emerged, as alluded to earlier on, and met with much scholarly recognition in the US. The Contrastive Analysis appeal reached the Continent where a range of contrastive analyses was undertaken (Fisiak, 1991).

1.1.1 The Psychological Underpinnings of CA

No comprehension of CA could legitimately be labelled thorough if the psychological underpinnings thereof are unknown. CA thereby emerged when structural linguistics and the psychological school of behaviourism were mainstream and highly influential. Therefore, a great many of the beliefs endorsed by contrastivists were initially extracted from this school of thought (Brown, 2000). It is the contention of behaviourism, pioneered by Skinner (1957), that learning is merely a matter of habit formation that fostered the scholarly persuasions out of which CA gradually came into being. To these scholars' mind, if the learning of any new habit is to take place, the learner cannot conceivably distance his/her new learning from old learning (Ausubel, 1963; Gagné, 1965; Osgood, 1946; Travers, 1977). This will immediately necessitate that picking up the new habit will either be facilitated or hampered by the old one. The rule of thumb at work, according to behaviourism, is that if concordances between the two sets of habit exist, learning prospers, whilst it is impaired when dissonances exist. Contrastivists, who deemed language learning another facet of habit learning, followed the footsteps of behaviourism. By implication, they propounded the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, which bears on language learning. Intrinsic to this hypothesis is the underlying assumption that language learning is analogous to the learning of any other skill. Hence, picking up the structural norms and conventions of any new linguistic code will perforce be exerted influence upon by the learners' linguistic background. This influence could turn out to be two-fold: positive and negative. Positive influence means that the learning of the new language is facilitated by the learners' maternal language; negative influence denotes that the learning process is adversely impacted by the learners' mother tongue.

CA advocates contend that positive and negative influence are conditioned by two variables: similarity and difference. When comparisons of the two languages in question reveal

the existence of structural affinities, whether they be syntactical or phonological or some others, the learning process will not be laborious and errors would not materialise. By contrast, if differences are discerned, then, the learning process is forecast to be fraught with hurdles and errors.

1.1.2 The Contrastive Analysis Procedure

Gass and Selinker (1992) maintain that any CA goes through a number of interdependent phases. Below is a brief outline of the key elements imbedded in the CA procedure:

a) Linguistic and/or cultural descriptions of the two languages are made;

b) Parallel linguistic areas or items are selected for further fine-grained comparisons;

c) The areas of differences and similarities are pinpointed;

d) Predictions as to the potential learning hurdles or facilitation are drawn; and

e) The predictions are put to didactical tests.

It is prudent to point out here that when establishing pair-wise phonological comparisons, Lado (1957) purports that three main dimensions have to be sufficiently well explored:

i. Does the first language have phonemes that are phonetically analogous to those deployed by the target language sound inventory?

ii. Do the phonemes of the target language and the first language have the same allophones? and

iii. Is there a convergence between the target and the first language phonotactics?

1.1.3 The A Priori and A Posteriori Versions of CA

Prior to looking at the flaws CA suffers, it is worthwhile to give a succinct account on the two principal versions of CA .viz. the *a priori* version and the *a posteriori* version.

The *a priori* version, or, as is also commonly known, *the strong* or *the predictive* version, entertains the overtly extreme belief that a fine-grained, systematic comparison of the mother

tongue and the target language would be robust enough to foresee all the areas of difficulty and those of easiness. Armed with this insight, effective teaching materials can be designed (Wardhaugh, 1970). It is abundantly obvious that this version does not leave any room for the potential impact of other variables or so it appears from the boldness of its followers. Learner-specific traits, such as personality, motivation and age, to mention but a few, were disregarded and unaccounted for altogether. What is even more striking, within the boundaries of this highly ambitious model of language acquisition, the dimensions of the overall instructional atmosphere, i.e. the credentials of the teacher, the amounts of time allotted to teaching and the instructional devices used did not get their fair share of contribution in the learning enterprise. This is the chief reason why some scholars came to prove the overt falsity of this version per se.

The *a posterior* or the explanatory version, on the other hand, holds modest ambitions, as it were, for the didactic significances of CA. It maintains that not only is the mother tongue to be held accountable for the occurrence of deviancies in learners' performance, other variables may also potentially play different roles whether they be constructive or otherwise. For this mild view of the CA version, errors and/or areas of difficulty should not be outlined beforehand. The similarities and differences between the two languages are taken recourse to only to gauge the true inducer(s) of errors. In a nutshell, this second version is, we would maintain, an improvement on the first which, rightly in our view, incorporated more elements into the language data analysis the absence of which rendered feeble the first version.

In conclusion, it is fair to say that this latter version, though far less ambitious than the former, is more pedagogically viable and holds better appeal in the field of second language acquisition and interlanguage studies. Indeed, this version has met with wider acceptance and the proof of the pudding is that it is this very version that emerged, after going through a number of transformative adjustments, under the label of Error Analysis. As any theory's fate, CA has its

laudable and blameworthy dimensions. In what follows, a number of the oft-quoted pros and cons will be addressed.

1.1.4 The Drawbacks of Contrastive Analysis

As all the other theories that have come and gone in the realm of second language learning and interlanguage studies, CA has not been remotely immune against scholarly criticism whether it be stern or lenient. It is worthy of notice, nonetheless, that the cons that have been spelt out do not entail that CA has to be discarded altogether as an entirely useless theory that is capable of fostering the learning process and remedying a portion of the abundant problems into which learners universally run. It only implies that overreliance on the part of material designers, teachers and learners on the findings of CA should be reduced and all these members ought to err on the side of caution and reservation and not fallaciously invariably fall back on this theory only. Equally importantly, CA, we argue, ought to be used as a supplementary, adjunct tool interacting with other means and procedures for the second language experience to benefit from the multifaceted insights offered by different theoretical assumptions.

Towards the close of the 1950s, Chomsky propounded a novel theory about language acquisition, which defies and runs counter to most of the beliefs of behaviourism. His new cognitivist theory does not view learning as a mere accumulation of habits. According to his revolutionary theory, language learning takes place by virtue of some innate mental mechanism which he calls Language Acquisition Device or LAD for short. In fact, Chomsky's revolutionary approach totally discarded every merit of CA. It was initially in his review of Skinner's Verbal Behavior (1957) that Chomsky (1959) propounded his new language acquisition theory which is still being put to empirical tests. Driven by his work, research in Second Language Acquisition (henceforth SLA) began to discredit many of the purported strengths of CA. It has, we would

believe, invited further in-depth re-examination of CA and what it can and cannot do language-learning-wise.

Additionally, virtually all practitioners in the field of Applied Language Studies (ALS) concur that the decline in the projected efficacy of CA is chiefly ascribable to two overarching shortcomings: under-prediction and over-prediction. In other words, a plethora of contrastive analyses forecast the emergence in the learners' performance of some kinds of errors, but examination of the learners' actual output ran plainly counter to these predictions. Learners did not invariably run into the hurdles foretold by contrastivists. By the same token, a myriad of errors turned up in the learners' output without it having been predicted. The notion of over-prediction and under-prediction is explicitly stated in Larsen-Freeman and Long (2014), 'When predictions arising from CAs were finally subjected to empirical tests...Some errors it did predict failed to materialise' (p. 55).

Furthermore, although CA is said to be of a bigger number of tangible applications in the realm of phonological learning, within this very field, CA was chastised for not being able to arrive at an all-inclusive establishment of phonemic comparisons. Some other researchers posit that regarding phonemic awareness, mother tongue constraints pose problems only at the outset of the learning career. Eckman, Elreyes and Iverson (2003) put learners' failure down to adjust to the sounds the target language phoneme inventory possesses to largely the fact that learners' ears are not sufficiently attuned to these sound distinctions. Hence, they go on to argue that as learners advance further in their learning and gain more grasp of the novel sound distinctions, or, phrased differently, they get better ear-training; the foreign accentedness is bound to gradually give way to a more target-like performance. A research conducted by Major (1994) seems to be arguing along the same lines as Eckman et al. (2003). In an interlanguage phonological study he undertook into the acquisition of English phonemes, he inferred that Brazilian learners of English

grew less dependent on their Portuguese linguistic background as their phonemic awareness expanded through more exposure to English.

The noticeable decline of CA's popularity is blamed on yet another reason, namely its failure to account for the impact of learner-variables in shaping up the overall patterning of the learning process and, not least, the nature and gravity of the errors that such factors are prone to trigger off (Gass & Selinker, 2008). According to these co-authors, CA holds a rather unjustifiably simplistic stance towards the various intricacies of language learning. For them, the mother tongue influence, which had been rated the sole cause of errors, is of minimal impact on the learning process. Learners' age, type, amount and frequency of exposure to the target language could be of substantial impact on the learning process. They go on to argue that even sheer ignorance of the target language structural norms can lie behind the commitment of so many errors. These errors are generically labelled *intralingual errors* and are to be looked at in a later section.

Whitman (1970) approaches the criticism from a different vantage point: he maintains that the theory's fragility lies essentially in its being subjective in the explanatory roots utilised when accounting for errors. Firstly, the argument runs, when any CA is embarked on, only a set of pre-selected linguistic constituents are subjected to comparison under the assumption that arriving at an all-inclusive comparison at all the linguistic levels is unviable. The question that immediately arises here is: What basis or alternatively set of bases in accordance with which the researcher would go about choosing the items to compare? It is the answer to this question proper that could unearth the purported subjectivity of the theory. Picking the items to compare mirrors, Whitman penned, 'the conscious and the unconscious assumptions of the investigator' (1970, p. 193).

Our discussion would be fragmentary if we were to overlook the crucial importance of the weakness outlined by Dulay and Burt (1974), and Pack (1977), three of the influential figures who wrote and published profusely on this topic. According to Dulay and Burt (1974), it is the psychological underpinnings of the theory per se that flaw it. In educational psychology, out of which CA's assumptions were borrowed, it is maintained that the learning of a new habit mandates the unlearning of older habits irrespective of the potential impact knowledge of the old may exert on the new. Pack surmises, 'If a new response is learned, the old response must be unlearned. This implies that the first language must be unlearned or extinguished so that the second language can be learned' (1977, p. 16). Pack believes that CA is downright faulty, counter-intuitive and plainly counter-factual as he goes on to argue, 'The existence of bilingual education runs counter to this implication' (Pack, 1977, p. 16).

Now that we have taken up a pithy account on the merits and demerits of CA, the discussion will delve into how CA has been treated in and portrayed by the books of phonetics and those of pronunciation teaching. We will, in other wordings, only scratch the surface of the phonetics scholars' different reflections on what CA findings have got to share as to how the English sound system can and should be taught.

1.1.5 Contrastive Analysis Reflections on Phonetics and Pronunciation Teaching

Under this rubric, we will dwell upon a succinct account on how the pronunciation scholarship has drawn upon and mirrored in their work the findings and the potential benefits CA has to offer in relation to the acquisition of the English sound pattern. We will confine our account to some widely used phonetics books during the span of time extending from the 1960s up until the 1980s.

1.1.5.1 An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English

Gimson's prevalently used English pronunciation teaching manual (1970) should, to our mind, open up this discussion. At many Algerian universities, his book is one of the primary references teachers of Phonetics depend upon in their teaching practices. As far as CA is concerned, it is worthy of mention right at the outset that nowhere in his book does he talk about or even allude to his stance towards the potential utility of the theory in the teaching of English pronunciation: no heading or alternatively sub-heading was written on the linkage holding between CA and pronunciation teaching as such. Nonetheless, his tacit conviction that CA could be an asset to learners and teachers alike is abundantly manifest in many places throughout the entire volume. Virtually at the end of most fundamental pronunciation points taken up in his book, he devotes a very short heading entitled 'advice for foreign learners'. In almost all of these headings, he warns learners coming from specific linguistic backgrounds against the errors or otherwise hurdles they might potentially run into owing to the lack of correspondence between the English pattern and the learners' maternal language counterpart. By way of example, regarding the learning difficulties the /v/ sound may pose, he penned, amongst other things, the following, 'Some learners (particularly Indians) use too weak a contact for /v/...Care should, therefore, be taken to distinguish such pairs as *vain, wane*; *verse, worse*; *vest, west,* etc.' (p.182). As regards the acquisition of /æ/-/ɑː/ vowels, Gimson (1970) wrote, 'Many languages do not have a qualitative opposition in the relatively open region of the English /æ/-/ɑː/. The retracted nature of RP /ɑː/ should be insisted upon, especially in those words of the *after, path, pass* and *chance* categories' (p. 111). Now that we have talked about how some representative instances of segmental acquisition are portrayed in this book, we will move on to look at how stress learning is treated under a later heading.

Gimson initiates his recommendations by drawing the learners' attention to the existence of dissonances in the accentual patterns of English and some other languages. Thereafter, he goes on to scratch the surface of this notion. However, it is to be noted that he does not overtly state (as he does when addressing vowel and consonant acquisition by foreign learners) that this lack of balance may give rise to the emergence in the learners' speech of un-English accentual patterns. Beneath the surface, however, he is emphatically warning the learners against falling into the trap of fallaciously perceiving the existence of affinities. Prior to leaving this discussion, it is prudent to say that although he does not explicitly state it whenever a pronunciation item is discussed and recommendations are offered, it is only right to argue that Gimson (1970) supported the assumptions of CA, in a tacit manner, though. In addition, we have just, as aforementioned, adduced but a few illustrative instances on how CA is portrayed in his book.

1.1.5.2 Teaching English Pronunciation

In this landmark book on English pronunciation teaching, Kenworthy (1987) devotes the entirety of a chapter to delineating the various trouble-spots learners of differing linguistic backgrounds are bound to experience. Kenworthy wrote:

> In the following sections on individual languages, the differences between the pronunciation of English and the language are discussed in terms of the problems learners tend to have. The comments under Learner Strategy (LS) describe the ways learners tend to cope, for example, by substituting one sound for another or misplacing stress in certain words. (1987, p. 123)

She establishes a patent linkage between the errors foreseen to crop up and the differences between the English language sound inventory and that of the learners' maternal tongue. In fact, in part two of her book, which spans nearly forty pages (from page 123 to 162), she embarks on

pinpointing the differences between English and Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Turkish focusing overwhelmingly on rhythm, sentence stress, contrastive stress, word stress and some other aspects of connected speech.

The delineation of the differences is not the terminus, as it were, of the author's account. Rather, underneath each of the sub-headings in this section, she sets out to offer a number of insightful guidelines for the foreign learners to help them surmount the hurdles rooted in the potential cross-linguistic influence. The following is a good case in point:

> Arabic is a stress-timed language, so Arab learners will not have as many problems in this area as, say French speakers have. But there is a difference in the force of pronunciation of stressed and unstressed syllables in English and Arabic. In English, there is a great difference in force, unstressed syllables can be pronounced very weakly and may almost disappear; stressed syllables can be explicitly and fully pronounced. In Arabic, the difference in the force of pronunciation is not nearly so extreme: an unstressed syllable can have a full vowel and can be pronounced weakly. (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 124)

What is immediately discernible herein is that this author places great faith in the predictions of Contrastive Analysis: she thinks that so long as there exists a lack of balance between the English and the Arabic characteristics of stressed and stressed syllables, problems will necessarily materialise. She does not look at any of the factors which are prone to alleviate the gravity of the task, like, for instance, age, amount and type of exposure, learner variables and so forth.

1.1.5.3 Better English Pronunciation

This is the last book we are discussing under this rubric. Choice has neither fortuitously fallen on this one nor on the above two: we targeted the pronunciation books and teaching

manuals featuring the sound patterns of English English (EE). These three were written by, in our gauges, the foremost scholars of that area during that era of time (1960-1980). They are, likewise, still functioning as valuable references for teachers of English at the local level at the present time.

O'Connor (1980), in this book, like the other two authors, deems contrasts between the mother tongue and the language being learnt a true impediment to an easy mastery of pronunciation. Unlike Gimson (1970), who opted for giving advice for foreign learners immediately after virtually all the items discussed, O'Connor puts off the recommendation until the very end of the book thereby slightly resembling Kenworthy's account. It is, nonetheless, worth addressing in what ways the two references are different. While O'Connor addresses solely segmental problems of learners, Kenworthy gives a more extensive account on the same items as well as dwelling on difficulties associated with word and sentence stress along with aspects of linkage, connected speech and intonation.

O'Connor (1980), hence, lists the main difficulties and advises speakers of languages the sound patterns of which are different to that of English to pay special attention to those parts of his book which deal with the forecast hurdles. He looks at a number of consonantal and vocalic difficulties that could be experienced by 'speakers of six major languages (Arabic, Cantonese, French, German, Hindi and Spanish)' (p. 138). His description, however, lacks depth of analysis. On top of that, he does not give well-illustrated guidelines. He merely gives a list of challenging vowels and consonants which happen to be different from the English ones. Irrespective of this inconclusive account, O'Connor transparently and obviously believes that phonemic or phonetic differences constitute one of the underlying error-causing variables.

1.2 Interlanguage

The extreme oversimplification that CA associated with interference and its foreseen impacts on learning had not withstood the test of time for so long as it turned out to be at glaring odds with what really shapes learning as a whole (Oller & Ziahosseiny, 1970; Whitman & Jackson, 1972). Teachers comprehended that learners aided by the linguistic and the social milieu where they find themselves erect what is for them a legitimate system in its own right while attempting to pull themselves out of the chores lying before them. This paradigm shift has led to drastically altered conceptualisations of how learner language should be studied. Scholars started a new era of research during which time the atmospheric features of second language studies became more and more akin to child language investigation. This holds that learners are not merely using language fraught with errors due to faulty and patchy repetitions of language data to which they are exposed. Rather, they are consciously and wisely going through the learning process making hypotheses and testing them and by a steady process of trial and error bringing their competence into ever closer proximity to the targeted norms.

Following this potentially rewarding, novel trend in the SLA province several terms came out into the field to designate the independence of learners' errors. The most prevalent of these is 'interlanguage', which was adopted from the adjective interlingual. This term overtly connotes that what the learner produces is actually a hybrid system that lies in the intermediate state between the first language and the foreign language. It tacitly implies that Selinker (1972), who came up with this term in his seminal work expounding the premises of the theory, is one of the upholders of the giant impact of the first language upon the second language. Nemser (1971) coined the term 'approximative system', which entails that the linguistic code deployed by the learner bears resemblances to the target language, but the learner's system is still farther from the target one. In later years, Corder (1967) coined the term 'idiosyncratic dialect'. He underscored

via using this term the fact that learners truly construct their own systems relying on how they construe learning as such.

Moreover, at the dawn of the 1990's, a term, that is now in the error analysts' common parlance 'learner language', started to appear in the applied linguistics agenda (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Admittedly, this term is, by our own reckoning, the most neutral of all the ones mentioned here fundamentally because it is by no means overtly indicative of the traits inherent to the learner's linguistic output presumed by the user of the term.

1.3 The Emergence of Error Analysis

At the turn of the 1960s, the SLA atmosphere started to witness a fundamental shift in the L2 learning perspective. After the substantial and excessive attention allotted to the role of teachers, textbook designers and not least the differing teaching methods, a more rewarding conceptualisation of how the rendition of more fertile learning environments could be achieved started to take proper shape. Put differently, errors, which were traditionally frowned upon by many practitioners, (because they were deemed sheer reflections of incomplete learning and immature teaching orientations), started, intriguingly enough, to gradually gain acceptance. The gloomy treatment of errors in the pre-error analysis era is clearly framed in Brooks (1960, p. 56), 'like sins, an error is to be avoided and its influence overcome.' This stance, derogatory in a way, researchers held about errors started to be little by little altered towards the end of the sixties. It was during this period that errors started to be looked upon as a promising, integral component inherent to the learning process. Interestingly, teachers began to realise that those erroneous bits in their students' productions were potentially sure signs of on-going, constantly changing interlanguage. They, likewise, bear witness to the fact that learners are in a steady constructive activity towards assimilating the underlying rules of the target language. Errors, as Dulay and Burt (1974, p. 1) put it, 'are an inevitable, glaring reality of learning'. These new and at the time

revolutionary ideas paved the way to what has come to be universally known as Error Analysis (hereafter EA).

As opposed to Contrastive Analysis-that is profoundly rooted in the behaviourists' assumptions-EA is tightly linked to the nativist's approach to second language learning. This is held to be so because one of the defining tenets of this approach is that it highlights the significance of errors (Bell, 1974; Corder, 1971; Ellis, 2008). For nativists, learning is not a sheer accumulation of habits which prosper through constant corrections and reinforcements and that old habits influence new ones. Rather, this camp of researchers (whose views have had telling impacts on EA) laid especial emphasis on 'the mental processes that occur inside the black box when learning takes place' (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2009, p. 29). Put differently, learning is set in motion by virtue of a specific learning mechanism with which homo sapiens are congenitally blessed.

Regarding the emergence of EA, the first scholar that springs to mind when discussions of EA are made is Corder. It was indeed thanks to his thorough, well-elucidated account on the importance of shedding further light on learners' errors that EA accrued its universal appeal. He states, 'A learner's errors…are important in that they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies and procedures the learner is employing in the discovery of language' (1967, p. 167). Herein the author depicts the manifold significance of scrutinising learners' errors, which were overlooked in the earlier theories that preceded EA. For him, errors provide ample evidence on the mechanisms at work when a second language is being acquired. They, by the same token, are prone to give insights into the learning strategies learners deploy in their attempts to come into terms with the new linguistic code. (Corder, 1975). Corder (1973) claims that errors have yet another set of equally viable objectives: they give the teacher

and the syllable designer some insightful, desperately needed clues as to how to go about their respective crafts.

In a later work, *Error Analysis and Interlanguage*, which was published over a decade after EA started to gain further maturity within SLA, Corder (1981) better delineated the ins and outs of EA. Here again, he looked at the myriad contributions of EA. In addition to the above, Corder appended that errors are of unquestionably vital status to teachers in the sense that the systematic study they conduct into their learners' language would empower them to gauge the effectiveness of their teaching orientations and how much has already been achieved of their pre-set goals (Corder, 1981, p. 11). Along the same lines, he added that learners themselves, when their errors are brought to their attention, will have a range of benefits to gain. Corder (1981, p. 11) wrote, '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. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning'.

1.3.1 Demystifying Notional Opacity in Error Analysis

Amongst the issues that have sparked off heated scholarly debates is what hallmarks an error proper. In lay terms, the definition of 'error' is abundantly non-controversial. The error analyst, on the other hand, is in a constant struggle to easily recognise one and as such controversies tend to abound. That is, should any language usage that violates the target norms be considered an error? After all, not all what goes wrong in the learner's interlanguage is of immediate relevance to the practitioner. Some errors do not appear systematically in the learner's output, while others do. This has kindled the interest on the part of the researchers to deploy more than one single term to designate the learner's failure to abide by the target norms. The most fundamental distinction is that drawn between systematic errors and non-systematic errors. Corder (1981) and Ellis (1997) argue that non-systematic errors are committed by learners not

due to deficient command of the target norms: they emerge chiefly due to some compelling physical and/or psychological factors. Learners, precisely like children picking up their mother language, are prone to fall short of obeying rules that are already known to them due to exhaustion, dizziness, lack of concentration or any other overwhelming emotions, to mention but a few of the possible reasons. Learners do demonstrate an inclination towards simplification that they sometimes end up using linguistic variants that are at stark odds with the native norms (Corder, 1977). Therefore, errors do not perforce mirror true deficiencies in the learners' output. To use Corder's own words, 'These are adventitious artefacts of linguistic performance and do not reflect a defect in our knowledge of our own language' (1981, p. 10). Errors of performance or mistakes are two other terms used to refer to this first class of errors. Systematic errors, by contrast, crop up in the learner's interlanguage because of sheer ignorance of the requisite target norms rules and/or exceptions to the rules. Systematic errors bear witness to partial learning. Hence, learners are in need for more pedagogical empowerment to internalise the necessary rules whereby strings of language more in line with the target norm could be generated. Two terms that are used interchangeably with this term are errors and errors of competence.

Arriving at an all-inclusive definition to the above-mentioned terms is not, however, half as laborious and illusive as telling whether the spotted deviancy is an error or a mistake because, as Corder's statement runs, 'Mistakes are of no significance to the process of language learning.' (1981, p. 10). This statement entails that only errors are of significance, whilst mistakes are not. After all, the analyst is in constant search for a sounder assimilation of how learning proceeds and what variables play the strongest roles (productive or otherwise) in the process; mistakes plainly do not. Ellis (1997, p. 17) suggests that for differentiating between errors and mistakes, one can draw upon two complementary criteria. The first one is consistency of occurrence of the erroneous form in the learners' approximative systems. That is, if the learner is observed to

persist in committing the same deviancy over and over again without touching upon target-like usage or vanishingly rarely does so, then, one can infer that this is an error, thereby further inquiries to delve into the roots of its sources are in order. The second criterion, a far more viable and usable one, is the ability on the part of the learner to rectify the blunder when the existence of a deviancy of some sort is brought to their attention. If the learner manages to put the deviancy right, then, it is a mistake; if they fail, it is an error.

We would argue that the first criterion is mostly usable in longitudinal studies where we can trace the progress route of learners and gauge the consistency of occurrence of their interlanguage goofs. The second, by contrast, is bound to have a wider applicability range in the sense that it can be used both in longitudinal and in cross-sectional studies. For in-class practices, the two criteria are potentially readily applicable.

1.3.2 Error Analysis Procedure

Error analysis is an inherently prolonged process. It is a manifold process that constitutes a set of systematically ordered and inter-dependent sub-processes. Any error analysis, hence, is made up of recognition of error, description of error, explanation of error, evaluation of error and correction of error (Corder, 1981). Since our study aims, amongst other objectives, at an examination of errors of stress assignment, the deployed procedural framework will be conducted along the lines of these universally agreed-upon phases. Some page space will, accordingly, serve to cast adequate light on what each of these sub-procedures entails.

1.3.2.1 Recognition of Error

Error analysis commences with the spotting of the error per se. It is at this preliminary, yet fundamental phase, that the researcher dissects the learner's interlanguage performance to get at the deviancies figuring therein. Corder dubs this first stage 'recognition of idiosyncrasy' (1981, p. 21). Ellis (1997) maintains that the recognition of errors is arrived at via a comparison

established between the learners' linguistic product and a comparable reproduction of what is believed to be the error-free native counterpart. On the face of it, spotting the discrepancy is an easy enough task. Ellis, however, contends that the identification of errors is not always readily done owing partly to the fact that calculating the communicative purport of the learners' utterances is truly fundamental to understanding where they have gone wrong in their attempted obedience to the target norms. The reason why this challenge often crops up is that when we get to analysing learners' performance, it is not always possible for us to get hold of the learners and have them inform us about the message they wanted to get across. Take, by way of example, the following sentence:

A man and a little boy was watching him (Ellis, 1997, p. 16).

It is patently clear that the error resides in subject-verb concord. That is, the learner should have used 'were' instead of 'was' since the sentence has a coordinated subject that calls for a plural verb. Notice, however, that knowledge of morpho-syntax would provide but little help with spotting the exact error in:

'If you want to know the meaning of the word, ask a dictionary' (Corder, 1973, p. 279).

Herein it is immediately obvious that two equally plausible reconstructions can be made:

'If you do not know the meaning ask a dictionary' and '*If you do not know the meaning ask for a dictionary'* (Corder, 1973, p. 279).

A further challenge that could be experienced in recognising what the error is bears on the suitability of the learners' utterance to the surrounding communicative context. Some utterances may sound perfectly in accord with the norm, but if access to the situational context is made, the utterance may turn out not to be particularly so. This theoretical dilemma has induced the coinage on the part of Corder of *overtly erroneous utterances* and *covertly erroneous utterances*. For him, an overtly erroneous utterance is one that is clearly in breach of some linguistic rules, whether

they be grammatical or phonological. It is termed as such simply and purely because once one is attuned to the grammatical and phonological rules at work, the error is readily identifiable. By contrast, a covertly erroneous utterance is one that is grammatically, phonologically and semantically accurate, but, nonetheless, it does not make any sense because it is in violation of the situational norms (Corder, 1973). Once errors have been identified, a further sub-procedure is adopted by the analyst: error description.

1.3.2.2 Description of Error

If the first stage is systematically conducted, then, it will provide the investigator with a range of utterance pairs. Members of each pair are looked upon as translation equivalents of each other: one is framed in the learners' dialect; the other in the target dialect, to deploy Corder's own perspective. This set of data will be the basis for the second stage (1981, p. 24).

It is at this phase of the analysis that a neat and tidy compartmentalisation of errors is carried out. The categorisation of errors is not a unilateral procedure, though. It is argued that there are two principal levels at which descriptions can operate (Corder, 1973, p. 279-80). The first pertains to the linguistic level at which the error was made. Here, the description is straightforwardly done; we recognise different types of errors: morphological, syntactical, phonological, semantic or pragmatic errors. The second level at which descriptions are made relates to the outward discrepancy between the learner's sentence, word or any other string of language and the reconstructed, error-free native counterpart. We can sort out a range of error types following this descriptive framework. However, analysts contend themselves with putting the errors spotted into four major classes: errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of selection, and errors of word ordering. It is worthwhile to mention that these two apparently unrelated descriptive frameworks do actually work harmoniously together to form a close-nit, unified descriptive procedure. We cannot dispense with any of them in any error analysis.

1.3.2.2.1 Omission Error

As their name implies, errors of omission are labelled as such because they designate learners' failure to insert a linguistic constituent which canonical language practices deem mandatory. Errors of omission can be spotted at various linguistic strata. At the syntactical level, for instance, the following sentence displays an error of omission: 'We not hot today'. It is clear that the sentence calls for the copula 'to be' to come between the subject and its complement. At the phonological end of the language spectrum, errors of omission abound. To give an example from prosodic phonology, learners of English whose mother tongue does not display the same intonation patterns peculiar to English utterances are reported to produce sentences which are devoid of any intonation (Cruttenden, 2001).

1.3.2.2.2 Addition Error

Learners, irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds, have also been reported to make yet another set of errors: errors of addition. That is, when a word or stretch of words or even a sound is positioned in a linguistic environment where it is not needed. Errors of addition manifest themselves at all linguistic strata. To adduce an example from phonology, an error with which the learners' spoken productions are replete and which has been widely reported upon is epenthesis. There are two main types of epenthesis: epenthetic vowels and epenthetic consonants. Crystal (2008, p. 171) defines this notion as follows, 'A term used in phonetics and phonology to refer to a type of intrusion, where an extra sound has been inserted in a word; often sub-classified into prothesis and anaptyxis.' Crystal employs 'extra' to mean not an integral constituent of the phonological make-up of the word where it is added. Usually, the insertion of intrusive vowels serves to add more syllables to the word, thereby meddling with the word's accentual and rhythmic patterning. To provide an illustrative example from the local English as a foreign language learning sphere, many learners erroneously append the schwa vowel in phonological

environments where this runs counter to the English phonotactics; they would pronounce the word ‘saddened’ with an added schwa vowel hence converting it into a three syllable word.

1.3.2.2.3 Selection Error

This results from failure on the learner’s part to go for the right segment, morpheme, word or any other bigger or smaller chunk of language. Examples of this error type are countless. The pronunciation province is replete with them. If a learner stresses the second syllable in *angry* in lieu of the first one, then this is an error of selection: they have mis-selected the right spot for accent allocation. Such errors are indeed remarkably prevalent in the learners’ phonological interlanguage both at the segmental level and the non-segmental one.

1.3.2.2.4 Misordering Error

Another category of errors that crops up in the learners’ output is errors of ordering. It designates the erroneous arrangement of phonemes, syllables, words or other chunks of language. As regards pronunciation acquisition, this set of errors is far less common than all the aforesaid ones. Once errors have been diagnosed, the analyst sets about putting interpretations into the amassed deviancies.

1.3.2.3 Error Explanation

The foregoing discussion has looked at the first preliminary stages in the error analysis procedure. They are essential primarily because they provide the raw material for a subtler and more crucial sub-procedure both for theoretical linguistics and practical applications: error explanation. To put it simply, explaining errors denotes getting to the bottom of the factors that have triggered off their materialisation in the acquirer’s collected output. Over the years, learners’ interlanguage has been subjected to large-scale as well as small-scale analyses which now feed into our knowledge and enlighten our quotidian practices in second language acquisition either at

a theoretical level or at a practical classroom level. In what follows, discussions will centre on the fundamental, oft-observed sources of errors.

It is customary in interlanguage studies, whether they be syntactical, phonological, cultural or otherwise, to draw a clear-cut boundary between two main sets of error sources, namely interlingual and intralingual sources.

1.3.2.3.1 Interlingual Error

These errors are caused by mother tongue interference (James, 1980; Macaro, Vanderplank, & Murphy, 2010; Tavakoli, 2012). These errors emerge mainly due to learners' hyper-reliance upon their mother tongue's constraints which happen to be at odds with the constraints of the target language. When learners wrongly perceive non-existent structural affinity between their language and the target language they are in the process of learning, then they are highly prone to commit errors. Difficulties may arise when dissonances between the maternal language and the target language are manifestly obvious, known to the acquirer, but unfortunately the acquirer falls short of shaking off his/her language habits when using the target language. Speakers of Mandarin Chinese are reported to use only one sound, the /l/, whether the English word contains a /l/ or a /r/. They would pronounce light and right as if they were homophones: /raɪt/. This is fundamentally due to the fact that in these languages /r/ and /l/ do not enjoy a phonemic status as they do in English: they are allophonic variants of the same abstract unit. Ellis (1997) adduces an illustrative example pertaining to how Bantu learners of English fare in the usage of the English prepositional system. He puts down these learners' failure to comply with the English norms to the lack of concordance between Bantu and English regarding the system of prepositions .viz. the English prepositional system is far more varied than that of Bantu. He cites the following example:

We went at Johannesburg last weekend (Ellis, 1997, p. 19).

The error in this sentence is said to be induced by the fact that Bantu uses only one preposition when referring to both direction and location, whilst English uses two distinct ones. In his study of the interlanguage phonology of Algerian learners of English, Beghoul (2007) revealed that one of the contributory factors (yet by no means the most fundamental one) that spurred his informants on to articulate in a way that violates the English norms bears essentially on interference from French.

1.3.2.3.2 Intralingual Error

The second major cause of errors is of an intralingual nature. They indeed have extra-linguistic explanations to them since their inducers are not traceable to the linguistic spectrum known to the learner. They bear this name because they are not related to the mother tongue-foreign language relatedness and/or otherwise lack of it and how this may bear on the learning route and ultimate attainment. Such genre of errors is further sub-divided into a set of other distinct sets of errors each of which stems from a different source.

1.3.2.3.2.1 Errors of Overgeneralisation

Gass and Selinker (2008) contend that learners often fall short of knowing the constraints imposed upon usage of target language rules. This, accordingly, may spark off the application of some rules in their speech or writing which are not tolerated by the target language. Overgeneralisation errors mirror deficiencies in learners' linguistic sensitivity (Crystal, 2008). It is worthy of mention that such errors are, intriguingly, not peculiar to second language acquirers: children picking up their mother tongue go through a period where they largely depend on this strategy (Gass & Selinker, 2008; Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

1.3.2.3.2.2 Communication-strategies-induced Errors

When the learner gets involved in a linguistic exchange where their current knowledge does not adequately serve their needs, they occasionally resort to the usage of their deficient

knowledge to fill up the void and ward off awkward communicational breakdowns even when the linguistic skills they have at their disposal is not entirely harmonious with the context. For instance, when a learner uses the word 'my wife's mother' to refer to 'mother-in-law', they are in fact getting round the word for the sake of getting their message across. This is indeed one of different ways whereby communication is made to go smoothly on.

1.3.2.3.2.3 Teacher-induced Errors

It is widely recognised that underneath the detected errors in learner's interlanguage lies a range of didactic variables. The syllabus adopted as well as the teacher's pedagogical orientations and credentials are, likewise, rated amongst the influential error-causing factors. Learners of all ages and competencies are known to extensively rely on their teachers' tuition. This, however, may under some circumstances where the methodological tools in use, the teacher's own unhealthy conceptualisations as to how languages are properly taught, the lack of balance between the teacher's gauges of the learner's needs and the faced hurdles may serve to hamper learning or bring about unwanted disturbances (Derwing, 2010; Foote, Holtby and Derwing, 2011; Murphy, 2014). Selinker (1972, p. 39) calls this 'transfer of training'.

1.4 Transfer Theory

Inextricably bound though Contrastive Analysis and Transfer Theory are, the latter is said to predate the former. Odlin (1989) stated that disagreement regarding the role of transfer in historical change, including the emergence of pidgins and creoles, can be traced back to as early as the nineteenth century. Most of the work on transfer in the nineteenth century was essentially diachronic in orientation, though. It is no wonder, nonetheless, that it was in the nineteenth century that comparative philology reigned and most researchers had a keenly vested interest in all the factors that were thought to be behind the linguistic evolution.

Irrespective of their common psychological underpinnings, transfer still enjoys more acceptance that CA does in interlanguage phonology studies be they segmental or suprasegmentals (Major, 1987). A flurry of studies have acknowledged the close linkage holding between transfer and L2 sound pattern acquisition (Guion, Harada & Clark, 2004; Leather, 1987, 1997, 2003; Odlin, 2003). About this, Major (2008, p. 68) wrote:

> This copious research includes segmental (Hancin-Bhatt 1994; Hung & Man on Hong Kong English 2002; J-E. Kim and Silva on Korean English 2003; Marghany on Egyptian English 2002; Wang & Geva on Cantonese English 2003; Zampini on Spanish English 1996), syllable structure (Basson 1986; Broselow 1984; Eckman & Iverson 1994; Flores & Rodrigues 1994; Seubsunk 2000), metrical structure (Archibald 1992), rhythm (Sajavaara & Dufva 2001; Wenk 1986; Zsiga 2003), connectionism (Ellis 1996 [for a response to Ellis, see Ioup 1996; Major 1996;]; Shirai 1992), and dialects (Munro, Derwing, & Flege 1999; Wolfram, Childs, & Torbert 2000).

In learning theories, transfer has been regarded as a highly influential agent. It is defined as, 'the hypothesis that the learning of task A will affect the subsequent learning of task B.' Jackobovits (1969, p. 55). The fundamental concept in transfer pertains to the influence exerted by old habits upon the new ones (Gass, 1996; Gass & Selinker, 1983). It is, none the less, not the inevitable impact of the old on the new that has enticed much controversy; rather, it is the conditions under which transfer is prone to occur and the extent to which transfer facilitates or hinders that research has been striving to more satisfactorily account for (Major, 2008). Among the influential models that drew extensively on transfer theory are the oft-cited works of Andersen (1983) Transfer to Somewhere Principle and Kellerman (1995) Transfer to Nowhere Principle. In these two elaborate models on second language acquisition, the researchers address

the very concepts of similarity and difference and demonstrate how these contribute to setting transfer in motion.

1.4.1 Interlanguage Transfer

Our discussion of the theory of transfer will doubtless be patchy and woefully inadequate if no mention is made of interlanguage transfer (henceforth IT). After all, the current study is conducted in a linguistic setting where learners of English as a foreign language typically get in contact with a second language after they have come in terms not only with their maternal language, Algerian Dialectal Arabic, but when they have already been institutionally taught Modern Standard Arabic.

IT designates the influence of a second or a third language on the acquisition of another language. Gass and Selinker (2008, p. 155) state that any theory of transfer that 'purports to be general cannot be robust without a sufficient account on the potential impact of a second language which is for a bilingual learning an additional language.' Indeed, how could one's inferences be justifiably valid if only the potential contribution of the mother tongue is computed, while any other languages besides the mother tongue are not adequately incorporated into one's interlanguage analyses? In any discussion of interlanguage transfer, two major issues must perforce come under scrutiny:

a. What are the conditions under which interlanguage transfer is set in motion?
b. Would cross-linguistic influence from the mother tongue be un-operational if interlanguage transfer is in operation?

Cenoz (2001) analysed language production of Spanish-Basque learners of English to gauge which factor, age, proficiency and learners' perception of the existing relatedness between the second language and English, will have the most overriding influence on triggering off interlanguage transfer. He observed that the perceived linguistic distance or closeness was a big

determinant of interlanguage transfer. Additionally, age came out as one of the dominant factors: older learners fell back more regularly on their already amassed linguistic knowledge than younger ones. To these factors, Bild and Swain (1989) append the proficiency level in the languages, whilst Hammarberg (2001) argues that the most recently acquired tongue would have a bigger scope of influence. Brown and Gullberg (2008), Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008), and Luk and Shirai (2009) are, however, all of the shared contention that transfer irrespective of its type is promoted by the learner's command of the linguistic code being learnt. In a more recent study, Rothman and Cabrelli-Amaro (2010) have shown that interlanguage transfer can be induced by the mother language or by any additional language depending on the linguistic level per se. Gass and Selinker (2008) posit that this line of research is still under exploration: there is a paucity of empirical evidence as to how bilinguals go about learning another language.

After this brief introduction, we will in the forthcoming section look at the interaction between transfer and the acquisition of phonology whether it be at the segmental level or at the suprasegmental one.

Major (2008) claims that second language phonology has gained its fair share of interest in transfer-oriented research. This genre of research is not in its infancy: probably the work of Weinreich (1953) can be considered the first of its kind to delineate the various components and dimensions of phonological transfer. The following are the various categories of phonological transfer that he distinguished; some of them are segmental whilst others are non-segmental:

i. Phoneme substitution: when the learner uses his first language's closest equivalent when attempting to emulate the target sound;
ii. Phonological processes: when the learner uses constraints of his mother language which are distributed differently from those of the target language;

iii. Under-differentiation: when the second language has phonemic distinctions not employed by the mother language's sound inventory. By way of example, when two sounds are used allophonically by the learner's L1, but enjoy full phonemic status in the L2;

iv. Over-differentiation: this is just the reverse of the preceding category. This obtains when some sound distinctions in the learner's language are not present in the second language, as when two distinct L1 phonemes are allophonic variants of the same abstract unit in L2;

v. Phonotactics interference: when there is lack of balance in the syllabic make-up of the target and the mother language. For instance, this obtains when the mother tongue uses less elaborate codas or onsets than those deployed by the target language; and

vi. Prosodic interference: when the learner falls back on their prosodic constraints when attempting to abide by the norms of the target language.

In a later research work, Haugen (1956), in his undertaking into bilingualism in the Americas, made use of virtually identical categorisations. There are, none the less, three labels that are dissimilar to those of Weinreich (1953): he preferred simple identification to sound substitution; divergent was used instead of under-differentiation, while convergent was used instead of over-differentiation.

1.4.2 Prosodic Transfer

In the above discussion, an older name for prosodic transfer figures: prosodic interference. In almost all current work, this old term is no longer in use. It is worth pointing out that interlanguage studies into the acquisition of prosody are miniscule if compared to studies at the other levels of linguistic analysis, most predominantly the morpho-syntactical level. The immediate inference one is entitled to make is that there is still a dearth of empirical evidence regarding the role of transfer in L2 prosody. However, in what follows, the discussion will centre on what is heretofore known about the impact of transfer on prosody acquisition.

Wenk (1985) claims that transfer is legitimately not an-all-or-nothing determinant of L2 prosody acquisition. He found out in a longitudinal study of French learners of English that stress acquisition was not constrained by transfer all along; rather, the learning process went through a number of developmental phases. It was only during the beginning and intermediate phases that these learners drew upon their French accentual structures. As their command of English increased, he concluded, they gradually steered away from their mother-tongue influence and adopted more native constraints. In a comparable later study into the acquisition of English pitch accent and stress assignment by Chinese learners, Juffs (1990) found out that erroneous allocations of stress were largely explainable in terms of the teaching approaches used. He noted that over-careful speech was emphasised which resulted in learners placing super-heavy stress on every word in the sentence: hardly did they un-stress function words when applicable. In their extensive treatment of the acquisition of English sound pattern, Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) dwell upon a constellation of topics and discussions all related to how segmentals and suprasegmentals are acquired and the extent to which transfer impinges upon the learning process. Some other studies, Archibald (1998) and Hansen (2001), have tried to decipher the various conditions under which suprasegmental transfer is set in motion. Regardless of the line of argumentation each has pursued, they both concur that transfer is one of the constraints that renders L2 phonological as well as phonetic features a huge uphill struggle to pick up by foreign learners.

1.4.3 Similarity and Transferability

Which phonetic and phonological phenomena are more susceptible to transfer? Are similar phenomena genuinely more bound to attract transfer or are different ones far stronger attractors of transfer? This topic has fuelled ongoing debate in interlanguage phonology studies for far too long and varying answers have been offered (Ringbom, 2007). At one pole of the

argument, Wode (1977) and Major (1987) hold that perceived phonetic and/or phonological similarity is a bigger learning impediment than difference on account of the empirically based evidence reporting that the former is more conducive of transfer than the latter. The main rationale behind this, the argument runs, is that when learners discern the existence of similarity, transfer is projected to persist as learners' efforts would be minimal if not non-existent altogether. According to Major (2008), perceived difference may drive more cognitive endeavours on the part of learners to come in terms with the novel phenomenon. English learners of French are likely to use the alveolar, aspirated [t] instead of its un-aspirated dental target-counterpart [t̪] because such differences are too tiny to attract due attention. Nonetheless, when confronted with the /r/ sound, the speaker 'more likely will notice that the French and English *r*s are different and may immediately start making non-English substitutions for French *r* (Major, 2008, p. 72).

In his oft-cited elaborate work on the meaningfulness and the possible impact of similarity, Wode argues along the same lines. He states that transfer operates only when 'crucial similarity measures' are conceived by the learner' (1983, p. 180). Intriguingly enough, he goes as far as to argue that if such measures do not obtain, the acquisition of the target sound will go through learning phases that bear a striking resemblance to those of native language sound acquisition (Wode, 1983).

The purport and effect of similarity has taken the scholarly interest of yet another scholar. In his influential Speech Learning Model, Flege (1995) stresses that owing to the absence of saliency, similar sounds could trigger off far more pronunciation errors than dissimilar ones. In a study he conducted prior to tailoring his now influential learning model, he found out that French learners of English produced the /ʊ/ practically invariably in a native-like manner for the newness they associated with it. By contrast, they generated an inaccurate /u/ because it struck them as being analogous to the same sound their mother tongue uses.

In a similar fashion, Sjoholm (1976) undertook a study into Finnish speaking Fins learners of English. The informants made errors which she put down to interference from Swedish, their second language. By contrast, Swedish-Finnish bilingual speakers made errors immediately attributable to Swedish, the primary language of the respondents. The researcher, to get into the roots of this scenario (the reliance on the part of the linguistically-divergent groups on the patterns of the same language), elicited the perception of representative informants from both groups. They attested that this glaring dependence on their Swedish linguistic habits and not on Finnish was fundamentally due to the false affinity they discerned between Swedish and English.

Literature on the potential significance of similarity, as reported about in Hansen Edwards and Zampini (2008), is replete with studies corroborating the above-discussed view. Never the less, some other researchers adopted a completely different perspective: they look more favourably at the contribution of similarity. This idea is conspicuously stated in Ringbom (1987, p. 134), 'Similarities, both cross-linguistic and interlinguistic, function as pegs on which the learner can hang new information by making use of already existing knowledge, thereby facilitating learning.' This theoretical prediction is borne out in a study that Bohn and Flege (1992) undertook into the phonological interlanguage of German learners. They unearthed, amongst other things, that on account of 'equivalence classification', as they put it, German learners of English did badly in producing similar sounds while they produced non-similar ones in a more native-like manner.

A third camp of researchers approaches this apparently all too crucial point in SLA transfer framework in a strikingly different fashion as they dismiss even the meaningfulness of difficulty and deploy rather uncommon terminological distinctions. Major and Kim (1996), the early pioneers of the Similarity Differential Rate Hypothesis, maintain that the concept

'difficulty' is fairly mystifying. As a more viable substitute, they suggested 'rate of learning'. For them, similar sounds are not inherently inhibitory: similar sounds just call for much more to integrate into the learner's interlanguage than do different ones. In their in-depth investigation of Korean learners of English, they observed that although the /j/ sound is similar to its Korean counterpart and /z/ was different, both more advanced and novice learners produced the former more authentically than the latter. In a further analyses of a couple of studies, Major (1997) arrived at a conclusion that lent ancillary support to the Similarity Differential Rate Hypothesis. It is worthwhile to hint at a very pivotal issue prior to closing this discussion: the very definition of similarity proper. Wode (1983) claims that the definition of similarity is still a cause of wide-ranging controversy. In a similar vein, Major (2008, p. 74) wrote, 'Criteria can include acoustic, articulatory, perceptual factors, as well as NS and NNS intuitions, and even orthographic evidence.' He concludes by saying that more intensive work is needed for coming up with a universally agreed upon definition.

1.4.4 Transfer and Segment Perceptibility

Transfer can operate at two extremes: production and perception. Seeing that a more profound assimilation of the transfer theory requires gaining a view of not only how it operates at the production end of the linguistic spectrum, but also how perception of sounds is impacted by transfer, it was deemed prudent to enclose herein a section on what the literature says about the ties holding between transfer and the perception and production of L2 sounds. Trubetzkoy (1958) claimed that sounds which are different from the learners' native language ones pose far more perceptual difficulties than those which are similar. He purports that perception and production are inextricably bound: when learners fall short of perceiving the second language sounds, their productive performance gets impoverished. On the other hand, their performance is remarkably promoted when they manage to perceive the L2 sounds. His predictions, however, did not

withstand empirical evidence for so long. Sheldon and Strange (1982) worked out that learners' segmental production can be relatively good even when their perception scores are low. Their Japanese informants faced insurmountable difficulties differentiating /r/ from /l/. Nonetheless, the production of these segments was fairly authentic in many of the words they made. Major (2008) claims that although some studies disclosed that production is better than perception, the usual scenario is that perception is better. The author puts forward that the existence of some vanishingly scarce studies where informants' productive aptitude outweighed the receptive one is essentially due to their literacy level. Hence, tutored learners may have been taught sound contrasts that they cannot possibly discern when left to their own devices. He added that even 'the orthographic cues may have aided production' (p. 75).

1.4.5 L1 Transfer and Access to Universal Grammar

Whenever L1 transfer comes under scrutiny, another notion that is thought to go hand in hand with transfer is Universal Grammar (UG). Quite a number of models have been set up to delineate the perceived relationship between these two concepts, which, on the face of it, seem to be unrelated. Prior to dwelling on such a discussion, it is worthwhile that we devote some page space to the trappings peculiar to the UG approach to language acquisition.

In its early crudest occurrence, the UG approach was essentially erected to account for the uniformally and universally full mastery of language un-impaired children accomplish with proverbial ease. It is common knowledge that insufficient and meagre though the language chunks to which children gain access are, they invariably arrive at a complete command of the language their immediate speech communities deploy. This dumbfounding universal phenomenon induced researchers to start assuming in more deadly earnest that the accumulation of the various language rules and abstractions must be set in motion by a far more robust force than sheer impoverished diets of language to which they are exposed.

UG is, hence, loosely defined as the inborn mental faculty that enables children to pick up and assimilate all the subtle rules of use and linguistic conventions of their native tongues with relative ease and stunning rapidity. White (1989) argues that children are capable of generating strings of language to which they have never been granted access. She adduces the illustrative example of how 'want' and 'wanna' are distributed in English sentences. According to this scholar, no matter how hugely varied instances of language to which they get exposed, without being equipped with a congenital predisposition for language acquisition, children will in all likelihood fall short of using all the forms that they use invariably accurately. Chomsky (1986), one of the famed adherents to this view, labels this deficient exposure 'the poverty of the stimulus'.

Some other researchers (e.g. DeCasper & Spence, 1986; Marcus, 1993) are adamant that the inherent void in the linguistic stimulus can be filled up by parental or other care-givers' intervention. To refute their argument, Chomsky claims that irrespective of how comprehensive and systematic the intervention, or as is alternatively called 'negative evidence', is, it can serve only to empower children to refine the sentences that they use; it is unable to enable them to alter the underlying hypotheses they internally formulate because these hypotheses are hardly ever possible to recognize, let alone to set right. He goes on to argue that the robustness of intervention is a scarcity as children are impervious to correction. Brown and Hanlon (1970) do not lend any support to Chomsky's account as they testify that empirical research into children's acquisition of their maternal tongues is far too scant for it to offer us sufficient cues on the basis of which we can gauge what really takes place in language learning and which factors outstrip which variables.

Now after this succinct introduction into some of the underlying tenets of the UG approach to language learning (which pertain to the epicentre of our discussion) has been

outlined, we will move on into intricate and, to our mind, not-well-delineated purported relationships existing between UG and transfer in second language acquisition.

1.4.5.1 No Access to UG

Bley-Vroman (1989, 1990) in his Fundamental Difference Hypothesis maintains that first language and second language learning take place in strikingly different environments. He claims that second language learners are disallowed access to UG if the learning has a post-puberty starting point. For this extremist model, learning is set in motion solely by the learning strategies learners develop when confronted with the task of language learning. Clahsen and Muysken (1986) also argue along the same extremist lines. These scholars, by implication, say that transfer plays a very salient role in L2 acquisition.

1.4.5.2 No Transfer-Full Access

Followers of this second model, Epstein, Flynn and Martohardjono (1996), entertain a strikingly different conceptualisation with view to the actual link between transfer and accessibility to UG. These scholars assume that UG is wholly accessible to L2 learners thereby rendering the penetration of the mother tongue knowledge into the learning process a non-existent scenario. This is the reason why they contend that that L1 learning and L2 learning operate along parallel lines. It is noteworthy that under this view, age is by no means viewed as a determinant or even a remotely influential variable: young and older learners alike glean comparable benefits from the inborn mental mechanism.

1.4.5.3 Partial Transfer-Full Access

Epstein and his associates (1996), the early pioneers of this view, are adamant that learners have undivided access to UG but this does not preclude a partial involvement of transfer in the learning process. One of the other tenets of this trend is that during the initial phases of learners' grammar, functional categories do not undergo transfer, while lexical categories do.

Peculiar to the conceptualisation of defenders of this trend is that reliance on transfer is only apparent at the beginning of the learning process but as more extensive input is taken in, learners will proceed along the full access route and vestiges of transfer will gradually vanish. For these scholars, age is no determining factor.

1.4.5.4 Full Transfer-Partial Access

Tsimpli and Roussou (1991) contend that only partial access to UG is allowed which, by implication, results in learners' taking full recourse to transfer to aid learning. White (1990), who published fairly extensively on second language phonology, also subscribes to the beliefs of this trend.

1.4.5.5 Full Transfer-Full Access

Schwartz and Sprouse (1994, 1996) put forth that at the initial stages of L2 grammar, learners rely entirely on their L1; meanwhile access to UG is allowed. It is worthy of mention that the learners will benefit from the properties of the language acquisition device even those which were not instantiated in the L1 grammar. Paradoxically enough, the amassed interlanguage grammars are UG-shaped even if discrepancies were to be attested between the second language and the native language. A further account of the denotation of full transfer-full access hypothesis bears mention at this juncture of the discussion. For them, full transfer is synonymous with entire dependence on the L1 parameters and full access entails that the initial state of L2 grammar goes along a number of reconstruction stages until it attains a phase where it acquires an end state that is more in tune with the parameters of the ambient language.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussing seems legitimately to point to one unified direction: second language research is such a bewilderingly tangled web and the task of endowing the learners with quick fixes to their many, varied and perplexing needs and quenching their thirst for a better

mastery of language is a far cry from being half done. Not a single theory or trend or approach or whatever its affiliation should be dubbed of the ones discussed above has managed to immunise itself from the perils triggered off by the mysteries of language learning. Contrastive Analysis is far too narrow in scope to accommodate all that needs to be accommodated into a mature theory capable of feeding into our everyday classroom practices. Acculturation, social and regional affiliations, how learning and success are defined in the individual learning situations, the gender and age of the acquirer and a whole host of other factors were not on the contrastivists' research agendas. This is why the theory has been the recipient of much sharp scholarly criticism. Seeing the need for a broader-scoped theory and discerning the flaws in their predecessors' accounts, error analysts joined the academic community to fill in the void they located therein. They commenced a new era of research into language learning hallmarked by a constructive tolerance of learners' goofs. This shift of vantage point empowered them to delve deeper into the learning process and discover more factors that lie behind learners' defective command of language.

This obsession with finding swifter, more decent cures for the learners has promoted the applied linguist's understanding of issues which had been mind-bogglingly opaque to them and resulted in the emergence of new avenues of research. Interlanguage studies are arguably amongst the most salient of these. Learners' idiosyncratic usage of language strings and chunks has gained its own linguistic legitimacy and imposed more reformulations into how one can more fruitfully approach this phenomenon.

To round off, it has been the role of this chapter to delineate a number of characteristics intrinsic to a moderately good understanding of the emergence, evolution and the growing maturity of four main approaches within the broad scope of SLA, namely Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis and Transfer Theory and Interlanguage Transfer. We have striven, amongst other

things, to enlighten the readership about how these are inextricably interlinked and how closely tied to our research work.

CHAPTER 2: The Accentual Pattern Hallmarks of English English Modern Standard Arabic and Standard French

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Introduction

Our research undertaking has been carried out at a linguistic setting whose most noteworthy, prominent trapping is that the targeted learner-informants have multiple codes at their linguistic disposal. By implication, accounting for how these interact to shape the generated accentual pattern output of a second-language learner constitutes one of the overriding tenets of this research enterprise as a whole. Contemporary and previous undertakings into the acquisition of SLA and how this hinges, at least partly, on the myriad interactions amongst the languages known to a multilingual do solidify the methodological legitimacy of our own (Han, 2004; Han & Odlin, 2006; Odlin, 2003). Such undertakings represent a true momentum for us and make us cling more faithfully onto our presumptions that only a research-based understanding of how the linguistic systems known to the Algerian learner could determine or at least condition their ultimate success or failure when confronted by the task of picking up an additional language.

The present chapter is, by implication, tailored to delineate the various stress properties of the three differing linguistic systems our informants have internalised over the years of their linguistic growth. Any preparedness to put their English performance partly down to cross-linguistic influence must emanate from a painstaking comparison of the accentual properties of the three languages known to them, namely Modern Standard Arabic, Standard French and Standard English. Prior to getting onto the individual accentual properties of these codes, it was rated of pivotal importance that the elucidation of a number of key issues bearing on stress as a component of language as a whole should take precedence.

2.1 The Phonetic Parameters for Gauging Stress

Although phonetic and phonemic accounts of speech production typically start with pinning down the different characteristics of discrete segments or phonemes whether they are vocalic or consonantal, the intrinsic long-term aim, as it were, does not end just there. After all, speech is hallmarked by continuously flowing, rule-governed successions of such sounds. Needless to say, when segments are strung together and woven by the human vocal tract and a set of other accompanying mechanisms into higher and more sophisticated units, the analysts find themselves confronted by a novel emerging stratum of language which warrants newer procedures and subtler analytic calibre. Amongst the many intricate notions to which segments in combination give rise is that of stress or accent.

Stress is defined as 'A certain type of prominence which, in some languages, is present upon certain syllables' (Trask, 1996, p. 336). This is, in effect, what many other phoneticians and experts in the field agree upon (Cruttenden, 2001; Jones, 1962; Ladefoged, 2001; Laver, 1994; O'Connor, 1973, 1980; Roach, 2001, 2002). This is what stress is when defined from a listener's vantage point. Conversely, stress-when viewed through the lenses of the producer of those perceived syllables-could be defined as the extra amount of muscular energy and articulatory and breath effort expanded in the production of certain syllables (Fudge, 1984; Kingdon, 1958; Roach, 2009).

It does not follow, however, that the accentual identity of a syllable which is said to be stressed is not dependent on other factors which work in tandem with the afore-mentioned one (Ogden, 2009). Similarly, McMahon (2002) believes that stress is 'relative' and to work out whether a given syllable bears stress via divorcing it from the other adjacent syllables does not actually offer much help. Rather, it is fundamentally by virtue of the adjoining unstressed syllables that this can be done. To quote his own words, 'it is only by comparing the syllables of

a word or a longer string to see which are picked out as more prominent' (2005, p. 119). Davenport and Hannahs (2005) also seem to share his views on this front.

What is contentious and fairly perplexing to frame in water-proof rules does pertain to the factors that work together to make certain syllables stand out and be recognised as such and what it is that a certain string of sounds must possess to qualify for the full status of a stressed syllable. The forthcoming discussion will, therefore, take on this issue. Moreover, what this account will strive to unravel is the discrepancy, small-scaled though it is, that is observed in the views of phonologists vis-a-vis the subject matter at issue herein. Of course, the existence of such a variable discussion does pay tribute, as it were, to the academic maturity of the topic at hand; it by no means portrays deficiencies in how stress has been studied over the years.

Roach (2009) and McMahon (2002) maintain that stress is the result of the culminated effect of four factors: intensity, pitch variation, vowel quality, and duration of vowels. To these four, Collins and Mees (2003) add partial and full articulation.

2.1.1 Intensity

The first parameter that imparts salience to stressed syllables is intensity. It bears on the big amount of articulatory tension and breath effort exercised by the speaker when producing stressed syllables. It is tightly related to what listener's perceive as augmented loudness. This is what Underhill (2005) wants to get out in this statement of his, 'You probably notice that the stressed versions of each sound are louder than the unstressed ones due to the extra lung power you are using' (p. 51).

2.1.2 Pitch Height

According to Roach (2009), significant changes in pitch are also remarkable aspects of stressed syllables. A word of caution must be sounded here before we go any further as this obviously innocuous verdict may potentially get misconstrued. Framed differently, contrary to

the interpretations that may be formulated following this, (stressed syllables are produced with a noticeably higher pitch than adjacent unstressed ones), pitch variation means that stressed syllables have, to all intents and purposes, their peculiar pitch level which marks them as such. This, consequently, entails that a manifestly high pitch or a patently low one are both equally possible and acoustically legitimate indicators of stressed syllables.

2.1.3 Vocalic Make-up

Intrinsic to the make-up of a stressed syllable is the nature of the vowel forming its nucleus. The peaks of unstressed syllables incline to be shorter and more centralised vowels (Cruttenden, 2001). By contrast, unstressed ones typically contain vowels occupying the periphery of the vowel continuum. This notion is technically dubbed 'vowel reduction'. Gliding vowels are often rendered more like pure ones in unstressed syllables (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 227). It is worthy of mention that vowel reduction is prone to take on a more extreme dimension in which fairly scarce case we often talk about vowel gradation rather than vowel reduction (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 227). This denotes the very substitution of one of the peripheral vowels by a central one. Not only are these centralised vowels associated with unstressed syllables, a bundle of consonants, namely syllabic consonants, may likewise play this role as well.

2.1.4 Vocalic Duration

Vowel duration is also one of the other factors that set unstressed and stressed syllables apart. Vowels tend to be longer in stressed than unstressed syllables.

2.1.5 Full/Partial Articulation

The last correlate of stress to be considered here is full/partial articulation. This feature pertains to the articulatory settings of consonants. In stressed syllables, consonants are fully articulated, while in unstressed ones they are only partly so. Consequently, the friction and

stricture involved in the production of fricatives and plosives respectfully is retained in stressed syllables in the sense that these two defining hallmarks of members of these sets are very salient. When we gauge the salience of these features in unstressed syllables, differences are to be seen; stops become more like fricatives in that only a gesture towards a closure is made. Framed more lucidly, full articulation involving full release is dropped to fulfil the articulatory as well as the acoustic requirements of an unstressed syllable. Furthermore, fricatives, in turn, are turned into approximants (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 228). In addition to the above, there is maintenance of fortis/lenis contrast in stressed syllables which is often taken off in unstressed ones.

Despite the apparent appropriacy and prevalence of these correlates of English stress, Cruttenden (2001) seems not to wholly concur with such a descriptive framework. Although he acknowledges that all of these factors may in one way or another contribute in the ultimate rendition of a stressed syllable, he argues that '...it is principally pitch change which marks an accented syllable' (p. 236).

Furthermore, it is worthy of mention that accented syllables and stressed syllables are by no means two distinct entities. In actuality, they are used to qualify the same linguistic entity, a syllable that is perceptibly more prominent than the adjacent ones of its phonological environment. Cruttenden (2001) opts for accented syllables and accent just 'because of the many different ways in which this word has been used, it is avoided in this book.' (237). He did not, however, give even a passing mention of these different uses.

Of course, the existing literature is not devoid of other authorities who concur with Cruttenden (2001) in opting for using 'word accent' rather than 'word stress', when addressing such a highly intricate non-segmental constituent of the English sound pattern. Haliday (1970) is a case in point. It goes without saying that this line of reasoning does not keep confusion at bay, or so we think. Are not we bound to run into 'accent' in utterances like, 'he has a strong Jamaican

accent, the queen's posh accent or accent-improving courses?' We absolutely are and this too may provoke confusion. We will, for want of a more neutral one and on account of this, use the two terms and their derivatives interchangeably. Inasmuch as pitch is concerned, Cruttenden (2001) argues that dual aspects of pitch may work collaboratively: pitch change and pitch height. It is the word 'insult' which he adduces to illustrate this. He argues that it is pitch change which enables speakers to differentiate between the two uses of the word .i.e. when used as a noun and when used as a verb. So, if it is falling intonation that is used to mark stress, it is the first syllable where the pitch drops and then rises when producing the final syllable when the word functions as a verb and the reverse holds true when the word functions as a noun. By the same token, if it is rising intonation that is aligned with the stressed syllable, then pitch is raised during articulation of the first syllable of the noun and at the second syllable of the verb.

What is immediately perspicuous in this rule is that it does not follow that stressed syllables are associated with rising pitch and the unstressed ones with the falling pitch. Rather, Cruttenden (2001) wants to underscore the very determining force of pitch change *per se*. Other phoneticians offer accounts that are patently at variance with Cruttenden's, however. Trager and Smith (1951) maintain that loudness is the most salient cue of stress. Crystal (1969, p. 120) seems to furnish insights that lie between the two extremes in the sense that for him it is not invariably pitch that serves primarily in singling syllables out. Under some other circumstances, when pitch has been utilised for other purposes, loudness shifts to becoming the chief determinant of stressed syllables. Clark and Yallop (1995), however, seem to agree with Cruttenden (2001) in stating that, 'in fact under normal circumstances English stress is signalled by pitch as well as supporting factors, notably loudness and duration' (p. 349).

2.2 The Predictability of English Stress

McMahon (2002, p. 119) and Hyman (1977, p. 204) concur that, broadly speaking, we can distinguish two clear-cut types of languages in terms of the gauged predictability of their stress allocation system, notably stress-fixed languages and stress-free languages. In stress-fixed languages, as the name may denote, stress is virtually always assigned to one particular syllable. In Scots Gaelic, as McMahon (2002) proceeds to exemplify, it is virtually invariably the first syllable that is the only site of stress. This does not preclude the existence of a few words whose accentual patterns flout this rule, mostly loanwords 'where stress stays on the syllable it occupies in the source language' (2002, p. 119). Swahili, too, is one of those stress-fixed languages, but unlike Scots Gaelic it is the penultimate syllable which bears stress in this language. Roach (2009, p. 88) gives other instances of such linguistic systems. Polish words, for instance, are stressed on the penultimate syllable and in Czech it is the first syllable that consistently receives stress. Such languages are also labelled 'predictable stress languages' owing to the fact that its placement is readily predicted from the syllable's weight as well as where in the word the syllable figures. It also plays a fundamentally demarcative function as it shows utterance edges; where one utterance ends and the subsequent begins (Léon, 2011).

Conversely, the other class of languages, Russian is a good case in point, is said to have free stress. In this language, words that have different meanings are made different by virtue of their divergent accentual patterns since their vocalic and consonantal patterns converge. That is why stress is said to have a contrastive role. Such a class of languages is called 'unpredictable stress languages'. For members of this latter class, stress is not tied up with any syllable; any syllable making up the word is likely to receive stress (Jakobsen & Waugh, 1979).

McMahon (2002) comments that no matter how all-encompassing this dual system might strike us, English does not fall neatly into one of these two categories. Furthermore, although

Cruttenden (2001) makes use of the words ‘fixed’ and ‘free’ in his extensive account of English stress, we do not recognise the faintest agreement between the descriptive functions these two authors want the terms in question to fulfil. Put more lucidly, Cruttenden (2001) deploys a term which, at first glance, seems to be antonymous with free/fixed. But when we look beneath the surface and read what he has to say about it, we realise how much value this term has to offer for a more thorough account of English stress system. By ‘fixed’, he means that if a given syllable in a string of syllables is said to be stressed, it is consistently that syllable as such which bears stress no matter which phrasal, clausal, sentential or discoursal positions the word where it figures occupies. Of course, it absolutely holds true that in tackling this issue, Cruttenden (2001) also acknowledges the fact that English stress is free thereby lending support to the aforementioned phonological line of reasoning. His addition of this other layer of description serves to impart further desperately needed disambiguation to the all-too-intricate nature of English accentual patterning.

This dual descriptive framework is, likewise, such an asset to empowering the baffled foreign learner to get the hang of, at the very least, the shaky nature of the linguistic task that lies ahead of them and awaits their painstaking attention. Now that we have touched on this fundamental issue that feeds into a whole range of other processes to do with stress placement, time is ripe to dwell on these processes and pinpoint the differing and equally relatively challenging aspects of word-level English stress assignment. Moreover, it is by no means the scope of the following headings to address issues bearing on stress above the word level as such discussions do not pertain to the overall scope and ultimate objective of our research work as a whole. Before that, however, we rate it worthwhile to consider the factors which have led to the richness of the English stress system and its inconsistencies.

2.2.1 The Factors Underlying the Attested Variability of English Stress

The immensely subtle nature of English stress patterning cannot be overestimated and its hurdles are barely all readily recognisable. Of course, the native speakers run into no such hung-ups or only very rarely. This is largely due to the innateness of their linguistic aptitude. It is genuinely the foreign learners who find themselves besieged by the few rules and gigantic abnormalities (for them of course) that the English accentual patterns exhibit. Before getting into the core of this discussion, we feel it incumbent upon this heading to give a brief sketch of the major reasons that lie beneath the existing complexity.

Amongst the authors who have addressed the issue of why English stress is so variable are Wennerstrom (2001) and McMahon (2002). According to them, the most fundamental reasons why there is a diversity of overlapping stress rules is the fact that English has been borrowing extensively and equally unreservedly from other languages for centuries. A good portion of English words is Germanic; that is why we find a great many words following the Germanic pattern: stress the first syllable of the root paying no attention to the affixes because they do not make any changes to where stress goes. This results in a number of words having strong-weak structure like: kindness, mother, number, etc. English has, likewise, borrowed vastly from Latin, which, as opposed to German, has a more subtly richer stress system. By implication, English words of Latin origin typically follow the following rules for their stress assignment:

a. The number of the syllables of the word;
b. The part of speech to which the word belongs;
c. The make-up of the syllables themselves (their vocalic and consonantal constitution, if applicable); and
d. The nature of affixes the word contains (Wennerstrom, 2001).

More than that, Wennerstrom (2001, p. 48) goes on to supplement his line of argumentation abiding by different orientations though, *viz.* not only does the language out of which words were borrowed count, the time at which the word was borrowed is equally meaningful. French, by way of example, has given English different names of wine brands, like claret and merlot. Because the two words were borrowed at different eras of the Anglo-Saxon language's expansion, they have different stress patterns. Claret was borrowed into Middle English that is why it abides by the Germanic patterning with stress on the first syllable. By contrast, owing to the fact that merlot has come into the language relatively recently, it is stress final.

2.2.2 Segments Diagnostic of Stresslessness

Much to the delight of the foreign learner, recognition of the traits of a number of English sounds, both vocalic and consonantal, may endow them with some insightful clues as regards stress assignment. A set of syllabic nuclei is said to be characteristically indicative of absence of stress. In all of their phonological occurrences, these sounds repel stress. The commonest of all these syllabic peaks is that neutral vowel which constitutes the centre of a huge number of syllables of English. It is so important indeed that it has acquired a name of its own, schwa. Although some writers, Roach (2009) and McCully (2009) argue that this vowel receives no stress whatever, others like Clark and Yallop (1995) comment that this vocalic segment is prone to receive some minute degrees of syllabic prominence. They, nonetheless, do not furnish any explanatory account on this observation of theirs that seems to depart from the norms as schwa is invariably a sure unfailing sign of stresslessness.

Furthermore, the English sound inventory possesses another vowel which is, like the schwa, diagnostic of unstress. This vowel falls in the general region of the short and long, /i/. The third segment that neatly falls into this category is the back vowel that comes in the general

region of the short and long, /u/ (Roach, 2009). What is worthy of mention regarding this vowel is that it has a fairly confined distribution if compared to the preceding two ones. The discussion has, in actuality, taken up these vowels using a descending scale of occurrence.

There is yet another guiding principle that may serve to disambiguate stress assignment rules and dispel some recurrent myths besieging the customary, haphazard nature of stress allocation. It is summed up in three or four parameters one has to put together and these pertain to some aspects of the word or of words under scrutiny, *viz*. the origins of the word, the phonological makeup and its grammatical structure (whether it is simple, complex or compound) (Clark & Yallop, 1995, p. 354). While the co-authors have considered these three of paramount importance, Roach (2009) mentioned four, of which only one is available in Clark and Yallop's framework. The morphological makeup of the word, the grammatical category of the word, the number of syllables along with the phonological structure of the word are what Roach deems of decisive value for deciding on which syllable bears stress.

2.2.3 Stress Placement in Monosyllabic Words

Words containing only one syllable may strike one to be the easiest words to handle with respect to stress allocation. This, however, is just genuinely further from the phonological truth of these words. In fact, monosyllabic words do fall into two-distinct compartments: the first is inherently stressed in all of their syntactical and semantic occurrences, whereas the second is subject to a number of restrictions and only under vanishingly few circumstances do members of the latter type become recipients of stress. Depending wholly on their lexical content, McCully (2009) labels the two sets of such words *lexical monosyllables* and *non-lexical monosyllables*. Lexical monosyllables are those words that, 'are meaningful and we can look those meanings up in a dictionary. The monosyllable 'dog' has the dictionary definition 'a domesticated flesh-eating animal...' (p. 68). The common denominator of all the constituent words of this class is that they

are all inherently stressed. Under no phonological conditioning are they prone to be unstressed or reduced because each of them has only one full form the nucleus of which is a vowel that is typically found in stressable syllables. On the other hand, a non-lexical monosyllabic word designates a word that has no 'semantic content' (McCully, 2009, p. 68). Rather, these items possess grammatical meanings or they are deployed for purely syntactical purposes. This set comprises words such *the, and, so, she, them* and many others. So, other namings thereof are also found in the literature, such as function words and empty words. McCully (2009), we would believe, has gone for this phonologically-based distinction because making use of purely grammatical labelling may interfere with the straightforward handling of the pronunciation point at stake.

Moreover, non-lexical monosyllables have more than one crucial feature stress-assignment wise. However, it does not follow that the co-existence of these two features means that they are invariably in free variation nor does it entail that they enjoy the same frequency of occurrence. In fact, only one of the existing features is most commonly associated with the pronunciation of these words (only one is the norm); the other is the exception and is far less common and, on top of that, for the second feature to be realised one or more governing conditions must be met. Differently framed, the pronunciation that enjoys high occurrence is said to be weak or reduced and it oftentimes has the schwa vowel at its centre. This realisation is accordingly invariably unstressed. The second pronunciation, by contrast, enjoys much lower rates of occurrence than the former. As opposed to the first realisation of these non-lexical monosyllabic words, Roach (2009) confirms that this pronunciation is subject, as hinted at earlier, to the following four factors:

a) When the function word figures in pre-pausal sentential, clausal or phrasal endings;

b) When the function word is being cited;

c) When the function word is used in contrastive co-texts; and

d) For auxiliary and copular verbs when used as the only verbs of sentences or clauses.

2.2.4 Stress Placement in Monomorphemic Words

Broadly speaking, words attached to no affixes behave differently to those where affixes appear. Nonetheless, this does not entail that all members of such a broad category abide by equivalent canonical patterning. It is, roughly speaking, the number of syllables and the nature of peaks as well as the composition of the termination which lie behind the noticeable variability of their accentual patterns.

2.2.4.1 Simple Two-syllable Words

They are alternatively called di-syllabic words. For ease of exposition, the discussion under this rubric will go through the following organisational pattern: it will firstly dwell on stress assignment in verbs and adjectives, adverbs and propositions as these share nearly identical affinity. Subsequently, nouns will be the part of speech in the ensuing discussion. This is essentially because parts of speech are a determinant factor of where stress is positioned. Equally crucially, adhering to such classification may serve at least minimally to demonstrate that there is some degree of predictability and regularity in how words are stressed. It is to be noted here that the account outlined by Roach (2009) is the one that we have chosen to reproduce herein for both its richness and consistency.

Verbs: if the second syllable's centre is a long monophthong or a diphthong or if it terminates with more than one consonant, then it is this second syllable that bears stress. These are examples: *allow, announce, believe, embark, alert, perform, construct, produce, annoy, assist, arrive, seduce, attempt, beseech, belie, transform, proclaim, explain, induce, seduce, enhance, empower*, etc. Before we proceed any further, it is noteworthy that although most phoneticians seem to talk about a given syllable being the recipient of primary or secondary

stress, Chomsky and Halle (1968) do talk of vowels being recipients of salience, 'The verbs in column 1 have main stress on the penultimate vowel, whereas in column 2 and 3 stress falls on the final vowel' (p. 69). The co-authors seem to argue that syllabic prominence is wholly allotted to the vocalic elements, which, we believe, is not what native English speakers would do. Of course, the very existence of syllables is entirely dependent upon the presence of vocalic segments therein. It does not follow, however, that consonants do not contribute in assigning salience to stressed syllables. Their contention is only valid when we talk about a syllable where there is no coda or onset (a minimal syllable). The onsets, particularly if they happen to be voiceless plosive consonants, do serve to augment the perceived salience of syllables through the aspiration they receive. The words *protect, accomplish* and *compartment* are indeed good cases in point. Moreover, consonants in unstressed syllables do undergo articulatory weakening: voiceless plosives may lose their aspiration trait or it may get noticeably reduced (compare the /p/ in the first and second syllable of *prepare*); other consonants may under complete elision.

If the second syllable contains a short vowel and one or no consonant (minimal or zero coda), then it is the first syllable that bears stress: *enter, open, equal,* etc.

If the second syllable contains the closing diphthong, **/əʊ/,** then it is the first syllable that receives stress. It is only accurate that this opening diphthong does repel stress, a tendency that is not shared by any of the other English diphthongs whether they are opening or closing in two-syllable words. These are examples: *borrow, follow* and *bellow***.**

Adjectives seem to comply with the same rules as verbs: *even, divine, correct, corrupt*. What is more, disyllabic adverbs and even their preposition counterparts obey the self-same rule discussed above.

Nouns, however, should be treated as a glaringly distinct category because they call for divergent stress-assignment rules. Here again, we go straight to the phonological make-up of the

second syllable. If the second syllable's centre is a short monophthong, then it is the first syllable that receives stress. If this pattern does not obtain, then stress falls on the second syllable proper (Roach, 2009). Example words of the first case are: *monkey, product, syllable, pattern, second*, whereas those which comply with the second rule are: *machine, marine, receipt, design, raccoon, balloon*.

2.2.4.2 Simple Three-syllable Words

These are alternatively labelled tri-syllabic words. It is worthy of mention here that as the category of words discussed above, there is an intimate link holding between the grammatical category and stress placement. We will proceed along the same lines of the foregoing class of simple words.

Verbs: if the last syllable contains a short vowel and ends with not more than one consonant, then it is the middle syllable that bears stress. If the last syllable contains a long monophthong, a diphthong or ends with more than one consonant, then it is this syllable to which stress is assigned (Roach, 2009).

Nouns: if the final syllable contains a short vowel or /əʊ/, then stress is not allocated to this syllable. If the middle syllable contains a long vowel, diphthong or ends with more than one consonant, then stress falls on this syllable proper. If the final syllable contains a short vowel and the middle syllable a short vowel and not more than one consonant, then it is the first that bears stress. If the last syllable contains a long vowel, a diphthong or ends with more than one consonant, then the first one is the stress-bearer (Roach, 2009).

2.2.5 Stress Placement in Complex Words

As alluded to earlier in the discussion, the behaviour of accentual patterns of words is bound to change when they shift from being simple into being complex. It is worthy of mention, however, that affixes themselves do not interact with stress in the same way. To begin with, all

the prefixes without the vaguest exception act in precisely the same way towards stress placement in the sense that they do not interfere with where it goes. Thus, once we know the accentual pattern of the simple word prior to the introduction of the prefix, our task is readily done as we can straightforwardly decide on which syllable to assign stress.

It is indubitably the addition of suffixes which could be problematic. Regarding their relation with the accentual patterning of words to which they are attached, suffixes fall into three clear-cut types, *viz*. stress-bearing suffixes, stress-shifting suffixes and stress-neutral suffixes (Hancock, 2003; Hewings, 2007). Kreidler has approached the discussion of the impact of affixes on stress placement from a slightly different perspective. He argues that 'When a prefix or suffix of Old English origin is added to a word, it has no effect on the position of stress' (2004, p. 79). The suffixes the addition of which, he goes on to argue, may alter stress placement are those which came into the English language from Greek, Latin or French. Although this is a reasonably grounded distinction, we do not think that providing the language learners with such knowledge is prone to augment their ability in identifying the right stress-bearing syllable. After all, tracing the word back to its linguistic birth-place is not a straightforwardly done task and it definitely calls for in-depth philological assimilation of many languages. Therefore, we would contend that sticking solely to the following descriptive, explanatory framework would do learners a wealth of services since the task of picking up native-like accentual patterns is subtly mind-boggling as it is.

2.2.5.1 Stress-bearing Suffixes

This category comprises a set of finite and not very productive suffixes which are themselves recipient of stress. If seen in a word, then the most probable site for stress is the suffix *per se*. These are the most prevalent ones:

a. *ain*, as in entertain;

b. *eer*: as in voluntary: volunteer, mountain: mountaineer, engine: engineer;

c. *ee*: as in refuge: refugee, address: addressee, refer: referee;

d. *ese*: as in China: Chinese, Vietnam: Vietnamese; and

e. *esque* as in picture: picturesque.

2.2.5.2 Stress-shifting Suffixes

These suffixes, as their name demonstrates, serve to shift the position of stress. What does this mean, however? How does this shift happen? It implies that the simple word and the same word attached to a suffix do not share the stress pattern due to the insertion of that suffix. In fact, it is not the shift proper that is worth knowing; the directionality of the shift is equally vital. These suffixes, to put it more conspicuously, make stress shift forward. That is, if in the simple word stress falls on the second syllable, then, in the same word made complex stress falls on the third one (Roach, 2009). The following are those suffixes:

a. *eous*: courage: courageous;

b. *iuos*: injury: injurious;

c. *ive*: product: productive, seduce seductive;

d. *ity*: immune: immunity, person: personality;

e. *graphy*: photo: photography, lexis: lexicography;

f. *ial*: adverb: adverbial, proverb: proverbial;

g. *ion:* anticipate: anticipation, violate: violation; and

h. *ic*: embryo: embryonic, horror: horrific, terror: terrific.

2.2.5.3 Suffixes that do not Influence Stress Placement

The overwhelming bulk of the most productive of English suffixes do not interfere with the stress pattern of the word to which they are appended (Roach, 2009). They can also be labelled stress-neutral suffixes. That is, their presence, though it might alter the grammatical

category of the word and/or its lexical significance, it does not have any impact on its accentual structure:

a- *able*: love: loveable, predict: predictable;

b- *age*: link: linkage;

c- *al*; identity: identical, deny denial;

d- *en*: danger: endanger, worse: worsen;

e- *ful*: delight: delightful, tact: tactful;

f- *ing*: rage: enraging, lend: lending;

g- ish: fever: feverish, long: longish, child: childish;

h- *like*: child: childlike;

i- *less*: friend: friendless, internet: restless, help: helpless;

j- *ment*: manage; management, harass: harassment;

k- *ness*: soft: softness, deaf: deafness;

l- *ous*: fame: famous, hilarity: hilarious;

m- *fy*: beauty: beautify, magnitude: magnify;

n- *wise*: like: likewise, clock: clockwise, obesity: obesity-wise;

o- *y*: luck: lucky, sun: sunny;

p- *ish*: long: longish, grey: greyish; and

q- *er, or ar*: teach: teacher, act: actor, tract: tractor.

2.2.6 Compound Word Stress

The grammatical make-up of words bears fundamentally on rules of stress placement. By implication, stress allocation in compound words calls for a distinct canonical patterning. A number of intertwining factors work together for stress to go on one syllable of one of the

members of the compound. In the subsequent discussion, we will get into the most defining hallmarks of this type of stress.

Collins and Mees (2003) distinguish two differing patterns of stress in compounds: first-element stress and second-element stress. For members of the former category, stress goes on the first element: *cherry stove, running shoes*. Members of latter category, on the other hand, receive stress on the second constituent. What is eminent in their categorisation is that never does stress go on both members of the compound.

Additionally, when referring to stress in compounds, we typically primary main stress. This is arguably because the other element of the compound retains some salience manifested in its acoustic and auditory correlates. After all, in the overwhelming bulk of common compounds, the members can exist in full independence of each other thereby each one must possess its independent stress pattern. In compounds, by implication, the intensity of the allegedly unstressed constituent is not blotted out completely; rather it is only noticeably shrunk to impart due eminence to the stressed one. The discussion calls for yet another argument: when it is said that the first element receives stress, what does this entail? When we say the first/second element receives stress we mean, other things being equal, the syllable of the element which is stressed, before the element in question gets into this lexico-grammatical partnership is the self-same one which is singled out. Stated, differently, no accentual pattern shift is attested as a result of word compounding process.

Now we can safely proceed to embark on the kernel of this discussion. First and foremost though, due to the notorious irregularity of stress placement as a whole, as regards stress in compounds, no all-encompassing coverage can be put together no matter how prolonged or extensive the description may strike the reader. At times, one feels inclined to embrace the conviction entertained by some practitioners Jones (1962) and Roach (2009). These experts

concur that due to the existence of stunningly baffling irregularity within the rules bearing on stress placement in words of more than one syllable, it makes ample sense to recommend that learning the stress pattern of newly encountered lexical items should be the sole reliable rule to adopt.

What will figure below is, hence, an attempt to dwell on the most prevalent patterns attested and codified in phonetics and pronunciation teaching books. The discussion will, likewise, enumerate a whole host of irregularities some of which are, hardly intriguingly, more numerous than their rule-abiding counterparts.

2.2.6.1 Semantic Conditioning

As the name may signify, the compound words' subsets addressed under this rubric abide by different stress structures predominantly owing to what the real-world semantic representations of the compound as a whole; neither the vocalic and consonantal constituents nor the number of syllables per word are immediate determinants of stress. This will be all the more comprehensible as the discussion below unfolds.

2.2.6.1.1 Graphological Patterning

Compounds written as two words blended without a hyphen or space setting them apart are more often than not stressed on the first element. On the other hand, compounds the elements of which are hyphenated or written as two independent words can be stressed either on the first or on the second depending largely on a number of variables which will come up in the following discussion. A sweeping glance at how this notion is portrayed in phonetics books (at least those we have referred to) would unearth that the most fine-grained account is that delivered by Collins and Mees (2003). Following this, the upcoming section will look fundamentally at the compartmentalisation the co-authors have chosen to set up for a more lucid illustration of the

topic under scrutiny. They maintain that if compounds are fitted into well-defined sets of classes, students will be far more likely to get the hang of them.

2.2.6.1.2 Manufacturer Rule

For the above-stated end, they chose to devise another distinct, yet very handy rule, which they labelled 'the manufacturer rule'. Phrased differently, in words whose first element names the material out of which the entire object is made: '(e.g. *an apple tart* is a tart made of apples)', then stress falls on the second constituent. The following are further examples: *chicken soup, cherry brandy, paper bag, stove wall, cotton socks, diamond ring*. It is noteworthy that there are some other compounds which, on the face of it, seem to comply with the same rule due to their lexical makeup. e.g. *wall-paper*. This category does not, however, encompass words whose second element is made up of the first. They, by implication, take a divergent accentual pattern: the first element bears stress: *apple-tree, chicken feathers, cherry stove, cotton reel, diamond ring* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 235).

2.2.6.1.3 Location Rule

The third rule to consider is the Location Rule. Intriguingly enough, those sets of compounds wherein figures the name of a given country, region, county, shire or area or alternatively its derivative adjectives take second element stress. A number of sub-classes fall neatly into this category. The following are the most attested ones in common parlance:

i. When the first element is the name of a given country or region per se, then it does not attract stress; stress goes on the second element. Here are examples: *German measles, Russian roulette, Siamese cat, London pride, Welsh rabbit*; and
ii. The overwhelming bulk of place names, street names included, take stress on the second constituent: *Cathedral Road, Saint John's Square, Park Place, Churchill Way.*

There is, hardly surprisingly, an exception to this rule, notably places whose names end in the word ‘street’ are stressed on the first element: *Cathedral Street, Saint John’s Street* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 235).

2.2.6.1.4 Names of Parks and Other Related Places

Furthermore, the location rule is equally applicable for yet a whole range of other names, notably names of parks, bridges, stations, gardens, public buildings along with names of football teams and other sports clubs. These sets of names, divergent though they may be, bow to the same stress pattern: stress goes on the second element: *The Forth-Bridge, Euston Station, (the) Wigmore Hall, Clarence House, Kew Gardens, Land’s End, Reachy Head, Long Island, Manchester United, Glasgow Rangers, Brooklyn Dodgers* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 235).

2.2.6.1.5 Names of Buildings

A fourth category of names complies with identical patterning, *viz*. names of buildings (houses included) and those of the surrounding regions. They all have second-element stress: *front door, kitchen window, back-stairs, attic-ceiling, garden seat, office desk, church clock, work’s canteen*. This rule is not immune against exceptions since names with the word ‘room’ in them do not follow suit: the word room proper takes the acoustic epicentre of such compounds: *bed room, living room, sitting room, drawing room*. Other instances where this rule comes in handy pertain to positioning: *left-wing, middle class, Low German, upper crust, bottom line* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 236).

2.2.6.1.6 Names of Time Locations

In a similar vein, names of time locations come under the category of the location rule: *Middle Ages, Morning coffee, Afternoon tea, January sales, Winter sports, April showers, Weekend return, Eastern Parade, Christmas day* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 236).

2.2.6.1.7 Names of Food Items

The manufacturer rule along with the location rule are of service for names of different compartmentalisations: items of food, by way of example, are stressed in accordance with one of these two rules. Stress is actually invariably placed on the second element of such names. This is the case only if one basic condition is fulfilled: if the food item in question is the outcome of food preparation processes. Food in its raw status does not fit into this category, however. There is a constellation of various examples: *Yorkshire pudding, Mint sauce, Bake well tart, port wine, cabinet pudding, baked potatoes, roast beef, macaroni cheese.* It is noteworthy that this rule also has exceptions of its own: those food items which are names of animals or plants are stressed on the first element despite the fact that they may have undergone cooking processes. These are examples*: chicken leg, goose liver, lemon juice, vine leaves* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 236).

2.2.6.1.8 Names of Magazines and Newspapers

The other set of compounds the co-authors mention is that of names of magazines and newspapers. This set of names is equally coverable by the above rules: stress is allocated to the second element of the compound. *Daily Mirror, Evening Standard, Baltimore Sun, Radio Times, Women's Own, Yorkshire Post* are just good cases in point (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 236).

2.2.6.1.9 Names of Academic Subjects and Skills

Names of academic subjects and skills are the last category of names here discussed and are, interestingly enough, in stark opposition to almost all the aforementioned ones in the sense that members of this set of names are overwhelmingly stressed on the first element. Examples are: *maths teacher, medical school, swimming instructor, technical college, history book, English student, French mistress* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 236).

2.2.6.2 Morphological Conditioning

The other big determinant of where stress goes in compounds is morphological conditioning. Under this rubric, we will get into differently-structured compounds; those compounds whose first or second elements are functional words.

Firstly, nouns made up of verbs + particles: these nouns are often stressed on their first element: *pick-up, make up, play back, flash back, lookout* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 236).

Secondly, nouns ending in 'er' or 'ing': they are predominantly stressed on the second element: *hanger-on, looker-on, passer-by, runner-up, washing-up, swimming-up* (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 236-37).

The third set under this heading pertains to compounds formed from 'ing' noun. This set of nouns is, in turn, split up into two different subsets:

a. The first set incorporates names of objects used to carry out some actions such as: *washing machine, sewing machine, running shoes*. Such compounds are unexceptionally stressed on the second element; and
b. Members of the second set, by contrast, contain nouns giving features of the object in question and offering no clues as regards its function, such as: *a whistling kettle* (which by no means makes you able to whistle but rather produces a whistling sound when put on). There are some other examples: *running water, ollins*second element of these nouns which bears the primary foci (Collins & Mees, 2003, p. 236-37).

Nouns ending in 'er' preceded by an adjective are yet a further subclass of such compounds that calls for an independent discussion. These nouns abide by the location rule spelt out earlier in this section; examples are: *free-thinker, loud-speaker, left hander, outsider, two-seater.*

Adjectives + past participle combinations are likewise covered by the location rule in that it is predominantly the second element which receives stress: *heavy-handed, thick-skinned, quick-tempered, cold blooded, evil minded.* Some irregularities do exist, however. They are vanishingly few, though*: downcast, thoroughbred, cross bred.*

Another peculiarly chunked set of nouns is, in a similar vein, worth mentioning, *viz*. noun + 'er' ending noun. For this particular type of nouns, it is the first element which is the recipient of primary prominence. These are examples: *proof reader, news reader, stock holder, shock absorber, care-taker, rate payer, hair dryer*.

The last compound to be taken up here are those with the following make-up: verb + noun. Like the foregoing category, these compounds are stressed on the first element: *search party, watch dog, sing song, drift wood, pick pocket* (Collins & Mees, 2003, 236-37).

2.3 Modern Standard Arabic Accentual Patterns

As alluded to in the introduction, the second division of this chapter deals wholly with the most defining hallmarks of Arabic stress system. We have tried to bring together the accounts of many scholars in order not to end up laying out an adequate portrayal of Modern Standard Arabic stress system. The existing literature documentation about Arabic stress patterning is far less extensive then that on English stress. We would put this down to the fact that the Arabic accentual pattern is far less varied and less diverse than that of English. The forthcoming headings will unearth the rationale backing up this claim. It should not be interpreted as a shortcoming of this chapter and a hindering gulf in its purported wholeness, if no balance is struck between the page space devoted to dealing with English stress patterns and that devoted to the Arabic one. This virtually wholly stems from the notoriously big irregularity inherent to the Anglo-saxon stress structures and the highly predictable, exception-minimal Arabic accentual pattern.

2.3.1 Predictability of Modern Standard Arabic Stress

How predictable is Arabic stress placement? Prior to answering this question, a note bearing on the old grammarians' handling of the notion of Arabic stress is worth underscoring right at the outset. 'Surprisingly enough, the Arabic grammarians did not deal with the position of stress (dynamic accent) in Arabic words.' Or at least this is what Abu-Chacra (2007, p. 33) has to say about the handling of Arabic stress on the part of Arabic philologists. So, the quote seems to attest to the fact that Arabic accentual system analyses came into the grammar of the Arabic language thanks to the manifold breakthroughs the linguistics province has witnessed ever since the late 1950s and early 1960s. What is ever so intriguing, however, is that the author did not get into the whys and wherefores of this unchartered yet immensely pivotal facet of the sound system of any code be it Semitic, Germanic or some other one. His claim does not entail that this phonological stratum has still been back-burnered till the present time; many an extensive reference which are now in print provide decently good and scholastic accounts on Arabic stress patterns manifold properties.

2.3.2 The Correlates of Modern Standard Arabic Stress

About the correlates of Arabic stress, Abu-Chacra (2007) argues that the most defining of Modern Standard Arabic (henceforth MSA) stress characteristics are the exertion on the part of the speaker of more vocal energy and breath effort as well as a rising in the pitch of the voice (p. 33). The author ascription of the accentuation of syllables to only these two factors strikes us not to be adequate enough. We would thereby hasten to add that other factors, by no accounts less important, have equally vital contributory force: augmented vocalic length and syllabic loudness.

We would be tempted to think that although vowels are said to be inherently short and inherently long, their presence in a stressed syllable does serve to give them more prolongation. We would comment, then, that a short vowel is longer in stressed syllables than in unstressed

ones and the same holds true for a long monophthong. It, likewise, goes without saying that for a syllable to stand out in its phonological environment and acquire this perceptual trait, it will have to be marked by an augmentation in the speaker's voice. Stressed syllables are, then, noticeably louder than unstressed ones. It is worthwhile to pinpoint now the fact that it is not immediately viable to gauge which of the aforementioned variables is most responsible for imparting this auditory salience to the stressed syllables. It is, consequently, fair to say that stress is the outcome of the collaborative efforts of all the foregoing factors and it heavily depends on the individual speaker to choose which one(s) to use for this particular end.

2.3.3 Modern Standard Arabic Syllable Structure

Before we commence any discussions about the trappings of MSA stress structures, it is imperative to hint at a key aspect of the Semitic language's syllable structure. The phonotactically legitimate syllabic make-up and sequencing is very limited in MSA (Ryding, 2005). This phonological reality does not imply the occurrence of only open syllables; MSA possesses both open and closed syllables (Anis, 1961; Holes, 2004). Wright (1995), however, uses 'shut syllables' or 'compound' instead of closed syllables. As far as the nucleus of open syllables is concerned, the vowels could, the rule goes, be either short or long ones. On the other hand, in closed syllables the vowels are 'almost always short' (Wright, 1995, p. 26).

Furthermore, crucial to a fuller assimilation of MSA phonotactics, which is of paramount importance to an understanding of the language's accentual pattern, it is vital to know that syllables never begin with a vocalic element (Mitchell, 1990). To erase any confusion that may arise following this potentially inconclusive rule, Ryding (2005, p. 35) argues that in words 'such as *islaam (religion)* or *umma (nation)* or *abadan (never)*, what is actually heard is a vowel preceded by a glottal stop (*hamza*)'.

Amongst the phonotactic constraints of Arabic syllable structure is that although Arabic syllables are allowed to have onsets, these can only be minimal i.e. we do not find two to three consonant clusters in the onsets. What is more, some syllables may have a coda, but here again the termination seems to follow identical phonotactic constraints as that of the onset in the sense that syllables never end in more than one consonant and no consonantal clusters are observed. To the latter rule, (Ryding, 2005) maintains that one single exception is obtainable. In pre-pausal positions, two-consonant clusters are phonotactically permissible, as in *fahimt* 'I understood' (Ryding, 2005, p. 36).

Knowledge about the composition of the onsets and codas definitely falls short of empowering us to draw a fuller picture of the entire syllabic system. The permissible syllable categories are equally important. Ryding (2005, p. 36) enumerates all the five phonotactically permitted syllable constituents of MSA. According to her, syllables fall neatly into two clear-cut classes: the first set comprises syllables typical of full (unreduced) pronunciation and the other one encompasses syllables figuring in pre-pausal environments.

2.3.3.1 Full Pronunciation Syllables

Regarding the make-up of syllables belonging to the first set, she mentioned:

'1) Short' or 'weak' syllable: CV (consonant–short vowel) e.g., *-ma, -bi, -hu*; and

2) "Long" or "strong" syllables: CVV (consonant–long vowel) or CVC (consonant–short vowel–consonant e.g. *-faa, -dii, -ras, -tab*' (p. 36).

2.3.3.2 Pause Pronunciation Syllables

About the make-up of those syllables which figure solely before pauses, she wrote: '(1) "Super-strong" syllables: CVVC (consonant–long vowel–consonant) or CVCC (consonant–short vowel–consonant–consonant) e.g., *-riim, -nuun, -sart, -rabt'* (Ryding, 2005, p. 37). Therefore, according to this author, 'VV' does not signal a succession of two fully-fledged monophthongs;

rather, such a sequence does actually stand for a long, pure vowel. Equally intrinsic to any knowledge about MSA syllables is that the most common syllabic structure figuring in the great bulk of MSA frequently used words is CV. This is at least what Al-Ani (1970) and Akidah (2012) have to say about the frequency of occurrence of Arabic syllable types.

At this juncture of the argumentation it is worth giving an overt definition of light and heavy syllables as comprehending part of the content addressed below hinges on them. To ward off any confusion which is bound to creep in on account of using strong and weak syllables in some discussions and heavy and light in some other discussions which appear to share striking affinities. These binary terms are used synonymously and we comply with their occurrence in the cited or quoted literature.

Light syllables, by implication, are syllables which have as their nucleus a non-branching vowel (Watson, 2007). To be more explicit, a non-branching vowel is a monophthong, typically short, which figures in a zero-termination syllable (Clements & Keyser, 1983, p. 12). Hyman (1977, p. 189) contends that when it comes to gauging syllable weight, the onset is not a relevant parameter. On the other hand, a heavy syllable is made up of a branching vowel. As opposed to the former category, this latter one is of two sub-classes. Both the syllables whose nuclei are long vowels, diphthongs or triphthongs (as in the middle syllable of *tarkiibun* (composition) and the initial syllable of *kaatibun (male writer*), and the syllables closed by a coda consonant come under this type (as in the final syllable of *najaHat* (she succeeded). The peak of the second sub-set as is evident in the example does not have to be a long monophthong, diphthong or triphthong to qualify for this status; irrespective of the nature of the peak, the presence of at least a one-consonant coda is enough to render a given syllable a legitimate member of this category (Clements & Keyser, 1983).

To round off, MSA syllable types and constitutions have been reviewed for one overarching rationale in mind: all stress discussions are intermingled with syllable types and constitutions. Therefore, an *a priori* inclusion of literature review bearing on the trappings of MSA syllables is rated utterly mandatory since following the line of linguistic reasoning underpinning the setting-up of accentual pattern rules could be disrupted or utterly mangled in the absence of this heading.

2.3.4 Accentual Assignment in MSA

Crucially pivotal to an understanding of MSA accentual patterns is the absence of the remotest relatedness between the accentual patterns of words and their denotations. Put in fewer words, MSA stress is non-phonemic (Holes, 2004, p. 62). It follows immediately from this that misplacements of stress will not interfere with the grammatical class of the word as it is true for some English words like *permit*, *subject* and *rebel* and a host of others.

Akidah (2012) contends that stress in MSA is not wholly predictable. He maintains, nevertheless, that aided with a two-step procedure, one can readily locate the recipient of stress in the overwhelming bulk of MSA words. There are, according to him, two factors that govern where stress falls in Arabic words:

a) The position of the syllable within the word; and

b) The nature of the syllables the word encompasses (Akidah, 2012, p. 82).

If a disyllabic or polysyllabic word is made up only of CV syllables, it is invariably the initial syllable that bears stress. In a word that contains only one syllable the nucleus of which is a long monophthong (a heavy syllable), it is this heavy syllable as such that receives stress. In words containing two long monophthongs or more, stress is assigned to the one that figures towards the end of the word. This rule is hallmarked by a constraint, though. Stress is not located on the final syllable (Akidah, 2012, p. 82).

As writers on Arabic grammar do give partly variable accounts on the Semitic tongue's accentual pattern and because the regulations outlined above do not seem adequate enough to give a decent overview on the subject matter at issue here, we have opted for the inclusion of a further descriptive framework. In addition to the rationale just mentioned, it also pays off to bring to the surface the linguistic and scholarly fact that MSA accentual patterning is the concern of Arabic linguists as much as English stress system is the concern of their Anglo-Saxon counterparts.

Ryding (2005, p. 36) comments that stress in MSA 'is essentially predictable and adheres to some general rules based on syllable structure.' Hence, she entertains the belief that it is the constitution of syllables that conditions where stress goes. This is not, as will be seen below, the whole truth; syllable position within the word is equally a strong determinant of stress assignment. She distinguishes two distinct sets of rules which underlie stress placement in MSA, *viz*. full-form stress rules and pause-form stress rules. The discussion seems to be calling for some adjunct background discussion bearing on the characteristics of such forms and under what circumstances they arise. Full-form pronunciation as a whole is hallmarked by the presence of 'complete voweling' (Ryding, 2005). In other words, all the vowels the word comprises are pronounced without any reduction or substitution taking place; this includes even the short vowels that are part of the phonological make-up of the words but are not explicitly portrayed in their graphological representations. Vowels appended for the sake of inflectional purposes, likewise, abide by the same convention as they themselves do not undergo any weakening or elision, as in *HaDar-a* and *laylat-a* (Ryding, 2005, p. 34).

On the other hand, pause-form pronunciation obtains when a short vowel is elided when figuring word-finally. Pause-form pronunciation could either be of a formal type or an informal one. In formal pause-form pronunciation, the short vowels figuring word-finally are elided solely

at the end of a sentence or at the end of breath groups. Conversely, in informal pause-form pronunciation, the short vowels are elided whenever present word-finally whether the word appears in sentence-initial positions, medial positions or when it is the last sound articulated before a pause (Ryding, 2005, p. 34).

The above generalisation does simply imply that one of the determining factors bearing on where stress goes in MSA words is also the words' position within the sentence. It is worthy of mention that-of undeniably immediate relevance though this factor is-the author does not deem this a parameter that may serve to determine at the very least partly where stress falls. So, in what follows, we will stick to her descriptive framework. The discussion will, by implication, take on firstly full-form stress rules before pause-form stress rules are dwelt on.

2.3.4.1 Full Form Stress Rules

The general principle in operation with regard to stress behaviour in such forms is that stress is never assigned to the final syllable: in disyllabic words, stress is unequivocally unexceptionally on the last syllable. This is invariably the case irrespective of the weight nature of the syllable. This fundamentally stems from the fact that initial syllables in words of only two syllables repel stress regardless of their syllabic weight or phonotactic constructions. The following are illustrative examples:

to, towards	**i**laa	إلى	we	**naH**nu	نحن
What	**Maa**dhaa	ماذا	they visited	**zaa**ruu	زارو
She	**Hi**ya	هي	here	**Hu**naa	هنا

(Ryding, 2005, p. 37)

2.3.4.1.1 Stress on the Penult

Stress is allocated to the second syllable counting from the end of the word providing that that syllable is heavy i.e. if that syllable has a coda (CVC) or terminates in a long monophthong (CVV).

Examples are:

efforts (nom)	Ju**huu**dun	جهود
students (acc.)	Tul**laa**ban	طلابا
they taught her	Darra**suu**haa	درسوها
they (f.) write	Yak**tub**na	يكتبن
you (m. pl.) worked	*A**mil**tum*	عملتم

(Ryding, 2005, p. 37)

2.3.4.1.2 Stress on the Antepenult

Here again, we go straightaway to the second syllable calculating from the end. If this syllable falls into the weak category (the only weak syllable in MSA being CV syllables), then it repels stress and stress should, accordingly, be assigned to the third syllable from the end (antepenult):

a capital	*aa**Si**matun*	عاصمة
all of us	***kul**lunaa*	كلنا
a liberary (noun.)	*mak**ta**batun*a	مكتبة
he tries	*yu**Haa**wilu*	يحاول
Palestenian (f.)	*filasTii**niy**yatun*	فلسطينية

(Ryding, 2005, p. 38)

2.3.4.2 Accent Assignment in Complex Words Containing Suffixes

Towards the end of the section where the author discusses these rules, Ryding (2005, p. 38) proceeds to look at the introduction of suffixes and its impact on accentual patterns. She argues that suffixes may serve to alter the stress pattern for reasons that will be mentioned shortly below. When the appended suffixes are said to alter stress placement, we observe that despite the fact that she just mentions the existence of a stress shift, she does not specify the directionality thereof. However, when we look at the examples provided, we can immediately deduce that a forward shift is what actually takes place; the introduction of the suffix pushes the stress towards the ensuing syllable.

University	*Jaa**mi**fiatun*	جامعة
our university	*jaamifi**a**tunaa*	جامعتنا
Office	***Mak**tabun*	مكتب
his office	*Mak**ta**buhu*o	مكتبه
we studied	*Da**ras**na*a	درسنا
we studied it (f.)	*Daras**naa**haa*	درسناها

(Ryding, 2005, p. 38)

2.3.4.3 Accent Assignment in Pre-pausal Environments

As far as the behaviour of stress in words occupying pre-pausal positions is concerned, Ryding (2005, p. 38) comments that the same principles applicable to full-form pronunciation are equally at work here. There is, nonetheless, a rule that is exclusively peculiar to this latter category. That is, if the last syllable is super-heavy (containing a two-consonant termination or ending in a long monophthong), then stress is placed on this syllable proper. Recall that in the former set of rules (those related to full-form pronunciation), it is stated that the last syllable is never a recipient of prominence regardless of its phonotactic composition. This notion, or rather

exception, is articulated more transparently together with other highly critical guidelines regarding stress assignment by McCarthy and Prince (1990). 'The stress system is obviously weight-sensitive: final syllables are stressed if superheavy CVVC or CVCC; penults are stressed if heavy CVV or CVC; otherwise the antepenult is stressed' (p. 252).

The forthcoming are examples:

minister	Wa**ziir**	وزير	discussion	mubaaHa**thaat**	مباحثات
boundaries	Hu**duud**	حدود	I tried	Haa**walt**	حاولت

(Rydng, 2005, p. 38)

Other extensions to the above rule (although not very abundantly available) are discussed afterwards and are the following:

2.3.4.3.1 Pre-pausal Form *Nisba*

In words which end in the nisba-indicating suffix 'yyi' (relative adjective), it is this suffix as such that bears stress. Before any examples are cited, it should be recollected that according to Ryding's descriptive framework, this is unequivocally the only suffix of its genre which is itself the bearer of stress:

Yemeni	*Yama**niyy***	يمنـي	Official	*Rai**isiyy***	رئيسي
Arab	Ara**biyy**	عربي	Bedouin	bada**wiyy**	بدوي

(Ryding, 2005, p. 39)

2.3.4.3.2 Pause Form for Words Ending in Taa Marbuuta

What is intrinsic to the nature of this letter together with its respective case endings is that they have zero realisations in pause-form pronunciations. This has a knock-on accentual pattern effect, as it were, in the sense that this zero-realisation in turn results in the deletion of a whole syllable from the target word. This will subsequently necessitate a re-calculation of where stress falls which is predominantly because in some words where this letter is deleted, an alteration to

the stress placement is triggered off. The resultant stress shift comes about because the number of syllables is depleted causing the third syllable counting from the end to become the second syllable from the end. And because the second syllable is of the weak category-which does not attract stress-stress is made to shift backwards to the adjoining preceding syllable (Ryding, 2005, p. 39).

	Full form (includes case ending)	**Pause form**
University	jaa**mi**'at-un	**jaa**mi'a جامعة
School	mad**ra**sat-un	**mad**rasa مدرسة
Lecture	muHaa**da**rat-un	mu**Haa**dara محاضرة

Table 01: First Category of Full-form Words and their Pause-form Counterparts

(Ryding, 2005, p. 39)

Furthermore, it is not always the case that the deletion of *taa marbuuta* together with its case endings necessitates an alteration to the accentual patterns of words; this process seems to hinge on the syllabic make-up of the neighbouring syllable proper. Put more plainly, this scenario is found in cases where the recipient of stress happens to be a strong syllable which keeps the stress pattern of the word wholly intact.

	Full form	**Pause form**
City	ma**dii**nat-un	ma**dii**na مدينة
Dove	Ha**maa**mat-un	Ha**maa**ma حمامة
Heroism	bu**Tuu**lat-un	bu**Tuu**la بطولة

Table 02: Second Category of Full-form Words and their Pause-form Counterparts

(Ryding, 2005, p. 39)

This discussion on the existence and non-existence of *taa marbuuta* does mark the ending of the portrayal of Modern Standard Arabic stress assignment rules, oddities and exceptions. What is left of the overall, major objectives of this chapter, however, bears on the manifestations of lexical stress in yet a third linguistic system known to the informants taking part in our study, French. If compared to English bewilderingly rich accentual pattern, the accentual trappings of the French language should be viewed as a veritable linguistic feast for learners of this European tongue. This is fundamentally due to the nearly total non-existence of any learning hurdles associated with the properties of French stress system, or so we would presume. This is precisely what the following rubric will try to elucidate.

2.4 The Predictability of French Stress Placement

If one is notified that both English and French belong to the vastly broad Indo-European language family, they would be induced to say, when asked about the potential existing accentual pattern commonalities of the two codes, that they must have a great many of them. The pertinent literature, however, is at odds with such projections. In other words, while the English accentual pattern is ever so rich, confusingly diversified and above all fraught with virtually endless exceptions, the French counterpart shares none of these characteristics as it is very regular, highly predictable and incredibly easy to frame in easy-to-take-away, water-proof rules.

The dichotomy of free and fixed stress languages does plain service to the French stress system in the sense that this language falls neatly into the latter category. In actual reality, we surmise that French should be justifiably deemed a prototype of the fixed-stress group of languages and for a language to qualify for this status it ought to be akin in its accentual structure properties to French.

2.4.1 The Accentual Pattern Hallmarks of French

The fixed nature of French stress does denote that the governing rules are very restricted and easy to formulate in a few words. It, by the same token, entails that the existing rules are virtually exceptionless. Grammont (1933), Fouché (1959), and Delattre (1963) concur that the overwhelming bulk of French words adhere in their accentual patterns to a unified maxim, notably they are all stressed on the final syllable. Jun and Fougeron (2002), however, comment that this pattern obtains only for the citation forms of words. They believe that in continuous conversational speech, another overriding pattern is at work; the only word which retains its final stress is the one which occupies phrase-final positions; while all the other undergo prominence loss. This view is shared by a number of other linguists, namely Grammont (1933), Marouzeau (1956) and Garde (1968). Abry and Abry (2007, p. 11) comment that stress in French is allocated to the last syllable whether it be the last syllable of a word when said in isolation or the last syllable in a rhythmic group. Another linguist, Price (2005, p. 48), shares this view although he does not even hint at the interrelatedness holding between the modes of speaking and/or the spoken and written medium manifestations in speech and stress assignment: 'Normal stress in French always falls on the last syllable of the rhythmic group'. What is also peculiar to his account is his inclusion of the word normal. The word normal is used contrastively with emphatic. It just goes beyond the scope of this heading and of the thesis in its entirety to look at issues of this type since we are not concerned with emphatic stress acquisition modes. What is noteworthy about his account, none the less, is that later on in his description he draws the attention to a very intriguing hallmark of French stress, its being not half as audibly noticeable as is its English counterpart, 'The normal stress in French, though real, is in fact barely perceptible' (Price, 2005, p. 48).

The literature is, however, not destitute of counterclaims to these rules. Although he does not claim that French does not have a fixed-stress system nor does he believe that a syllable other than the final one receives stress, Dell (1985) contends that each word in the utterance bears its own primary final stress. This account is not endorsed by the above scholars and practitioners nor is it approved off by Bachelor and Chebli-Saadi (2011). Notwithstanding the fact that they initiated their account by fully backing up Dell's (1985) descriptive account: 'In French words considered in isolation, the stress falls on the last syllable, or on the penultimate syllable when the last syllable is a mute **e**: *v'eri***t´e**, *senti***ment**, *indiff'er***enc***e*, *mont***agn***e*, *ils d'eses***p`er***ent'* (p. 45). Immediately after looking at stress manifestation in words in isolation, they went on to spell out accounts on accentual patterns at the above-word stratum. It is, in fact, at this juncture of their argumentation that they furnish patent non-uniformity with Dell's (1985) description. This is conspicuously seen in their own words, 'In groups of French words, the stress falls on the last articulated syllable of a group of words, not on the individual word: Prenez votre livre, Je pars demain, Il s'y rendra cet apr`es-midi, Qu'est-ce que vous en pensez?' (p. 45).

Furthermore, Di Cristo (1998), in his effort to elucidate the groundwork of French stress, he enumerates three guiding principles in accordance with which French stress is assigned, 'We can assume that stress placement in French is based on three elementary principles. A principle of *accentogeneite* (stressability) selects lexical items (generally content words) that are stressable; a grouping principle specifies that a stress group is constituted by a stressable word and by adjacent pro/en-clitics governed by it; a right-heading.'

This account may potentially serve to clear off any misconception that might stem from the simplistic view which holds that French has a word-final stress pattern. In addition to the above rules, it is immediately conceivable from this quote that function words never receive stress or so the account appears to imply as the author does not look at any existing irregularities.

Before we close this discussion, another equally important aspect of French stress should be appended, notably whether or not stress has any contrastive weight or not. Peperkamp (2004), and Demuth and Johnson (2003) would contend that stress in this language does not play this contrastive role whatever.

Conclusion

To round off, this chapter has taken up the stress systems of English, Arabic and French following two overriding maxims, namely the predictability and existing regularity each sound system has. This was adopted primarily to pinpoint how vastly divergent from each other the three codes known to the learners are. It is obvious that the most subtle of the stress systems is that of English with Arabic displaying bigger accentual variability than French. The Algerian learners, accordingly, must get a bit perplexed and daunted when they come into contact with the so many and varied regularities and mind-blowing irregularities English stress structure is notorious for. This is predominantly because their mother language and French, their first foreign language, must have made them draw a rewarding picture pertaining to how effortless and burden-free stress assignment learning is prone to be. This could then be an asset to projecting that the errors they make and the uphill difficulties they run into could be partly ascribable to the not-so-smooth transition they make when attempting to acclimatise themselves with the English accentual pattern. Moreover, many of the clues to triumphant classroom practices and the measures necessary to expunge these errors must lie in how the successful reversibility of the impacts Arabic and French have on English learning could be accomplished.

CHAPTER 3: Applied Linguistics Students' Survey Analysis and Implications

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Introduction

Pronunciation acquisition most particularly when it comes to the assimilation of the various elements of the prosodic system is, we would strongly believe, more intricate and multi-tiered than other linguistic constituents; by implication, it perforce calls for profound scrutiny and the implementation of a profusion of diagnostic, evaluative tools. Sticking to only one means of research would spark off patchy analyses due to the miniscule data procured, which would, in turn, lead to hazier and less reliable outcomes. It goes without saying, however, that recordings of the learners' oral production should constitute the core and kernel of any pronunciation study irrespective of both its overall orientations and sought contributions. However, right at the fringes lie some adjunct, supplementary tools (peripheral though they may be dubbed) which cannot be legitimately dispensed with. Questionnaires lie at the epicentre of this periphery. According to, Dörnyei (2010, p. 6), 'The main attraction of questionnaires is their unprecedented efficiency in terms of (a) researcher time, (b) researcher effort, and (c) financial resources'. Indeed, the deployment of a questionnaire saves one's time, energy and resources which no other research tool seems to be capable of doing in a comparable manner. The manifold research virtues, so to speak, of questionnaires are not wholly confined to their being highly efficient, cost-effective tools, Bryman (2008) argues that a properly designed questionnaire is prone to remove great amounts of bias that is occasionally associated with interviews which will contribute to the eventual trustworthiness of the research output at large.

We have, following this line of reasoning, opted for a mandatory inclusion into the methodological procedure of our undertaking of this students' questionnaire. The study takes place in a linguistic setting where the language being learned cannot be viewed other than foreign and learners, advanced though they our judging by local standards, do really and truly get

restricted exposure to English if compared to other students where English is the second language of the speech community. This state of affairs and others (to figure more conspicuously later in the chapter) would engender more hindrances when researchers strive to analyse the spoken data they have previously gathered. Worse still, one cannot venture into any analyses whatever, if the only material one has at one's disposal is the recorded output of the informants. Inferences gleaned from questionnaires are bound to pave the way for better grounded analyses and would serve to delimit the scope of the analyses.

3.1 Population and Participants

For a number of intertwined reasons to be addressed shortly below, we have opted for second-year LMD students reading for a Master's Degree in Applied Linguistics at the Department of English, Mentouri University 1. All the targeted respondents started their major studies in the third year of the BA programme. Put more patently, the first two years thereof were wholly devoted to a more general programme encompassing modules such as Literature and General Culture. Out of a totality of 120 students, 31 were randomly appointed to take part in the survey. Most of the participants had handed in the approved-off, final versions of their Master's dissertations by the time we started administering the questionnaire. In collaboration with my mentor, the students' tutor of Phonetics and Phonology of the foregoing academic year, most of the survey was conducted in a language laboratory. The involvement of their teacher was not fortuitous, though. It was done for the sake of making sure the participants would handle the questionnaire more seriously than if their teacher was not involved. It is worthy of mention, however, that they were reassured that their answers would not be graded nor would their names be recorded for any other future use; the data would be used for exclusively pure research purposes on an utterly anonymous basis.

3.2 Questionnaire Overriding Aims and Overall Content

Given the very orientation of the current research work that is explicitly framed right at the outset of this thesis, deployment of a students' questionnaire was deemed a cardinal prerequisite. Of course, this survey is not going to disentangle all the confusion surrounding the reasons why accent allocation errors emerge and how to sort them out, but it will potentially endow us with a fairly accurate account on some of the most overriding factors and help us in our endeavours to arrive at firmer conclusions. As it strikes us that it would be virtually impossible to spell out each and every objective of the questionnaire as a whole herein, these will actually become apparent as the discussions of the various items and questions unfold.

The questionnaire is made up of forty questions. The ordering of the differing questions is not of immediate relevance. For instance, question number one could have been labelled question two without imparting any alteration to the final inferences made. It is worthwhile to enumerate at this juncture of the discussion some defining hallmarks pertaining to the sought contributions of the survey as a whole. These are as follows:

i. Does prolonged exposure lead to fewer errors and better mastery of English accentual pattern?
ii. Does feedback contribute in any way in enhancing students' scores in stress allocation?
iii. Peer correction is claimed to be a hugely big asset for language learners. Does this hold equally true when it comes to stress learning?
iv. Are electronic and print dictionaries equally beneficial to the growth of students' knowledge?
v. Does the deployment of properly well-devised learning strategies have any bearing on learners' handling of accent assignment?

vi. Do learners perceive any structural affinities between English and French sound systems and how does this, if any, feed into their English accent aptitude?

vii. How has the countless fruits and astounding marvels of digital era been approached by the Algerian advanced learners of English?

3.3 Questionnaire Analysis and Interpretations

The foregoing discussion has been tailored to lay out a decently comprehensive account on the various hallmarks of the questionnaire, the pool of participants and its overriding objectives. Under this extensive, core heading of the present chapter, analyses of the individual question's findings are embarked on. A great deal of the analyses are accompanied by pertinent pedagogical implications stemming essentially from the inferences made along with (albeit very scarcely) some theoretical backing). At a number of intervals, we have, likewise, tried to enumerate some didactic practices drawn out of a unified account the findings of interlocked question together have yielded.

1) Since when have you been an English language major?

2007 ☐ **2008** ☐ **2009** ☐

Dates	Participants	Percentages
2007	03	09.68%
2008	21	67.74%
2009	07	22.58%
Total	31	100%

Table 03: Students' First Enrolment at University

This question was devised primarily to reveal that the informants are by no means new to the language learning realm. The results (the overwhelming bulk of the respondents have studied

English at university for not fewer than five years) manifest this quite patently. Hence, it is just rational to put forward that their partial competence in using English accentual patterns in conformity with the target norms cannot be ascribed to newness of exposure. One has, therefore, to delve deeper into one's analyses to get firmer cues about this state of affairs so that one can ultimately procure firmer inferences. This is the reason why the questionnaire makes use of quite a wide range of various questions.

02) Regarding their gravity and impact on a smoothly-flowing communication, pronunciation errors are:

Less destructive ☐

More destructive than the grammatical and lexical ones ☐

Of equal impact on communication ☐

I have never thought of this ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Less destructive	07	22.58%
More destructive	07	22.58%
Of equal impact	08	25.81%
I have never thought of this	09	29.03%
Total	31	100%

Table 04: Students' Estimates of the Gravity of Pronunciation Errors

Data embodied in this table exhibits that 29.03% of the participants ticked off the 'I have never thought of this' box, which could be indicative of their carelessness of the impacts of pronunciation errors on the comprehensibility of their speech. This could be interpreted to mean

that the participants have never fallen into any communicational breakdowns on account of failure to comply with the canonical stress patterns. This stems mainly from the fact that most of their interlocutors are Algerian and their idiosyncratic dialects do share a range of resemblances. Over 20% of them think that stress-allocation rules are less destructive than those of grammar rules. Stress assignment errors do not appear on their own; most of the users of English who fall short of bowing to these rules do also float the pronunciation of other individual segments and this gathering of multi-faceted errors could spark off communicational breakdowns most particularly when the addressees are non-Algerian and/or not fairly acquainted with the peculiarities of their interlanguage. Only 25% are aware of the gravity of these errors. It is legitimate to conclude that more sensitisation is required about the likely impacts of failure to abide by the target norms. Learners should be notified and examples properly elucidated that these errors could be truly detrimental communication-wise particularly when they hold conversations with people other than their country-fellows.

03) Which of the forthcoming pronunciation points has been the most challenging for you over the years?

English vowels ☐ **English consonants** ☐ **English stress assignment** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Vowels	04	12.90%
Consonants	02	6.45%
Stress	25	80.65%
Total	31	100%

Table 05: The most Challenging Pronunciation Feature for Students

Although, we would surmise, the respondents did not have the faintest inkling as to the perspective of our research enterprise, they seemed to lend us substantial support in our assumption that English accentual pattern mastery is a veritable trouble-spot for most Algerian English learners. The overwhelming majority of the informants answered that English stress assignment was the most challenging facet of English pronunciation. This bit of insight should be shrewdly treasured by both teachers and syllabus designers. This overt admission on the part of the learners themselves should serve as a potentially reliable source of enlightenment for these members of the academic community. If learners, the very recipients of teaching materials, bear witness to the demanding nature of English stress placement rules, then teachers and syllabi designers are promptly called upon to rummage into their language-tuition toolkits for ways by virtue of which this state of affairs could be reversed. As long as the learners expressed concern about the tough learnability of English stress, this might bring into question the reliability of the teaching materials in use. We shall recommend, based on these findings, that to eradicate this anxiety and erect a more productive approach, then we should reconsider our options. We are not saying that we should give precedence to the teaching of stress over other linguistic elements; we are merely urging the syllabus designers to up-date and up-grade the teaching materials deployed and strike as best they can a balance between how they are construed and constructed and the modern approaches to pronunciation teaching.

04) Do you believe that students who are good at the articulation of individual sounds are equally so at the production of stressed syllables?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	20	64.52%
No	11	35.48%
Total	31	100%

Table 06: Students' Perception of Relatedness between Segmental Articulation and Stress Assignment

Devised principally to explore how much learners contend that good mastery of individual sounds feeds into accurate renderings of stress, this question ha sought to demonstrate that the learners do not perceive sufficiently well that the two phonological strata are indicative and determinant of each other. A fairly high percentage of the respondents, gauging by their answers, are in the dark of this state of affairs. The elucidation of this point must be readily visible. Being good at the pronunciation of individual segments may denote, amongst an array of other things, that the speaker has allotted much care and used constructive tools to attain this command. It also means that the speaker has a trained ear for sound recognition. This aptitude then will not, we assume, fail the acquirer when getting into the task of picking up stress structures. It goes without saying that the two learning objectives may flow simultaneously together. It is equally legitimate to argue, however, that better learners are those who consciously choose to learn one aspect of speech at a time before proceeding into another one. We highly recommend, based on these findings, that decent segmental phonetic training right at the outset of

the learning process will probably be hugely empowering to learners and it could enable them to gain further autonomy whereby they can take full charges of their own learning.

05) Has your growing knowledge on how the English pronunciation system works helped you in assigning stress to words?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	25	80.65%
No	06	19.35%
Total	31	100%

Table 07: Overall Linguistic Growth Contributions to Students' Stress Aptitude

This question's prime aim is to get the informants' own reflections on how length of exposure has contributed to the shaking off of fallacious language habits. There is an abundance of literature that maintains that the farther learners get into the realm of learning, the more they manage to get rid of hampering mother-tongue interference habits thereby the closer they get to near-native mastery (Eckman et al., 2003; Major, 1994; Wenk, 1983). This question was set to gauge how much essence lies within this claim. It, by the same token, strove to unearth whether learners do perceive the plentiful un-English renderings of accentual patterns that they make. We would conjecture that if this recognition is missing, learners will be far less prone to make any move towards a better mastery. As 80.65% of the informants answered in the affirmative, our suppositions could gain some backing. Despite the existence of so many irregularities in their interlanguage prosody, the respondents believe that their knowledge had grown. This perception could be put down to the fact that these errors are not sufficiently enough attended to in the local SLA classrooms and not much peer-correction has been used. We, accordingly, suggest that

learners get better sensitised about their blemishes and more frequent and well-guided frequent peer-correction is encouraged.

06) When you are out of the classroom, how much time do you devote to learning English stress?

Student	Amount of Time Devoted to Learning Stress out of the Classroom
Student 01	Learning in the classroom will take few time
Student 02	Sometimes
Student 03	A little bit
Student 04	Really a few time
Student 05	Not more
Student 06	When I talk to my friend or watch American movies
Student 07	Two hours in the day
Student 08	Never do it
Student 09	I devote a lot of time especially erading and watching English channels
Student 10	No time
Student 11	Only on dictionaries and movies and somehow books
Student 12	Really a few times
Student 13	Not for much time
Student 14	Often
Student 15	I devote three hours per a day
Student 16	Never
Student 17	Not much , about one per week

Student	Amount of Time Devoted to Learning Stress out of the Classroom
Student 18	Rarely
Student 19	Not too much
Student 20	Not much
Student 21	Not much, whenever I face a situation, check for answers
Student 22	Sometimes hen I have some free time, I read different novels or short stories
Student 23	Not much time
Student 24	Not at all
Student 25	Generally, I devote five minutes
Student 26	I always ignore this point of taking care of English stress
Student 27	Not at all
Student 28	Sometime
Student 29	In fact it is rarely for me to learn English stress. Just when I check dictionaries.

Table 08: Amount of Time Devoted by Students to Reading about Stress at Extra-curricular Settings

This is one of the open-ended questions the present questionnaire encompasses. We went for this choice primarily because we have thought it wise to leave it entirely up to the participants to notify us about the true amount of time each of them would devote to learning stress beyond the classroom walls. Had we provided alternatives, we would have probably ended up obscuring the true picture: we would have got less real answers as the given alternatives may not have corresponded to the students' real time.

The first deduction we could make is that some students failed to understand the question altogether, or so their answers seem to convey. The students whose answers match the requirements of the question, however, appear to denote that a good proportion of the respondents' answers seem, on the face of it, to point in one direction and dictate parallel inferences; little is done on the part of the learners for picking up insight into the English accentual pattern properties. Even those who said that they devoted some of their out-of-the-classroom time seemed (judging by the shallowness of their answers) to be using inadequate learning strategies. Here again, learners ought to be instructed about the tangible, irreplaceable merits of extra-curricular activities. The role of the teacher should trespass these boundaries; teachers should outline some activities that have worked for them when they were going through the same phase of their own learning experience. If teachers choose drawing upon their own experiences, we reckon, they will be better able in tailoring a better map for their students and setting a better model. Of course, this instructional technique has to be solidified by other techniques for warranting better outcomes. The literature has a lot to offer on this front.

07) There are certainly many learning strategies for the language learner to get over the difficulties of stress. Cite some of the most effective ones you have used to master English stress.

Student	Learning Strategy Used
Student 01	The most effective learning strategies that I have used to master English stress are: watching films, listening audios, and music, reading articles and phonetics books
Student 02	Using dictionary and watching English programs
Student 03	Listening courses recording words oral courses
Student 04	Paraphrasing strategies, affective strategies, cognitive strategies, translating

Student	Learning Strategy Used
	strategies
Student 05	The best way for me to overcome this matter is using electronic advanced learners dictionaries which give pronunciation options Working cooperatively to sort out stress difficulties, checking the dictionary whenever it is necessary, listening constantly to the different podcasts, English videos and TV programs
Student 06	Transcription of words, ie Phonetic transcription, the most module that helps us to learn how to master English stress
Student 07	Mainly, I try to listen to native speakers through media
Student 08	Listening to native speakers and reading and then comparing between the own pronunciation and the native speakers' pronunciation
Student 09	Practice daily, check the dictionary and search for words
Student 10	Reading some books which are relevant to learning stress. Besides, listening to programmes wich are helpful to enhance our level in temes of using stress in English
Student 11	I use the strategy of listen to some recordings
Student 12	Just to know the roles of how to pranonce stress and the use of dictionaries
Student 13	Syllabus strategy
Student 14	When I watch BBC news, I pay attention to stress and when I check a word in the dictionary I pay attention to the placement of stress
Student 15	Listening to native speakers of the English language
Student 16	Listening to the original people (native speakers)

Student	Learning Strategy Used
Student 17	During my studies for five years the only important strategy I used is listening to English pods English news, spoken by native speakers
Student 18	If you mean stress in phonetics, I depend usually in my learning brain box. And if you mean stress in psychology: you mean anxiety, I just be confident.
Student 19	Learning the rules of stress
Student 20	Transcribing many times. Knowing the difference between stressing verb, noun adjective or any other types of words
Student 21	Checking the dictionary and the daily practice to have more knowledge
Student 22	Listening to native speakers through broadcasts/ reading novels/ short stories and check pronunciation by using dictionaries

Table 09: Learning Strategies Utilised by Students

One of the basic tenets of this research is to work out the peerless value of having well-advanced learning strategies and their unmissable contributions to the learning output. We would vehemently believe that the more versatile the learners are in using strategies and the more elaborate these strategies are, the better they are likely to score. The answers to this open question do tell about the miniscule range of strategies that the informants use. Although they had ample page space to fill in, most of them did mention only one single strategy each. On top of that, the strategies that they enumerated would neatly fall into three different types:

a. Listening to authentic spoken discourse;

b. Looking up newly encountered words in dictionaries, both print and electronic; and

c. Doing transcription exercises.

08) While listening to spoken English, you pay more attention to:

The overall meaning content ☐

The morpho-syntactic structures ☐

Word meaning ☐

The articulation of vowels and consonants ☐

The words and larger stretches of discourse stress pattern ☐

None of the above ☐

All of the above ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
The overall meaning content	22	70.97%
The morpho-syntactic structures	03	9.68%
Word meaning	15	48.39%
The Articulation of vowels and consonants	15	48.39%
Word and larger stretches of discourse stress pattern	07	22.58%
None of the above	01	3.22%
All of the above	05	16.13%

Table 10: Component of the Spoken Signal to which Students Pay the most Attention

It is conspicuous from the above table that many participants went for more than one alternative, which is fairly natural: it sometimes happens that our attention keeps swinging back and forth between two different aims or more due to the colossal amount of indecisiveness that gets in the way. The gist of this question's contribution was not only getting to the bottom of the types of language layers learners would pay the utmost listening attention to, though: it sought to disclose to us some pivotal cues whereby we can discern their ultimate listening objectives as

such. Only a few informants said that they listened out to the stress manifestations of words. A good percentage listened out to the renderings of vocalic and consonantal components of the speech stream, while the overwhelming bulk of them are meaning-centred listeners, as it were. This prioritisation is clearly translated when one observes their speech; pronunciation errors (not least stress-placement ones) do abound. It is, hence, rational to argue that unless their prioritisations are reshaped, we cannot seek tangible relinquishment of their partly futile pronunciation habits. Listening is what a great many students in this digitalised world seem to deem the most productive way for language learning. As such, far more importance has to be attached to how teaching listening is conducted in order that we might add another tool to the equipment for which learners are in dire need for to eradicate their stress-assignment goofs.

09) Is watching films with Arabic subtitles more profitable for stress learning than listening to audio clips?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	06	19.35%
No	25	80.65%
Total	31	100%

Table 11: Students' Weighing of the De/Merits of Watching Films with Subtitles and Listening to Audio Clips

This table's results are in happy harmony with our own conceptualisation of the drawbacks of watching films having Arabic sub-titles infused. Arabic subtitles serve to make listening far less demanding which reduces the benefits of this learning skill; learners will not get enough ear training as the role of the ear is thwarted by their dependence on the subtitles. The

equation that holds that challenges could be detrimental does not have much sense here: if challenges are made to vanish by virtue of the subtitles, little or no learning will ultimately take place. Having said that, we do encourage that subtitles be used sparingly and in small doses. These doses will enable the learners to discern the morpho-syntactical, semantic as well as pragmatic affinities and dissonances between their mother language and the English one thereby fostering a better mastery of the English language.

10) Learning the stress placement mechanism is said to be very difficult. Which of the following would you grade the most effective for reducing the errors you make?

Doing transcription exercises on a sensibly regular basis ☐

Listening out to how stress manifests itself in audio clips ☐

Memorizing the stress rules outlined in phonetics books ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Regular Transcription	12	38.71%
Listening to audio clips	18	58.06%
Stress rules memorizing	08	25.81%

Table 12: Students' Stances towards the most Effective Means for Accentual Errors Reduction

The biggest number of the informants appears to be largely dependent upon listening for gaining a better command of English stress. We would maintain, however, that drawing upon aural perception of the linguistic stimulus, the contributions of memorising stress pattern rules, irregularities and all that phonetics and pronunciation books have to offer do outweigh those of listening. Reading extensively about the mechanism of stress placement will assuredly empower the learners to be more confident users of these patterns. The rules outlined in phonetics books

will not solely instruct the learners on how a set of words are pronounced; rather, these rules offer them the underlying mechanisms that govern stress assignment as a whole. It unravels for them the whys and wherefores why some words bear stress on the ultimate and others on the penultimate and so forth. The books demonstrate the interlocking of the various components of the phonetic signal they perceive. They, by way of example, spell out the traits and trappings of those vocalic elements that are banned to be peaks of stressable syllables and those which could be epicentres of stressable ones.

11) In your efforts to learn English pronunciation, you:

Attempt to imitate a native speaker as a model ☐

Use dictionaries to explore the sound system ☐

Both ☐

None ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Attempt to imitate a native speaker as a model	13	41.93%
Use dictionaries to explore the sound system	06	19.35%
Both	13	41.93%
None	03	09.68%

Table 13: Students' Pronunciation-fostering Tactics

The table shows that 41.93% of the informants strove to emulate native speakers' pronunciation, 19.35% used dictionaries for gaining good pronunciation, whilst the remaining 41.93% made use of the two learning strategies. These data demonstrate that not many learners diversify their learning tools. Making use of as many tools as possible is what ought to be the norm because relying on one tool alone, no matter how robustly helpful it may strike the user,

will not cater to the multi-layered pronunciation-learning needs. Dictionaries will present raw data that need actual strengthening via exposure to native speakers in order for substantiation to be gained. Listening to native speakers and endeavouring to mimic their pronunciations could turn out to have its drawbacks. Not all native speakers use the standard code of speech. A novice learner cannot differentiate between what is substandard and what is standard. In light of this discussion, we would recommend that exposure to native speakers should be minimalised at the outset of learning lest learners pick up dialectal forms of pronunciation. Only when sufficient training has been put in place will intensive exposure to native speakers be sensibly allowed to step in. After all, there are all manner of films whose language is far from being remotely standard. Rather, it is full of vulgarisms and stark, frowned-upon deviations from the norm.

12) As far as English stress assignment rules are concerned, is there sufficient correction on the part of your teacher in the speaking classes?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	18	58.06%
No	13	41.94%
Total	31	100%

Table 14: Amount of Corrective Feedback Students Get

The informants do not seem to concur that they have received adequate amount of corrective feedback as regards stress allocation errors. Nearly half of them, 41.94%, ticked off the 'no' box. It could be inferred, hence, that if more extensive corrective feedback is offered, more errors would go away. Additionally, corrective feedback might have other contributions: it could heighten the learners' own sensitivity and awareness about their manipulation of English stress

placement. We would believe that unless the teacher awakens the sense of phonological judgment in their learners, it will always remain dormant. This stems essentially from one pivotal factor: the learners are not endowed with the ability to concentrate on the various constituents of the speech signal and more often than not they are primarily pre-occupied with the semantic content thereof. By the same token, peer correction could also follow suit as this task is initiated by the tutor and its merits become readily visible to the acquirers.

13) Do you like it when your teacher corrects you?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	28	90.32%
No	03	09.68%
Total	31	100%

Table 15: Students' Attitude towards Corrective Feedback

The percentage of the informants who welcome teachers' correction does outweigh that of those who reject it. Therefore, the immediate conclusion to draw from here is that the learners are well aware of the merits of teachers' interventions. We cannot, accordingly, justifiably argue that they are against teacher-fronted feedback. We can, nonetheless, put some interpretations into this state of affairs: the feedback offered is not appropriately used. Having been a tutor of Spoken Language Proficiency myself, I noticed, much to my teacherly dismay and often even frustration, that most of my learners were stubbornly resistant to taking down notes when feedback was provided despite my repeated reminders of the copious advantages of this simple gesture. It is indeed the joint responsibility of teachers of other modules to cast sufficient light on the prime importance of feedback for the totality of the learning process.

14) Are you content with the amount of teaching you get in Spoken Language Proficiency classes about English stress?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	12	38.71%
No	19	61.29%
Total	31	100%

Table 16: Students' Contentment of the Amount of Tuition on Stress Structures

This table reveals that a great proportion of the participants, 61.29%, bore witness to the fact that stress does not get its fair share of tuition in the Spoken Language Proficiency classes. We must, however, hasten to underscore the enormity of the teaching loads placed on this module's teachers; it is too demanding indeed that it is borderline impossible not to lose sight of some of the integral components of the speech signal. Nonetheless, teachers are spurred to make sure that they do not overdo the teaching of new lexical items at the tragic expense of instructing their learners about the accentual patterns of English. We would believe that picking up vocabulary items is an on-going process that does not ask for constant, explicit tuition and learners have shown marvels on this front: the teaching of stress patterns, however, does require some intentional, well-guided teaching. It is fair to infer, therefore, that this facet of speech production must regain its attention in this module's admittedly crammed agenda.

15) When listening to your non-native teachers of the various modules, you often:

Accept their pronunciation as wholly accurate ☐

Look up newly encountered words in the dictionary for verification ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Accept pronunciation as wholly accurate	12	38.71%
Always look up encountered words in the dictionary	19	61.29%
Total	31	100%

Table 17: Students' Reactions Vis-a-vis Non-native Teachers' Pronunciations

The table shows that the majority of the respondents are committed to making sure that they pick up correct pronunciation or so their answers would attest. Their answers do give rise to doubt, however. Either their checking-up of the words is not done wisely or they do not keep record of their checking practices. We would recommend that whenever the learners run into novel vocabulary items whose pronunciations are alien to their perceptual mechanisms, they take down the transcriptions that they find in the dictionaries. This jotting down of the phonemic transcriptions can be a learning asset. When the visual and the auditory signals combine, they function as a huge help for the memory to safeguard the various layers of the newly coming linguistic signals.

16) Do you encourage other students whom you trust to be good at pronunciation to constantly give you corrective feedback?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	25	80.65%
No	06	19.35%
Total	31	100%

Table 18: Students' Persuasions Concerning the Usefulness of Peer-correction

Responses to some other questions above as well as this one do have one common denominator: learners are acutely aware and totally tolerant of peer correction and teachers' intervention as 80.65% of the respondents went for 'yes'. Our efforts should not, by implication, be invested in this area; they should be directed towards other tactics and guidelines since the informants are not in the dark about this current one. Needless to say, this survey has unravelled a wealth of directions and a profusion of avenues for the teacher to take as much as it has enlightened them about other ones where they should devote minimal care.

17) Explain why, please:

Student	Estimate of the Effectiveness of Feedback
Student 01	Because I believe of the notion that you can learn from everyone and especially from diligent students.
Student 02	Feedback plays a crucial part in developing the pronunciation.
Student 03	Because I interested more with grammatical features and not the pronunciation ones.
Student 04	Because pronunciation is as much important as the other sides of learning a language.
Student 05	Exchanging our knowledge with friends is a good way of acquiring the English language.
Student 06	To be convinced so as to not forget it in the future.
Student 07	Because it's helpful.
Student 08	Because if I know different things about pronunciation, everything will be done easily.
Student 09	It is always a good idea to have some feedback on your pronunciation.

Student	Estimate of the Effectiveness of Feedback
Student 10	Because this help me to remember the right pronunciation as it helps them.
Student 11	Because feedback is one of the major elements in developing our skills.
Student 12	We still have a lot of to learn from each other because feedback are a true gift.
Student 13	Proper pronunciation is helpful to understand meaning of words and to communicate effectively.
Student 14	I do so to get the right pronunciation, and also the right knowledge.
Student 15	In order to exchange ideas.
Student 16	Because I consider the good pronunciation indicates that a person is mastering well the language.

Table 19: Students' Explanations of Peer Correction Value

These explanatory answers show that learners are really cognizant about the immediate relevance of peer correction. If these answers are truly indicative of what takes place, then it is just legitimate to say that no further efforts are required to instil the tolerance and craving of peer correction into the learners. A word of caution should be sounded here before we move along though; peer correction should not be viewed as a wholly innocent activity that learners practise without dreading any potential side effects that might be triggered therewith. Learners should be instructed that not all corrections furnished by their friends or classmates should be adopted as true without further checking. Peer correction should also constitute some sort of peer-negotiation. What peer-negotiation denotes is that if one student corrects another one's pronunciation which they rate to be erroneous, then the corrected student must not suffice with what is given out by their partner; they must ask for confirmation and consolidation. They could

ask the corrector about the rules underlying the pronunciation which they think is correct and where the correct pronunciation was heard or found and so forth.

18) Have you ever been interested in what the language teaching approaches have to say about learning?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	13	41.94%
No	18	58.09%
Total	31	100%

Table 20: Students' Interest in Language Teaching Approaches Offers

It is our contention that the language learning research enterprises have a wealth of promises to deliver for the practicing, perplexed teacher, the avid syllabus designer and most crucially the inspiration-thirsty learner. Learners who take it upon themselves to delve into these various provinces and undertakings are highly bound to become far more successful than those who suffice with what the stiflingly restricted classroom atmospheres have to offer. Over the decades, countless research avenues have embarked on finding out how the acquisition of prosody takes place and what sort of applicably tangible strategies work best (Altmann, 2006; Vafaei, 2013). Case studies of highly successful learners are similarly sterling directions for learners to procure a great deal of what they will need to be triumphant acquirers themselves. Our informants, 58.06% of them, do appear to be at variance with this conceptualisation of how learning could be better fostered. Therefore, more needs to be done if we are to be accurately hopeful that our education system could become truly rewarding. In other words, the merits and marvels theoretical as well as practical research enterprises have to offer must be taught and

learners must be encouraged to get fully immersed in such realms for the ultimate attainment of true linguistic success.

19) Have you, over the years, used any pronunciation-promoting software tools?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	16	51.61%
No	15	48.39%
Total	31	100%

Table 21: Students' Deployment of Pronunciation-boosting Software Tools

It seems that nearly half of the informants had not used any pronunciation-promoting software tool. This could be put down to their lack of interest in ameliorating their pronunciation output. Other data gleaned from various other questions do back up our claim. If they had had heightened sensitivity towards their pronunciation, they would have done something to polish it off. These tools do play a part in their phonemic growth in the sense that they could (1) empower the learners to be on their guard whenever they or their peers speak, (2) pinpoint to the learners how destructive failure to abide by the native norms could be and (3) teach the learners about how to take good care of their phonemic competencies.

20) If your answer is yes, would you kindly name it (them)?

Student	Software Tool Used
Student 01	English records/podcasts
Student 02	Google/Cambridge and Oxford
Student 03	Oxford Learner Advanced Dictionary (OALD)
Student 04	I use many softwares and phone applications to master my pronounciation

Student	Software Tool Used
	skills. The softwares I use are mostly dictionaries like Oxford.
Student 05	Resetta Stone
Student 06	Google translator: Cambridge dictionary and others
Student 07	Easy speak, Oxford dictionary
Student 08	Phonetizer, Pronunciation coach
Student 09	The software tool which I use it and I found it helpful is: 'Tell Me More' which includes a particle exercises in phonetics.
Student 10	Online dictionary/ mobile
Student 11	Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary and Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary

Table 22: Software Tools Students Use

What this table demonstrates is that only 34% of the informants attempted this question. One third of this percentage, however, managed to name some of the targeted pronunciation-promoting software tools. In other words, they mentioned Rosetta Stone, Phonetizer, a Phonetics Coach, and Tell Me More. These are indubitably some of the most beneficial tools to depend upon for boosting our students' pronunciation calibres. We would put forth that if more students are prompted to turn their serious attention to these gadgets, we could guarantee that some of the errors would steadily vanish. The line of reasoning that underpins this presumption is far from opaque: these digital pronunciation mentors will, at least, heighten the learners' phonetic sensitivity which they badly need for a smoother confrontation of this huge uphill task. These tools will, likewise, broaden the learners' horizon as regards what could be used and how. Thirdly, and no less crucially, these tools will take away the mundane routine associated with

language learning as a whole. A word of caution must be sounded here, though; they are to be viewed and deployed as merely adjunct devices. We cannot discard the traditional ways of learning no matter how immensely rewarding novel ways may strike us.

21) Have you ever used Praat software to improve your pronunciation?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	04	12.90%
No	27	87.10%
Total	31	100%

Table 23: Students' Usage of Praat

This table exhibits that the overwhelming bulk of the respondents, 87.10%, ticked off the 'no' box. This may be taken to bear witness to their unfamiliarity with the usability of Praat, a program used for analysing the speech signal. Despite the fact that Praat is not used for enhancing pronunciation as such, it is a good gadget, so to speak, to have at one's disposal. Diversifying the tools the learners use is prone to generate better output. Amongst other functions Praat is nominated to have is to give tangible manifestations of the phonetic jargon that the learners find hard to decipher when reading phonetics books. Knowledge of these specialised words is indispensably necessary for a better digestion of what phonetics and phonology books have to offer about stress properties. Only when the learners are truly acquainted with the various deep rules underlying the surface manifestations of the phonetic signal that their command of stress-allocation practices is bound to get a genuine boost.

22) If your answer to question 21 is yes, would you please explain how helpful you have found it?

Student	Explanation on the Usability of Praat
Student 01	It is very clear that Praat is very necessary for the pronunciation.
Student 02	I have never heard of Praat and I think that teachers could guide us by mentioning some of those softwares.
Student 03	Never heard of.

Table 24: Students' Ratings of the Usefulness of Praat

It seems that the respondents who attempted this question did not fully grasp its purported meanings or they simply wanted instead to append some comments about this software tool. This is obvious from the explanations they provided. This would lead us to virtually have the self-same readings we arrived at from the foregoing question. Virtually all the informants did not get the chance of using this software tool nor did they receive any meaningful instruction about the usability of pronunciation-aiding programs as a whole. In the digital era we are living, it has become mandatory that we draw upon these tools in all manner of acquisition domains. This becomes all the more mandatory when the efficacy of such applications is borne out by scholarly research and confirmed by classroom practices.

23) Will you call yourself a devoted user of dictionaries to learn the pronunciation of new vocabulary items?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	22	70.97%
No	09	29.03%
Total	31	100%

Table 25: Students' Devotion to Dictionary Use

Oddly enough, 70.97% of the participants answered that they were devoted users of dictionaries. A glance at their oral performance would not find much alignment between what they said they did and what they practised. Here again, we ought to remind ourselves of the maxim the essence of which is that deployment of dictionaries is not a haphazard process; it requires adherence to some guiding principles the absence thereof may drown out the many and varied contributions of these immensely helpful, easily accessible pronunciation-boosting tools.

24) If your answer is yes, which dictionaries do you frequently use?

Print ☐ **Electronic** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Print	11	35.48%
Electronic	20	64.52%
Total	31	100%

Table 26: Students' Use of Print and Electronic Dictionaries

The table exhibits that 64.52% of the respondents utilised e-dictionaries in their daily check-ups. We would ascertain that this reliance on this category of dictionaries is not without its repercussions and perils. Put in plainer words, regardless of their merits and benefits (their ease of access and time-saving features, amongst others), such dictionaries may potentially develop substantial laziness in the learners. Owing to the pre-recorded pronunciations of the lexical items,

learners would, we strongly argue, not pay any or only little heed to how words are transcribed let alone to their stress patterns. Moreover, the visual signal is often missing which renders the consultation of dictionaries less profitable. Students, most peculiarly those majoring in English as a second language, must be fully equipped with profound knowledge of the ins and outs of how English pronunciation works, and the transcription of words does constitute an unavoidably integral part of this. Furthermore, the enthusiasm and avidity associated with looking up a newly encountered lexical item in the dictionary is taken away thereby putting the learners at a major disadvantage.

25) When using electronic dictionaries, do you:

Suffice with the listening out to the pre-recorded pronunciation of the individual words ☐

Depend on the phonemic transcription only and never use the above feature ☐

Use them both together ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Listen towards pre-recorded pronunciation only	09	29.03%
Depend on the phonemic transcription only	05	16.13%
Use them both together	17	54.84%
Total	31	100%

Table 27: Students' Habits Regarding some Facets of Dictionary Use

Amongst other things, this table portrays that 29.03% of the informants solely listen out to the pre-recorded pronunciations of the words that they look up. This does substantiate the claims we made when putting interpretations into the data of the foregoing table. Usage of such dictionaries may lessen the desperately sought roles of dictionaries, notably the familiarisation of the user with the phonemic transcription along with the accentual make-up of words. Hence,

learners' interest in print dictionaries ought to be rekindled and the stigma that is sparingly linked with usage of such dictionaries should be demystified: print dictionaries are by no means an out-dated, worthless means. They still hold incredible appeal and possess colossal benefits for the eager learner.

26) In your everyday self-initiated usage of dictionaries, do you often:

Check only the meaning of the new words? ☐

Check both the meaning and the pronunciation of vowels and consonants? ☐

Check also the stressed syllable? ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Check only the new words meaning	09	29.03%
Check both the meaning and the pronunciation of vowels and consonants	18	58.06%
Check also the stressed syllable	04	12.90%
Total	31	100%

Table 28: Students' Dictionary-use habits at Extra-curricular Settings

Here again, the finding embedded in this table does collaborate with other inferences made above. In other words, learners (none of them pays the faintest attention to how stress manifests itself in the words they look up in dictionaries) are not conscious about the significant role stress plays in their phonemic output or else how would one explain their disinterest or lack of curiosity regarding the accentual structures of words they look up. Had they been half-aware of the pivotal role of this tiny gesture, their answers would have been starkly different. It, we maintain, behoves the teachers of Spoken Language Proficiency to spell out the significance of

paying attention to stress sites in words. Although this is a 'tiny gesture', as time goes by, the tangible fruitfulness thereof will baffle both learners and teachers alike.

27) A number of features work together to make stressed syllables stand out in their respective phonological environments. Can you mention them?

Student	Stress Correlates
Student 01	The goal of saying those words plays a great role, because stress moves along with the kind of the sentence.
Student 02	No
Student 03	I have no idea.
Student 04	The phonological features, the grammatical features, and the number of syllables.
Student 05	Background knowledge of the speaker
Student 06	No idea.
Student 07	I don't know.
Student 08	Honestly, I don't know them.

Table 29: Students' Enumeration of Stress Correlates

Only one fourth of the respondents attempted this question. All of their answers were erroneous; none of them managed to cite even one factor that contributes to rendering syllables stand out. This is a remarkably patent sign of the dearth of internalised linguistic knowledge about this particular pronunciation point. By implication, the prevalence of pronunciation errors bearing on stress allocation could potentially rightfully, in our view, be ascribed, at least minimally, to the learners' lack of understanding of what makes a stressed syllable bear this phonetic label. On the basis of this luminous finding, we could venture to foresee the following:

unless learners fully master the correlates of stress and how each of them works, it would be downright counterintuitive to expect them to perform accurately. Knowledge feeds into practice and it is by virtue of explicit teaching of such features that learners can get them into their phonetic repertoire. We assume that sheer observation on its own cannot fill this void. After all, learners have been for five years at least exposed to various manifestations of the spoken medium without it enlightening them about even one intrinsic component of stressable syllables. We can utilise observation just to solidify their understanding of the potentially not-so-conspicuous explanations that they get, but observation in its crudest sense would not have the requisite payoffs no matter how prolonged it is.

28) Regarding their impact on word stress, prefixes:

Make stress shift one syllable forward ☐

Make stress shift one syllable back ☐

Do not impact stress placement altogether ☐

I do not know ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Make stress shift one syllable forward	09	29.03%
Make stress shift one syllable back	03	09.68%
Do not impact stress placement	01	03.23%
I do not know	18	58.06%
Total	31	100%

Table 30: Students' Perception of Prefixes Impact on Stress Placement

This question was tailored to enable us to delve more deeply into the participants' internalised knowledge of stress placement generalities. Oddly enough, 58.06% of them ticked

off the 'I do not know' box. One informant (03.23%) got the answer right, whilst the remaining ones got wrong answers. These findings are immediately indicative of the existence of gaps in their knowledge of stress placement generalities. Prefixes are used extensively in the English language words and phonemic knowledge thereof will assuredly enable the learners to possess a good departure foundation for allocating stress. Once they know that prefixes do not interfere with stress assignment, they would make further efforts for the identification of the stressed syllable. The least this bit of insight would do is that it would guarantee that they would not fall into the trap of assigning stress to the prefix *per se*.

29) Do suffixes behave exactly like prefixes?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **I do not know** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	05	16.13%
No	15	48.39%
I do not know	11	35.48%
Total	31	100%

Table 31: **Students' Perception of Suffixes Impact on Stress Placement**

Belonging to the same category of questions, this one does lend further support to our earlier inferences. If 64.52% of the respondents fell short of giving the right answer, then we would be justified to pin a good share of the error-blame, as it were, of the prevalence of stress-assignment irregularities in their interlanguage prosody, on their lack of mastery of baseline rules bearing on the behaviour of affixes vis-à-vis accent allocation. Suffixes do have a glaringly bigger role to play in determining where stress goes. They fall into various categories. Therefore,

a fairly good comprehension thereof would be a big asset for the learners to attain a better-guided command of stress placement.

30) In compound words:

The first element of the compound is always stressed ☐

The second element is always stressed ☐

Both the first and the second receive primary stress ☐

It all depends on the nature of the compound ☐

I do not know ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
The first element is always stressed	04	12.90%
The second element is always stressed	04	12.90%
Both the first and the second receive primary stress	03	09.68%
It all depends on the nature of the compound	17	54.84%
I do not know	07	22.58%

Table 32: Students' Compound-word Stress Aptitude

It seems that some of the informants did tick off more than one provided alternative, which could be conceived as a sign of indeterminacy on their part. What is strikingly clear in their answers is that as regards stress assignments in compounds, at least over 40% do not have the faintest inkling about it. Being the one-before-last question under this rubric, its insights do point in comparatively the same direction as its sister questions tackled above: far more needs to be done on teaching the groundwork of English accent placement. This is not exclusively the responsibility of Phonetics and Phonology teachers; teachers of Spoken Language Proficiency ought to make sure that this constituent of the spoken medium is truly worthy of a portion of their

time allotment measures. Admittedly, time allotment and scaling the priorities in this intricately sophisticated, multi-layered module is a hugely daunting task, but this does not preclude a miner inclusion of bits of pronunciation hints shrewdly sprinkled here and there throughout the teaching course.

31) Other rules, please mention them:

Student	Other Features of Compound-word Stress
Student 01	It is a long time I didn't look in phonology
Student 02	If a syllable has a vowel centre, the word stressed and vice versa.

Table 33: Students' Enumeration of Compound-word Stress Trappings

This space was left to further gauge if the informants would have something to share about the topic under scrutiny. Their answers seem to back up our assumption and lay more robust foundations for it to turn it into a hard and fast rule of which to take properly good notice. Only two informants ventured to mention some rules, which they thought govern stress allocation in compounds. Their answers are just not the right ones, though. They are, in actual reality, potentially indicative of how desperately they need to receive more instruction on this particular aspect of pronunciation. Explicit instruction buttressed by convenient reinforcing practical applications of the rules exposed is highly likely to enable the learners to polish their pronunciations off, not only of stress but other tiers of the phonetic spectrum are to benefit too. Leaving the rules to be picked up from context does not seem to be adequately productive, most particularly when we have an abundance of time to spare. Furthermore, these are English language majors, future instructors, about whom we are talking. They are in dire need to possess well-balanced linguistic competences without which their careers would be fraught with hurdles that could be warded off now.

32) Have you ever had a chat with a native speaker?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	14	45.16%
No	17	54.84%
Total	31	100%

Table 34: Students' Experience as Regards Conversation-holding with Native Speakers

This table shows that more than half of the respondents had not had the chance to come in one-to-one conversational exchanges with native speakers. This could be taken to corroborate one of our earlier claims: learners are not cognizant about the serious impact of their failure to adhere to the native norms. They always interact with fellow Algerian citizens who seem to share more or less the same interlanguage features. It is not readily accessible to bring these learners into daily contact with native speakers. For this reason only, it is incumbent upon us to inculcate into them the various tricks, tips and tactics which would eventually enable them to come to full grips with stress structures and become learned users thereof. It would pay off, moreover, to expose them to oral or written conversational exchanges where breakdown was triggered off solely by flouting the maxims of stress placement.

33) When listening to spoken English, you notice that:

Some syllables are louder than others ☐

All syllables are loud ☐

All syllables are pronounced softly ☐

You have never paid attention ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Some syllables are louder than others	21	67.74%
All syllables are loud	01	03.23%
All syllables are pronounced softly	03	09.68%
You have never paid attention	06	19.35%
Total	31	100%

Table 35: Students' Listening Habits

This question aims to find out whether the informants would recognise the stressed syllable when figuring in a syllabic chunk via how loud it is and whether loudness plays any part in imparting prominence to syllables. This table shows that 67.74% are aware of this stress-indicating aural signal. Referring back to an earlier question that required the respondents to enumerate those factors that contribute to syllabic salience, we can readily discern some lack of equilibrium; they fell completely short of mentioning even one single factor there, whilst they managed to unwittingly pick one out in this question. It is a prerequisite, however, that language learners are capable of answering such overt questions unfailingly. This is purely and simply because they have been trained to be vested in the linguistic jargon and any ignorance of this elementary knowledge is by no means in their favour. Hence, coming to full grips with the various categorisations, specificities and traits of language as a systemic means of interaction falls well and truly within their interest zone and its pertinence has to be repeatedly underscored.

34) Do English speakers produce all syllables with equal speed?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	04	21.90%
No	27	87.10%
Total	31	100%

Table 36: Students' Perception of Native Speakers' Speech Delivery Rates

This question, likewise, pertains to the same category of that of the above and its findings go hand in hand with the above conclusions. The table reveals that 87.10% of the participants know that speed of delivery of stressed and unstressed syllables is different. This indicates that that their perceptual skills are strong enough and that they can easily spot the stressed syllable when they encounter it. Knowing these defining hallmarks of stressed syllables, vital though they are for the recognition of syllables, does not guarantee an English command of stress allocation. The sets of questions that sought to gauge how much they know about some key facts bearing on stress assignment confirms this. It is, we maintain, true that not having the rules governing stress placement at one's prosodic disposal will spark off the materialisation of errors no matter how excellently the learner performs in stressed-syllables-recognition tasks.

35) Please, explain.

Student	Explanation of Why Native Speakers Have Different Rates of Delivery
Student 01	Because they have different accent.
Student 02	There syllabus which requires more speed than others.
Student 03	It depends on the situation of using such a word in expressing a statement.
Student 04	It depends on the persons if they are native speakers or not.

Student	Explanation of Why Native Speakers Have Different Rates of Delivery
Student 05	Because in one word you may find stressed and instressed syllables.
Student 06	It is noticed that some syllables receive a kind of stress that is more plosive then other ones.
Student 07	Each syllable has its rules depending on the centre of it. The strength of the syllable is the best guide to the speed of syllable.
Student 08	Because some syllables need to be stressed, others do not.
Student 09	Because there are two forms either weak or strong. And I utter in different speed.
Student 10	The pronunciation varies following the situation and context.
Student 11	It depends on the stressed syllables.
Student 12	Some syllables are stressed whereas others are not stressed.
Student 13	We have short and long vowels.
Student 14	I do not know but I have noticed that via listening to those natives.

Table 37: Students' Explanations of Native Speakers' Use of Various Rates of Delivery

Despite the fact that most of the informants expressly said that stressed and unstressed ones are different in terms of their tempo, their justifications do not in any way mirror true assimilation of the point under scrutiny. This question does, consequently, reveal that the informants are wanting in the linguistic terminology whereby they can spell out what they deem to be the case. After all, Linguistics and Applied Language Studies majors should be overtly aware of, at the very least, some rudimentary ABC's of the phonetics jargon. We would put forth

that any phonetics course ought to take it upon itself to inculcate into the students that although phonetics is practically relevant and oriented, its theoretical content should not be known solely for examination matters. Examination-success is only a short-term gain. For prospective English teachers this knowledge is a major prerequisite. Hence, a Phonetics and Phonology course should not exclusively concern itself with disentanglement of the various concepts of the field. Rather, in addition to this major aim, another equally pivotal aspect should be spelt out, the module's immediate relevance to the students' professional career needs.

36) How would you rate your command of French?

Excellent ☐

Good ☐

Weak ☐

Almost non-existent ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Excellent	03	09.68%
Good	18	58.06%
Weak	08	25.81%
Almost non-existent	02	06.45%
Total	31	100%

Table 38: Students' Self-rated Mastery of French

When asked to give a self-rating of their own mastery of the French language, over 60% (nearly 70%) of the informants graded themselves to be good, if not excellent. These answers exhibit the learners' familiarity with one of the languages that, in accordance with a locally widely held belief, shares major affinities with the English tongue. This belief could be rooted in

the two languages sharing the same Roman alphabet. Additionally, the two languages do share a substantial number of graphological affinities as well. This resemblance-equation, which usually constitutes their pronunciation-foundation, does not, we believe, offer much learning support. By contrast, when learners fall back on their French pronunciation knowledge, their performance would be fraught with departures from the native norms. As long as learners themselves attested that they know French, the job of the pronunciation teacher is highly prone to get rather compounded. The teachers need to make sure that the learners do not use French as a model and heavily depend on what they have already mastered. The learners must be instructed in such a way as to learn the English sound system completely independently of other systems for the idiosyncratic properties it possesses.

37) Globally speaking, are there more similarities than differences between the English and French linguistic systems?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **I do not know** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	21	67.74%
No	08	25.81%
I do not know	02	06.45%
Total	31	100%

Table 39: Students' Perceived Convergence or Divergence between English and French

The findings embedded in this table do give tangible confirmation to our earlier presumption, or so the numerical data attest. 67.74% of the respondents hold the belief that, linguistically speaking, English and French are more similar than they are different. This

fallacious assumption can lie behind some of the errors they make when confronted by the daunting task of picking up English accentual patterns. If learners are not made to relinquish this unsound belief and replace it with the sound, accurate one that the two languages demonstrate major dissonances, at the micro as well as macro phonological level, greater resistance to pedagogic intervention and later fossilisation will likely crop up. Accordingly, once the new sound belief is embraced, learners will start to make genuine efforts to come to full grips with the accentual patterns characteristic of English. Founded in this belief, these efforts are, hence, in the right direction and they could eventually lead to a better-polished output.

38) Have you ever wanted to sound like a native speaker?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	27	87.10%
No	04	12.90%
Total	31	100%

Table 40: Students' Willingness to Emulate Native Speakers

What is immediately patent from the percentages of this table is that the respondents are keen on the attainment of native-like pronunciation. 87.10% of them ticked off the 'yes' box which could be taken to give various cues. The most prominent of these cues is that there is no need for any didactic intervention to change their tune about the scope of their phonetic aspirations. They already acknowledge that sounding like a native speaker does not run against who they are. In fact, no matter how hard one strives to accomplish this, the success would be, in the most fertile of circumstances, be half-perfect resemblance to native norms. However, not having this hugely vital inspiration at one's disposal would give rise to rather 'invincible

rejection' to pedagogic efforts. We should, by implication, make judicious use of this ready platform to serve the needs of the learners.

39) When you speak English, do you want to preserve your national, cultural and linguistic identity?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Answers	Participants	Percentages
Yes	22	70.97%
No	09	29.03%
Total	31	100%

Table 41: Students' Identity Maintenance in Spoken Language Production

The current question and the foregoing one seem to give rise to some intractable illusion. While the overwhelming bulk of the respondents said they wanted to become like native speakers in their use of English, nearly the same percentage of them said that they would rather retain the various tiers of their identity. On account of the overt contradiction displayed here, it is genuinely tough to put any interpretations that deserve to be called remotely accurate. Presumably the informants do not consider sounding like a native speaker something that would go against who they are. However, if teachers-in their quotidian practices-perceived that their learners are distinctly aware of the fact that sounding like a native speaker is a likely peril to their identity, then the teacher is in a difficult situation which would call for well-weighed-up practices. Issues like identity are not easy to resolve. Learners who happen to fall into this category must be made to change their mind for the reasons we have cited above. They should be reassured that speaking like a native speaker does not cause any threat to their identity. This is fundamentally identity loss comes about only when one loses all the constituents thereof. Endeavouring to use the

English language like the British people, or like the American for that matter, will not make one British or American. If this were to be the case, it is only momentary: the learners still use their mother language, which clearly sets them apart from English speakers.

40) Can you take the time to add any recommendations about matters not mentioned herein and which, you believe, enhance our understanding of how stress is learnt and how and what should be done to eradicate the existing problems?

As is customary at the end of questionnaires irrespective of their genre that the respondents are offered some page space for appending any bits of insight, inspirational orientations or otherwise palpable recommendations which they see fit. Our informants did take the time and the trouble to do precisely that. Most of the participants' propositions regarding the best roots to take for expunging accentual pattern errors and acclimatising the language learner with the various facets of English stress structures could therefore be summed up in the following points:

1. Learners should pay far more attention to reading books and adhering to their teachers' instructions;
2. Learners should get ample practice as this is of substantial value for boosting one's level;
3. Learners should come to full grips with the rules and listening to audio clip, podcast and videos is bound to be indispensable for all of them;
4. Learners ought to attach more importance to English suprasegmental features, like stress and intonation as these are all inextricably bound together;
5. Learners had better avoid watching films with subtitles and deployment of Arabic print dictionaries should be minimised;
6. Learners should give more importance to reading phonetics books;
7. Teachers had better not humiliate their learners;

8. Learners are just ‘given the rules from the book’ without it being made clear how to use the rules for tangible linguistic performance;
9. The time allotted to oral expression classes is not enough. Moreover, the classes are a bit tedious and to take boredom out of these classes and impart vividness to them, teachers should make use of modern technology; and
10. Owing to the subtle nature of English pronunciation, language clubs monitored by professionally-talented teachers could help alleviate this burden.

Although the participants do not seem to have enriched the questionnaire so much, their answers seem to offer further backing to some of our own assumptions. Their recommendations were not spelt out sufficiently clearly, though. Out of all these suggestions, one has been the most attention-grabbing: teachers ought to avoid humiliating their learners. The respondent who said this might have formerly undergone some humiliation be it real, intentional or only wrongly felt. This might have come about unwittingly; the teacher might have been in a fit of pique. Regardless of what might have sparked off this feeling of humiliation on the part of the learner, we must underscore the importance of caring about the feelings of learners. Learners err and this is what humans do, but errors should not be viewed as sins that call for reprimanding the learners and rebuking them for being too feckless and inattentive that errors were allowed to surface. Rather, errors should be treated in a shrewd manner, and under no circumstances should learners be belittled. To round off, teachers should master the hugely constructive art of praising and ought to make sure they get into the professional habit of cheerfully praising even for the tiniest achievements learners make. Rebuke will only serve to slow learning down and force all the teacher’s efforts to backfire.

3.4 Summary of Findings

Having touched upon some key factors that made of this survey deployment compulsory, this heading will, therefore, recapitulate in different guises the key findings of the questionnaire. Of course, the inferences calculated out of each question are dealt with on an individual basis and it is the role of this rubric to bring together those conclusions and strive to bring unity of purpose and function into them. This will, amongst other things, be a handy shortcut outlined to enable readers who might be solely interested in the summary of findings to gain easy, time-saving and equally crucially enlightening access to the kernel of the procured results.

Length of exposure does not entail better command of English accentual patterns. Although the subjects who took part in our test had been learning English for nearly five years, they have not managed to purify their spoken output of many blemishes and departures from the target norms. Hence, when it comes to thorny spots of pronunciation acquisition, exposure alone does not lead to much tangible betterment of their competencies. What is even more dreaded is that if this exposure is not bound with explicit instruction, the learners may end up tasting prosodic fossilization. This is a dead end, to put it mildly. If this stage is reached, their interlanguage will, we believe, gain further immunity against change.

Teachers' corrective feedback does not seem to play a vital role in the enhancement of the learners' command of stress assignment. This is true owing to the fact that the learners do not seem to heed the feedback half as properly as they ought to. So, feedback should also be accompanied by the teacher accentuating the potential repercussions that might ensue when learners fail to comply with the norms. Aridity of feedback is what renders it ineffectual, then, not the existence thereof as such. This is the case fundamentally because the learners' interlocutors are their fellow Algerian learners as such: the destructive impacts of stress misplacement do not stare them in the eye. A good contextualisation of the feedback is a

prerequisite for it to be properly received. It goes without saying that some books of pronunciation instruction present a profusion of such examples.

Furthermore, reliance on electronic dictionaries should be reduced. Learners ought to be informed about the better merits of print dictionaries. Although print dictionaries are deemed clumsy by modern digital standards, their benefits do overshadow those of electronic ones. If it is the pre-recorded pronunciations that pin the learners to e-dictionaries, it is, we believe, this very feature which is slightly counterproductive. The oral signal is everywhere and learners can get an infinitely endless flow of it around the clock. The visual signal, by contrast, tends to be less easily accessible and less tolerated by the learners. It is, nonetheless, the visual signal which is needed when using dictionaries. Getting frequent fixations of the phonemic transcriptions of words is a must. E-dictionaries do have this feature, too, but, we would venture to conjecture, learners will more often than not hasten to clicking the pre-recorded-pronunciation button and wholly ignore the all-too-important transcriptions of the words.

Perceived, non-existent, learning-hampering affinities between French and English sound systems have been judged to be amongst the inhibitory, error-inducing factors. One way for the confrontation of this interference is through a patent highlighting of how the two Indo-European languages diverge regarding sound features. If these wrong assumptions are eradicated right at the outset of phonetics' courses at the BA level, their interlanguage phonology will gain intractable resistance to pedagogic measures. In other words, given the ever so demanding nature of phonological acquisition, we should adopt the best possible practices whereby we ensure a maximal warding-off of the biggest number of errors and, probably more crucially, error-causing variables such as cross-linguistic influence. When left to their own devices, learners will not have the right aptitude for discerning these dissonances and taking good measures to make sure French does not 'meddle with' their English acquisition. This is, likewise, partly because learners come

to university loaded with all manner of flawed conceptualisations that French and English are sister languages and if you know French, then that is the golden ticket of a strain-free acquisition of English.

Conclusion

This students' questionnaire utility was deemed of cardinal importance right at the outset of this undertaking. This is an essentially pronunciation research enterprise and customarily in such genres the analyst does not have to take recourse to such a means of data collection. As stated before, however, as the study unfolded, distinctly different orientations dictated different avenues to take. What underpins the adoption of this methodological procedure lies precisely in the very core of the objectives of the research work proper. We categorically did not set out only to work out the extent to which the Algerian MA majors command English accentual patterns. Although it is one of the key constituents, it is by no means the only one targeted. We are, likewise, keen on getting to the root causes behind error materialisation. The ultimate aim, then, is to come up with a research-grounded, data-based understanding of the various facets and dimensions of the learners' interlanguage lexical accentual patterns for the sake of gleaning a better comprehension of the system at work, why it works as it does and how to make it work in alignment with the Anglo-Saxon norms. This premise is fed essentially by the contention that approaching the study from the lenses of an error-seeker would render it borderline ineffectual. After all, the language learning academic community in our country is definitely in sore need for how the learners could be better empowered in their efforts to bring their oral proficiency as close as possible to native standards. Such accomplishments may be slightly more demanding to attain than grammatical ones. They, accordingly, call for meticulous analyses and profound search.

CHAPTER 4: Analysis of Spoken Language Proficiency and Listening Comprehension Teachers' Questionnaire

CHAPTER 4: Analyses of Spoken Language Proficiency and Listening Comprehension Teachers' Questionnaire

Introduction

The all-too-cumbersome process of accentual pattern acquisition cannot be readily understood, and accurate constructive inferences and, later remedial works cannot be legitimately embarked on without the active collaboration of teachers as they are an integral component of the whole mix. A number of scholars and practitioners, Derwing (2010), Foote, Holtby and Derwing (2011), and Murphy (2014), to mention but a few, do subscribe to the belief that teachers could be partly held accountable for at least a small proportion of their learners' linguistic success or otherwise their incompetence and failure. Following the footstep of this line of reasoning, the teachers' expertise is highly prone to feed into our own conceptualisation of the various issues addressed in our research at large as it could impart further dimensions to the final product as such. After all, we have not ourselves been teachers at the MA level and any attempt to make assumptions on their behalf would potentially backfire as it could run counter to academic constraints which are only satisfactorily captured by their finely honed academic intuitions. Only such members of the academic community are entitled to and have the requisite calibre of filling in the slots, which if left vacant, would potentially minimise the eventual fruitfulness of our undertaking.

4.1 Questionnaire Overall Aim

The overriding rationale lying behind opting for implementation in our methodological procedure of teachers' questionnaire could be summed up more lucidly in the forthcoming nine points:

i. To gauge and benefit from their accounts vis-à-vis their vantage points regarding what renders English stress structures a huge uphill struggle for their learners;

ii. To work out whether or not they discern any positive transitional growth in MA learners' command of English accentual patterns;

iii. To elicit their quotidian practices concerning the manifestation of erroneous stress patterns in their learners' prosodic interlanguage;

iv. To get to the bottom of their own pedagogical persuasions as to the potentially viable applicability of Contrastive Analysis ideas;

v. To delve more profoundly into their own perspective of the adequacy of phonetics books for catering for the multifarious needs of learners when striving to pick up error-free accent assignment;

vi. To closely explore whether they have discerned that cross-linguistic influence could be justifiably viewed as one of the strongest and above all most resilient error-causing variable;

vii. To get supplementary enlightenments into how we would format our inferences regarding the error-inducers;

viii. To work out whether the brand-new communicative language teaching approach is given precedence over correctness and adherence to the norms; and

ix. To unearth some key reactions to the endorsement or alternatively downright rejection and wholesale dismissal on the part of the targeted teachers of Jenkins' views regarding the superfluous importance of stress mastery for non-native speakers.

4.2 Questionnaire Population Participants and Administration

The orientation as well as the underlying objectives of our research work in its entirety has dictated that only one category of teachers be involved in the filling out of this questionnaire. The teachers whose partnership in this present research enterprise has been sought are, then, those of the Spoken Language Proficiency and Listening Comprehension module. The choice has

fallen on this particular genre of teachers owning to the fact that they have had adequate hands-on experience of and are immediately concerned with learners' overall language production, be it morpho-syntactical, phonological, pragmatic, stylistic or others. Therefore, we have deemed it downright counter-intuitive and potentially utterly counter-productive to ground our ultimate research conclusions if their accounts are discarded and their enlightenments not paid sufficient heed to. Their answers and suggestions will potentially enable us to arrive at more reliable conclusions. This is essentially because depending solely on the investigation of the contributions of some variables which we rate to be partly behind students' errors would trigger off shallowness of analysis if what goes on in the classroom setting is pushed to the fringe of our discussion. After all, it is in the classroom where errors visibly emerge and it is right there where they may go un-noticed and gain further tenacity. By contrast, the classroom, when well-equipped, is likely to ward off the emergence of quite an array of errors. It is, also, equally highly likely to remedy the ones which have already made their way onto the learners' output.

The present questionnaire has been administered to nearly all the teachers who have taught this module at the Department of Letters and English Language, Mentouri University Constantine. It should be recalled that the MA Applied Linguistics Programme was first taught at the aforementioned university in 2008 and it has been taught ever since. Two or three other targeted respondents could not be got hold of as they no longer teach at this university or so it was the case at the time when the questionnaire was being administered.

4.3 Teachers' Questionnaire Obtained Results Analyses and Inferences

Having addressed issues bearing on the relevance of this research tool to our enterprise and spelt out the defining aspects of subject pool selection along with questionnaire-administration overall setting mode, under this rubric we shall get into a portrayal of the results obtained and accompanying deductions made.

01)Since when have you been a university tutor?

Teacher	Year
Teacher 1	1982
Teacher 2	1984
Teacher 3	2000
Teacher 4	1985
Teacher 5	1985
Teacher 6	2004
Teacher 7	1999
Teacher 8	2012
Teacher 9	2004

Table 42: Teaching Experience of University Teachers

The data in this table reveal that all the teachers who filled out this questionnaire had taught for at least four years. In fact, this is what one teacher (with the smallest number of university-tuition years of service) said about the amount of time spent as a university tutor. Two other teachers had taught at the university level for thirty-two years. Two other teachers had been practitioners at the tertiary level for thirty-one years. The remaining other teachers had been teaching for ten, twelve, sixteen years and seventeen years. These results demonstrate that, upon the whole, most of the participating members of the targeted academic community are by no means novice or short of expertise which would trigger off doubt and put into question the reliability of the conclusions to be drawn. The various multi-dimensional accounts, which will figure throughout their answers would, hence, be reliably empowering. They would guide us towards the right path which may ultimately enable us to come up with the erection of a better

roadmap to be adopted in the local academic sphere. After all, the epicentre of our research-underpinning aims is to put forth novel conceptualisations of the issues at stake for the ultimate end of reducing the inherent tension associated with the thorniest-to-pick-up aspects of English phonological system, the language's primary lexical accentual patterns.

2)How many times have you taught postgraduate English majors?

Once ☐ Twice ☐ Thrice ☐ Four times ☐ More (please specify).....

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Once	00	00%
Twice	05	50%
Thrice	02	20%
Four times	01	11%
More	01	11%
Total	09	100%

Table 43: Number of Times Teachers have Taught at the Master's Level

Although prior to administering the questionnaire, we made sure that only teachers who had taught the Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension module at the Master's level got targeted. We, however, wanted to leave no room for doubt or suspicion that amongst the surveyed teachers there would accidently be those who had had no previous experience at the MA level which would completely defeat the purpose. The results depicted in this table show that all the nine teachers had taught for at least twice at the aforementioned level. In fact, more than half of them had undertaken these tuition charges for two years; two teachers had taught for three times, whereas one other had taught four times. Only one of them ticked off the 'more' option. He/she did not give any exactitude about the number of years, though. These two preliminary

questions have been set fundamentally to make certain that the questionnaire has been filled out by the right members of the population under scrutiny.

3) Throughout your English-teaching span, which of the following would you confidently rate to be the areas with the most trouble-spots for your learners?

English morpho-syntax ☐

Diction ☐

English segmental system ☐

English accentual patterns ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
English morpho-syntax	06	66.66%
Diction	03	33.33%
English segmental system	03	33.33%
English accentual patterns	04	66.66%

Table 44: Most Difficult Linguistic Components According to Teachers

The first step towards remedying or palliating the intensity of a given problem should perforce be its recognition as such. So, this question was tailored to elicit teachers' stances as regards the most troublesome linguistic components for their learners. The table encompasses some reassuring data in the sense that a good proportion of teachers are cognizant about the demanding nature of the acquisition of the English accentual patterns. Based on these findings, we would probably safely say that teachers have been perpetually struck by the students' inability to readily cope with the notoriously tough rules of stress assignment. We could, likewise, infer that the foregoing four academic years have not done enough on this linguistic front; if enough had been done, the difficulty universally associated with the picking-up of this prosodic

component would have been far less remarkable. Members of the English-teaching academic community should not, we must add here, lose sight of the fact that the overwhelming bulk of the learners are prospective teachers. Of course, amongst the learners of the English department we do have members coming from other departments (the department of medicinal sciences, pharmaceutical studies, law, biology and the list goes on), but these constitute but a tiny minority whose requirements and expectations should not supersede those of the would-be-teachers and future professionals in the field of applied language studies.

4) Regardless of your answer to the above question, which has proven to be the most challenging for your learners?

Abiding by the native norms in producing the vowels and consonants in the commonest words ☐

Complying with the stress patterning of syllable ☐

They are equally challenging ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Abiding by the native norms on producing the vowels and consonants in the commonest words	00	00%
Complying with the stress patterning of syllables	00	00%
They are equally challenging	09	100%
Total	09	100%

Table 45: Most Challenging Pronunciation Features according to Teachers

It goes without saying that it is hard to draw a distinct line between segmentals and suprasegmentals when it comes to assessing the learning hurdles to which each of the layers may give rise. The results shown in this table do lend unequivocally patent support to our view; 100%

of the respondents reported that both the acquisition of vowels and consonants, and accentual patterns are equally challenging for learners. Here again, it should be recalled that the principal aim behind setting up the question as such was to make certain that teachers are not in the dark about the patent existence of learning predicaments linked to stress structure command.

5) Your experience has taught you that:

The students who are better at vocalic and consonantal articulations are equally good at the production of stressed syllables ☐

There is no patent interrelatedness between the two linguistic aptitudes ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
The students who are better at vocalic and consonantal articulations are equally good at the production of stressed syllables	06	66.66%
There is no patent interrelatedness between the two linguistic aptitudes	03	33.33%
Total	09	100 %

Table 46: Teachers' Perception of the Interrelatedness between Segmental Mastery and Accurate Stress Allocation

The table shows that 66.66% of the teachers believe that there is a strong bond holding between segmentals and suprasegmentals. Three other teachers (33%) answered that there is no interrelatedness between the two. It seems that these may not have considered the issue altogether seeing that if one analysed for even a little while how the two layers may be linked together, one would immediately realise how inextricably bound they are. We must recommend, hence, that teachers read more on this subject matter and try to bring to the forefront of students' attention

the importance of taking care of all the facets of speech for the ultimate attainment of a good accent. Students' interest would potentially go up once they are taught that accurate articulation of vowels and consonants hinges to a great extent on proper stress assignment.

We have always been of the idea that the existing compartmentalisation of the various units of speech (vowels, consonants, stress, rhythm, tempo, intonation and so forth) is there essentially to facilitate the comprehension of language, its teachability and learnability, to mention but a few uses. Therefore, seldom do we encounter someone who is good solely at the articulation of vowels, or the production of consonants or the rendering of target-like accentual patterns and bad at other phonological levels. This may stem from the fact that you are either keenly interested in pronunciation acquisition or simply not so. Of course, pronunciation learning does entail working diligently on it: deploying all possible means whereby you can improve it. Each of us has an accent of some sort, but only a few of us own an accent that bears some resemblance to a native one and this is by no means the outcome of sheer coincidence.

6) Do you discern any upgraded command of stress assignment on the part of the post-graduate students?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	03	33.33%
No	06	66.66%
Total	09	100%

Table 47: Teachers' Discerning of Up-graded Command in Students' Stress Mastery

One of the variables whereby teaching success could be tested is visible learning progress and the disappearance of at least some global as well as local errors; if none of these manifests

itself, then we could generally talk of the ineffectiveness or inadequacy of the teaching approaches that were in application. This table seems to give us confirmatory accounts on the partial ineffectiveness of teaching or so the results seem to say: 66.66% of the teachers said that they had not perceived any upgraded command in their learners' accentual-pattern aptitude, while only 33.33% answered that they noticed this growth. One of the deductions we could make out of these results is that the syllabus does not cater for all the learners' needs when matters concern stress mastery. A second deduction could be that learners have not followed the various tactics outlined by their teachers. In either case, the teaching of these linguistic elements should be reconsidered. Success or failure of learning is partly conditioned by what goes on in the classroom right at the outset of the freshman year: it is there where the basic cornerstone of success should be laid down. Therefore, the syllabus should undergo some reformulation for it to be better suited for this highly sensitive module.

7) How do you set about tackling your students' stress-allocation errors?

You elucidate the vital importance of accurate stress placement in retaining their speech melody and rhythm ☐

You pinpoint how crucial is stress mastery for an easy comprehension of spoken discourse ☐

You do not attend to these errors altogether ☐

Others, please specify ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
You elucidate the vital importance of accurate stress placement in retaining their speech melody and rhythm	01	11.11%
You pinpoint how crucial is stress mastery for an easy comprehension of spoken discourse	04	44.44%
You do not attend to these errors altogether	04	44.44%
Others, please specify	00	00%
Total	09	100%

Table 48: Teachers' Pedagogical Practices Concerning the Materialisation of Stress Placement Errors

This table exhibits that nearly half of the teachers (44.44%) do not attend to accentual patterns' errors altogether. This practice could then be blamed at the very least partly for the apparent tenacity associated with such errors. One of the driving incentives for learners to make any moves and adopt any strategies to promote their performance is indeed teachers' attitudes as such. If teachers fall short of even addressing pronunciation issues bearing on stress placement, then learners would become less aware of this linguistic constituent and less ready to improve their command. Furthermore, some of the weak learners, who cannot observe their own output and diagnose their own errors using a set of theoretical standards, would be the most adversely impacted by such a practice on their teachers' part.

The annotation to the above question (others, please specify) was appended crucially for the sake of making sure that we take the most we can out of the teachers' didactic practices when errors of stress allocation surface in their students' idiosyncratic dialects. This is chiefly because we have suggested above only two alternative ways out of a wide spectrum of practices on offer.

This extension has not, none the less, got us any enlightenment: no specifications or additions were cited. It is hard to make sense of such results, but one thing has to be involved in the interpretation: erroneous stress assignments are not amongst the elements occupying the topping of the list of priorities as a big enough proportion (44.44%) of teachers said that they did not attend to these errors at all. Therefore, if this is the state of affairs in operation, then we can foresee that learners receive only very little guidance from teachers, the fact which would entrench the difficulty rather than lessen it. Purporting that the Oral Expression module is ever so subtle to readily teach would not make the problem go away. Claiming that teachers of phonetics would have to find the requisite vaccine to ward off the emergence of the problem in the first place would not help matters either. Setting up a newer list of priorities wherein the research enterprises, small-scaled and large-scaled, are paid sufficient heed to and taking recourse to the various newly devised ways of teaching would be, we would contend, the best way forward.

8) Many believe in the tangible usefulness of the Contrastive Analysis findings in the sphere of pronunciation teaching. Does this, to your mind, apply to the teaching of stress to Algerian learners?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	04	44.44%
No	05	55.55%
Total	09	100%

Table 49: Teachers' Contentions towards the Merits of Contrastive Analysis

This table demonstrates that over half of the teachers (55.55%) concur that the findings of Contrastive Analysis (henceforth CA) cannot be applied for the teaching of English stress

assignment. These accounts clearly run counter to the wealth of insights the CA old and new research agendas alike contain. One of the uppermost practical applications of CA is laying down guidelines about two main, hugely important teaching components: (1) what to teach; (2) how to teach (James, 1980; Ringbom, 2007). We do argue along the same lines of these two authors in maintaining that if we are to erect a learner-friendly learning environment, we should rummage into the international and the local research papers to work out how Arab learners have learnt the English language over the decades and how Arabic, French and indeed any other language known to them have contributed adversely or otherwise in the building up of their interlanguage performance. No immunity or barrier could be erected between what is already known and what learners are striving to learn; we cannot make them unlearn already internalised codes. The most favourable way and indeed the most realistically trustworthy one to go for, then, is try to make old knowledge facilitate the acquisition of incoming knowledge and not pretend that we can safely ignore it because simply and purely it is there and it will continue to be so.

11) Can you kindly explain why this is so?

Teacher	Explanation
Teacher 01	No: Arabic and English are fundamentally unequal.
Teacher 02	Yes: most Algerian English learners seem to be deeply affected by the language they have got in contact with their childhood i.e. French and Arabic.
Teacher 03	Yes: contrastive Analysis could provide us, teachers, with valuable insights in to the learning process of our learners as well as their learning habits and tendencies, thereby make it easy for us to identify areas of difficulty (why some features are more difficult to acquire than others) and predict many learning impairment (what would go wrong).
Teacher 04	No: not really, listening to native speakers is the key to pronunciation improvement.
Teacher 05	Yes: knowing the areas of similarities and those of difficulty regarding stress may help the learners to avoid relying too much on their mother tongue when more difficulties exist.
Teacher 06	Yes: Contrastive Analysis may raise the students' awareness of the differences between different accents of different languages.
Teacher 07	No: Although contrastive Analysis findings have been and still are of great value, its findings are still incomplete due to the discrepancy among the informants in term of cultural background and environmental effects.

Table 50: Teachers' Explanations of the Beliefs they Hold about the Usefulness of Contrastive Analysis

Out of this table's content-which depicts the two opposing views regarding the usefulness of CA-we can immediately perceive the inconclusiveness in the arguments provided by those teachers who do not trust the promises of CA for delivering what it vows to. The most un-balanced of arguments is that of the first teacher who said, 'English and Arabic are fundamentally unequal.' We can infer from this that he/she thinks that CA could step in to help only when similarities between the mother tongue and the target language exist which is rather untrue. CA, we must be reminded, could have a role to play irrespective of the nature of the perceived relationship holding between the two codes: different modes of teaching would have to be in operation, though. Moreover, it is indeed when more dissonances between the target language and the maternal language are detected that CA could be of more tangible application (Gass & Selinker, 2008). The second teacher, however, has taken us onto other territories not of patent relevance to the issue at stake when proposing that listening to native speakers is fundamentally crucial to language success. Of course, exposure to authentic language does help in a diversified number of ways, but what we are seeking here is to work out how CA findings could get into our classrooms and benefit our learners. The third teacher's explanations bear on the very procedure adopted by CA, which goes way beyond the scope of this discussion. It goes without saying that no theory, old or new, strong or weak, is immune against procedural flaws; this, nonetheless, does not render the totality of its findings flawed. The fourth teacher did not give any reasons why they assume CA is of practical use.

12) Have you ever conducted any class-room based large-scale or small-scale research into the usability of the Contrastive Analysis findings pertaining to the stress-learning enterprise?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	00	00%
No	09	100%
Total	09	100%

Table 51: Teachers' Previous Research Undertakings into Contrastive Analysis

The table shows that none of the teachers has carried out a classroom-based research into CA. This further supports the uselessness associated on the teachers' part with the tangible applicability of CA. It could, likewise, be taken to denote that the findings have not got their way into the classrooms, which is all the more reason for calling to renew our appeal for this to be put to the test. Of course, we are not saying that these findings will erase all existing problems, but the intensity of some problems could get reduced.

13) If yes, can you enumerate some of the conclusions it enabled you to draw?

As long as no teacher had previously conducted any classroom-based research using CA findings, no one would come to any conclusions.

14) Mention any other theories which, you contend, would supersede the viable applicability of Contrastive Analysis in their immediate usefulness regarding the teaching of stress?

Teacher	Theory
Teacher 01	Task-based language teaching–learning.
Teacher 02	Perhaps, interlanguage theories (they are very close to contrastive Analysis, anyway).
Teacher 03	I cannot think of any.
Teacher 04	I have no idea.
Teacher 05	This is definitely not my cup of tea.
Teacher 06	Until now, I don't think that there is a more detailed theory that can supersede Contrastive Analysis.

Table 52: Teachers' Enumerations of Other Theories Superseding Contrastive Analysis

Four teachers amongst those who attempted this question have not mentioned any other theory whose pedagogic robustness could outstrip that of CA. After all, if findings of this question were measured together with those of the two preceding questions, what would be immediately visible is that over half of the targeted teachers are not of the contention that learning theories could be constructively integrated into their teaching syllabus. If these teachers had conducted any research or put these theories to the test but arrived at negative inferences as regards the usefulness of the various learning theories, their answers would have been far more convincing than they actually are. Now that their answers are merely judgmental views not emanating from or solidified by any research-based outcomes, their accounts would only meet with sharp criticism. Here again, it is worth reiterating our previously stated suggestion: teachers of the Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension module are highly recommended to try

their level best to read more about the various SLA theories research-based findings and deploy them for reshaping at least partially their teaching persuasions and practices.

15) Have you attempted to put them to test?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	00	00%
No	04	100%
Total	04	100%

Table 53: Teachers' Testing of their Highly Regarded Theories

We have deliberately delayed discussing the answers of those teachers who mentioned some teaching theories which, in their own gauges, do outweigh CA for the sake of coupling it with this one. Two teachers mentioned that interlanguage theories and task-based language learning would be more beneficial to fall back on than CA. When asked to tell whether they had put them to the test, none answered in an affirmative manner or so this table demonstrates. This question and the above were not devised for solely knowing what theories teachers trust to fulfil their expectations and cater for their students' needs; we also sought out to know the extent to which teachers would care about the rich content of SLA research and try to make wise use of it for empowering their learners to attain linguistic success less laboriously.

16) What inferences have you arrived at concerning stress?

Teacher	Inference
Teacher 01	No idea I have never heard of it.
Teacher 02	Stress can only be learnt via exposition to native speakers and practice.

Table 54: Inferences Procured about by Teachers

Although none of the teachers had tested any learning theories, one of them seemed to have not paid enough attention to this question as they said 'I have never heard of it', which would not match the requirements of the question at all. The second teacher who answered this question, however, asserted that stress learning cannot be accomplished unless learners got exposed to native speakers and had ample practice. We would think that this is more of a hasty over-generalisation and over-restriction to the many and varied ways which ought to work together to lessen the linguistic burden rooted in the acquisition of English accentual pattern. Furthermore, practice and exposure to native speakers are by no means strictly confined to classroom teacher-led practices: learners can do so on their own outside the classroom settings. What is more, they have actually been doing this for a long time, but still their English pronunciation is not mastered to reassuring levels. More attention should, hence, be attached to the current research findings in order that we can glean more insightful orientations towards a better approach to adopt for teaching Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension.

17) Do you entertain the belief that phonetics-and-pronunciation-books-outlined guidelines are a sufficiently enough toolkit for the students to procure a satisfactory mastery of stress usage?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	01	11.11%
No	08	88.88%
Total	09	100%

Table 55: Teachers' Estimates of the Empowering Nature of Phonetic Books

The current table shows that the overwhelming majority of teachers (88.88%) do not maintain that phonetics and pronunciation teaching books and manuals are enough for learners to

pick up English stress. It seems that when answering this question, the participants thought of only one single component of such references, how English stress works. In fact, there is more to the wealthy content of these genres of books than mere stipulation of rules and guidelines to follow. In fact, such resourceful books are amongst the best devices to use by learners to come to full grips with the English accentual patterns. Let us just take the oft-too-cited book of Cruttenden '*Gimson's Pronunciation of English*' as a good case in point. In this large volume, the author, after looking in fine-grained details at the various traits and trappings of the English accentual patterns, he goes on to address trouble spots learners coming from divergent linguistic backgrounds may stumble into when trying to cope. Kelly (2000), in his book '*How to Teach Pronunciation'*, by the same token, addresses a plethora of learning and teaching pathways to utilise for teaching stress patterns. In these books and a whole host of many others with which these share a profusion of affinities, the authors' objectives do transcend the miniscule horizon of sheer enumeration of rules and exceptions. It is fair to argue, based on these facts, that only teachers who take a vested interest in the multi-tiered content of phonetics books and pronunciation teaching manuals could be successful mentors of their students. The vantage points of many who unduly reverentially believe in the merits of continual practice have given rise to more problems than they have actually solved. Exposure to native speakers alone does not help much if students go on to listen to every native speaker they find their way. Depending on aural reception alone would not help them much to master the rules at work. After all, what academic institutions teach is academic language and for academic language to get mastered, rules as well as practice guidelines have to be well grasped. Where better to find all of these and even more if not in pronunciation teaching books and phonetics teaching ones? Even a great deal about the usefulness of CA accounts and research-based findings could be found therein, too.

18) Can you provide an explanatory account?

Teacher	Explanation
Teacher 01	Stress, like any other pronunciation faculty can only be mastered through immersion. In other words, learners need practice, not just read about stress.
Teacher 02	Practice is the mother of any learning action. Books alone are never enough.
Teacher 03	The students' mastery of stress use comes if their learning acquired from books is accompanied by listening to and viewing authentic materials.
Teacher 04	If students apply the guidelines which are presented to them in those books, they will be able to acquire a useful account of the use of stress.
Teacher 05	A competent teacher and good practice are always needed.
Teacher 06	Knowing the rules of English stress is not sufficient to acquire a native-like pronunciation. Learners also need to know how those rules are actually applied by native speakers.
Teacher 07	Exposure to English is more important. Books are important, but at the theoretical level.
Teacher 08	Because without practice, no theoretical knowledge helps.
Teacher 09	Students need an English speaking environment.

Table 56: Teachers' Explanations of their Conceptualisation of the Usefulness of Phonetics Books

The teachers explanations reproduced verbatim in the present table do lend further consolidation to what has been elucidated above. Put more lucidly, teachers assume that practice is not the business of phonetics books and pronunciation-teaching manuals. Are not there phonetics books with enclosed CDs containing a great deal of practical assignments and guidance

about how to practise the various rules to more successfully cope with pronunciation learning? *English Phonetics and Phonology* (2009) by Roach is one of the most salient examples of such books. No authority in the field of SLA as a whole has sounder tuition guidelines and more fruitful practices than phoneticians as they possess the very requisite credentials for just this sphere of language acquisition.

19) Do you teach English stress in an explicit fashion?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	03	33.33%
No	06	66.66%
Total	09	100%

Table 57: Teachers' Explicit Teaching of Accentual Pattern Rules

Explicit and implicit modes of instruction have been the subject matter of many raging debates in the province of SLA at large not only in the area of pronunciation acquisition (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, & Griner, 2010; Saito, 2011; Saito & Lyster, 2012). This question was, therefore, imbedded herein to find out with which camp of opposing practitioners the targeted teachers would side. The results show that a small minority of them prefer explicitness rather than implicitness. We would not share such a conviction for a number of reasons. First and foremost, unlike some English vowels and consonants which can be taught in an implicit fashion, stress does not lend itself to such a mode because it is not always perceptibly easy for learners to notice where stress goes in a word or in a sentence. Secondly, even if we were to take for granted that some gifted learners could discern where stress falls when left to their own devices, the weak learners would not follow suit. Approaching instruction from this utopian perspective where only

a privileged few readily learn whereas the others lag behind should better be discarded. In mixed-ability classes, and ours are virtually always of such a category, one had better err on the side of caution and teach explicitly.

20) When addressing issues bearing on stress allocation of some ill-accented words, do you customarily:

Bring into the discussion some defining hallmarks of the quintessentially common rules of other words complying with the same pattern ☐

Only in passing say that this word is stressed here whilst this one is stressed there without giving any guidelines ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Bring into the discussion some defining hallmarks of the quintessentially common rules of other words complying with the same pattern	03	33.33%
Only in passing say that this word is stressed here whilst this one is stressed there without giving any guidelines	06	66.66%
Total	09	100%

Table 58: The Manner in which Teachers Address Stress Allocation Errors

According to this table, 66.66% of the teachers surveyed attest that they stuck in their reactions towards stress-allocation errors to no systematic way of error correction. Put in plainer English, on the face of it, six out of the nine teachers suffice with solely rectifying their learners' production by drawing their attention to the accurate articulation of the erroneous words. They customarily do not go beyond the frontiers of an ill-formed pronunciation and grab the opportunity for spelling out more guidance about how to avoid falling into the same error in the

future by elucidating the rule(s) at work regarding the accentual pattern of that genre of words. If learners are to be better empowered to avoid making the same error again, relying heavily on this practice would not be guaranteed to be invariably adequate. One of the immediate interpretations of error materialisation is that learners have not internalised the target language rules whereby they could generate strings of language in accordance with them. By way of example, if a learner stresses the word *developmental* on the second syllable, correcting him/her by saying that it is rather the penultimate syllable that is stressed would not be enough. It would be far more constructive if the learners are made aware of the stress-shifting capacity of the 'all' suffix and give further elucidation. So, it is the teachers' responsibility to bring to the forefront of the learners' linguistic attention the rules needed in order that in the future they will not only manage to get the ill-formed word right, but all words sharing the same characteristics will likewise be generated in compliance with the target norms. To round off, we should argue here that shallow handling of errors is more a waste of time than a genuine remedial practice, since learners have not been offered the linguistic equipment whereby they get enough confidence for future use.

21) If you have gone for the second alternative in question '18' above, could this be because:

You do believe that English accent assignment teachability is a sheer myth ☐

Errors of stress assignment are not worth corrective feedback ☐

The responsibility of teaching stress lies solely with the teachers of Phonetics ☐

All of the above ☐

Others, please mention them ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
You do believe that English accent assignment teachability is a sheer myth	01	16.66%
Errors of stress assignment are not worth corrective feedback	00	00%
The responsibility of teaching stress lies solely with the teachers of Phonetics	01	16.66%
All of the above	02	33.33%
Others, please mention them	02	33.33%
Total	06	100%

Table 59: Teachability of English Accentual Patterns

This table seems to have presented us with mixed responses. To begin with, only six teachers answered this question. The first teacher ticked off the box of 'English accent assignment teachability is a sheer myth'. It strikes us that this teacher has yielded to the negatively daunting belief that English stress is utterly unteachable. Of course, English stress is a bit baffling to teach; it is very demanding and presumably time-consuming to teach, but we would by no means think that it is an impossibility to teach it. Entertaining this belief would burn down, as it were, all efforts on the part of teachers to confront the problem head-on. Probably this teacher had worn him/herself out attempting to improve his/her learners' command for no avail. If this were the case, instead of succumbing to the unhealthy conviction that a given linguistic constituent is utterly unteachable, one should bring amendments to one's teaching practices, to say the least.

The second teacher, on the other hand, stated that the entire responsibility of teaching English stress lies with the teachers of phonetics. This is also not a wholesome persuasion to possess as a language teacher. For a linguistic component as intricate and fraught-with-exceptions as the English sound system is, many teachers of different modules ought to work together to help their learners surmount the difficulties into which they run. Two other teachers said that the first and the second reason put together make them pay little attention to English stress errors surfacing in their learners' interlanguage prosodies. The views of these latter teachers are far more counterproductive than the former ones as these contentions would lessen or even cripple their endeavours to help their learners cope with this learning hurdle.

When asked for any further explanations, as this table shows, only two teachers offered theirs. They are framed in the following:

1) The teaching of stress is often not a priority where I work (EFL context and very weak students).
2) I always opt for direct feedback, including highlighting stress allocation.

The first one stated that given the nature of the EFL context where they work, their students are weak and this is the main reason why attending to stress errors is not deemed a priority for them. The first teacher's views may appear to dictate that not enough was done in the foregoing academic years or else how would one expect to get such accounts when the learners concerned are those reading for a Master's Degree in applied language studies. We should, urge, therefore, that more amendments be made to at least the Oral Expression module not only at a master's level, but at the BA level as well. About the statement of the second teacher, we would much rather leave it till later when we address questions on feedback.

22) Students' pronunciation bears traces of:

Their dialectal Arabic accent ☐

The French sound system ☐

Their accent is wholly idiosyncratic and bears no resemblances to any other linguistic system they possess ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Their dialectal Arabic accent	03	33.33%
The French sound system	02	22.22%
These two combined together	03	33.33%
Their accent is wholly idiosyncratic and bears no resemblances to any other linguistic system they possess	01	11.11%
Total	09	100%

Table 60: Nature of the Students' Pronunciation Through Teachers' Lenses

Data presented in this table assert that teachers are not unaware of the contribution of cross-linguistic influence in the learning process and its manifestations in the learners' accents. So, we are not alone in blaming part of the learning hindrances on linguistic interference. In a set of questions, discussed above, most teachers do not seem to offer us any support in maintaining that CA research-findings should get their way into the local EFL teaching settings for the ample benefits they would offer. If we are all distinctly aware of how Arabic and/or French may hamper learning, why not do something about it? Apparently, one of the copious benefits of the LMD system adopted by the Algerian higher education authorities is that it has led to the generation of many and varied interlanguage studies that have explored in more profundity different facets of

English learning locally. It is high time the findings and recommendations of these studies got seriously valued on the part of syllabus designers for bringing research-fed updates into the teaching syllabus of Oral Expression.

23) What, do you think, triggers off the emergence of stress-assignment goofs in the students' rehearsed and spontaneous output?

Teacher	Stress-errors Triggering Variables
Teacher 01	The question is rather unclear to me, I could not get it.
Teacher 02	I do not know.
Teacher 03	The influence of the French sound system and the students' carelessness. The lack of listening to authentic materials seem to pose a problem as well.
Teacher 04	In their focus rehearsed output, students focus shifts towards a correct grammatical output. While in their spontaneous speech, their attention is fully grabbed by the choice of words which make them less interested about stress.
Teacher 05	Pronunciation is hard and students do not seem to spend enough time on improving theirs. Moreover, they spend more time on learning other aspects of language.
Teacher 06	(1) Lack of practice. (2) ignorance of the English stress pattern rules. (3) learners don't listen to native speakers. (4) learners' indifference.
Teacher 07	The transfer of the Arabic accentual patterns to English.
Teacher 08	The interference of the mother tongue.
Teacher 09	See answer to question 16. It's lack of practice.

Table 61: Teachers' Stated Causes of the Emergence of Stress Assignment Errors

This question was set in such a way that we could see the error-causing variables through the teachers' own lenses. These factors could, according to this table, fall neatly into the following categories:

a) The inherent difficulty associated with English stress rules;
b) Students' indifference towards mastering these rules;
c) Students' attention is nearly wholly consumed by striving to produce grammatically accurate and semantically acceptable sentences that they forget about accentual pattern correctness;
d) Insufficient practice; and
e) Interference from their mother tongue.

These are, indeed, amongst the most salient variables that lie behind the partial mastery of not only accentual patterns but segmental correctness, too. We feel it incumbent upon the discussion to keep reminding ourselves that both grammatical accuracy and the semantic one are catered for by most modules, while pronunciation seems to be the responsibility of phonetics' teachers and to a far lesser degree Oral Expression teachers. Striking a newer balance is, we would assume, mandatory. Phrased differently, pronunciation errors should get further attention by teachers of Oral Expression; lesser attention should, by implication, be given to the other linguistic components for the aforesaid reasons.

24) Will you say that your students' attitude towards mastering English stress rules is that of disinterest?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	08	88.88%
No	01	11.11%
Total	09	100%

Table 62: Teachers' Grading of Students' Attitude towards Stress Rules

The results portrayed in this table do lend additional confirmation with regards to students' indifference towards mastering English stress rules: 88.88% of the teachers appear to say so. Based on this, the indifference which hampers learning progress should be lessened using all means possible. Part of the problem concerning the under-estimation on the learners' part of the gravity of stress placement errors could stem from their ignorance regarding its adverse impact on:

a) Their intelligibility; and

b) Their heavy foreign-accented speech.

It is probably fairly clear from the above discussion that the tenacity associated with learners' resistance to mastering accentual patterns could be overcome only when these factors are taken care of. We could put forth that independent lessons on the repercussions of these two factors get integrated into the syllabus and perpetual reminders be used.

25) If yes, this can be on account of:

Struggle to expunge their grammatical error ☐

Oblivion to the paramount importance of stress in producing and perceiving spoken English ☐

Others, please mention them ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Struggle to expunge their grammatical errors	07	87.50%
Oblivion to the paramount importance of stress in producing and perceiving spoken English	01	12.50%
Others, please mention them	02	22.22%

Table 63: Teachers' Explanations of Students' Attitudes towards Stress Rules

The results depicted in this table would likely take us closer to comprehend what triggers off students' disinterest towards learning English stress patterns. The overwhelming bulk of the teachers (87.50%) seem to point towards one direction: preoccupation with grammatical correction is the most overarching factor with which such attitudes modes could be associated. Although we have already addressed this issue above, it seems relevant to revisit it here, in a different guise, though. We would, more specifically, try to put some sense into this state of affairs. Learners paying greater care to grammatical accuracy at the expense of phonological one could potentially be ascribed (at least partly) to teacher-induced variables. Most of the teachers' guidelines along with their feedback seem to be related to essentially grammatical as well as semantic accuracy. This could be the principal reason why students fall short of ameliorating their phonological output. It is, indeed, teachers' quotidian classroom practices which could alter this treatment of pronunciation deficiencies. Students would not feel it their duty to improve their

phonological performance unless they were made to realise that this skill is of paramount importance. This could be accomplished via, amongst an array of other things, constant provision of feedback whether it be positive or negative, explicit or implicit till students recognise the parallel value of grammar and pronunciation.

When asked to furnish clarification accounts about why stress assignment is not a priority for learners, only two teachers did so. Their elucidations could be recapitulated as follows:

I. Probably because learning accurate stress rules does not seem to be of much help as they can easily understand each other; and

II. Sheer carelessness and lack of practice.

Of the two, the most sensible one appears to be the second because the first seems only to have raised an issue about which handling this and the foregoing questions were set in the first place. The second teacher, by contrast, touched upon a very vital point: if learners do not into get any communicational breakdowns when talking to one another in the target language using their idiosyncratic pronunciation, then their efforts to learn better pronunciation would be minimal. Does it not stand to reason to argue that intelligibility is not guaranteed if they happen to hold discussions with native speakers or other non-Algerian non-native speakers? Moreover, their perceptive aptitude may be too impoverished to comprehend native speakers because they are not accustomed in their speech to emulate native speakers. Accordingly, teachers should step in to help learners to conceive of this fact in order that they will be better prepared to learn the rules at work since most learners fail at one time or other to understand native speakers even if they know that they have rich and diversified vocabulary repertoires.

26) The brand-new communicative language teaching approach seems to have outshone all the traditional ones. Do you think that this hyper-emphasis on primarily getting one's message out clearly constitutes a barrier between students and a proper mastery of stress rules because most of

the interlocutors involved in the classroom discussions share virtually identical linguistic background?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	06	66.66%
No	03	33.33%
Total	09	100%

Table 64: Teachers' Vantage Point Vis-a-vis the Repercussions of Hyper Emphasis on Communicative Language Teaching

The communicative approach to teaching came into existence when many flaws and shortcomings of some older approaches became more visibly discernible even to the lay's observation. We, however, do not think that this approach is safely applicable everywhere. After all, in the local academic arena where most students are trained to become language professionals, this approach should have substantially confined applications. Its very name is indicative of many of the beliefs behind its inception and application: communication is key. It focuses far more on tips, techniques and tactics whereby one can get one's message by as efficiently and effortlessly as possible. Additionally, this approach lays far more emphasis on fluency at the expense of accuracy. In academic contexts where language mastery as such is the chief objective of the curriculum, this approach may need some reconstructions for it to be successfully applied.

A small majority of teachers (66.66%) do concur with us in ticking off the first alternative. This is, therefore, all the more reason for us to call for the application of this approach with caution.

27) Can you back up your answer, please?

Teacher	Explanation
Teacher 01	What is the point of mastering stress if one's utterance is grammatically ill?
Teacher 02	What is brand-new communicative language teaching approach?
Teacher 03	I rather think that pronunciation is rather important in the communicative approach. Grammar perhaps is less important.
Teacher 04	It may prevent those who have a poor linguistic background to improve their knowledge about the use of stress in English.
Teacher 05	Students are more interested in being intelligible than mastering the perfect pronunciation of English. They feel satisfied when their messages are successfully communicated even if their pronunciation is awful.
Teacher 06	Simply because students feel that they are obliged to deliver a clear message or refrain from giving a vague or mystified one.
Teacher 07	Good communication requires accuracy and clarity; two of the factors 'the stress' appears to guarantee.
Teacher 08	Why not consider that the English language can be spoken in many ways?
Teacher 09	Successful meaning exchanges do keep them away from paying much attention to accuracy especially phonological one.

Table 65: Teachers' Explanations of their Stance towards Communicative Language Teaching

When asked to back their answers up, some of the approach opponents stated that this approach focuses more on accuracy than fluency, which is clearly not wholly accurate or at least not convincingly so as far as its application in the local context is concerned. A second teacher

does give further consolidation to the not-too-sound belief that pronunciation should wait until grammar is well mastered. We should recall what we considered earlier; grammatical accuracy is sufficiently catered for by many modules as most end-of-term examinations and tests are written and without correct grammar, learners would end up scoring low grades. Learners, hence, are already self-prompted to improve their grammar for at least this reason. Pronunciation, on the other hand, is a requisite skill for getting a good mark in the Oral Expression module and other sporadic oral presentations students are required to deliver by teachers of some other modules.

28) Will your students hold successful conversational exchanges with other non-native speakers of English?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	06	66.66%
No	03	33.33%
Total	09	100%

Table 66: Teachers' Estimates of Students Ability to Converse with Non-native Speakers

When asked whether students would hold successful conversational exchanges with other non-native speakers, 66.66% of the teachers answered affirmatively, while 33.33% of them ticked off the 'no' box. Teachers are the nearest people to their students and they should know best about what students are able and not able to do linguistically. Their views about their students being capable of getting their messages across successfully when interacting with other non-native speakers is what Jenkins (2000, 2009) asserts in her English as Lingua Franca Core teaching model. She maintains that learners can communicate successfully with other non-native

speakers even if they fall short of adhering to word stress assignment rules of English, as these do not interfere with successful interactions. Of course, the 'non-core features' as Jenkins (2009, p. 13) chooses to dub them do not only bear on some suprasegmental features, some segmental ones are also an integral part of this peripheral core. This overly extreme claim of hers truly holds some validity because, at least locally where most interlocutors are non-natives, learners do not find it difficult to get themselves understood by their addressees. Nevertheless, this state of affairs should not entail that we ought to cease making efforts and making all the unneeded irritating fuss about our students' ill-formed accentual patterns: by contrast, we should never forget that these students are not merely being taught and trained to become mere talkers. These students will be, amongst other things, teachers of future generations either at an elementary level, secondary level or beyond. The first sign they would radiate about their good training would be through their native-like or near-native-like accents. Now that native speakers' spoken language can be found at the touch of a button, learners (even the youngest ones) can tell if their teacher's accent is native-like or not. If learners start to doubt their teacher's linguistic credentials, then the teachers' success is probably at a veritable risk. In addition to this strong reason, the research conducted by Zoghbor (2010) into the tangible usefulness of the Jenkins' propounded Lingua Franca Phonological Core (LFPC) for boosting the intelligibility and comprehensibility of Arab learners does substantiate our claims. Amongst an array of other inferences, she came to the research-based conclusion that non-mastery of accentual pattern properties of three syllable words and bigger words does indeed interfere with intelligibility of her subjects' interlanguage.

29) Will they run into any awkward exchanges with native speakers?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	08	88.88%
No	01	11.11%
Total	09	100%

Table 67: Teachers' Projection of their Students' Interactional Aptitude

According to this table, 88.88% of the teachers assert that their students would run into awkward exchanges if they happen to speak to native speakers. What is relatively patent from these accounts is that not abiding by the target norms of accent allocation would reduce the learners' comprehension of spoken English. Therefore, one of the four language skills would be enfeebled by insufficient mastery of stress rules. Grounding our recommendations on this starting point, we can put forth that teachers use this (the importance of accentual pattern accuracy for effortless comprehension of natives) to kindle learners' interest in paying more attention to this linguistic component. Needless to say, owing to the mind-boggling expansion of Internet services globally nowadays, learners can get exposed to endless documentaries and instructive lessons online in no time at virtually no cost. Their gains would be minimal if they cannot understand 90% or so of what they watch or listen to**.**

30) Jenkins and her followers subscribe to the idea that stress-placement errors should not give rise to any conversational breakdown in non-native speakers' interactions. Do you support their claim?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Participants	Percentages
Yes	06	66.66%
No	03	33.33%
Total	09	100%

Table 68: Teacher's Rejection/Acceptance of Jenkins' Lingua Franca Core

Here again, the majority of teachers (66.66% of them) seem to concur with Jenkins' assumption which stipulates that stress placement errors would not give rise to communicational failures in non-native speakers' interactions. Although teachers at the local level may have hands-on experience with their learners and they have deduced that erroneous accent allocation does not trigger off communicational awkwardness, Jenkins' proposal does seem to be unduly overtly over-ambitious. We would comment that at any local setting where learners (who come from similar linguistic backgrounds and have been instructed under virtually equivalent teaching conditions) other linguistic constituents would be of comparable weight as is stress and other prosodic features for effortless conversation; even some vocalic and consonantal deviations from the norms would potentially likewise follow suit. This, we would hasten to append, stems essentially from the factor of familiarity. Put in plainer words, the more familiar the interlocutors are with each other, the less likely they are to fail to successfully interact with each other irrespective of the nature and the degree of linguistic departures from the target language norms they exhibit. This line of reasoning would lead us to the following conclusion: we cannot teach decently unless there are a set of standards to follow. Those standards are the very norms, oddities and irksome, cumbersome difficulties of the native language. These are the very ones which have for centuries gained universal appeal and, we would foresee, these are the ones as such which will continue to do so in the centuries to come.

31) Can you please provide some illustrative account?

Teacher	Explanation
Teacher 01	Grammatically, rapport, and backchannels are more important aspects.
Teacher 02	Stress placement causes a lot of troubles and is a basic reason of some communicative breakdowns.
Teacher 03	Stress can change the meaning sometimes.
Teacher 04	The misuse of stress may be a source of ambiguity (because stress carries meaning), it does not prevent the interlocutors from understanding each other and from carrying on the conversation.
Teacher 05	Non-native speakers are expected to produce almost the same type of speech (patterns, accent, stress, etc.) Thus, they can understand each other without so much struggle.
Teacher 06	I cannot remember any scenario where we failed to understand each other and the reason was because the student(s) did not place stress correctly.
Teacher 07	A native speaker understands easily what a NNS is saying or even trying to say. The NNS has a limited capacity with the language.

Table 69: Teachers' Examples in Favour of Jenkins' Lingua France Core

'I cannot remember any scenario where we failed to understand each other and the reason was because the student(s) did not place stress correctly', said one of the teachers. It seems that a satisfactory explanation to this teacher's account is there in the table where another one penned, 'Non-native speakers are expected to produce almost the same type of speech (patterns, accent, stress, etc.). Thus, they can understand each other without so much struggle'. All these accounts are valid, but they should not be taken to mean that the model of Jenkins should be adopted in our

classrooms. If the Lingua Franca Phonological Core propounded by Jenkins were to be adopted, we would better ask for a Lingua Franca Grammatical Core so that we would end up paving the way for the emergence of a remarkably pidginised English to be adopted solely by non-native speakers and this variety should be adhered to universally by all non-native speakers up and down the globe. These are only unrealistic aims and their pursuit would only be a waste of time and resources. It would be far more advisable that we think of how to simplify the learning process and to use sound didactic practices in lieu of trying to shrink the English language to an un-English dwarfish core.

32) When teaching advanced learners, you tend to:

Fairly frequently highlight that near-native mastery of English should be their primary preoccupation ☐

Foreign-accented speech should be the norm because one should preserve his/her identity ☐

Options	Participants	Percentages
Fairly frequently highlight that near-native mastery of English should be their primary preoccupation	07	87.50%
Foreign-accented speech should be the norm because one should preserve his/her identity	01	12.50%
Total	08	100%

Table 70: Native Likeness or Identity Preservation as Underscored by Teachers

This table demonstrates that 87.50% of the teachers highlight to their students the importance of trying to imitate native-speakers' speech. This is, indeed, one of the best practices that have over the years yielded incredibly substantial linguistic fruits at virtually all linguistic strata. We all know that native-likeness is a hugely demanding aptitude to reach, but encouraging

learners via this means could help keep learning going. Indeed, it is indubitably through setting up gradually tougher objectives that learning can be better guaranteed to keep steadily improving. If only small objectives are set, learning is bound to stop the minute these objectives are accomplished. On the other hand, if teachers encourage learners to make sure that they maintain their identity, then their linguistic aptitude may become unbearably foreign. So, this latter practice should be avoided because it will only serve as an element of deterrence to learning growth and to effort-making.

33) Does students' reluctance to pick up an error-free accent emanate from the fact that when it comes to pronunciation, the ill-formed pronunciations are looked upon as sheer abnormalities which do not have any adverse impact on the resultant output?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Participants	Percentages
Yes	05	55.55%
No	04	44.44%
Total	09	100%

Table 71: Teachers' Views about Pronunciation Errors Correction

If errors of pronunciations are treated as errors precisely the same way as grammatical ones, learners will care more fervently and diligently about their avoidance. It strikes us that such errors are merely treated as sheer deviancies from the norms that do not have the same repercussions as morpho-syntactical and lexical ones. The results portrayed in this table seem to lend support to this as 55.55% of the teachers attested that their learners do not treat grammar and pronunciation errors similarly. Of course, if a good proportion of teacher-offered feedback is all about grammatical errors and most remedial practices address the differing aspects of

grammatical competence, then learners will perforce be lead to fallaciously believe that pronunciation is there only to impart an aesthetic dimension to their output. We are not deriving these accounts from nowhere; some teachers when answering some of the above questions seemed to put words into our arguments.

34) Do you underscore the importance of stress in the maintenance of their speech melody?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	04	44.44%
No	05	55.55%
Total	09	100%

Table 72: Importance of Stress for Speech Melody According to Teachers

Stress is one of the strongest factors whereby native speakers maintain their speech melodies. This is the reason why their utterances and words are very musical. This question was, then, set to find out whether teachers encourage their learners to comply with accentual pattern properties because they would help them generate native-like melodic language output. The results shown in this table exhibit that slightly over half of the teachers, (55.55%), do not do so. It is unquestionably common knowledge amongst us all linguists and practising teachers that eclecticism is such an immensely crucial, indispensably necessary component in any rewarding teaching approach. This is partly because learners come into the classroom with differing aims and needs and catering for the needs of these learners would not be readily fulfilled unless the teachers vary their prompting, instructional devices and draw upon as many strategies and moves as the individual classroom overall atmospheres call for. Probably what some of our learners like most about spoken English is the rhythm with which its words and utterances are delivered by the

natives. So, this category of learners would be readier and more enthusiastic to master English stress structures once this fact is professionally brought to their attention.

35) Would you please explain your answer?

Teacher	Explanation
Teacher 01	Stress is very important to get your (the learner's) messages across. Learners who don't master the English stress patterns always face difficulties in being understood.
Teacher 02	The more students comply with the use of stress in their speech, the more melodic it is.
Teacher 03	The appropriate use of stress (i.e. at regular intervals) gives the right rhythm to the utterance. Thus the right 'melody' or intonation.
Teacher 04	See question 25.
Teacher 05	Stress is the backbone of all speech melodies.
Teacher 06	Whatever the mistake in stress production is, stress remains very important and has to be dealt with fairly and judiciously.
Teacher 07	It is important, but it needs years to be perfected.
Teacher 08	There are so many things the oral class requires us to do and I do not think this aspect could get any time for it to be introduced.
Teacher 09	Using proper stress is paramount in obtaining fluency and getting one's message across appropriately.

Table 73: Teachers' Explanations of the Importance of Accurate Stress Placement for Melody Maintenance

All these explanatory notes are truly valuable and they do reflect the teachers' acute awareness of the crucial importance of empowering the learners to come to full grips with the English accentual norm and exceptions. Yielding to the belief, sounded by one teacher in this table, that there is not enough time to attend to stress errors is wholly unadvisable.

36) Are students well-prompted to know and respect stress rules because these rules help them produce vowels accurately?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Options	Teachers	Percentages
Yes	06	75%
No	02	25%
Total	08	100%

Table 74: Teachers' Gauges of Student-directed Prompts for Stress Learning

Vowels may have different realisations depending on their phonological environments. One of the most determining factors in such environments pertains to the presence or absence of stress. It follows immediately from this that for a native-like articulation of vowels, learners need to possess a good command of English stress properties. It was for issues around this that this question was set. The data represented in this table show that teachers do encourage their learners to master English stress for the aforesaid end. Indeed, learners need to be made to perceive the inextricable bond holding between the various phonological units in order that they will not wrongly spend more time learning one phonological aspect at the expense of another.

37) Your professional expertise is indubitably capable of filling up some residual slots in this questionnaire of ours thereby rendering it more comprehensive. We have, accordingly, allocated

the following dotted lines to make filling them out possible. If you please, feel free to append all what you gauge is prone to enrich the questionnaire and solidify the findings of our research.

Teacher	Recommendation
Teacher 01	Yes, there is a problem of clarity very often it was rather ambiguous.
Teacher 02	Teaching English stress is very important. Stress should be given more much priority. Attention should be devoted to suprasegmental features of English pronunciation.
Teacher 03	The bulk of teachers, like their student seem to overlook the importance of stress in the production of fluent and correct speech. They have a tendency to focus on grammar and vocabulary which are deemed a high priority. One can't deny that the teaching of stress is intricate, don't expect blood from stone.
Teacher 04	The trouble with all these mind-spluttering about stress vowels, spelling and all the aspects of language are thrawled by the compensatory system ad do-not-want the eliminatory mark!! For God's sake, why would expect a (careless) student to care about stress or anything else when such a student knows that with least effort s/he can move from one year to another and with a suffocating easiness.
Teacher 05	I have to say that I disagree with the way the questions and statements are phrased. Scientific language is a simple one. Therefore, one should avoid terms which have a literary connotation in such a setting.
Teacher 06	Teaching the details of the various aspects of pronunciation should be done in the phonetics class. We have too many elements in the oral expression class which makes it very difficult to look at the different details of pronunciation.

Teacher	Recommendation
	Also, students do not care much about native-like pronunciation because it is very hard to imitate and learn.

Table 75: Teacher-offered Recommendations for the Ultimate Enrichment of the Questionnaire Findings

This questionnaire page-space was devoted entirely to allowing the contributing teachers some further room to voice ideas or contentions, observations and recommendations that the above questions did not make it possible for them to do. Two teachers have rather voiced complaints regarding the ambiguity they experienced when trying to understand some of the questions. They called for usage of easier ways of question formatting. In fact, we have tried our level best to make all the questions readily understandable for them all. After all, they are teachers and this should not constitute an area of complaints for them.

Two other teachers merely reiterated some key issues of pertinence to the teaching of stress whose discussions have had ample analysis in the foregoing sections. Another teacher indeed raised an issue of pivotal value. S/he said that, although not sufficiently overtly, one of the most tenable error-causing factors that defies all measures could be the non-existence of the 'eliminatory mark'. For him/her, this could be the chief cause of their overt reluctance to improve their performance. S/he maintained that as long as success is nearly guaranteed due to the absence of this endangering mark, most students would not care much about enhancing their performance and fulfilling their potential linguistically. Of course, we would concur with this view and lend him/her our undivided support. However, we would hasten to add that it is not for us teachers to do so. What is within our reach is making sure learning takes place in a nourishingly healthy atmosphere where novel ways of teaching should be the driving force.

4.4 Summary of Findings

This questionnaire has indeed, precisely as foreseen right at the outset of this research enterprise, yielded considerably multi-dimensional data which would be of immediate service to the ultimate outcome of our study. These contributions are summed up in the forthcoming five points:

Teachers do attest that they have not noticed any upgraded growth in their learners' knowledge and actual performance as regards English accentual patterns. This would be taken to denote that length of exposure alone is not guaranteed to eradicate pronunciation errors if no teacher intervention is put in place. It could, by the same token, entail that syllabi, at least of the Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension module, had not attended sufficiently enough to empowering the learners to remedy their pronunciation errors or else their performance would have gone through positive transitions and not through incessant phases of stagnation. Moreover, learners have not been autonomous enough to take independent charges of their own learning and this too could be potentially put down to their overreliance on their teachers and reluctance to read and explore for themselves what might work best for them.

One of the variables to which the emergence of some errors in the learners' interlanguage prosody could be ascribable is teachers' own classroom practices. A good proportion of the participating teachers attest that they seldom provide direct feedback to their students when they fall short of complying with the stress rules. Part of the reason why this scenario takes place is that teachers cannot fit this practice in: many of them argue that offering constant direct feedback cannot be a straightforward accomplishment since learners are still grappling with purifying their grammatical output. So, correction of pronunciation errors, peculiarly those to do with stress allocation, will have to be discarded. It is undeniably hard to conceive of why exactly grammatical errors should take precedence over pronunciation errors. Why should not they be

viewed as equivalent ones both deserving to get equal amounts of class time? Why should not grammatical errors be the ones that get backburnered? We have repeatedly stated above that the Oral Expression class should cater more to students' phonological growth than to morpho-syntactical one. After all, most modules examinations and research papers and tests and many other related elements are written; students know how hugely important grammar is for coherent, cohesive and intelligible writing. They will try against their will to expunge grammatical errors from their output. However, accurate pronunciation seems only to be assessed by Oral Expression teachers. Of course, some would try to refute this argument of ours by reminding us about the English Phonetics and Phonology module. Our reactions would be: knowledge of this module is only examinable twice a year, but the Oral Expression teacher may meet their students up to three times a week. On top of that, students will need to get reassurance that their pronunciation is on the right track, so to speak. This could only be constantly done by their Oral Expression teacher.

This questionnaire has, by the same token, unearthed for us that contrastive analysis and indeed any other learning theories findings have not been used as pedagogical tools whereby the tension and strain associated with learning pronunciation would be lessened. It is, therefore, worth recalling at this final juncture of the analysis that one should not underestimate the likely robust contributions research into what CA may have to offer on how and what to teach to our learners. Moreover, we are not tempting teachers to bring reformulations into the syllabus because that is not for them to do. What we are trying to underscore here is that teachers would better read more about contrastive analysis and other related theories that have been endeavouring to make more sense of learning ebbs and flows. Once they have read extensively on this area, more fertile, research-grounded conceptualisations about how to better teach would gradually take shape and would ultimately sip into their quotidian practices.

This questionnaire has, likewise, unravelled that teachers do not place enough confidence in the significant role phonetics books and pronunciation-teaching manuals could play for boosting students' accentual pattern command. On the face of it, such resources may appear to contain only rules about stress placement, which is just not the whole truth. These references do have a far wealthier content. They are indeed the most relevant references to seek guidance from because they were put together by authorities whose chief area of expertise is to construct more lucid ideas about pronunciation acquisition and instruction. Therefore, these books will offer guidance on how teachers should teach, how to grade their priorities and a whole host of other elements. To be it in a comprehensive nutshell, if teachers are not certain about the fruitfulness of these books, then they would be less inclined to spur their learners to use them.

As regards the most conspicuous error-causing factors, teachers seem to have laid special emphasis on a number of them. Chief amongst them is learners' carelessness towards improving their command. The second factor pertains to learners' preoccupation with grammatical accuracy and semantic correctness. Last, but by no means least, lack of practice does also lead to lack of error-free performance. These factors could, however, be confronted once more adequate learning practices are implemented. We would assume that consistently furnishing learners with corrective feedback, implicit and explicit, could be one of these sound practices to opt for. Another one would be tailoring independent lessons, which specifically target the would-be professional environments where learners will function if they go for becoming language teachers. Dwelling on the phonetics content of the textbooks used at the secondary education level which are adopted by the ministry of education together with the support document accompanying these books would be concrete awareness-raising tools. Indeed Algerian educationalists when devising the new textbooks for the new education reform that was implemented in 2005 catered more overtly for learners' pronunciation needs.

Conclusion

To round off, the present research work was embarked upon not only to amass sufficient amounts of data regarding the students' accentual pattern errors and afterwards striving to put errors into clear-cut classes; one of the other overriding tenets of this research enterprise has been to try and come up with some legitimate explanations to the hampering variables lying underneath the materialisation of the prosodic deviations under scrutiny *per se*. This is the basic reason why this questionnaire got into the methodological procedure of the current study. As is salient throughout the above content, this questionnaire has proven its suitability to this study as it made it abundantly possible for us to get to some of the roots of why accentual patterns are fraught with departures from the target norms and what could be done for reducing at least minimally the linguistic burden inherent in the acquisition of English stress patterns. The findings this questionnaire has generated have helped us confirm, at least partially, the soundness of our assumptions as regards what better alternatives there could be to some of the not well-devised teaching practices adopted locally

CHAPTER 5: Analysis of Students' Accentual Patterns

CHAPTER 5: Analysis of Students' Accentual Patterns

Introduction

Failure to be sufficiently well-attuned with the accurate realisations of the various facets of the English stress pattern placement is indeed only the beginning of other facets of failures, namely potential, cumbersome communicational exchanges or, worse still, total breakdown. These two couple with yet another linguistic repercussion: a patent projection of a foreign accent. False recognition of entire lexical items do abound in the literature. Benrabah (1997, p. 161) reports that the word *normally* was perceived as *no money* by English listeners due to the placement on the part of an Indian speaker of stress on the second syllable rather than the first one. The word *absent*, too, was wrongly interpreted as *upset* owing to the assignment of stress to the initial syllable rather than the second. These instances are merely scratching the surface of an indeed profounder issue. This is, by implication, more than a driving incentive for more and more investigatory studies into the erroneous deployment of stress, its precise nature, what lies behind its materialisation and what should be done to ease up the learners' burden.

So far in our investigation, we have been strenuously paving the way and painstakingly carefully procuring as much insight, inspiration and guidance as we possibly could for making sure that we can eventually arrive at a fuller, better grounded assimilation of why Algerian learners' interlanguage prosody is so deviant and why accentual pattern errors abound. The preceding two chapters wherein we analysed and discussed the array of findings gleaned out of both the students' and teachers' questionnaires would empower us to delve more safely and confidently into analysing the students' recorded oral performance. Of course, all these research tools do complement and solidify each other in an intricate number ways. Put more lucidly, the research enterprise as a whole has set out to answer a number of questions which cannot be readily satisfactorily accounted for by merely relying exclusively on analyses of the students' oral

performance. After all, as is reported on in the first theoretical chapter, a wide range of hampering variables do conspire to give rise to deviancies from the target norms, like cross-linguistic influence, learning strategies, classroom practices, students' own beliefs and conceptions of what success and failure are, syllabus content and syllabus aims, assessment scales, teachers' persuasions and actual practices and a host of many others.

The present chapter will, hence, aim at procuring answers to the following questions:

i. What hallmarks Algerian advanced learners' stress assignment aptitude?
ii. Is cross-linguistic influence the variable number one behind the materialisation of stress assignment errors?
iii. Is failure to abide by the stress norms a minimal issue or does it transcend into other dimensions of the learners' interlanguage phonology as a whole?
iv. Do learners have at their disposal correct pronunciations of English monophthongs and diphthongs?
v. If not, would it be accurate to foresee a better command of stress allocation if they have a fairly well-established mastery of vowels, pure and gliding?
vi. What could be done to minimise the horizon of errors and double the learners' chances for gaining a speedier, more error-free command of English stress placement?

5.1 Subjects and Procedure

Advanced learners of English were selected to take part in this experiment. More specifically, we targeted students reading for an MA degree in English at the Department of Letters and English Language, Constantine University 1. To ensure homogeneity of the subject pool, however, we made certain that only those students reading for a master's degree in Applied Linguistics were involved in the investigation. After all, the two other areas of specialisation, namely Language Sciences as well as American/British Civilisation and Literature, do employ

different genres of syllabuses. To be more precise, amongst the modules which the curriculums of the other specialties do not teach is Phonetics and Phonology. Unavailability of this module alone would render the candidacy of students of these branches a sheer impossibility. At the end of the day, the research enterprise aims, amongst a host of other things, to generate some research-rooted insights into what may serve to enrich, at the very least minimally and marginally, some areas in the syllabus of this module not for the MA programme alone but for the BA one, too.

The test was deliberately carried out when the subjects were conducting their MA research. This was the case because we sought to work out whether advanced learners' command of English stress is remarkably different from that of less advanced learners. This would enable us to furnish refuting arguments or lend supportive and confirmatory accounts to those theorists who purport that cross-linguistic influence is manifestly robust solely at the onset of learning, but as learners' experience expands, their reliance on mother tongue constraints would go gradually down. A second reason why we went for this population as such burns own to the fact that we wanted to figure out their readiness level vis-a-vis facing up to the challenges that lie ahead of them. We strove, more specifically, to gauge whether they are phonologically prepared and able to cope with teaching a middle school or a secondary school class. Right at this juncture it is worth reminding ourselves of the importance attributed to pronunciation instruction by textbook designers of the new generation of books. Phonological failure would, therefore, potentially be more of a cumbersome handicap when these students step into the classroom (when they become teachers themselves) and have a face-to-face encounter with the phonemes of English and worse, its stress.

The time-span during which the experiment was undertaken was highly critical for the informants as they were doing their MA research. This, accordingly, made the task of test

administration unavoidably go out of what we had planned earlier. Right at the outset, we wanted to make sure that all the subjects got recorded in the same language laboratory at the university so as to make certain that not even the smallest amount of noise would mingle with their voices. Due to the unavailability of the adequate number of language labs, as most of them were used by teachers for delivering their lessons, we were compelled to switch to administering the diagnostic test at different places, some of which were ordinary classrooms which made it all the more hard for us that we had to choose the farthest classes from noise. Moreover, all of our recordings were carried out when the university was relatively quiet.

After the administration of the test, all the 51 subjects were allowed the amount of time they saw fit to read the items the test encompasses and no recording was initiated until the subject declared themselves well and truly ready to get started. Rushing the participants to read was deemed counterproductive as going hastily about the task would make the ultimate recordings fraught with hesitation noises and other verbal productions, which would utterly defeat the purpose; it would interfere with an otherwise safer, more representative transcription. Worse still, without prior familiarity with the items, informants could have ended up failing to decipher the phonotactic and/or graphological constitution of some new items; thereby they would have fallen short of taking resort to their learning strategies like generalisation, for instance.

5.2 Diagnostic Test Stimuli

The test consisted of 184 real English words. These words did not fall into the same category, though. They were grouped into 29 different categories following a set of parameters thus:

a. The number of syllables each word contains;

b. The grammatical category to which the word belongs;

c. The accentual pattern of the word; and

d. The morphological constitution of the word.

As is evident from the token word selection parameters, we varied the structures of the words the production stimulus contains. Each structure has a number of tokens. There are no fewer than two tokens per structure, though. The rationale behind variability in the structure of words used is manifold:

i. Firstly, we sought to see whether students' command of English stress is better when producing shorter words than when producing longer ones;

ii. Secondly, as the test comprises sets of words which comply in their stress patterning with what phonetics and pronunciation teaching manuals rules/guidelines stipulate, whilst other sets exhibit irregularity and departures from these rules, we wanted to work out which sets pose more hurdles to the students;

iii. Thirdly, the test encompasses quite a number of mono-morphemic and their affix counterparts. As English suffixes do not behave the same way towards stress structures of words to which they are appended, we were keen to unearth to what extent learners are aware of this suffixal trait; and

iv. Additionally, prefixes, the overwhelming bulk of them, do get their independent discussion in the stress-related literature for they have their idiosyncratic shade of impact, as it were, on English stress placement. We wanted, accordingly, to get to the bottom of the students' internalised knowledge regarding this particular state of affairs.

It is to be noted that under this rubric we have only hinted at some big issues and most prominent factors and rationale that contributed in the ultimate shaping of the test stimulus content. As the discussion of the results unfolds, however, more particulars of the content together with their underlying aim will be dealt with more conspicuously.

5.3 Analyses and Discussions of the Diagnostic Test Data

It should be remembered right at the outset of this analysis that the study reported on under this chapter is essentially an error-analysis enterprise. It would not be appropriate herein to go back to laying down the requisite theoretical ground about this area of enquiry. This is fundamentally because the various traits, hallmarks, aims and so forth of such genres of investigations is dealt with in the first chapter of the thesis. What is noteworthy, nonetheless, is that transition from one procedural framework into another (from recognition into description into categorisation and ultimately into explanation) would not be as salient and as clear-cut as the literature review would tell. This is due to two major reasons:

a) Information exposition in that review, as is typical of most reviews, aims to make arguments as explicitly stated as possible in such a way that readers will readily get ample, unobscured grasp on the theoretical content per se; and

b) Approaching the analyses from that perspective would make data presentation rather unconventionally clumsy and hard to straightforwardly assimilate.

5.3.1 Students' Idiosyncratic Performance in Producing Simple Di-Syllabic Words

5.3.1.1 First-syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Di-syllabic Verbs

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Enter	/ˈentə/	/ˈentə/	06	11.76%
		/entər/	18	35.29%
		/ɪntər/	27	52.94%
Envy	/ˈenvi/	/ˈenvi/	14	27.45%
		/ɪnvi/	18	35.29%
		/ɪnˈvai/	19	37.25%
Open	/ˈəʊpən/	/ˈəʊpən/	44	86.27%
		/ˈɒpən/	07	13.72%
Worship	/ˈwɜːʃɪp/	/ˈwɜːʃɪp/	10	19.60%
		/ˈwɜːrʃɪp/	17	33.33%
		/wɒrʃɪp/	24	47.05%
Whisper	/ˈwɪspə/	/ˈwɪspər/	16	31.37%
		/ˈwaispər/	24	47.05%
		/wɪsˈpɜː/	11	21.56%

Table 76: Production of First Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Di-syllabic Verbs

The first type of words the test contains is, as is shown in this table, non-affix two-syllable verbs. There are five different tokens of such a structure and they are all stressed on the last syllable. Of these stressed syllables, three are open (have no coda), while two are closed. The testees productions are, upon the whole, erroneous and most of their errors fall into two categories: errors of mis-selection (like /ɪnˈvai/ and /wɪsˈpɜː/) and complete unstressing of any of

the two syllables like (/ɪnvi/and /wɒrʃɪp/). Another error pertains to substituting the schwa vowel with the long, half-close, central, unrounded vowel /ɜː/. What seems to have been behind the materialisation of this error is an intralingual variable. The word *infer* which receives stress on the final syllable whose peak is /ɜː/ could well have been the one which has triggered off this error. What is intriguing about their error, however, is that the word *infer* as such is very uncommon, while the peak of the final (second) of most of the common words which end in 'er' is arguably the schwa vowel. It is fair to argue, by implication, that this error is as much an intralingual whose inducer is wrong application of a highly scarce pattern as it is an error of total reliance on spelling-pronunciations coupled with arbitrary allocation of stress.

Moreover, what is patent in the table is that errors of vowel substitution are also many and varied. Most of these errors are most likely of an intralingual nature stemming essentially from the lack of balance between English graphemes and phonemes. Another equally plausible interpretation that can be put into this state of affairs is that these errors are equally of an interlingual nature. Because Arabic and, to a less extent, French exhibit high rates of grapheme-phoneme correspondence, this habit has been fallaciously carried over onto English.

5.3.1.2 Last Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Di-syllabic Verbs

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Produce	/prəˈdjuːs/	/prəˈdjuːs/	11	21.56%
		/ˈprəəʊdjuːs/	08	15.68%
		/prɒˈdjuːs/	21	41.17%
		/prɒdjʊs/	11	21.56%
Maintain	/meɪnˈteɪn/	/meɪnˈteɪn/	13	25.49%
		/ˈmeɪnteɪn/	24	47.05%
		/mənˈteɪn/	11	21.56%
		/menteɪn/	13	25.49%
Occur	/əˈkɜː/	/əˈkɜː/	14	27.45%
		/ˈʌkə/	20	39.21%
		/əˈkjuːr/	12	23.52%
		/ˈʌkər/	07	13.72%
Obtain	/əbˈteɪn/	/əbˈteɪn/	09	17.64%
		/ˈɒbteɪn/	42	82.35%
Omit	/əˈmɪt/	/əˈmɪt/	11	21.56%
		/ˈɒmɪt/	40	78.43%
Persuade	/pəˈsweɪd/	/pəˈsweɪd/	13	25.49%
		/ˈp ɜːrsweɪd/	15	29.41%
		/ˈpɜːsweɪd/	23	45.09%
Surprise	/səˈpraɪz/	/səˈpraɪz/	06	11.76%
		/syrpraɪz/	33	64.70%

		/syrpraɪz/	12	23.53%
Dragoon	/drəˈguːn/	/drəˈguːn/	05	43.13%
		/dragɑ̃/	22	23.53%
		/ˈdrægu:n/	12	23.53%
		/ˈdrægən/	12	09.80%
Obey	/əˈbeɪ/	/əˈbeɪ/	07	13.72%
		/ˈɒbeɪ/	44	86.27%
Assault	/əˈsɔːlt/	/əˈsɔːlt/	11	21.56%
		/ˈæsɔːlt/	21	41.17%
		/ˈæsɒlt/	18	35.29%
Protect	/prəˈtekt/	/prəˈtekt/	12	23.53%
		/prɒˈtekt/	12	23.53%
		/ˈprɒtəkt/	27	52.94%

Table 77: Production of Last Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Di-syllabic Verbs

The second structure present in the test pertains to two-syllable non-affix verbs, but, unlike the first structure, members of this second one are stressed on the second syllable. There are eleven tokens of which only two-stressed syllables are open. Precisely like the above structure, their errors are of two types: errors of wrong selection and errors of total unstressing. When producing the word *produce*, for example, some of the students gave the first syllable undue salience by substituting the schwa vowel with the stronger open back rounded short vowel /ɒ/. The same holds true for *omit*, *obey*, *obtain* and *occur*. These words were intentionally selected for the big rate of frequency of occurrence that each of them enjoys both in the native speaker' use and in the students' and teachers' parlance as well. Does not the deviant

pronunciation of these words open our pseudo-awake pedagogic eyes to the fact that exposure alone may not be guaranteed to enable the learners to pick up error-free pronunciations? Many teachers when filling out the questionnaire kept repeatedly highlighting the pivotal importance of exposure and practice for fostering good pronunciation habits. If exposure and practise have been of much help, these errors would not have possibly maintained this tenacity for so long. The least that could be said about these errors is that they are doubtless very hard to expunge; the worst and the nearest to the truth would be that they have secured long-term fossilisation for themselves. So, it seems that it is feedback which should have stepped in and set these errors right. Learners could not invariably spot errors of their own accord; teachers should be out there for them: perceptual linguistic vigilance does help and repeated feedback could make sure errors would no longer surface.

5.3.1.3 Second Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Di-syllabic Adjectives

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Abrupt	/əˈbrʌpt/	/əˈbrʌpt/	08	15.68%
		/ʌˈbrʌpt/	14	27.45%
		/ʌbrʌpt/	29	56.86%
Sublime	/səˈblaɪm/	/səˈblaɪm/	04	07.84%
		/ˈsʌblaɪm/	25	49.01%
		/sʌblɪm/	22	43.13%
Alone	/əˈləʊn/	/əˈləʊn	51	100%
Aloof	/əˈluːf/	/əˈluːf/	13	25.49%
		/əˈlʊf/	20	39.21%
		/ælʊf/	18	35.29%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Polite	/pəˈlaɪt/	/pəˈlaɪt/	16	31.37%
		/pɒlaɪt/	35	68.62%
Asleep	/əˈsliːp/	/əˈsliːp/	15	29.41%
		/əˈslɪp/	05	09.80%
		/æslɪp/	31	60.78%
Complete	/kəmˈpliːt/	/kəmˈpliːt/	12	23.52%
		/ˈkɒmplɪt/	19	37.25%
		/ˈkɒmpliːt/	29	39.21%
Mature	/məˈtʃʊə/	/məˈtʃʊə/	08	15.68%
		/ˈmeɪtə/	11	21.56%
		/mætjuːr/	18	35.29%
		/mætər/	07	13.72%
		/ˈmeɪtʃər/	07	13.72%

Table 78: Production of Second Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Di-syllabic Adjectives

The third type of words comprises non-affix two-syllable adjectives stressed on the second syllable. This stimulus contains eight tokens of the targeted structure, of which only one token has an open stressed syllable, viz. /məˈtʃʊə/. The most common two categories of errors are also errors of mis-selection (like /ˈsʌblaɪm/ and /ˈmeɪtə/) and errors of unstressing (like /ʌbrʌpt/ and /ælʊf/). This stimulus, it should be noted, contains more frequently-encountered words (*polite, asleep, complete* and *alone*) than less frequently-encountered ones (*aloof, sublime* and *mature*). Of all these words, only *alone* was pronounced accurately by all the participating students. We can, following these results, deduce that students' heavily rely on English spelling

for generating sounds and sound sequences paying little or no heed to the all-too-notorious fact regarding lack of concurrence between English spelling and pronunciation. Here again, taking recourse to the findings of both the teachers' and students' questionnaires would be empowering. Both teachers and students attested to the paucity of feedback in the oral expression classroom. If the classroom had done its job of reminding the students' linguistic memory about the inherent lack of agreement between English letters and sounds, their errors would have been comparatively fewer. It seems to be transparently clear here again that familiarity with the input does not perforce entail fewer departures from the norm. We can readily observe that students made comparable errors both when producing more familiar input and less familiar one.

5.3.1.4 First Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Di-syllabic Adjectives

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Sudden	/ˈsʌdn/	/ˈsʌdn/	32	62.74%
		/ˈsʌdən/	19	37.25%
Clever	/ˈklevə/	/ˈklevə/	51	100%
Rigid	/ˈrɪdʒɪd/	/ˈrɪdʒɪd/	10	19.60%
		/rɪʒɪd/	21	41.17%
		/ˈrɪdʒi:d/	11	21.56%
		/ˈrɪʒi:d/	09	17.64%

Table 79: Production of First Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Di-syllabic Adjectives

This structure concerns non-affix two-syllable adjectives stressed on the first element. What is common to the three token words representing this structure is that the stressed syllables contain a short vowel. Moreover, two of the tokens (*sudden* and *clever*) are highly common while the third token is comparatively far less so. All the participants have got the pronunciation of

clever right. The element of familiarity seems to have paid off this time. This could be due to the not-so-subtle grapho-phonemic constitution of the word itself. For the word *sudden*, however, many participants seemed to have generated a non-target-like final syllable by substituting the syllabic [n] with the schwa vowel. This, however, did not interfere so much with the accentual pattern of the word: owing to the articulatory vocalic weakness of the schwa, its insertion did not impart any perceptible salience to the last syllable. The last word *rigid*, however, seems to have posed some pronunciation challenges to the participants. A good proportion of them fell into the error of complete unstressing; they gave equal salience to both the first and the final syllable by producing as their peaks the short, close, front, unrounded /ɪ/, /rɪʒɪd/. They, likewise, erroneously substituted the voiced palato-alveolar affricate /dʒ/ with its fricative counterpart /ʒ/. This error of substitution is by no means triggered off by the fuzziness of the English spelling-pronunciation correspondences; it is essentially due to ignorance of some rule-governed grapho-phonemic matches. The letter 'g' cannot be pronounced /ʒ/. At least this holds true as far as the overwhelming bulk of frequently-used English words are concerned: there might exist some foreign words or alternatively scientific jargon the pronunciation of which runs counter to this generalisation, though. Even so, these would be treated as highly scarce instances.

5.3.1.5 First Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic and Bi-morphemic Di-syllabic Nouns

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Women	/ˈwɪmɪn/	/ˈwɪmɪn/	08	15.68%
		/ˈwʊmən/	43	84.31%
Honey	/ˈhʌni/	/ˈhʌni/	10	19.60%
		/ˈhɒni/	41	80.39%
Cabbage	/ˈkæbɪdʒ/	/ˈkæbɪdʒ/	14	27.45%

		/ˈkæbədʒ/	12	23.52%
		/kæbɪʒ/	11	21.56%
		/ˈkæbəʒ/	09	17.64%
Cotton	/ˈkɒtn/	/ˈkɒtn/	10	19.60%
		/ˈkɒtən/	23	45.09%
		/ˈkɔːtən/	09	17.64%
		/ˈkʌtən/	09	17.64%
Bottle	/bɒtl/	/ˈbɒtl/	17	33.33%
		/ˈbɔːtəl/	11	21.56%
		/ˈbɒtəl/	11	21.56%
		/ˈbʌtəl/	12	23.52%
Penny	/ˈpeni/	/ˈpeni/	18	35.29%
		/ˈpɪni/	22	43.13%
		/bɪni/	11	21.56%
Forty	/ˈfɔːti/	/ˈfɔːti/	17	33.33%
		/ˈfɔːrti/	34	66.66%
Actor	/ˈæktə/	/ˈæktə/	19	37.25%
		/ˈæktər/	32	62.74%
Teacher	/ˈtiːtʃə/	/ˈtiːtʃə/	22	43.13%
		/ˈtiːtʃər/	29	56.86%

Table 80: Production of First Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Di-syllabic Nouns

This table contains the production of nine tokens of a new structure. This structure relates to non-affix/affix two-syllable nouns having first-syllable stress. In fact, a big proportion of English two-syllable nouns do follow this accentual pattern. The nuclei of the stressed syllables vary; two contain long vowels (*forty* and *teacher*), whereas all the remaining others contain short vowels. We notice that errors of unstressing do figure here, too, namely /bɪni/, /kæbædʒ/ and /kæbɪʒ/. Falling short of imparting prominence to any of the two syllables could be ascribed to hyper-reliance on spelling for sound generation as well as probable ignorance of an intrinsic defining property of English stress placement i.e. all two-syllabic words and longer ones must be stressed on one of their syllables. The students also made another error: error of substitution. They used the schwa vowel instead of the syllabic [l] when producing the second syllable of *bottle* (like /ˈbɒtəl/). This substitution did not mangle the accentual pattern of the word, though. This is essentially due to the fact that both the schwa vowel and the syllabic [l] never occupy peaks of stressable syllables. The word *women* was, likewise, mispronounced /ˈwʊmən/. The overwhelming bulk of the participating students pronounced the word as if it were the singular form *woman*.

5.3.1.6 Second Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic and Bi-morphemic Di-syllabic Nouns

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Canoe	/kəˈnuː/	/kəˈnuː/	09	17.64%
		/ˈkɒnʊ/	22	43.13%
		/ˈkænəʊ/	13	25.49%
		/ˈkænuː/	07	13.72%
Ado	/əˈduː/	/əˈduː/	10	19.60%
		/ˈædəʊ/	16	31.37%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
		/eɪdəʊ/	13	25.49%
		/əˈdəʊ/	12	23.52%
Machine	/məˈʃiːn/	/məˈʃiːn/	18	35.29%
		/mæʃɪn/	33	64.70%
Result	/rɪˈzʌlt/	/rɪˈzʌlt/	15	29.41%
		/rɪzɒlt/	36	70.58%
Festoon	/feˈstuːn/	/feˈstuːn/	05	09.80%
		/fæstuːn/	34	66.66%
		/ˈfæstən/	11	21.56%
Balloon	/bəˈluːn/	/bəˈluːn/	10	19.60%
		/bæluːn/	41	80.39%
Cartoon	/kɑːˈtuːn/	/kɑːˈtuːn/	13	25.49%
		/kɑːrtuːn/	38	74.50%
Disease	/dɪˈziːz/	/dɪˈziːz/	20	39.21%
		/dɪzɪs/	13	25.49%
		/dəˈses/	08	15.68%
		/dɪzɪz/	10	19.60%
Tonight	/təˈnaɪt/	/təˈnaɪt/	51	100%

Table 81: Production of Second Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Di-syllabic Nouns

Embodied in this table are the pronunciations on the part of the students of nine tokens of another structure, namely non-affix/affix two-syllable nouns stressed on the second element. The

tokens, however, do fall into two distinct categories: tokens of familiar words (*machine*, *result*, *balloon*, *cartoon*, *disease* and *tonight*) and comparatively less familiar words (*canoe*, *ado* and *festoon*). Two divergent types of errors crop up here too: errors of mis-selection (like /ˈkænəʊ/, /ˈædəʊ/ and /ˈfæstən/) and errors of complete unstressing (like /eɪdəʊ/, /mæʃɪn/ and /dɪzɪz/). If we were to ponder over the plausible causes lying behind the materialisation of the former genre of errors, the most problem explanation would be that some students have a tendency to stress the leftmost syllable irrespective of its phonological make-up. The second genre of errors, however, would mainly be ascribed to ignorance of the existence of a hugely determining maxim: all two-syllable words (verbs nouns and adjectives and even propositions and adverbials) must be stressed on one of their syllables. It would be shrewd of us if we were to go back to the students' answers to some of the questions asked in the questionnaire to do with some hallmarks of English stress. Phrased differently, the students demonstrated drastic unawareness even of the various correlates of stressed syllables as such. It is, accordingly, only normal to get such results where students impart comparable prominence to the two syllables while they were supposed to make one stand out if they are not equipped with the requisite knowledge regarding what makes a stressed syllable as such in the first place.

5.3.2 Students' Idiosyncratic Performance in Producing Simple/Complex Tri-Syllabic Words

5.3.2.1 Penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Verbs

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Resemble	/rɪˈzembəl/	/rɪˈzembəl/	10	19.60%
		/ˈrɪzembəl/	13	25.49%
		/ˈrɪzæmbəl/	28	54.90%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Surrender	/səˈrendə/	/səˈrendə/	23	45.09%
		/syrendər/	28	54.90%
Extinguish	/ɪkˈstɪŋgwɪʃ/	/ɪkˈstɪŋgwɪʃ/	09	17.64%
		/ɪkstɪngwɪʃ/	08	15.68%
		/ɪkstɛ̃gwɪʃ/	34	66.66%
Distinguish	/dɪˈstɪŋgwɪʃ/	/dɪˈstɪŋgwɪʃ/	11	21.56%
		/dɪstɪngwɪʃ/	17	33.33%
		/dɪstɛ̃gwɪʃ/	23	45.09%
Disallow	/ˌdɪsəˈlaʊ/	/ˌdɪsəˈlaʊ/	12	23.52%
		/dɪzəˈlaʊ/	14	27.45%
		/dɪzəˈləʊ/	12	23.52%
		/dɪzælaʊ/	13	25.49%
Disappoint	ˌ/ˌdɪsəˈpɔɪnt/	/ˌdɪsəˈpɔɪnt/	14	27.45%
		/dɪzæpɔɪnt/	23	45.09%
		/dɪzəˈpɪnt/	14	27.45%
Astonish	/əˈstɒnɪʃ/	/əˈstɒnɪʃ/	09	17.64%
		/əˈstɔːnɪʃ/	12	23.52%
		/ˈæstɒnɪʃ/	30	58.82%
Alleviate	/əˈliːvieɪt/	/əˈliːvieɪt/	06	11.76%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
		/ˈælıveıt/	16	31.37%
		/ˈælıvieıt/	17	33.33%
		/ˈılıvieıt//əˈlə	12	23.52%
Inhabit	/ınˈhæbıt/	/ınˈhæbıt/	51	100%
Prohibit	/prəˈhıbıt/	/prəˈhıbıt/	08	15.68%
		/ˈprɒhıbıt/	35	68.62%
		/prɒhıbiːt/	08	15.68%
Develop	/dıˈveləp/	/dıˈveləp/	03	05.88%
		/dıvæləp/	12	23.52%
		/dıvæˈləʊp/	07	13.72%
		/dıvælɒp/	21	41.17%
		/dıvləʊp/	08	15.68%
Abolish	/əˈbɒlıʃ/	/əˈbɒlıʃ/	09	17.64%
		/ˈæbɒlıʃ/	34	66.66%
		/əˈbɔːlıʃ/	09	17.64%
Humiliate	/hjuːˈmılieıt/	/hjuːˈmılieıt/	07	13.72%
		/hæmılaıt/	10	19.60%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
		/hjuːmɪlaɪt/	13	25.49%
		/ˈhjuːmɪleɪt/	21	41.17%

Table 82: Production of Penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Verbs

This table includes another structure of words whose number of tokens is thirteen. What these tokens have in common is that each of them is a non-affix/affix verb having penultimate stress pattern; some of the stressed syllables have as their peaks long vowels whereas others have short vowels. Some of the words are familiar/enjoy high rates of frequency in the learners' output (*develop, astonish, disappoint* and *distinguish*) while the remainder are relatively less common owing essentially to their low lexical functional load. Two clear-cut types of errors do abound in the students' production: errors of mis-selection (/ˈrɪzæmbəl/, /ˈælɪveɪt/, /dɪvæˈləʊp/ and /ˈæbɒlɪʃ/ to mention but some illustrative instances) and errors of total absence of stress (like /syrendər/, /dɪvælɒp/ and /hæmɪlaɪt/). What is patent in their performance is that despite the fact that we have moved from one structure of words (bi-syllabic words) onto a phonologically bigger structure (tri-syllabic words) their strategies have not altered in the slightest or so their scores would tell. They are still largely reliant on spelling-pronunciation. We would maintain that such a strategy does covertly denote that, hardly paradoxically, they are short of strategies altogether. It, by the same token, entails that they are presumably not sufficiently cognizant to the fact that in a succession of three syllables, one of them must be made to stand out. A word as frequent as *develop* should, if we bow to the repeated practice maxim, not be ill-formed stress-allocation-wise. Of course, we are not alleging herein that practice is meritless and unproductive. What we are trying to underscore is that practice should not elude teachers' correction. If a teacher

encourages their students to use a given word as often as the linguistic opportunity permits without making sure that the right word shape, grammatical and phonological, is respected, then their guidance would likely backfire. Erroneous repeated practice may only serve to entrench a given linguistic problem as learners will find it hard after months of wrongly-guided practice to set their performance right: they may end up living forever with the daunting spectre of fossilisation.

5.3.2.2 Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Verbs

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Incubate	/ˈɪŋkjəbeɪt/	/ˈɪŋkjəbeɪt/	09	17.64%
		/ɪnkuːˈbaɪt/	13	25.49%
		/ɪnˈkʌbɪt/	16	31.37%
		/ɪnˈkʌbwɪt/	13	25.49%
Recognise	/ˈrekəgnaɪz/	/ˈrekəgnaɪz/	09	17.64%
		/ˈrɪkəgnaɪz/	28	54.90%
		/rɪkɒtgˈnaɪz/	14	27.45%
Purify	/ˈpjʊərɪfaɪ/	/ˈpjʊərɪfaɪ/	05	23.80%
		/pjʊrɪfaɪ/	34	66.66%
		/pjʊrɪˈfaɪ/	06	11.76%
		/bjʊrɪˈfaɪ/	07	13.72%
Decorate	/ˈdekəreɪt/	/ˈdekəreɪt/	06	11.76%
		/ˈdɪkɒreɪt/	31	60.78%
		ˈ/dɪkəreɪt/	09	17.64%

		/ˈdekɒˈreɪt/	05	09.80%
Annotate	/ˈænəteɪt/	/ˈænəteɪt/	07	13.72%
		/ænɒteɪt/	31	60.78%
		/ænɒˈteɪt/	13	25.49%

Table 83: Production of Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Verbs

This structure, of which there are five tokens, concerns non-affix/affix tri-syllabic verbs having anti-penultimate prominence. Students' scores are very low indeed as most of them failed to locate the right recipient of stress or did not make any of the syllables salient. Indeed, the errors made fall into two types: errors of mis-selection (like /ɪnˈkʌbɪt/, /rɪkɒgˈnaɪz and /ænɒˈteɪt/); errors of total unstressing (/pjʊrɪfaɪ/ and /ænɒteɪt/). What is uppermost in their errors is that many students selected the syllables whose nuclei are the closing diphthongs /eɪ/ and /aɪ/; whether such diphthongs figure in an open syllable or a closed syllable did not seem to alter their tendency. This inclination to go for this particular genre of syllables may be accounted for in terms of what they were previously taught in the phonetics module and portrayed in phonetics books. Roach (2009) says about the accentual pattern of three-syllable verbs that if the last syllable contains a long monophthong, a diphthong or ends with more than one consonant, then it is this syllable to which stress is assigned. Although this rule is valid for words like *disagree*, *volunteer*, *disapprove*, *disallow*, it does not apply for the words targeted herein. In fact, such words were deliberately used in order that we might work out whether students follow some generalisations or their choice when it comes to stress allocation is often ad hoc. Consequently, we can legitimately state that although these errors are essentially mis-selection errors they can equally possibly be labelled errors of rule over-generalisation. What this apparent indecisiveness should

be construed to communicate is not outright failure to properly set up clear-cut error sets: there might exist some terminological overlap in the classes of errors. Such an overlap is not reported on in the literature: at least in all the literature we have read no such discussion is mentioned.

5.3.2.3 Initial Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Adjectives

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Fabulous	/ˈfæbjələs/	/ˈfæbjələs/	15	29.41%
		/fæbyləs/	20	39.21%
		/ˈfeibələs/	14	27.45%
		/ˈfæbɪləs/	02	03.92%
Sensitive	/ˈsensətɪv/	/ˈsensətɪv/	11	21.56%
		/ˈsænsɪtɪv/	24	47.05%
		/sənˈsiːtɪv/	18	35.29%
Beautiful	/ˈbjuːtɪfəl/	/ˈbjuːtɪfəl/	32	62.74%
		/ˈbjuːrɪfəl/	19	37.25%

Table 84: Production of Initial Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Adjectives

The stimulus structure this table encompasses, of which there are three token words, pertains to three-syllable adjectives stressed on the initial syllable. Two of the stimulus words stressed syllables have short vowels at their centres, whilst the third has a long monophthong. The same type of errors has materialised here two, namely errors of mis-election (/sənˈsiːtɪv/) and errors of unstressing (/fæbyləs/). The former type of errors seems to have been made owing to essentially failing to get the syllabic peak of the penultimate syllable right by substituting the short monophthong /ɪ/ by its long counterpart /iː/ and stressing the resultant syllable. Positioning

stress on the middle syllable appears to have been the outcome of a wrong application of the rule stipulating that if the penultimate syllable is heavy, then it ought to be stressed. What is baffling to account for is the vocalic substitution as such. This seems to be a) a wholly idiosyncratic error or b) an error emanating basically from unfamiliarity with well-established grapho-phonemic matches. After all, we cannot recall any word wherein the letter 'i' figuring in comparable orthographic environments is pronounced /i:/.

By contrast, the pronunciation of *fabulous* is orthography-based. Students seem to have fallen back on their grapho-phonemic French knowledge when producing the second syllable thereby generating a non-English vowel sound, /y/, instead of the English one. The pronunciation of this word constitutes a blend of orthography-based pronunciations: English and French.. By contrast, the pronunciation of *fabulous* is orthography-based, of a different nature, though. Students seem to have fallen back on their grapho-phonemic French knowledge when producing the second syllable thereby generating a non-English vowel sound, /y/, instead of the English one. The pronunciation of this word constitutes a blend of orthography-based pronunciations: English and French. High frequency of occurrence was an empowering factor for students to generate native-like pronunciation of the word *beautiful.*

5.3.2.4 Penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Adjectives

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Hilarious	/hɪˈleəriəs/	/hɪˈleəriəs/	13	25.49%
		/hɪlæriəs/	38	74.50%
Precarious	/prɪˈkeəriəs/	/prɪˈkeəriəs/	11	21.56%
		/prɪkæriəs/	25	49.01%
		/prɪˈkɑːriəs/	15	29.41%
Familiar	/fəˈmɪliə/	/fəˈmɪliə/	18	35.29%
		/fæmɪliər/	33	64.70%
Informal	/ɪnˈfɔːməl/	/ɪnˈfɔːməl/	14	27.45%
		/ɪnˈfɔːrməl/	23	45.09%
		/ˈɪnfɔːrməl/	14	27.45%
Fastidious	/fæˈstɪdiəs/	/fæˈstɪdiəs/	06	11.76%
		/fæˈstiːdiəs/	21	41.17%
		/ˈfæstɪdjʊs/	11	21.56%
		/fəˈstɪdiəs/	13	25.49%
Tremendous	/trɪˈmendəs/	/trɪˈmendəs/	08	15.68%
		/ˈtrɪmendjəs/	21	41.17%
		/trəˈmendəs/	22	43.13%
Prestigious	/preˈstɪdʒəs/	/preˈstɪdʒəs/	09	17.64%
		/prɪˈstiːʒəs/	13	25.49%
		/ˈprɪstɪʒjəs/	19	37.25%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
		/ˈpreˈstɪdʒjəs/	10	19.60%
Stupendous	/stjuːˈpendəs/	/stjuːˈpendəs/	07	13.72%
		/stʌpəndəs/	14	27.45%
		/stjuːˈpɒndəs/	17	33.33%
		/stjuːˈpendjəs/	13	25.49%
Abnormal	/æbˈnɔːməl/	/æbˈnɔːməl/	17	33.33%
		/æbnɔːrməl/	19	37.25%
		/əbˈnɔːrməl/	15	29.41%

Table 85: Production of Penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Adjectives

Represented in this table are the students' productions of nine different tokens of a new structure stimulus. What these tokens have in common is that they are all non-affix/affix three-syllable adjectives having a penultimate syllable stress pattern. Most of the stressed syllables peaks are either long vowels or diphthongs. It is plausible to apply the rule stipulating that when the middle syllable contains a long vowel, a diphthong or terminates in a consonantal cluster, then it is this syllable as such that should receive stress. The students, many of them, do not seem to have taken recourse to this rule the right way, though. The words *fastidious* and *prestigious* were fallaciously articulated /fæˈstiːdiəs/ and /prɪˈstiːʒəs/ respectively. Probably because of their awareness of this rule, what these students did was that they substituted the short front, close neutral vowel with its long counterpart and stressed the resultant syllable afterwards. Although they happened to stress the right syllable, their conversion of those syllables nuclei does not go hand in hand with the target norms. The rule mentioned above seems to be based on the

presumption that learners will readily know the vocalic constitution of every syllable into which they run, which is just not invariably the case. The other errors which most students made fall neatly into two kinds: errors of mis-selection (like /ˈtrɪmendjəs/ and /ˈprɪstɪʒjəs/) and errors of unstressing (like stʌpəndəs/ and /æbnɔːrməl/).

5.3.2.5 Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Nouns

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Calendar	/ˈkæləndə/	/ˈkæləndər/	39	76.47%
		/kəˈlændə/	12	23.52%
Instrument	/ˈɪnstrəmənt/	/ˈɪnstrəmənt/	13	25.49%
		/ɪnˈstruːmənt/	23	45.09%
		/ɛ̃strəmənt/	15	29.41%
Lavender	/ˈlævəndə/	/ˈlævəndə/	19	37.25%
		/ˈlævəndər/	20	39.21%
		/ˈlevəndə/	12	23.52%
Jealousy	/ˈdʒeləsi/	/ˈdʒeləsi/	18	35.29%
		/ʒalezi/	18	35.29%
		/ˈdʒæləsi/	11	21.56%
		/ˈdʒɜːləsi/	04	07.84%
Jupitar	/ˈdʒuːpətə/	/ˈdʒuːpətə/	07	13.72%
		/ˈʒjuːpɪtər/	22	43.13%
		/ˈdʒuːpɪtər/	08	15.68%
		/ˈʒypɪtər/	14	27.45%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Harvester	/ˈhɑːvəstə/	/ˈhɑːvəstə/	06	11.76%
		/ˈhɑːrvɪstər/	13	25.49%
		/hævestər/	17	33.33%
		/ˈhɑːrvəstər/	15	29.41%
Monitor	/ˈmɒnɪtə/	/ˈmɒnɪtə/	23	45.09%
		/ˈmɒnɪtər/	28	54.90%
Sentiment	/ˈsentəmənt/	/ˈsentəmənt/	29	56.86%
		/ˈsɑ̃tɪmənt/	22	43.13%
Amateur	/ˈamətə/	/ˈamətə/	07	13.72%
		/əˈmetər/	14	27.45%
		/amə ˈtʃʊər/	15	29.41%
		/ameɪtʃər/	15	29.41%
Penalty	/ˈpenəlti/	/ˈpenəlti/	10	19.60%
		/pɪnæti/	14	27.45%
		/pɪnɒlti/	17	33.33%
		/ˈpiːnɒlti/	10	19.60%
Formula	/ˈfɔːmjələ/	/ˈfɔːmjələ/	10	19.60%
		/fɔːrmjuːlə/	22	43.13%
		/fəˈmjuːlə/	19	37.25%
Carpenter	/ˈkɑːpəntə/	/ˈkɑːpəntə/	04	07.84%
		/ˈkɑːrpɪntər/	25	49.01%
		/ˈkɑːrpəntər/	22	43.13%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Unison	/ˈjuːnɪsən/	/ˈjuːnɪsən/	06	05.88%
		/juːnɪsə̃/	17	33.33%
		/jəˈnaɪzən/	17	33.33%
		/juːˈniːʃən/	11	21.56%

Table 86: Production of Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Nouns

This structure concerns simple/affix, three-syllable nouns stressed on the first syllable. Due to the frequency of such a structure, the present stimulus has thirteen tokens thereof. Some of the stressed syllables of these tokens have a long vowel at their centres (*Jupiter*, *harvester*, *formula*, *carpenter* and *unison*) whereas the remaining words have short vowels at their centres. None of the token words' stressed syllables contains a diphthong or a triphthong as its nucleus. Drawing upon spelling to help generate accurate renditions of phonemes and syllables is helpful mainly when well-established grapho-phonemic correspondence is mastered. For instance, 'ar' and 'or' when constituting the first syllable's rhyme as in *largely*, *armament*, *pharmacy*, *orchestra* and *orphanage* are strong indicators that the resultant syllable should constitute a long monophthongal element, not a short one and not a gliding vowel either. Knowledge of such patterning would pave the way for correct stress assignment since in longer words there is a tendency for stress to go on syllables whose peaks are long vowels. The students seem to have used this rule when stressing the word *carpenter* as their performances go hand in hand with the target norms. The words *harvester* and *formula* were not pronounced in accordance with the same maxim; a good proportion of the participating students did not rely on the aforementioned spelling-to-sound relatedness for recognition and articulation of the accurate stressed syllable.

Non-usage of this relatedness has resulted in making one error of unstressing, /hævestər/, and an error of mis-selection, /fəˈmjuːlə/. The same types of errors were made when producing other words as in /jəˈnaɪzən/, /aməˈtʃʊər/, /ʒalezi/ and /ɪnˈstruːmənt/. Another error-inducing variable seems to be ignorance on the part of some students of some maxims in operation in the English phonotactical patterns: we cannot have two long vowels occupying the nuclei of two consecutive syllables. Absence or paucity of knowledge of such a constraint inherent to the English phonotactical patterning made the students generate /juːˈniːʃən/.

5.3.2.6 Penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Nouns

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Assembly	/əˈsembli/	/əˈsembli/	14	27.45%
		/ˈæsəmbli/	37	72.54%
Acquaintance	/əˈkweɪntəns/	/əˈkweɪntəns/	09	17.64%
		/əˈkwɪntəns/	19	37.25%
		/əˈkwentəns/	23	45.09%
Pedestrian	/pəˈdestriən/	/pəˈdestriən/	13	25.49%
		/pɪdɪstriən/	17	33.33%
		/bɪdɪstriən/	06	11.76%
		/ˈpedɪstreɪn/	15	29.41%
Manoeuvre	/məˈnuːvə/	/məˈnuːvə/	12	23.52%
		/ˈmænuːvər/	27	52.94%
		/ˈmænævər/	12	23.52%
Bazooka	/bəˈzuːkə/	/bəˈzuːkə/	06	11.76%
		/bæzuˈkæ/	13	25.49%

		/ˈbæzukæ/	32	62.74%
Attention	/əˈtenʃən/	/əˈtenʃən/	20	39.21%
		/ˈætenʃən/	31	60.78%
Detention	/dɪˈtenʃən/	/dɪˈtenʃən/	19	37.25%
		/dɪtenʃən/	32	62.74%

Table 87: Production of Penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Tri-syllabic Nouns

In this table, another stimulus structure targeted is portrayed: tri-syllabic nouns having penultimate syllable salience. Such a structure is very common in the English lexicon. The nuclei of the stressed syllables vary, though. One contains a closing diphthong: /əˈkweɪntəns/; two contain a long back vowel /məˈnuːvə/ and /bəˈzuːkə/ whereas the remaining token words contain short vowels. The stimulus does contain only one familiar word (*attention*), while the rest have varying degrees of unfamiliarity. Although this familiar word does figure extensively in their quotidian classroom speech, this repeated encounter has not led to their getting the hang of its accentual pattern: over half of the students did make the error of mis-selection via giving prominence to the first syllable rather than the middle one: /ˈætenʃən/. We would maintain that although all English two-syllable words and larger ones contain primary stress, not all stressed syllables in the language's lexicon have comparable levels of salience, at least not for a foreign aural perception. The presence of stress is more patent in heavy and super-heavy syllables (*believe, complain, allow*), but when stress goes on a short vowel instead of a long one or a diphthong figuring at the level of the same word, like *recognise, optimise* and *allow*, its presence is not as perceptibly clear as in the former types of syllables. The word *attention* does not belong to this category and its penultimate syllable is perceptibly salient due essentially to the presence

of schwa as the nucleus of the first and last syllable. We have gone all this way to pinpoint one crucial point: erroneous production may actually mirror, among other things, feeble perceptive calibres. One possible interpretation to this is that students were not trained enough to listen out to how native speakers produce stressed syllables. Furthermore, regarding their performance in producing the unfamiliar words, their reliance on spelling-pronunciation is indeed ever so clear. This led to the making of two types of errors, namely errors of wrong-selection as in /ˈpedıstreım/ and /ˈmænuːvər/, and errors of unstressing as in /pıdıstriən/ and /dıtenʃən/.

5.3.3 Students' Idiosyncratic Performance in Producing Poly-morphemic Di-Syllabic Words

5.3.3.1 Pre-anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four syllabic Verbs

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Characterise	/ˈkærəktəraız/	/ˈkærəktəraız/	23	45.09%
		/kæræktəˈraız/	28	54.90%
Criminalise	/ˈkrımınəlaız/	/ˈkrımınəlaız/	26	50.98%
		/krımınəˈlaız/	25	49.01%

Table 88: Production of Pre-anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Verbs

The structure represented in this table pertains to four-syllable verbs stressed on the first syllable. The peak of both token words of this stimulus is the closing diphthong /aı/. This is one of the vocalic attractors of stress in English. Its attractiveness seems to fade away, as it were, when it figures in larger words as the nucleus of final syllables. It is this which has kindled inclusion of these two words for this structure: we wanted to find out whether the students are aware of this vocalic fact. Their output, however, seems to point in the opposite direction. It is

indeed the last syllable in both token words that was stressed: /kærəktəˈraɪz/ and /krɪmɪnəˈlaɪz/. Their over-reliance on the graphological make-up of words does manifest itself very transparently here in their pronunciation of the first and second syllable of *characterise* /kærəktəˈraɪz/.

5.3.3.2 Anti-penultimate Syllable Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Verbs

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Acclimatise	/əˈklaɪmətaɪz/	/əˈklaɪmətaɪz/	12	23.52%
		/æklɪməˈtaɪz/	24	47.05%
		/ˈæklɪmətaɪz/	15	29.41%
Familiarise	/fəˈmɪliəraɪz/	/fəˈmɪliəraɪz/	14	27.45%
		/fæmɪliəraɪz/	32	62.74%
		/fæmɪliəˈraɪz/	05	09.80%
Exemplify	/ɪgˈzempləfaɪ/	/ɪgˈzempləfaɪ/	19	37.25%
		/ɪgzæmplifaɪ/	19	37.25%
		/ɪgzɑ̃mplifaɪ/	13	25.49%
Elucidate	/ɪˈluːsədeɪt/	/ɪˈluːsədeɪt/	14	27.45%
		/ɪˈluːʃideɪt/	16	31.37%
		/ɪluːsiˈdeɪt/	21	41.17%
Enumerate	/ɪˈnjuːməreɪt/	/ɪˈnjuːməreɪt/	10	19.60%
		/ɪnjuːmɪˈreɪt/	12	23.52%
		/ɪnuːmireɪt/	29	56.86%
Electrify	/ɪˈlektrəfaɪ/	/ɪˈlektrəfaɪ/	11	21.56%
		/ɪlɪktrɪfaɪ/	32	62.74%

		/ɪlɪktrɪˈfaɪ/	08	15.68%
Apologise	/əˈpɒlədʒaɪz/	/əˈpɒlədʒaɪz/	13	25.49%
		/æpɒlɒˈdʒaɪz/	13	25.49%
		/æpɒlɒdʒaɪz/	20	39.21%
		/æpɒlɒˈʒaɪz/	05	09.80%
Computerise	/kəmˈpjuːtəraɪz/	/kəmˈpjuːtəraɪz/	17	33.33%
		/kʌmpjuːtəraɪz/	13	25.49%
		/kɒmpjuːtəraɪz/	21	41.17%
Collaborate	/kəˈlæbəreɪt/	/kəˈlæbəreɪt/	12	23.52%
		/kɒlæbɒreɪt/	29	56.86%
		/kɒlæbəreɪt/	10	19.60%

Table 89: Production of Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Verbs

We will now consider another structure bearing on four-syllable verbs, of a different nature though. This category, of which there are nine tokens, concerns four-syllable verbs stressed on the anti-penultimate syllable. As regards what occupies the centres of stressed syllables, three different types figure there, viz. the long vowel /uː/, short vowels such as /ɒ/ and the closing diphthong /aɪ/. What is readily noticeable about the last syllable in all the target words is that the centring diphthongs /aɪ/ and /eɪ/ appear in unstressed environments each. We should recollect that in four-syllable words and larger ones, the last syllable has a tendency to repel stress even if the nucleus is a long vowel or a diphthong which would attract stress in smaller words. Inconsistency in stress allocation seems to surface here. It strikes us that students do not, as a rule, stress the strongest syllable in the word as their pronunciation of some of the above

words in the foregoing table may lead us to infer. The words *elucidate* and *computerise* do contain two strong syllables each, syllable strength here being measured by length of the syllabic nuclei or the presence of gliding vowels. Despite this factor (which seemed to govern their choice earlier and in their production of some words here too) they ended up making errors of total syllable unstressing: /ɪnuːmireɪt/, /kʌmpjuːtəraɪz/ and /kɒmpjuːtəraɪz/. Furthermore, familiarity with the stimulus word has not rendered the task of accurate stressing placement any easier. Errors made at the level of other words do straightforwardly come into two classes; errors of wrong-selection as in /ˈæklɪmətaɪz/ and /æpplɒˈdʒaɪz/, and errors of complete unstressing as in /æpplɒdʒaɪz/ and /ɪlɪktrɪfaɪ/.

5.3.3.3 Pre-anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Four-syllable Adjectives

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Solitary	/ˈsɒlɪtəri/	/ˈsɒlɪtəri/	10	19.60%
		/sɒlɪtæri/	29	56.86%
		/sɒlɪˈteəri/	12	23.52%
Monetary	/ˈmʌnɪtəri/	/ˈmʌnɪtəri/	09	17.64%
		/ˈmɒntəri/	20	39.21%
		/ˈmɒnetəri/	04	07.84%
		/mɒnɪtæri/	18	35.29%
Necessary	/ˈnesəsəri/	/ˈnesəsəri/	10	19.60%
		/nəˈsɪsəri/	17	33.33%
		/nɪsɪˈseri/	13	25.49%
		/nɪsɪsəri/	11	21.56%

Mandatory	/ˈmændətəri/	/ˈmændətəri/	11	21.56%
		/ˈmændætəri/	19	37.25%
		/mənˈdætɒri/	21	41.17%

Table 90: Production of Pre-anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Mono-morphemic/Bi-morphemic Four-syllable Adjectives

The structure represented in this table is that of non-affix/affix four-syllable adjectives having pre-anti-penultimate syllable stress. The errors the students made could be classified into two sets: errors of mis-selection. This first type is further sub-divided into mis-selection of the penultimate syllable as in /sɒlɪˈteəri/ and mis-selection of the anti-penultimate syllable (/nəˈsɪsəri/ and /mənˈdætɒri/). The former sub-type could be equally labelled an error of over-generalisation, too. Students substituted the mid central neutral vowel (schwa) with a centring diphthong; this is probably the reason why they placed stress on this penultimate syllable. Moreover, /sɒlɪtæri/ and /nɪsɪsəri/ fall into the second category: errors of unstressing. In spite of the fact that the word *necessary* is the commonest of them all, it was wrongly pronounced. This faulty articulation could be teacher-induced. The learners did encounter this word very early on: they met this word during their pre-university years. It is fair to argue that probably their secondary-school and middle-school teachers would mis-pronounce this word thereby their very early encounters with this word together with later encounters at university along with students' reluctance to improve their pronunciation have collectively led to the fossilisation of this error.

5.3.3.4 Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Adjectives

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Accusatory	/əˈkjuːzətəri/	/əˈkjuːzətəri/	09	17.64%
		/ækyzætəri/	19	37.25%

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
		/ækjuːzətəri/	05	09.80%
		/ækjuːzeɪtəri/	10	19.60%
		/ækjuːsætəri/	08	15.68%
Compatible	/kəmˈpætəbəl/	/kəmˈpætəbəl/	16	31.37%
		/kɒmpɪtɪbəl/	12	23.52%
		/kɒmpætɪbəl/	23	45.09%
Conventional	/kənˈvenʃənəl/	/kənˈvenʃənəl/	15	29.41%
		/kənˈvenʃɒnəl/	10	19.60%
		/kɔ̃nvenʃjɒnəl/	10	19.60%
		/kɒnˈvenʃənəl/	16	31.37%

Table 91: Production of Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Adjectives

This structure pertains to four-syllable adjectives having anti-penultimate stress. There are only three tokens of this structure. Noteworthy is the fact that the schwa vowel seems to have a unique vocalic tendency of having multiple chances of appearing more than once as the peak of syllables when the number of syllables making up a word goes up. In four-syllable adjectives, the ones listed above being illustrative examples, it tends to occupy syllabic peaks of both the pre-anti-penultimate syllable and the ultimate one. Having such knowledge at one's prosodic disposal would at least take a portion of the burden of deciding on which syllable stress would go. Put simply, once learners have such insights, their chances of recognising the right syllable to stress would be higher as they would know for definite that stress would fall on one of the medial syllables, namely the penultimate or the anti-penultimate one. On the face of it, the students do

not possess such knowledge and their scores do attest to this. Having relied excessively on spelling, they fell into errors of unstressing like /ækjuːsætəri/, /kɒmpætɪbəl/ and /kɔ̃nvenʃjɒnəl/.

5.3.3.5 Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Nouns

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Paralysis	/pəˈræləsəs/	/pəˈræləsəs/	07	13.72%
		/pəˈræləsaɪz/	16	31.37%
		/pæræli:siz/	14	27.45%
		/pærəˈlaɪzis/	14	27.45%
Eternity	/ɪˈtɜːnəti/	/ɪˈtɜːnəti/	15	29.41%
		/ɪtɜːrniti/	36	70.58%
Experiment	/ɪkˈsperəmənt/	/ɪkˈsperəmənt/	13	25.49%
		/ɪkspɪrɪmənt/	28	54.90%
		/ɪkspɪri:mənt/	10	19.60%
Acknowledgement	/əkˈnɒlɪdʒmənt/	/əkˈnɒlɪdʒmənt/	19	37.25%
		/əkˈnθɔːlɪdʒmənt/	15	29.41%
		/æknɒlɪdʒmənt/	17	33.33%
Fraternity	/frəˈtɜːnəti/	/frəˈtɜːnəti/	13	25.49%
		/freɪtɜːniti/	15	29.41%
		/frætɜːrniti/	23	45.09%
Community	/kəˈmjuːnəti/	/kəˈmjuːnəti/	07	13.72%
		/kɒmjuːniti/	23	45.09%
		/kʌmjuːniti/	21	41.17%

Table 92: Production of Anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Nouns

This table presents data of a different kind. The structure targeted, of which there are six tokens, relates to four-syllable nouns stressed on the anti-penultimate syllable. Three of the stressed syllables of these stimulus words have at their centres long vowels: /uː/ and /ɜː/. Their position within the word is a strong-enough indication for them to get prominence if we are to abide by the maxim some students rightly revert to for allocating stress. In light of their performance, their choice appears to be rather haphazard since they do not invariably stand by their own commitment to assign stress to such syllables. Their scores in the production of this new structure seem to reinforce this inference we arrived at out of their output regarding earlier structures. Put more patently, although both the words *eternity* and *fraternity* contain a long vowel, a small majority of students fell short of stressing the syllable containing this long vowel thereby ending up making errors of unstressing: /ɪtɜːrniti/, /freɪtɜːniti/ and /frætɜːrniti/. The same holds true for the pronunciation of the word *community* in the erroneous production thereof errors of unstressing were made too: /kɒmjuːniti/ and /kʌmjuːniti/. Here again, it is noteworthy that familiarity with the stimulus does not seem to have generated better pronunciation outcomes, though. Errors of wrong-selection and total unstressing were made regarding the pronunciation of *paralysis*, *experiment* and *acknowledgement.*

5.3.3.6 Penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Nouns

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Competition	/ˌkɒmpəˈtɪʃən/	/ˌkɒmpəˈtɪʃən/	08	15.68%
		/kɒmpɪtɪʃən/	25	49.01%
		/kʌmpətɪʃən/	18	35.29%
Constitution	/ˌkɒnstɪˈtjuːʃən/	/ˌkɒnstɪˈtjuːʃən/	06	11.76%
		/ kɒnstɪtjuːʃən/	25	49.01%
		/kʌnstɪˈtuːʃən/	20	39.21%

Table 93: Production of Penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Nouns

This current structure, of which there are two tokens, concerns four-syllable nouns having penultimate stress patterns. The peak of the first word is a short vowel, while that of the second word is a long vowel. We assumed that if students depended on syllable strength, they would get the accentual pattern of the latter word right. This, however, was not the case. Despite the fact that they managed to get at the right vowel for the penultimate syllable right, their success was of no avail as it did not pave the way for accurate stress structures: nearly half of the students made errors of unstressing instead: / kɒnstɪtjuːʃən/, while a good proportion of them got it right.

5.3.3.7 Pre-anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllabic Nouns

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Calculator	/ˈkælkjəleɪtə/	/ˈkælkjəleɪtə/	06	11.76%
		/kælkɪleɪtə/	15	29.41%
		/kælkyleɪtər/	13	25.49%
		/ˈkælkjuːleɪtər/	17	33.33%

Territory	/ˈterətəri/	/ˈterətəri/	10	19.60%
		/ˈtrɪtəri/	21	41.17%
		/terɪʃəri/	19	37.25%
Dictionary	/ˈdɪkʃənəri/	/ˈdɪkʃənəri/	51	100%
Escalator	/ˈeskəleɪtə/	/ˈeskəleɪtə/	04	07.84%
		/ɪskæleɪtər/	27	52.94%
		/ɪskælætər/	20	39.21%

Table 94: Production of Pre-anti-penultimate Syllable Stressed Poly-morphemic Four-syllable Nouns

The structure represented in this table, of which there are four tokens, concerns four-syllable nouns stressed on the first syllable. In the production of these stimulus words, only one type of errors has materialised: the error of unstressing as in /kælkɪleɪtə/, /terɪʃəri/ and /ɪskælætər/. The students' over-dependence on spelling as a faithful guide to segment pronunciation is still highly visible here. Furthermore, familiarity with the stimulus word *dictionary* has paid off as all the participating students managed to pronounce it correctly.

5.3.4 Students' Idiosyncratic Performance in Producing Affix Words

5.3.4.1 Affix Nouns Containing the Stress-bearing Suffixes: *'ee' and 'eer'*

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Refuge	/ˈrefjuːdʒ/	/ˈrefjuːdʒ/	07	13.72%
		/rɪfjuːdʒ/	24	47.05%
		/ˈrɪfjuːʒ/	20	39.21%
Refugee	/ˌrefjʊˈdʒiː/	/refjʊˈdʒiː/	05	09.80%
		/rɪfjʊdʒiː/	23	45.09%

		/rɪfjʊʒɪ/	23	45.09%
Mountain	/ˈmaʊntən/	/ˈmaʊntən/	09	17.64%
		/maʊnteɪn/	14	27.45%
		/ˈmɒnteɪn/	14	27.45%
		/mənˈteɪn/	14	27.45%
Mountaineer	/ˌmaʊntəˈnɪə/	/ˌmaʊntəˈnɪə/	04	07.84%
		/maʊnteɪni:r/	17	33.33%
		/maʊnteɪnɪər/	13	25.49%
		/mentɪnə/	17	33.33%
Interview	/ˈɪntəvju:/	/ˈɪntəvju:/	13	25.49%
		/ɪnˈtɜ:rvju:/	18	35.29%
		/ɪntervju:/	20	39.21%
Interviewee	/ˌɪntəvjuˈi:/	/ˌɪntəvjuˈi:/	05	09.80%
		/ɪntɜ:rvjui/	22	43.13%
		/ˈɪntervjui/	24	47.05%
Address	/əˈdres/	/əˈdres/	07	13.72%
		/ædres/	29	56.86%
		/æˈdres/	15	29.41%
Addressee	/ˌædreˈsi:/	/ˌædreˈsi:/	07	13.72%
		/ædrɪsi:/	17	33.33%
		/ædrɪsi/	14	27.45%
		/ˈædresi/	13	25.49%

Table 95: Production of Affix Nouns Containing the Stress-bearing Suffixes: *'ee' and 'eer'*

At this juncture of the analysis, we feel it incumbent upon the context to pinpoint the following: from this table onwards, all the structures will be solely those of affix words. On account of the fact that regarding stress allocation, English suffixes behave differently and most of the rules concerning their impact or otherwise zero impact on stress assignment of the recipient words seem to allow virtually no widely recognised exceptions. Therefore, the rationale behind inclusion of these affix words is that of exploring to what extent students have over the years internalised the various rules and patterns at work. This table represents a number of mono-morphemic words together with their derivatives. Although we are not immediately interested in how they would pronounce the non-affix words, their inclusion was deemed indispensably necessary. Framed in plainer English, without knowing how they would pronounce the word before the addition of the suffix (the simple word), we cannot know how the addition of the suffix has influenced or altered their pronunciations.

What these results show is that the overwhelming bulk of the students manifested ignorance of the stress-bearing nature of the two targeted suffixes. There is virtually no difference in the mono-morphemic words' stress patterns and their affix counterparts. In the pronunciation of the words *refuge* and *interview*, they made the error of syllable unstressing and an identical error was made when articulating their affix counterparts: /rɪfjuːdʒ/: /rɪfjʊdʒiː/ and /ɪntervjuː/: /ɪntɜːrvjui/. The same faulty principle was at work in articulating the remaining token words.

5.3.4.2 Affix Words Containing the Stress-bearing Suffixes: *'esque' and 'ette'*

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Cigar	/sɪˈgɑː/	/sɪˈgɑː/	12	23.52%
		/ˈsaɪgər/	15	29.41%
		/ˈsɪgər/	14	27.45%

		/ˈsiːgær/	10	19.60%
Cigarette	/ˌsɪgəˈret/	/sɪgəˈret/	12	23.52%
		/sɪgærɪt/	16	31.37%
		/sɪgæret/	23	45.09%
Picture	/ˈpɪktʃə/	/ˈpɪktʃə/	16	31.37%
		/ˈpɪktʃər/	35	68.62%
Picturesque	/ˌpɪktʃəˈresk/	/pɪktʃəˈresk/	06	11.76%
		/ˈpɪktʃəresk/	32	62.74%
		/ˈpɪktʃəreskiː/	13	25.49%
Grotesque	/grəʊˈtesk/	/grəʊˈtesk/	03	05.88%
		/grɒtesk/	38	74.50%
		/grɒteskiː/	10	19.60%

Table 96: Production of Affix Words Containing the Stress-bearing Suffixes:

'esque' and 'ette'

The stimulus structure of which there are three tokens and which is represented in this table pertains to words terminating in either the stress-bearing suffix *esque* or *ette*. These suffixes, however, do not enjoy a high functional load if compared to the above ones. The students' pronunciation is by no means in happy harmony with the English norms. This is most patently exhibited in their failing to alter the stress patterns of the words after the introduction of the suffix. In the word *picture*, both in the simple word and its complex word counterpart, stress remained on the self-same syllable: /ˈpɪktʃər/: /ˈpɪktʃəreskiː/. What is equally noticeable about their production is that they erroneously generated a four-syllable word rather than the target three-syllable one through the addition of the long /iː/ after the termination of the ultimate

syllable. The same error of syllable addition does also figure at the level of the word *grotesque*: /grɒteski:/.

5.3.4.3 Affix Words Containing the Stress-bearing Suffixes: *'self' and 'selves'*

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Yourself	/jɔːˈself/	/jɔːˈself/	23	45.09%
		/ˈjɒrself/	18	35.29%
		/ˈjɔ:rself/	10	19.60%
Herself	/həˈself/	/həˈself/	21	41.17%
		/hɜ:rself/	30	58.82%
Myself	/maɪˈself/	/maɪˈself/	24	47.05%
		/ˈmaɪself/	27	52.94%
Ourselves	/aʊəˈselvz/	/aʊəˈselvz/	20	39.21%
		ˈ /aʊərselvz/	31	60.78%

Table 97: Production of Affix Words Containing the Stress-bearing Suffixes: *'self' and 'selves'*

This table represents the students' productions of words containing another type of stress-bearing suffixes: the word *self* when added to the ending of possessive pronouns (*your*, *my*, *her* and *our*) for generating possessive pronouns. Inclusion into the stimulus of only these four reflexive pronouns does not entail that when the targeted suffix figures in other reflexive pronouns it does not maintain this trait; these are only representative token words. The students' scores do not seem to give any confirmatory proofs to mastery or awareness of this rule. Globally speaking, over half of the participating students did make errors of wrong-selection: /ˈjɔ:rself/, /ˈmaɪself/ and /ˈaʊərselvz/. Another error, the error of complete unstressing, was made when

producing the word *herself*: /hɜːrself/. Additionally, they erroneously converted the weak syllable /hə/ into a strong one: /hɜːr/.

5.3.4.4 Affix Nouns Containing the Stress-bearing Ending: *'ess'*

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Depress	/dɪˈpres/	/dɪˈpres/	23	45.09%
		/ˈdɪprəs/	28	54.90%
Obsess	/əbˈses/	/əbˈses/	12	23.52%
		/ˈɒbsəs/	34	66.66%
		/ˈɒbzəs/	05	09.80%
Possess	/pəˈzes/	/pəˈzes/	10	19.60%
		/pəˈses/	09	17.64%
		/ˈpɒzəs/	20	39.21%
		/ˈpəʊsəs/	12	23.52%
Confess	/kənˈfes/	/kənˈfes/	11	21.56%
		/kənˈfiːs/	11	21.56%
		/ˈkʌnfəs/	09	17.64%
		/ˈkɒnfəs/	20	39.21%

Table 98: Production of Affix Nouns Containing the Stress-bearing Ending: *'ess'*

The stimulus structure depicted in the present table, of which there are four tokens, concerns words ending in 'ess' which is another instance of stress-carrying suffixes. A word of caution should be sounded here; although this ending is common to half a dozen English lexemes, it does not enjoy the status of a fully independent syllable; its onset is invariably the last consonant in the verb as tokens in this table demonstrate. Furthermore, we have not labelled it a

suffix, it is merely an ending for two reasons: 1) its removal will leave the string of letters to which it is attached utterly meaningless (*conf*, *poss*, *obs* unless they are used as abbreviations or acronyms of some sort or other); 2) it is not used for derivational or inflectional purposes.

Students participating in the diagnostic test do not seem to have read about or noticed by themselves the distinctive function of this ending, or so their productions appear to communicate. They made the error of wrong-selection as in: /ˈdɪprəs/ and /ˈkʌnfəs/. They exhibited more awareness about the word *possess*, though, as a little minority did get the accentual pattern right: /pəˈses/.

5.3.4.5 Affix Words Containing the Stress-neutral Suffixes: *'able', 'ing', 'ment', 'fy', 'ly', 'like', 'tion', 'ous' and 'ness'*

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Comfort	/ˈkʌmfət/	/ˈkʌmfət/	08	15.68%
		/kəmˈfɔːrt/	13	25.49%
		/kɑ̃nfɒrt/	21	41.17%
		/ˈkɒmfərt/	09	17.64%
Comfortable	/ˈkʌmftəbəl/	/ˈkʌmftəbəl/	05	09.80%
		/kɑ̃nfɔːrtɪbl/	20	39.21%
		/ˈkɑ̃nfərtəbl/	10	19.60%
		/kənˈfɔːrtəbəl/	16	31.37%
Astonish	/əˈstɒnɪʃ/	/əˈstɒnɪʃ/	13	25.49%
		/ˈæstɒnɪʃ/	30	58.82%
		/ˈæstɔːnɪʃ/	08	15.68%
Astonishing	/əˈstɒnɪʃɪŋ/	/əˈstɒnɪʃɪŋ/	12	23.52%

		/ˈæstɒnɪʃɪŋ/	28	54.90%
		/ˈæstɔːnɪʃɪn/	09	17.64%
Alarm	/əˈlɑːm/	/əˈlɑːm/	17	33.33%
		/ælɑːrm/	34	66.66%
Alarming	/əˈlɑːmɪŋ/	/əˈlɑːmɪŋ/	16	31.37%
		/ælɑːrmɪn/	35	68.62%
Punish	/ˈpʌnɪʃ/	/ˈpʌnɪʃ/	51	100%
Punishment	/ˈpʌnɪʃmənt/	/ˈpʌnɪʃmənt/	51	100%
Glory	/ˈglɔːri/	/ˈglɔːri/	13	25.49%
		/glɒri/	38	74.50%
Glorify	/ˈglɔːrəfaɪ/	/ˈglɔːrifaɪ/	15	29.41%
		/glɒriˈfaɪ/	36	70.58%
Ample	/ˈæmpəl/	/ˈæmpəl/	24	47.05%
		/ɪmpəl/	14	27.45%
		/ˈempəl/	13	25.49%
Amplify	/ˈæmpləfaɪ/	/ˈæmpləfaɪ/	12	23.52%
		/ɪmplɪfaɪ/	16	31.37%
		/ˈemplɪfaɪ/	23	45.09%
Assure	/əˈʃʊə/	/əˈʃʊə/	25	49.01%
		/əˈʃjʊər/	26	50.98%
Assuredly	/əˈʃʊərədli/	/əˈʃʊərədli/	15	29.41%
		/æʃjʊrədli/	18	35.29%
		/əˈʃjʊrədli/	18	35.29%

Selfish	/ˈselfɪʃ/	/ˈselfɪʃ/	51	100%
Selfishly	/ˈselfɪʃli/	/ˈselfɪʃli/	51	100%
Child	/tʃaɪld/	/tʃaɪld/	51	100%
Childlike	/ˈtʃaɪldlaɪk/	/ˈtʃaɪldlaɪk/	30	58.82%
		/tʃaɪldˈlaɪk/	21	41.17%
Correct	/kəˈrekt/	/kəˈrekt/	15	29.41%
		/kɒrekt/	36	70.58%
Correction	/kəˈrekʃən/	/kəˈrekʃən/	18	35.29%
		/kɒrekʃən/	33	64.70%
Poison	/ˈpɔɪzən/	/ˈpɔɪzən/	32	62.74%
		/ˈpɒzən/	19	37.25%
Poisonous	/ˈpɔɪzənəs/	/ˈpɔɪzənəs/	33	64.70%
		/ˈpɒznəs/	18	35.29%
Yellow	/ˈjeləʊ/	/ˈjeləʊ/	30	58.82%
		/jeˈləʊ/	21	41.17%
Yellowness	/ˈjeləʊnəs/	/ˈjeləʊnəs/	32	62.74%
		/jeˈləʊnəs/	19	37.25%

Table 99: Production of Affix Words Containing the Stress-neutral Suffixes:

'able', 'ing', 'ment', 'fy', 'ly', 'like', 'tion', 'ous' and 'ness'

Students' performance regarding the production of affix words ending in stress neutral suffixes is what this table exhibits. What is worthy of mention, none the less, is that these suffixes are distinct from the two other sets of suffixes not only because their affixation does not interfere with the accentual patterns of the resultant words. In other words, when added to a given word,

the syllabic nuclei of the other unstressed syllables do remain intact as they do not undergo any weakening or strengthening. Although what is targeted via this structure is gauging students' aptitude concerning the properties of these suffixes, the stimulus is made up of simple-and-complex word pairs. It is only through comparing their scores in producing the simple words and their complex counterparts that we can hope to work out whether or not the students have at their disposal the required rules.

Broadly speaking, if we were to take their performance as a faithfully representative mirroring of their aptitude, then we would deduce that they are well aware of the neutral impact these targeted suffixes have. This is transparently visible in the overt affinity they displayed in their accentual patterns production of simple-complex word pairs, as: /kəmˈfɔːrt/: /kənˈfɔːrtəbəl/; /əˈʃʃʊər/: /əˈʃʃʊrədli/ and /kɒrekt/: /kɒrekʃən/. As regards the types of errors that they made, they fall into two types: errors of unstressing (like /ɪmplɪfaɪ/ and /kɒrekʃən/) and errors of wrong-selection (like /ʧaɪldˈlaɪk/ and /jeˈləʊnəs/.

5.3.4.6 Affix Words Containing the Stress-Shifting Suffixes: *'eous', 'graphy', 'ial', 'ious', 'al', 'ous', 'ic' and 'ity'*

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Advantage	/ədˈvɑːntɪdʒ/	/ədˈvɑːntɪdʒ/	08	15.68%
		/ædvəntɪʒ/	29	56.86%
		/ædvɑ̃ntədʒ/	14	27.45%
Advantageous	/ˌædvənˈteɪdʒəs/	/ˌædvənˈteɪdʒəs/	05	09.80%
		/ˈedvəntɪdʒəs/	16	31.37%
		/ædvəntɪdʒəs/	15	29.41%
		/ædvɑ̃ntdʒjəs/	15	29.41%
Courage	/ˈkʌrɪdʒ/	/ˈkʌrɪdʒ/	14	27.45%
		/ˈkɒrədʒ/	12	23.52%
		/kɒrɪʒ/	19	37.25%
		/ˈkʌrəʒ/	06	11.76%
Courageous	/kəˈreɪdʒəs/	/kəˈreɪdʒəs/	10	19.60%
		/kɒrædʒəs/	19	37.25%
		/kʌrɪʒəs/	13	25.49%
		/kɒrɪdʒəs/	09	17.64%
Photograph	/ˈfəʊtəgrɑːf/	/ˈfəʊtəgrɑːf/	07	13.72%
		/fəˈtɒgraf/	12	23.52%
		/fɒtɒgraf/	26	50.98%
		/fətəgrɑːf/	06	11.76%
Photography	/fəˈtɒgrəfi/	/fəˈtɒgrəfi/	06	11.76%

		/fɒtɒgrafi/	30	58.82%
		/fətɒgrəˈfi/	15	29.41%
Proverb	/ˈprɒvɜːb/	/ˈprɒvɜːb/	15	29.41%
		/ˈprɔːvəb/	13	25.49%
		/ˈprɒˈvɜːrb/	23	45.09%
Proverbial	/prəˈvɜːbiəl/	/prəˈvɜːbiəl/	10	19.60%
		/prɒvɜːbəl/	16	31.37%
		/prɒvɜːbial/	19	37.25%
		/ˈprɒvəbəl/	06	11.76%
Injury	/ˈɪndʒəri/	/ˈɪndʒəri/	13	25.49%
		/ˈɪndʒjuːri/	23	45.09%
		/ɪndʒeriː/	15	29.41%
Injurious	/ɪnˈdʒʊəriəs/	/ɪnˈdʒʊəriəs/	03	05.88%
		/ɪndʒjəriəs/	23	45.09%
		/ɪnˈdʒjʊrəs/	25	49.01%
Victory	/ˈvɪktəri/	/ˈvɪktəri/	23	45.09%
		/vɪkɒtri/	28	54.90%
Victorious	/vɪkˈtɔːriəs/	/vɪkˈtɔːriəs/	13	25.49%
		/vɪktɒriəs/	29	56.86%
		/vɪkteriəs/	09	17.64%
Development	/dɪˈveləpmənt/	/dɪˈveləpmənt/	05	09.80%
		/dɪvælɒpmənt/	27	52.94%
		/dɪvlɒpmənt/	09	17.64%

		/dɪvæləʊpmənt/	10	19.60%
Developmental	/dɪˌveləpˈmentl/	/dɪˌveləpˈmentl/	05	09.80%
		/dɪvælɒpmɑ̃ntæl/	15	29.41%
		/ˈdɪvælɒpməntl/	16	31.37%
		/dɪvæləʊpməntl/	15	29.41%
Geometry	/dʒiˈɒmətri/	/dʒiˈɒmətri/	06	11.76%
		/dʒiɒmi:tri/	15	29.41%
		/dʒiɒmitri/	21	41.17%
		/ʒiɒmitri/	10	19.60%
Geometrical	/ˌdʒiːəˈmetrɪkəl/	/ˌdʒiːəˈmetrɪkəl/	04	07.84%
		/ˈdʒiɒmɪtrɪkəl/	23	45.09%
		/ʒiɒmɪtrɪkəl/	24	47.05%
Theory	/ˈθɪəri/	/ˈθɪəri/	19	37.25%
		/ˈθiːri/	17	33.33%
		/ˈθiːɒri/	15	29.41%
Theoretical	/θɪəˈretɪkəl/	/θɪəˈretɪkəl/	12	23.52%
		/θɪɒrɪtɪkəl/	39	76.47%
Volume	/ˈvɒljuːm/	/ˈvɒljuːm/	17	33.33%
		/vəˈljuːm/	34	66.66%
Voluminous	/vəˈluːmənəs/	/vəˈluːmənəs/	08	15.68%
		/vɒljuːmɪnəs/	16	31.37%
		/vɒlɪmɪnjəs/	11	21.56%
		/vɒlymɪnuːs/	09	17.64%

		/vɒljuːmɪnjəs/	07	13.72%
Climate	/ˈklaɪmət/	/ˈklaɪmət/	16	31.37%
		/klɪmæt/	18	35.29%
		/klɪmeɪt/	17	33.33%
Climatic	/klaɪˈmætɪk/	/klaɪˈmætɪk/	08	15.68%
		/klɪˈmætɪk/	16	31.37%
		/klaɪmetɪk/	27	52.94%
Diplomacy	/dɪˈpləʊməsi/	/dɪˈpləʊməsi/	17	33.33%
		/dɪplɒmæsi/	34	66.66%
Diplomatic	/ˌdɪpləˈmætɪk/	/ˌdɪpləˈmætɪk/	09	17.64%
		/dɪplɒmætɪk/	42	82.35%
Problem	/ˈprɒbləm/	/ˈprɒbləm/	51	100%
Problematic	/ˌprɒbləˈmætɪk/	/ˌprɒbləˈmætɪk/	07	13.72%
		/prɒbləˈmɑːtɪk/	17	33.33%
		/prɒblɪmætɪk/	27	52.94%
Real	/rɪəl/	/rɪəl/	27	52.94%
		/riːəl/	24	47.05%
Reality	/riˈæləti/	/riˈæləti/	15	29.41%
		/riælɪti/	36	70.58%
Fatal	/ˈfeɪtl/	/ˈfeɪtl/	15	29.41%
		/ˈfɑːtl/	18	35.29%
		/fætæl/	18	35.29%
Fatality	/fəˈtæləti/	/fəˈtæləti/	08	15.68%

		/fəˈtæli:ti/	06	11.76%
		/fæti:lıti/	10	19.60%
		/fætælıti/	29	56.86%
Popular	/ˈpɒpjələ/	/ˈpɒpjələ/	17	33.33%
		/pɒpylər/	15	29.41%
		/pəˈpju:lər/	09	17.64%
		/pɒpju:lər/	15	29.41%
Popularity	/ˌpɒpjəˈlærəti/	/ˌpɒpjəˈlærəti/	07	13.72%
		/pɒpylærıti/	23	45.09%
		/pɒpılærıti/	21	41.17%

Table 100: Production of Affix Words Containing the Stress-Shifting Suffixes:

'eous', 'graphy', 'ial', 'ious', 'al', 'ous', 'ic' and 'ity'

The sixteen tokens which this table represents pertain to affix-words ending in a number of the most common stress-shifting suffixes in English. These suffixes, in fact, do not only serve to push stress one syllable forward; they do reduce the salience of the syllabic nucleus of one syllable, most typically the one immediately preceding the stressed syllable in the affix word. So, the overarching aim of inclusion into the diagnostic test of these stimulus words is indeed twofold: 1) working out the extent to which the participating students are acquainted with the stress-shifting nature of these suffixes and 2) getting to the bottom of their knowledge as regards the accompanying syllabic weakening intrinsic to the resultant accentual pattern shift.

What their performance seems to pinpoint is that they are, upon the whole, plainly short of knowledge on this front. This shortage of knowledge and command of the above-stated rules was such a robust inhibitory factor that they ended upon making two types of errors: errors of

unstressing: (as in: /vɒlymınu:s/, /fæti:lıti/ and /pɒpılærıti/, and errors of wrong selection (/ˈdıvælɒpməntl/ and /ˈdʒiɒmıtrıkəl/). Familiarity with some token words seems to have led to more target-like accentual patterns: /klıˈmætık/, /prɒbləˈmɑ:tık/, /fəˈtæli:ti/. It is worthy of mention, however, that notwithstanding the fact that the accentual pattern was adhered to, they failed to get some of the syllabic nuclei right.

5.3.4.7 Affix Words Containing the Prefixes: '*re*', '*per*' and '*in*'

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Recount	/rɪˈkaʊnt/	/rɪˈkaʊnt/	18	35.29%
		/ˈrɪkaʊnt/	33	64.70%
Reform	/rɪˈfɔːm/	/rɪˈfɔːm/	13	25.49%
		/rɪfɔːrm/	23	45.09%
		/ˈrɪfɔːm/	15	29.41%
Perform	/pəˈfɔːm/	/pəˈfɔːm/	22	43.13%
		/pərˈfɔːrm/	29	56.86%
Reject	/rɪˈdʒekt/	/rɪˈdʒekt/	13	25.49%
		/rɪʒekt/	23	45.09%
		/rɪdʒekt/	15	29.41%
Inject	/ɪnˈdʒekt/	/ɪnˈdʒekt/	13	25.49%
		/ɪnʒekt/	23	45.09%
		/ɪndʒekt/	15	29.86%
Resign	/rɪˈzaɪn/	/rɪˈzaɪn/	13	25.49%
		/rɪzaɪn/	28	54.90%
		/rəˈsaɪn/	10	19.60%

Table 101: Production of Affix Words Containing the Prefixes: '*re*', '*per*' and '*in*'

This table and the following two will shift the attention from scrutinising the properties of suffixes vis-a-vis English stress allocation and how students would cope with them onto the traits and the partially divergent properties of prefixes. Unlike suffixes, which fall into crucially three sets, prefixes do seem to all belong to the self-same category. They, in other words, do not

interfere with the prosodic natures of the words to which they are affixed: seldom are they the recipient of prominence themselves nor do they serve to alter the accentual patterns of the host words by causing stress to shift forwards or backwards.

The structure targeted here, of which there are five different tokens, is that of words containing the prefixes: *re*, *per* and *in*. The students' scores presumably dictate that only a few of them do not get the hang of the characteristics of prefixes and their influence/non-influence on stress assignment. In their productions of the words *recount*, *reject* and *inject*, their performance is comparatively less native-like, though. A small majority fell into making two types of errors: errors of wrong-selection (/ˈrɪkaʊnt/ and /ˈrɪfɔːm/) and errors of unstressing (as in /ɪnʒekt/ and /rɪzaɪn/). The factor of familiarity seems to have played its constructive role in the pronunciation on the part of nearly a quarter of the participating students of *resign* /rəˈsaɪn/. They, none the less, due to substituting the voiced alveolar fricative /z/ by its voiceless counterpart /s/, came up with a totally different lexeme, *re-sign*. Owing probably to the fact that *perform* has a far bigger rate of occurrence, over half of the students managed to get its stress structure right: /pərˈfɔːrm/.

5.3.4.8 Affix Words Containing the Prefixes: '*inter*' and '*ad*'

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Intermission	/ˌɪntəˈmɪʃən/	/ɪntəˈmɪʃən/	17	33.33%
		/ɪntɜːrmɪʃən/	34	66.66%
Admission	/ədˈmɪʃən/	/ədˈmɪʃən/	12	23.52%
		/ædmɪʃən/	26	50.98%
		/ædmiːʃən/	13	25.49%

Table 102: Production of Affix Words Containing the Prefixes: '*inter*' and '*ad*'

This table portrays students' pronunciation of two other prefixes. There is actually one token per prefix. These prefixes, like the three ones addressed under the foregoing table, do not serve to bring about any accentual pattern alterations to the recipient words. The word *mission* is stressed on the first syllable with and without the prefix. The students, however, do not (as their scores attest) have this bit of insight at their prosodic disposal. For the first word, they fallaciously imparted undue strength to the anti-penultimate syllable thereby making an error of over-generalisation. The graphemic sequence 'er' is generally pronounced /ɜ:/ as in *internal*, *external*, *emergency*, *eternal* and so forth. The penultimate syllable of the second word was rendered strong by replacing the front, close, neutral, short vowel by its long counterpart. This does not seem to stem from over-generalisation processes as the letter 'i' is usually not pronounced /i:/. It is, hence, an error of ignorance of well-established sound-to-letter matches. Moreover, as is evident in many of the above tokens and structures in the preceding tables, their erroneous choice of the appropriate syllabic nuclei emanates essentially from over-reliance on spelling-pronunciation coupled with sheer, overt unfamiliarity with commonly known instances of sound-to-letter agreement. The resultant error for this structure is that of unstressing: /ɪntɜ:rmɪʃən/, /ædmɪʃən/ and /ædmi:ʃən/.

5.3.4.9 Affix Words Containing the Prefix: '*un*'

Word	Transcription	Production	Student	Percentage
Uncover	/ʌnˈkʌvə/	/ʌnˈkʌvə/	10	19.60%
		/ʌnkɒvər/	22	43.13%
		/ʌnkəʊvər/	10	19.60%
		/ənˈkʌvər/	09	17.64%
Undo	/ʌnˈduː/	/ʌnˈduː/	11	21.56%
		/ʌnduː/	23	45.09%
		/ʌndʊ/	17	33.33%
Untie	/ʌnˈtaɪ/	/ʌnˈtaɪ/	13	25.49%
		/ənˈtaɪ/	21	41.17%
		/ʌntɪ/	17	33.33%
Unleash	/ʌnˈliːʃ/	/ʌnˈliːʃ/	13	25.49%
		/ʌnlɪʃ/	15	29.41%
		/ənleʃ/	13	25.49%
		/ənˈliːʃ/	10	19.60%

Table 103: Production of Affix Words Containing the Prefix: '*un*'

This last table demonstrates how students performed at producing the four tokens concerning poly-morphemic words containing the prefix '*un*'. Precisely akin to other English prefixes, this present one, which enjoys substantial derivative force, does not interfere with the accentual properties of the derived words. The first error that students made pertains to erroneously weakening the prefix's syllable via usage of the schwa vowel instead of /ʌ/. This is most probably an error of over-generalisation and this, in turn, was probably fuelled by ignorance

of rule restrictions. In the first syllable of the word *until* (which is ever so common in their speech and also in the speech of teachers and native speakers as well) the peak is the schwa vowel. It could well be that the participating students thought that all English *uns* when figuring at the beginnings of words represent weak syllables having the weakest vowel-the schwa-at their centres. The target rules, however, stipulate that this is the case only when this letter combination is not appended in derivational processes having contrastive purposes.

5.4 Comparison of Findings and Inferences to Previous Research Work

In a cross-linguistic experimental study he conducted into the production and perception of 47 nonce English words on the part of groups of learners coming from seven different language backgrounds (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, Korean, Chinese and Japanese), Altmann wrote, 'What must be noted across L2 groups is that whenever the productions were not target-like, the final syllable was the most common choice for stress' (2006, p. 120). What this researcher seems to highlight herein is that irrespective of the nature of this final syllable nuclei, the L2 learners participating in his experiment showed preference for placing stress on this syllable proper. Our study, however, does not provide any consolidation for this conclusion. The subjects taking part in our investigation did overwhelmingly fail to impart prominence to any of the syllables making up the stimulus words, thereby making the error of complete unstressing.

When addressing the tendency of Arabic speaking participants as an independent group, Altmann (2006) seems to furnish other accounts, which, on the face of it, appear to contradict his above-stated generalisation, 'The case of Arabic speakers remains unclear. They stressed the rightmost non-final heavy syllable (i.e., syllable with a tense vowel) in the majority of cases' (2006, p. 139). Our study does lend only partially supportive evidence to this researcher's inference. In other words, the subjects tested in our study did manifest, amongst other things,

overt preference for positioning stress on heavy syllables; they, contrary to what this author observed, demonstrated tendency to place stress on the leftmost heavy ultimate syllable. The syllables which are called heavy in our study are those which have at their centres long monophthongs or diphthongs.

Another interlanguage phonology undertaking that is worth considering here is that of Beghoul (2007). His study does not share many affinities with that of Altmann (2006) since he investigated the interlanguage phonology of speakers sharing the same first academic language (Modern Standard Arabic) and having at their disposal knowledge of a second language (French) with varying degrees of competence, though. What sets the groups of subjects targeted in his study apart are fundamentally two key variables: their regional maternal dialects and their academic credentials. Another factor that sets the two studies apart is that the former addressed the accentual pattern aptitude of the subjects, whereas the latter investigated multiple layers of the subjects' interlanguage phonology (segmental and suprasegmental aptitude). The lion's share of the analyses and interpretations and later pedagogical recommendations of Beghoul's (2007) study were essentially segmental in nature.

The notion which Beghoul (2007) discussions raised and which is of immediate pertinence to our study is the knock-on effect on vowel non-target like use. About this, he penned, '...frequent misuse of vowels common to all students of the previous samples is the substitution of the mid-central unrounded vowel /ə/' (Beghoul, 2007, p. 171). Subsequently, he goes on to pinpoint the repercussions of this erroneous vocalic substitution, 'This misuse leads to the strengthening of so many syllables that ought to be weakened and, as a result, to a great disturbance of the rhythmic flow of language' (Beghoul, 2007, p. 171). Although no overt mention is made or even alluded to by this researcher about the distorting impacts of such substitutions on the accentual patterns of words, his addressing of rhythmic pattern distortions

does covertly entail accompanying un-English stress structure. After all, for rhythm to flow naturally, stress patterns have to be shaped in accordance with the target norms.

Later on in his argumentation, about the varied and most probable inducers of consonantal and vocalic errors, he revisits stress errors, in a different and more salient guise, though, '... some hypotheses yield poor results not only at the level of the segments, but, most importantly, at the suprasegmental aspects such as stress and rhythm' (Beghoul, 2007, p. 186). The hypotheses he is referring to herein pertain to what students presume to be transferrable and what is otherwise and which code to revert to when difficulties crop up. According to this researcher, due to the glaring fact that English and French do have lots of commonalities, orthographic-pattern-wise and because there are far more instances of grapheme-to-phoneme matches in French than the other way round, students seem to fall back on their French knowledge (whether it be little or big) to produce English sounds. For him, this reliance does not only lead to deviant productions of vowels and consonants, stress and rhythm follow suit as well. Our study does argue along the same lines in the sense that the participating subjects seem to have relied heavily on spelling-pronunciations. It is abundantly clear that this dependence emanates mainly from cross-linguistic influence from French. We do, none the less, think that transfer gains more momentum as learners knowledge of the target norms shrinks. It is, hence, only logical to argue that whenever there are more instances and types of transfer-induced errors, there are comparable instances and types of unfamiliarity with the requisite target norms, exceptions and restrictions.

Conclusion

This error-analysis-based, diagnostic test into the interlanguage prosody of a sample of advanced Algerian students' has contributed desperately needed, badly sought insightful outcomes by virtue of which we could ultimately reach a more fertile, more mature understanding of the idiosyncratic prosodic mechanisms at work. Although students exhibited varied instances

of accentual pattern departures from the target norms, their performance is not utterly haphazard after all. The recurrent, unified types of errors made are one strong variable whereby systematicity of their linguistic aptitude could be measured. It is indeed fair and legitimate for us to call it a system in its own right since it abides by a number of persistently occurring patterns and these patterns are given rise to by a set of identifiably recognised conceptualisations and strategies regarding what is correct and what is otherwise. Coinage on the part of Corder in the late 1960s of *idiosyncratic dialect* and on the part of Selinker in the early 1970s of *interlanguage* was not done on shaky, arbitrary grounds. Our investigation has put aside any refuting arguments which may attempt to prove these labels fictitious. There are, after all, highly predictable sets of patterns that are invariably abided by and these are amongst the sure signs of the existence of a governing mental system at work. Of course, this system does not comply with the target norms. Nevertheless, the fact that the underlying disruptive principles are known is a strong enough incentive to erect sets of remedial practices which may serve to set things right.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Coming to conclusive evidence about the precise nature as regards the conglomeration of variables (linguistic, social, didactic, learner-specific and others) to which ascription of the advanced Algerian learners' interlanguage accentual pattern anomalies could be made constitutes but a part of the skeletal make-up of the current research undertaking. Needless to say, knowledge of what is thought of to be inducers of interlanguage errors would serve to open up the horizon for further, more enriching but potentially subtler investigation avenues. After all, unlike some other linguistic enterprises, we have not only sufficed with seeking to arrive at a more mature understanding of the linguistic phenomenon at issue here for purely theoretical purposes. Rather, we also have aimed for furnishing a research-led account on how the advert impacts of at least some error-inducing variables could be reduced. In a nutshell, we have striven via this learner language stress structures investigative study to render our study of pertinence to the linguistician who is keen on unravelling more and more aspects of interlanguage phonology inherent make-up, acquisition route and so forth. We have, by the same token, endeavoured to bring to the forefront of teachers and syllabus designers and learners a range of learning truths which were concealed from their vision essentially due to the dearth of studies into what shapes accentual pattern learning.

This current research enquiry is, we must be reminded, not our initial foray into the interlanguage phonology at the local level. It is actually a more extensive, wider-ranged attempt in our pursuit for a more comprehensibly comprehensive account on the interlanguage phonology of the category of learners under scrutiny. Our first exploration into this linguistic phenomenon was conducted a few years ago and, what is more, it was wholly segmental in orientation. In that study we carried out, amongst other procedures, an error-analysis-based oral production test for getting an adequate grasp on the various hallmarks intrinsic to the advanced learners' aptitude

vis-à-vis English closing and centring diphthongs. That previous study paved the way for us to delve more profoundly into the learners' approximative systems and gave rise to many and varied compound puzzles. Having carried out this earlier study meant that we were more likely to devise a better-grounded procedure to follow for the current study since we were not alien to these study terrains. It would, likewise, potentially entail that the magnitude of falling into procedural errors, whose explanation lies in the naivety of the investigator as such, would be reduced.

It ought to be recalled, moreover, that no study of this undertaking was conducted at the department of Letters and English Language, Frères Mentouri University, Constantine. At the very least, as far as we are aware, no comparable prosodic undertaking (in terms of its depth, orientation, aims, questions, hypotheses tested, methodological procedures adopted and so on) had already been fulfilled, was being undertaken or even initiated when our choice fell on this area of enquiry *per se*. It is, as a matter of fact, the fact that this interlanguage aspect had not been chartered by our predecessors that gave rise to the first ever flame of scholarly interest out of which more eager scholarly zest gained momentum. The only research enterprise which attempted to study the interlanguage phonology of Algerian learners was that conducted by Beghoul (2007). Substantially diverse in orientation and pedagogic as well as linguistic appeal and application though this study is, as regards its exploration of the learners' accentual aptitude it is rather limited. This is crucially due to the researcher's in-depth analyses of the learners' segmental interlanguage phonology. Our study, by contrast, does not intend to address segmental interlanguage aptitude as an area of central concern as such. This, none the less, does not signify that segmental properties of words are ruled out and utterly dismissed as irrelevant elements to take into consideration for arriving at a wholesale account on learners' accentual pattern performance. No analyses of stress structures acquisition are remotely plausible without relying on the stimulus words segmental constitution. Notwithstanding this inevitable overlap, we made

no intentional attempt to look specifically for reasons fuelling the emergence of vocalic and consonantal errors unless it bears immediately on accentual pattern departures from the norms. It must have been abundantly obvious by now that our study and that of Beghoul (2007) do complement each other in patently perfect ways.

The three data-collection tools we have deployed for carrying out this research (students' and teachers' questionnaires as well as the oral production diagnostic test) have led to the disambiguation of quite an array of questions and queries raised at the outset of the study. Advanced learners are still grappling with assigning stress to the right syllable or are totally failing to impart due, native-like prominence to any of the stressable syllables in a number of words. This does exhibit, amongst other things, that sheer prolongation of exposure to the target language is no guarantee whatsoever of prosodic-knowledge growth and expansion. Although the participating learners have studied English as their main area of expertise at the tertiary level for ten semesters, this length of time has not contributed in any significant linguistic maturity regarding usage of English stress placement. The findings gleaned out of many items in the students' and teachers' survey do seem to demystify this puzzling state of affairs and offer many clarificatory clues. Learners' ill-formed allocations of English primary accent are to a great extent attributable to basically pedagogical settings and learner variables. Put in plainer English, a number of loops in the learning chain are either too weak to hold the chain in place or are missing altogether and these appear to bear immediately on the classroom setting atmosphere. The glaring marginalisation of the irreplaceable role of feedback (both teacher-fronted and peer-initiated) is one of the missing loops. Shallowness in the deployment of effective pronunciation-promoting learning strategies is yet another missing component therein. This second constituent does encompass a number of interwoven sub-sets. The following is an attempt to pinpoint more lucidly a more fertile conceptualisation of the value of feedback and learning strategies along

with how they ought to be made use of for ensuring better learning outcomes. Amidst the discussion, reference is made to a recapitulation of relevant major findings of our research. Feedback has to be provided far more frequently and the teacher of oral expression ought to make certain that they devise painstakingly carefully a proper roadmap to follow for feedback provision. Out of both the teachers and the students' accounts on the extent to which teachers corrections are employed, we deduced that feedback is viewed at best as a peripherally important component of the oral expression classroom and at worst as a mere optional extra that is brought into their practices predominantly when there is nothing else for them to do. Both conceptualisations of the true value of feedback are misleadingly unsound, we must assert here. This is the case due to a diverse range of closely interlinked reasons. If students do not receive feedback when errors crop up in their output, this may be construed on the student' part to mean that their performance is error-free thereby no further efforts are required for them to rid their performance of the existing deficiencies. This is essentially because teachers are, in their learners' gauges, custodians of decent, approved-off linguistic behaviour. This, by implication, would entail that if teachers do not, as a rule, attend to their learners' goofs as they arise, then what these teachers are doing is that they are distancing themselves from their revered preachly position. Absence of feedback or otherwise its sporadic manifestation has yet another drawback. We all know that scaffolding is one of the most common scenarios at work in language learning and in most manner of acquisition. Brilliant learners are always turned to for guidance. It is these brilliant learners as such who could distort the teachers' own otherwise prestigious status in their learners' eyes. A weak learner whose errors are invariably spotted and corrected by a better partner, and seldom attended to by their teacher, will start to lose confidence in their teacher's credentials as such. This is partly because teachers are looked at as suppliers of good and combaters of evil by their learners right from the first grade. These weak learners, to be more

explicit, will begin to think that as long as their teacher failed to offer them the requisite type of guidance regarding their errors, then presumably this teacher does not themselves know what is correct in the first place. Therefore, feedback is an indispensable element in the learning setting because it, in effect, contributes, at least minimally, in the preservation of the teacher's image itself. After all, most of the teachers of oral expression locally are themselves non-native speakers whose accents may exhibit some anomalies. One way of filling the void and guaranteeing that their tuition will cater for their learners' needs and expectations is through constantly providing feedback.

Of course, we are by no means arguing that feedback should only be constant no matter how it is conducted. Indeed, there is a wealth of literature on how to best mange one's feedback (Derwing, 2008). It offers the right prescription for teachers and these prescriptions are mostly research-based. However, a word of caution should be sounded here: what works for teachers of speaking may not necessarily work for teachers of writing and vice versa. What works for beginning learners, intermediate learners and advanced learners does also differ. So, teachers of oral expression must be well versed in what works for their particular subject and their students' level as well. What should be done, however, is that feedback should have its presence in all their classes irrespective of the nature of the topic handled or the lesson's own objectives. Timing, then, is paramount. Another thing that ought to take place is that the teacher should make sure that all the feedback that is provided in class is taken down. This move would raise the learners' awareness about the true weight of feedback and will help them to avoid at least the errors that were made by their peers in their future use of language. Moreover, the teacher themselves should also try and take down the most recurrently corrected errors. This will help them in later classroom assessment. They will, for instance, inform their classes that learners who avoid the corrected widespread errors would have a bonus mark, while those who keep making the same

error over and over make may well run the risk of getting a minus. It is indeed like this that we can hope to impart a further enriching dimension to the classroom, which may eventually serve in the ultimate fruition of teaching speaking.

Learning strategies are, we maintain, amongst the learning tools of which any language learner should have at their disposal a rich repertoire. Learners, when left to their own devises, cannot readily assemble the most fruitful and robust of such strategies. This, hence, would entail that pedagogic intervention is one way of catering for this particular type of needs. The students' survey deployed in our study unearthed that students possess neither an adequate grasp on the likely merits of learning strategies nor have they amassed over the years a minimal number of such devices. Even those who managed to enumerate some useful strategies necessary for boosting pronunciation, they furnished shallow, inconclusive accounts most of which lacking precision and clarity. This state of affairs could well have been the immediate outcome of shortage of lessons tailored fundamentally to fill in this void or at least introducing the learners to the wealthy universe of learning strategies. Instead of devoting unduly excessive amounts of class time to merely bringing up discussions of arid or semi-arid topics the content of which has been rehearsed by learners, some of these lessons should be more theoretically oriented. Of course, by theoretical orientation, it is not meant that the teacher of speaking should become a teacher of linguistics. What is meant by this is that learners should be assigned the preparation of topics bearing on learning strategies and their immediate relevance to their individual learning venture as a whole. Such lessons' aims would be manifold. Firstly, they would bring onto the forefront of learners' attention that like any other non-linguistic ordeal, there are ample tactics and tangible shortcuts which, when properly employed, are highly bound to ease up the pain, anxiety and indecisiveness intrinsically associated with learning and pave the way for lesser pain, lesser anxiety and, above all, will make them more capable of making apt decisions for what to do next

and how to go about this new ordeal. Secondly, because such discussion topics are straightforwardly inked to their own learning atmospheres, their readiness to take in and absorb the shared factual knowledge would potentially go higher. After all, the presentations and ensuing discussions and question-answering scenarios would have to be enriched with real language acquisition settings, not fictitious or dreamt-up ones. It is essentially case-studies which encompass such real-life proven learning strategies.

Furthermore, the most reliable sources out of which treasures of learning strategies are available are those studies reporting on what highly successful language learners have done to reach their laudably good linguistic accomplishments. We must argue that purely theoretical discussions where solely definitions, types and projected pros of learning strategies ought to be avoided. This is partly because learners would be less inclined to pay due attention to abstract ideas and partly because what purely theoretical discussions may offer may not be easily applicable or truly half as promising and rewarding as their advocates would purport.

Now time is supposedly ripe to introduce several strategies which, we contend, could be of substantial efficacy to the bewildered language learner who does not have the faintest inkling or has but a confusingly vague understanding of what learning strategies actually stand for. Right at the outset, however, it should be recalled that what we are addressing here are those strategies which, we believe, could be fairly empowering for a swifter, less irksome pronunciation acquisition. No analogy-making is encouraged, though. In other words, what may work for pronunciation acquisition may not necessarily be readily safely applicable for the acquisition of morphology, syntax and vocabulary or indeed any other level of language. It goes without saying that it may well be accurate to argue that some strategies are potentially partly generalizable. This is not what propelled us to argue against a hasty application of these strategies. In fact, we do trust that language is a unified continuum (the virtually-drawn boundaries have been set for

purely linguistic convenience purposes) and that what may help learners at one level could, when properly integrated, serve to help them at other levels as well. The reason that made us launch that deterring argument, hence, is that we cannot vouch for a guaranteed usefulness of these strategies for learning other linguistic aspects fundamentally because we have no research-borne evidence to back up our claims.

Discussions now would call for returning to pronunciation-acquisition-boosting strategies and what we have in store on this highly critical front. Of course, it would be utterly unrealistic of us to maintain that these strategies would work for everyone wrestling with thorny pronunciation predicaments. This is predominantly because we cannot foresee what individual variability there is concerning the very definition of pronunciation-acquisition success and failure.

To start with, beginning learners should not expect themselves to become eloquent speakers immediately after they step into the university gates. The absence of this anticipation will have the constructive impact of reassuring them that all what they have been doing, all the efforts they have been making, is not a waste of time. It is indeed only natural that most learners would go through comparable verbally-stagnant stages. Most learners, during the first few months, profusely grumble about their inability to string a sentence together, let alone linguistically act in accordance with native norms. This is essentially because the mind needs some time span to make sense of this alien incoming code. The mind, to frame it differently, cannot send signals to the speech-producing apparatus unless it has received adequate amounts of input. The equation at work, hence, is that the more input it receives, the readier it gets for it to order the speech-producing mechanism. So, the learners, right at the outset of their learning journeys, should try their utmost to assemble and make sense of linguistic input without caring overly obsessively about their inability to produce comparable output.

It is of pivotal importance to mention that at this preliminary stage, learners should not care too much about how their accents flow. It is only natural that departures from native norms will be the norm for their accents at the early stages. This implies that they should not dread that if they carry on witnessing no tangible growth, their accents will never improve and that they would end up becoming certified underachievers. This will not be the case provided that what is to be addressed here is well-assimilated and adhered to. This early phase ought to be devoted literally wholly to two objectives: a) learners ought to amass as much semantic as well as morpho-syntactic knowledge as possible; b) they should strive to make their aural mechanism accustomed to the new sound system and do not get obsessed with how to become good users of this code. Not having at one's linguistic disposal adequate knowledge of English grammar and not possessing a rich enough vocabulary repertoire will function as a cumbersome handicap whose adverse impact will keep thwarting their attempts to improve pronunciation when time is ripe to attend to this linguistic component. Moreover, grammar and vocabulary are not half as time-consuming to pick up as is pronunciation, and mastery of these aspects will provide the learner with desperately needed determination to go higher in the linguistic ladder because of the confidence they will have gained out of mastery of these two aspects. A good command of these layers will pave the way for truly rewarding pronunciation learning. While getting the hang of English grammar and vocabulary the learner will be concurrently procuring more familiarity with the new sound system by sheer exposure to spoken English. The exposure, however, does have to come in sporadic spells since the aim is essentially familiarising the learner with the new sound patterns, not teaching them this new system. When this essentially preparatory phase is over, the learner will supposedly be readier, more willing and able to soldier on and move onto phase two, which is, in effect, intentional pronunciation acquisition. Intentionality of acquisition is not uni-layered, though. As a matter of fact, it encapsulates a number of elements all of which will work

together and none can safely be ignored or its contributions undermined for some reason or other. Being a constituent of spoken language as such, pronunciation acquisition cannot be decontextualised and reliance on the spoken medium is unequivocally of central importance. There are, during the first phase of exposure, more areas of restriction than areas of total liberty as regards what is advisable to do. In other words, when listening out to spoken language for the sake of pronunciation improvement, what learners should pay virtually exclusive heed to are the sounds and sound patterns used by the speakers. Conscious efforts should be made to avoid caring about the factual or lexical content of the input data. This is fundamentally because keeping the attention focused on the manifestation of certain sound properties will double the chances of learners being more able to decipher the differing hallmarks of the sounds under scrutiny. Meanwhile, working in tandem with this aural strategy, learners should read relevant phonetics and phonology literature which address the self-same sounds or sound patterns constituting the listening foci. This strategy will help them develop multiple linguistic skills: a) they will gain familiarity with phonetic jargon deployed by scholars in the field b) they will master the phonetic properties of the sounds being targeted and c) they will gradually extinguish some fear and misconceptions about phonetics being a wholly theoretical field whose purported applications in real language-acquisition scenarios are a downright myth. It is highly recommended that learners, mainly beginning ones, suffice with using phonetics books with enclosed CDs or DVDs since such supplementary tools do complement the objectives of the raw materials available in the book.

Another equally viable strategy whose implementation is prone to facilitate the learning process is that learners, particularly novice ones, should listen solely to educated native speakers of only one standard variety be it American, British, Canadian or Australian. Exposure to speakers of more than one variety is baffling and likely to prolong the time-span needed for

reaching sufficient acquaintance with only one variety. Beginning learners may be perilously led to believe that they should be adequately familiar with the pronunciation features of at least two varieties, British and American. Of course, we cannot legitimately argue that this claim is wrong, but we should point out that beginning phases are not to be devoted to intentional efforts to acquire aspects of more than one accent because such an obsession with accomplishing this phonological variety is more of a predicament than a cure. This is essentially because if a learner is too ambitious and endeavours to learn and apply the phonological trappings of two accents, then they will end up achieving partial mastery of the two varieties, which may potentially run counter to what ought to be the ultimate goal. We would, accordingly, argue that the chapter of getting attuned with other aspects should be opened up only when the learner has arrived at a sufficient command of one accent. After all, no substantial differences set the various accents apart. Therefore, once the groundwork of one accent is mastered, command of the traits of other accents will be accomplished in a relatively shorter period of time.

Moreover, and still on the issue of accent choice, we would recommend that beginning learners would do well to go for only one educated native speaker whose linguistic performance as a whole appeals to them and try to emulate this particular speaker. Although educated speakers of one standard variety, say the English English variety, are reported to use the same speech pattern, this is actually not a hard-science fact. Individual variation emanating crucially from parental and sibling influence, neighbourhood surrounding, and travelling could have imprinted some irremovable, though vanishingly little, traces of dialects and sociolects peculiar to their own place of birth. Of course, most dialectal trappings gradually go away over time, but self-evidently there would always be tiny doses of residues which will never let go of even the highly posh of accents. Variation is potentially a guaranteed source of destruction and it does slow down success. It is, therefore, safer that learners listen only to one native speaker and try to step by step

make sense of how they produce sounds, how they string sounds together into higher units. Our perspective should, we must warn, not be conceived to entail that exposure to many native speakers should be banned altogether. Of course, this is not what we are trying to dispel here. When learners are listening for mimicry purposes i.e. intentional aural-training (which ought to be done fairly frequently), their aim would potentially be shattered by targeting the accents of many speakers; when listening merely for unintentional aural-training; it is not as counter-productive as for the former aim. A word of caution should be sounded, though; even for the latter aim, only native speakers of one educated variety should constitute the input providers.

The common denominator of the above error-inducing variables is that they all fall neatly under the umbrella category of intra-linguistic causes of errors. It is worthy of mention that our study has sought to work out whether language transfer is one of the strongest impairing variable. The various findings our research tools yielded do point in one direction: cross-linguistic influence could be rated as one of the error-causing variables. Of course, the adverse contribution of this factor as such is outweighed by the presence of more intralingual categories of error sources. This, however, should by no means lead us to draw the faulty conclusion that as long as this factor is not one of the strongest inhibitory ones, it is not worthy of adequate pedagogical intervention. After all, if in our study we arrived at this estimate of the impact of this factor, it does not intuitively follow that this is wholly accurate. As the accentual pattern of the advanced learners' interlanguage has not as yet received extensive empirical investigation, further studies may prove that interference from Arabic and French are a major learning hindrance.

Following this line of reasoning, a set of recommendations are in order. The potential adverse contribution of cross-linguistic influence should be nipped in the bud. Needless to say, this practice would be more constructive and easier to implement than constant remedial work that the arising errors will perforce impose. The integration into the phonetics syllabus or that of

linguistics should constitute the kernel of this pedagogic practice. This is essentially because learners seem to come to university equipped with some misconceptions about relatedness between English and French pronunciation. This misconception could have been self-framed or classroom-instilled. It could be self-framed in the sense that due to the overt matches between English and French orthographical make-up, students may foresee resemblances at other linguistic levels. On the other hand, it could be classroom-instilled because throughout the middle and secondary school years many teachers would depend on French whenever transition of knowledge is impeded by non-comprehension of English. This could well have induced the learners to envisage the existence of linguistic sisterhood relatedness between English and French.

All in all, we have tried throughout the various phases of the present undertaking to gain and project as much insight into the acquisition on the part of advanced Algerian learners of English primary accentual patterns as was feasibly possible. We have done our utmost to fill up at least a diminutive slot inherent in the research into Algerian learners' accentual pattern properties. Due to the substantial scope of studies of this genre, our own study does indeed open up mammoth horizons for more and diversified research avenues.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

Appendix 1

Constantine University 1

Department of Arts and English Language

Academic Year 2013-2014

Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of our research project which aims, amongst a host of other things, to analyse the interlanguage accentual patterns of advanced learners of English. Please, answer the questions figuring herein by ticking off the right box when applicable or writing on the dotted lines. I hereby express my heartfelt, lasting gratitude to you for your collaboration.

1) Since when have you been a university tutor?

……

2) How many times have you taught postgraduate English majors?

Once ☐ **Twice** ☐ **Thrice** ☐ **Four times** ☐ **More (please specify)……**

3) Throughout your English-teaching span, which of the following would you confidently rate to be the areas with the most trouble-spots for your learners?

English morpho-syntax ☐

Diction ☐

English segmental system ☐

English accentual patterns ☐

4) Regardless of your answer to the above question, which has proven to be the most challenging for your learners?

Abiding by the native norms in producing the vowels and consonants in the commonest words ☐

Complying with the stress patterning of syllables ☐

They are both equally challenging ☐

5) Your experience has taught you that:

The students who are better at vocalic and consonantal articulations are equally good at the production of stressed syllables ☐

There is no patent interrelatedness between the two linguistic aptitudes ☐

6) Do you discern any upgraded command of stress assignment on the part of the post-graduate students?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

7) How do you set about tackling your students' stress-allocation errors?

You elucidate the vital importance of accurate stress placement in retaining their speech melody and rhythm ☐

You pinpoint how crucial stress mastery for an easy comprehension of spoken discourse is ☐

You do not attend to these errors altogether ☐

Others, **please specify**:

……
……
……

8) Many believe in the tangible usefulness of the Contrastive Analysis findings in the sphere of pronunciation teaching. Does this, to your mind, apply to the teaching of stress to Algerian learners?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

9) Can you kindly explain why this is so?

……
……
……
……

10) Have you ever conducted any class-room based large-scale or small-scale research into the usability of the Contrastive Analysis findings pertaining to the stress-learning enterprise?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

11) If yes, can you enumerate some of the conclusions it enabled you to draw:

……
……
……
……

12) Mention any other theories which, you contend, would supersede the viable applicability of Contrastive Analysis in their immediate usefulness regarding the teaching of stress?

……
…….

13) Have you attempted to put them to test?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

14) Stress-acquisition-wise, what inferences have you arrived at?

……
……
……
……..

15) Do you entertain the belief that phonetics-and-pronunciation-books-outlined guidelines are a sufficiently enough toolkit for the students to procure a satisfactory mastery of stress usage?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

16) Can you provide an explanatory account?

……
……
……..

17) Do you teach English stress in an explicit fashion?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

18) When addressing issues bearing on stress allocation of some ill-accented words, do you customarily

Bring into the discussion some defining hallmarks of the quintessentially common rules of other words complying with the same pattern ☐

Only in passing say that this word is stressed here whilst this one is stressed there without giving any guidelines ☐

19) If you have gone for the second alternative in question '18' above, could this be because:

You do believe that English accent assignment teachability is a sheer myth ☐

Errors of stress assignment are not worth giving corrective feedback about ☐

The responsibility of teaching stress lies solely with the teachers of Phonetics ☐

All of the above ☐

Others, please mention them:

……
……
……

20) Students' pronunciation bears traces of:

Their dialectal Arabic accent ☐

The French sound system ☐

These two combined together ☐

Their accent is wholly idiosyncratic and bears no resemblances to any other linguistic system they possess ☐

21) What, do you think, triggers the emergence of stress-assignment goofs in the students' rehearsed and spontaneous output?

……
……
……
……
……

22) Will you say that your students' attitude towards mastering English stress rules is that of disinterest?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

23) If yes, this can be on account of:

Struggling to expunge their grammatical errors ☐

Oblivion to the paramount importance of stress in producing and perceiving spoken English ☐

Others; please mention them:

……
……
……
……
……

24) The brand-new communicative language teaching approach seems to have outshone all the traditional ones. Do you think that this hyper-emphasis on primarily getting one's message out clearly constitutes a barrier between students and a proper mastery of stress rules because most of the interlocutors involved in the classroom discussions share virtually identical linguistic background?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

25) Can you back up your answer, please?

……
……
……
……
……

26) Will your students hold successful conversational exchanges with other non-native speakers of English?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

27) Will they run into any awkward exchanges with native speakers?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

28) Jenkins and her followers subscribe to the idea that stress-placement errors should not give rise to any conversational breakdown in non-native speakers' interactions. Do you support their claim?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

29) Can you please provide some illustrative account?

……
……
……

30) When teaching advanced learners, you tend to:

Fairly frequently highlight that near-native mastery of English should be their primary preoccupation ☐

Foreign-accented speech should be the norm because one should preserve his/her identity ☐

31) Does students' reluctance to pick up an error-free accent emanate from the fact that when it comes to pronunciation, the ill-formed pronunciations are looked upon as sheer abnormalities which do not have any adverse impact on the resultant output?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

32) Do you underscore the importance of stress in the maintenance of their speech melody?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

33) Would you please explain your answer?

……
……
……
……

34) Are students well prompted to know and respect stress rules because these rules help them produce vowels accurately?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

35) Your professional expertise is indubitably capable of filling up some residual slots in this questionnaire of ours thereby rendering it less comprehensive. We have, accordingly, allocated the following dotted lines to make filling them out possible. Please, feel free to append all what you gauge is prone to enrich the questionnaire and solidify the findings of our research.

……
……
……
……
……

……
……
……
……
……

Thank you ever so much for your time and energy

APPENDIX TWO

Appendix 2

Constantine University 1

Department of Arts and English Language

Academic year 2013-2014

Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of our research which aims to analyze the interlanguage accentual patterns of advanced learners of English. Please, answer the questions figuring herein by ticking off the right box when applicable or writing on the dotted lines. I hereby express my heartfelt, lasting gratitude to you for your collaboration.

1) Since when have you been an English language major?

2007 ☐ **2008** ☐ **2009** ☐

02) Regarding pronunciation errors' gravity and impact on a smoothly-flowing communication, they are:

Less destructive than the grammatical and lexical ones ☐

More destructive than the grammatical and lexical ones ☐

Of equal impact on communication ☐

I have never thought of this ☐

03) Which of the forthcoming pronunciation points has been the most challenging for you over the years?

English vowels ☐ **English consonants** ☐ **English stress assignment** ☐

04) Do you believe that students who are good at the articulation of individual sounds are equally so at the production of stressed syllables?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

05) Has your growing knowledge on how the English pronunciation system works helped you in assigning stress to words?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

06) When you are out of the classroom, how much time do you devote to learning English stress?

07) There are certainly many learning strategies for the language learner to get over the difficulties of stress. Cite some of the most effective ones you have used to master English stress.

08) While listening to spoken English, you pay more attention to:

The overall meaning content ☐

The morpho-syntactic structures ☐

Word meaning ☐

The articulation of vowels and consonants ☐

The words and larger stretches of discourse stress pattern ☐

None of the above ☐

All of the above ☐

09) Is watching films with Arabic subtitles more profitable for stress learning than listening to audio clips?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

10) Learning the stress placement mechanism is said to be very difficult. Which of the following would you grade the most effective for reducing the errors you make?

Doing transcription exercises on a sensibly regular basis ☐

Listening out to how stress manifests itself in audio clips ☐

Memorizing the stress rules outlined in phonetics books ☐

11) In your efforts to learn English pronunciation, you:

Attempt to imitate a native speaker as a model ☐

Use dictionaries to explore the sound system ☐

Both ☐

None ☐

12) As far as English stress assignment rules are concerned, is there sufficient correction on the part of your teacher in the speaking classes?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

13) Do you like it when your teacher corrects you?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

14) Are you content with the amount of teaching you get in Spoken Language Proficiency classes about English stress?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

15) When listening to your non-native teachers of the various modules, you often:

Accept their pronunciation as wholly accurate ☐

Look up newly encountered words in the dictionary for verification ☐

16) Do you encourage other students whom you trust to be good at pronunciation to constantly give you corrective feedback?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

17) Explain why, please:

……
……
……

18) Have you ever been interested in what the language teaching approaches have to say about learning?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

19) Have you, over the years, used any pronunciation-promoting software tools?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

20) If your answer is yes, would you kindly name it (them)?

……
……
……...

21) Have you ever used Praat software to improve your pronunciation?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

22) If your answer to question 16 is yes, would you please explain how helpful you have found it?

23) Will you call yourself a devoted user of dictionaries to learn the pronunciation of new vocabulary items?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

24) If your answer is yes, which dictionaries do you frequently use?

Print ☐ **Electronic** ☐

25) When using electronic dictionaries, do you:

Suffice with the listening out to the pre-recorded pronunciation of the individual words ☐

Depend on the phonemic transcription only and never use the above feature ☐

Use them both together ☐

26) In your everyday self-initiated usage of dictionaries, do you often:

Check only the meaning of the new words? ☐

Check both the meaning and the pronunciation of vowels and consonants? ☐

Check also the stressed syllable? ☐

27) A number of features work together to make stressed syllables stand out in their respective phonological environments. Can you mention them?

28) Regarding their impact on word stress, prefixes:

Make stress shift one syllable forward ☐

Make stress shift one syllable backward ☐

Do not impact stress placement altogether ☐

I do not know ☐

29) Do suffixes behave exactly like prefixes?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **I do not know** ☐

30) In compound words:

The first element of the compound is always stressed ☐

The second element is always stressed ☐

Both the first and the second receive primary stress ☐

It all depends on the nature of the compound ☐

I do not know ☐

31) Other rules; please mention them:

32) Have you ever had a chat with a native speaker?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

33) When listening to spoken English, you notice that:

Some syllables are louder than others ☐

All syllables are loud ☐

All syllables are pronounced softly ☐

You have never paid attention ☐

34) Do English speakers produce all syllables with equal speed?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

35) Please, explain

……
……
……...

36) How would you rate your command of French?

Excellent ☐

Good ☐

Weak ☐

Almost non-existent ☐

37) Globally speaking, are there more similarities than differences between the English and French linguistic systems?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **I do not know** ☐

38) Have you ever wanted to sound like a native speaker?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

39) When you speak English, do you want to preserve your national, cultural and linguistic identity?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

40) Can you take the time to add any recommendations about matters not mentioned herein and which, you believe, enhance our understanding of how stress is learnt and how and what should be done to eradicate the existing problems?

……
……

……
……
……

Thank you ever so much for your time and energy.

APPENDIX THREE

Appendix 3

Exhaustive List of Token Words Used in the Oral Production Diagnostic Test

C: Consonant

V: Vowel

CV: Stressed Syllable

1. Two-Syllable Words

a. Stress on the First Syllable (Verbs: Five Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Enter	**CV—CV**
Envy	**CV--CV**
Open	**CV--VC**
Worship	**CV--CVC**
Whisper	**CV**--CCV

b. Stress on the Second Syllable (Verbs: Eleven Token)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Produce	**CCV--CCVC**
Maintain	**CVC--CVC**
Occur	**V--CV**
Obtain	**VC--CVC**
Omit	**V--CVC**
Persuade	**CV--CVC**
Surprise	**CV--CCVC**
Dragoon	**CCV--CVC**
Obey	**V--CV**
Assault	**V--CVCC**
Protect	**CCV--CVCC**

c. Stress on the First Syllable (Nouns: Nine Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Women	**CV—CVC**
Honey	**CV--CV**
Cabbage	**CV--CVC**
Cotton	**CV--CVC**
Bottle	**CV--CVC**
Penny	**CV--CV**
Forty	**CV--CV**
Actor	**VC--CV**
Teacher	**CV--CV**

d. Stress on the First Syllable (Adjectives: Three Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Sudden	**CV—CVC**
Clever	**CCV--CV**
Rigid	**CV--CVC**

e. Stress on the Second Syllable (Nouns: Nine Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Canoe	**CV--CV**
Ado	**V--CV**
Machine	**CV--CVC**
Result	**CV--CVCC**
Festoon	**CVC--CVC**
Balloon	**CV--CVC**
Cartoon	**CV--CVC**
Disease	**CV--CVC**
Tonight	**CV—CVC**

f. Stress on the Second Syllable (Adjectives: Eight Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Abrupt	**CV—CVCC**
Sublime	**CVC--CVC**
Alone	**V--CVC**
Aloof	**V--CVC**
Polite	**CV--CVC**
Asleep	**VC--CVC**
Complete	**CVCC--CVC**
Mature	**CV—CV**

2. Three Syllable Words

3. Stress on the First Syllable (Verbs: Five Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Incubate	**VC—CCV--CVC**
Recognize	**CV--CVC--CVC**
Purify	**CCV--CV--CV**
Decorate	**CV--CV--CVC**
Annotate	**V—CV--CVC**

a. Stress on the Penultimate Syllable (Verbs: Thirteen Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Resemble	**CV—CVC—CVC**
Surrender	**CV--CVC--CV**
Extinguish	**VCC—CVCC--CVC**
Distinguish	**CVC--CVCC--CVC**
Astonish	**VC—CV--CVC**
Alleviate	**V—CV--CVVC**
Inhabit	**VC--CV--CVC**
Prohibit	**CCV—CV--CVC**
Develop	**CV--CV--CVC**
Abolish	**V—CV--CVC**
Humiliate	**CCV—CV--CVC**

b. Stress on the Penultimate Syllable (Adjectives: Nine Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Hilarious	**CV--CV--CVC**
Precarious	**CCV—CV--CVC**
Familiar	**CV--CV--CV**
Informal	**VC—CV--CVC**
Fastidious	**CVC--CV--CCVC**
Tremendous	**CCV—CVC--CVC**
Prestigious	**CCVC--CV--CVC**
Stupendous	**CCCV--CVC--CVC**
Abnormal	**VC--CV—CVC**

c. Stress on the First Syllable (Adjectives: Three Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Fabulous	**CV--CCV--CVC**
Sensitive	**CVC--CV--CVC**
Beautiful	**CCV--CV—CVC**

d. Stress on the First Syllable (Nouns: Thirteen Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Calendar	**CV--CVC--CV**
Instrument	**VC--CCCV--CVCC**
Lavender	**CV--CVC--CV**
Jealousy	**CV--CV--CV**
Jupiter	**CCV--CV--CV**
Harvester	**CV--CVC--CV**
Monitor	**CV--CV--CV**
Sentiment	**CVC--CV--CVCC**
Amateur	**V--CV--CV**
Penalty	**CV--CV--CCV**
Formula	**CV--CCV--CV**
Carpenter	**CV--CVC--CV**
Unison	**CV--CV--CVC**

e. Stress on the Penultimate Syllable (Nouns: Seven Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Assembly	**V--CVC—CCV**
Acquaintance	**V--CCVC--CVCC**
Pedestrian	**CV--CVC--CCVC**
Manoeuvre	**CV--CV--CV**
Bazooka	**CV--CV--CV**
Attention	**V--CVC--CVC**
Detention	**CV--CVC--CVC**

4. Four-Syllable Words

a. Stress on the First Syllable (Verbs: Two Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Characterise	**CV--CV--CCV--CVC**
Criminalize	**CCV--CV--CV--CVC**

b. Stress on the Second Syllable (Verbs: Nine Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Acclimatise	**V--CV--CV—CVC**
Familiarise	**CV--CV--CCV--CVC**
Exemplify	**V--CCV--CCCV--CV**
Elucidate	**V--CV--CV--CVC**
Enumerate	**V--CV--CV--CVC**
Electrify	**V--CVC--CCV--CV**
Apologise	**V—CV--CV--CVC**
Computerise	**CVC--CCV--CV--CVC**
Collaborate	**CV--CV--CV--CVC**

c. Stress on the First Syllable (Adjectives: Four Tokens)

Words	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Solitary	**CV--CV--CV--CV**
Monetary	**CV--CV--CV--CV**

Necessary	**CV--CV--CV--CV**
Mandatory	**CVC--CV--CV--CV**

d. Stress on the Second Syllable: (Adjectives: Three Tokens)

Words	**Syllabic and Accentual Structure**
Accusatory	**V—CCV—CV—CV--CV**
Compatible	**CVC—CV—CV--CVC**
Conventional	**CVC—CVC—CV--CVC**

e. Stress on the Second Syllable (Nouns: Six Tokens)

Word	**Syllabic and Accentual Structure**
Paralysis	**CV—CV--CV--CVC**
Eternity	**V--CV--CV--CV**
Experiment	**VCC—CV--CV--CVCC**
Acknowledgement	**VC--CV--CV--CCVCC**
Fraternity	**CCV--CV--CV--CV**
Community	**CV--CCV--CV--CV**

f. Stress on the Penultimate Syllable (Nouns: Two Tokens)

Word	**Syllabic and Accentual Structure**
Competition	**CVC--CV--CV--CVC**
Constitution	**CVC--CCV--CCV—CVC**

g. Stress on the Initial Syllable (Nouns: Four Tokens)

Word	**Syllabic and Accentual Structure**
Calculator	**CV--CCCV--CV--CV**
Territory	**CV--CV--CV--CV**
Dictionary	**CVC--CV--CV--CV**
Escalator	**VC--CV--CV--CV**

5. Affix Words Ending in Stress-Bearing Suffixes:

a. Words Ending in the Stress-Bearing Suffixes ‘ee’ and ‘eer’ (Nouns: Four Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Refugee	**CV--CCV—<u>CV</u>**
Mountain	**<u>CVC</u>--CVC**
Mountaineer	**CVC--CV--<u>CV</u>**
Interview	**<u>VC</u>--CV--CCV**
Interviewee	**VC--CV--CCV--<u>CV</u>**
Address	**V--<u>CCVC</u>**
Addressee	**VCCV--<u>CV</u>**

b. Words Ending in the Stress-Bearing Suffix ‘ette’ and ‘esque’ (Nouns and Adjectives: Five Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Cigar	**<u>CV</u>—CV**
Cigarette	**CV--CV--<u>CVC</u>**
Picture	**<u>CV</u>--CCV**
Picturesque	**CVC--CV--<u>CVCC</u>**
Grotesque	**CCV--<u>CVCC</u>**

c. Words Ending in the Stress-Bearing suffix ‘self’ (Pronouns: Four Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Yourself	**CV--<u>CVCC</u>**
Herself	**CV--<u>CVCC</u>**
Myself	**CV--<u>CVCC</u>**
Ourselves	**V--<u>CVCC</u>**

d. Words Ending in the Stress-Bearing Ending ‘ess’ (Verbs: Four Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Depress	**CV—<u>CCVC</u>**
Obsess	**VC--<u>CVC</u>**
Possess	**CV--<u>CVC</u>**
Confess	**CVC--<u>CVC</u>**

6. Words Ending in Stress-Neutral Suffixes:

a. Words Ending in Stress-Neutral Suffixes (Verbs, Adjectives and Nouns: Six Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Comfort	**CVC—CVC**
Comfortable	**CVC--CV--CV--CVC**
Astonish	**V--CCV--CVC**
Astonishing	**V--CCV--CV--CVCC**
Alarm	**V--CVC**
Alarming	**V--CV--CVCC**
Punish	**CV--CVC**
Punishment	**CV--CV--CVCC**
Glory	**CCV--CV**
Glorify	**CCV--CV--CV**
Ample	**VC--CVC**
Amplify	**VC--CCV--CV**

b. Words Ending in the Stress-Neutral Suffixes (Adjectives and Nouns: Five Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Assure	**V--CV**
Assuredly	**V--CV--CCV**
Selfish	**CVC--CVC**
Selfishly	**CVC--CVC--CV**
Child	**CVCC**
Childlike	**CVCC--CVC**
Correct	**CV--CVCC**
Correction	**CV—CVC--CVC**
Yellow	**CV--CV**
Yellowness	**CV--CV--CVC**

7. Affix Words Ending in Stress-Shifting Suffixes

a. Words Ending in the Stress-Shifting Suffixes (Adjectives and Nouns: Six Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Advantage	**VC--CVC--CVC**
Advantageous	**VC—CVC--CV--CVC**
Courage	**CV--CVC**
Courageous	**CV--CV--CVC**
Photograph	**CV--CV--CCVC**
Photography	**CV—CV--CCV--CV**
Proverb	**CCV--CVC**
Proverbial	**CCV--CV--CVC**
Injury	**VC--CV--CV**
Injurious	**VC--CV--CVC**
Victory	**CVC--CV--CV**
Victorious	**CVC--CV--CVC**

b. Words Ending in the Stress-Shifting Suffixes (Adjectives and Nouns: Ten Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Develop	**CV--CV—CVC**
Developmental	**CV--CV--CVC--CVC--CVC**
Geometry	**CV--V--CV--CCV**
Geometrical	**CV--V--CV--CCV--CVC**
Theory	**CV--V--CV**
Theoretical	**CV—V—CV--CV--CVC**
Volume	**CV--CCVC**
Voluminous	**CV--CCV--CV--CVC**
Climate	**CCV--CVC**
Climatic	**CCV--CV--CVC**
Diploma	**CV--CCV--CV**
Diplomatic	**CV—CCV--CV--CVC**
Problem	**CCV--CCVC**
Problematic	**CCV--CCV--CV--CVC**
Real	**CVC**
Reality	**CV--V--CV--CV**
Fatal	**CV--CVC**
Fatality	**CV—CV--CV--CV**

8. Affix Words Containing Stress-Neutral Prefixes

a. Words Containing the Prefixes ‘re’ ‘per’ and ‘in’ (Verbs: Six Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Recount	**CV--<u>CVCC</u>**
Reform	**CV--<u>CVC</u>**
Perform	**CV--<u>CVC</u>**
Reject	**CV--<u>CVCC</u>**
Inject	**VC--<u>CVCC</u>**
Resign	**CV--<u>CVC</u>**

b. Words Containing the Stress-Neutral Prefixes ‘inter’ and ‘ad’ (Nouns: Two Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Intermission	**VC--CV--<u>CV</u>--CVC**
Admission	**VC--<u>CV</u>--CVC**

c. Words Containing the Stress-Neutral Prefix ‘un’ (Verbs: Four Tokens)

Word	Syllabic and Accentual Structure
Uncover	**VC--<u>CV--</u>CV**
Undo	**VC--<u>CV</u>**
Untie	**VC--<u>CV</u>**
Unleash	**VC—<u>CVC</u>**

ملخص الرسالة

إن محاولة فهم الخصائص الأدائية المستعملة من طرف طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية الجزائريين في السنة الثانية ماستر للأنماط النبرية للغة الإنجليزية، والكشف عن أبرز أسباب عدم قدرة هؤلاء الطلبة على إتقان نطق تلك الأنماط، وأكثر هذه الأسباب تكرارا، وكذا الوصول إلى استيعاب مؤسّس لتلك المعيقات قصد الحدِّ من فاعليتها السلبية، يعدّ هو المسعى الأسمى لهذه الرسالة، حيث يتم تجسيد هذا المسعى من خلال الاشتغال المزدوج على المستويين النظري والتطبيقي.وقد افترضنا أن عدم القدرة على استعمال أنماط تتماشى مع متطلبات اللغة الأجنبية يرجع بشكل نسبي إلى التداخلات اللغوية؛ إذ إنه ثمة عوامل لغوية خارجية تلعب أدوارا معيقة بشكل واضح. وللحصول على تشكيلات متنوعة من البيانات، وظفنا ثلاث أدوات بحث مختلفة: استبيان للأساتذة، وآخر للطلبة، إضافة إلى اختبار تشخيصي للعينة المستهدفة من الطلبة، وتشير النتائج المحصَّل عليها إلى القصور الكبير الذي يعانيه الطلبة فيما يخص تكييف لغتهم البينية الفونولوجية مع إعدادات اللغة الأجنبية. إن التداخل اللغوي مع اللغة الفرنسية، والذي ينظر إليه كسبب أساسي في الأخطاء، هو نفسه ينبع من الاعتماد المفرط على النطق الإملائي المستمد من القواعد النطقية الفرنسية الراسخة، وترجع هذه الأخطاء النطقية أيضا إلى قصور في طريقة تعامل الطلبة عبر السنين مع هذا المركب الصوتي للإنجليزية، وكذا قلة دراية الطلبة بخصوصيات النبر وأبجدياته في الانجليزية، إضافة إلى النقص الكبير في استعمال الاستراتيجيات المسهلة لتعلم النطق والعادات المصاحبة لها، والاستعمال المتذبذب للقواميس، هذا إضافة إلى عوامل متعلقة بالاستعمال غير المتواصل للاستجابات الرجعية من قبل الأساتذة، وأخرى تتعلق بالنقص الكبير في إدراج دروس مستوحاة من الدراسات اللسانية المقارنة التقليدية، وكذا نقص الاستفادة من نتائج الدراسات الصوتية، خصوصا تلك المتعلقة باكتساب النطق من طرف الطلبة. وأُختتِمتْ الرسالة بجملة من الإرشادات البيداغوجية اللسانية الهادفة إلى تجاوز تلك الصعوبات، مع محاولة تبيين مدى إمكانية عملها بشكل متناغم ومتجانس من أجل تحكم أحسن في الأنماط النبرية للغة الإنجليزية.

Résumé

Comprendre les caractéristiques de l'utilisation de l'accent des mots anglais par les étudiants algériens de deuxième année Master en anglais, divulguer les traits le plus récurrents, et suggérer des solutions pratiques pour atténuer l'influences des facteurs négatifs constituent les contributions théoriques et pratiques de cette thèse. Nous avons supposé que l'échec des étudiants à utiliser des modèles accentuels propres à la langue étrangère pourrait être causé par une influence cross linguistique. Des facteurs extralinguistiques jouent également un rôle non moins perturbateur. Pour recueillir différents types de données, nous avons utilisé trois différents outils de recherche: un questionnaire administré aux enseignants et un autre aux étudiants ainsi qu'un test auquel un échantillon d'étudiants est soumis. Les résultats obtenus nous indiquent que les étudiants ont un déficit important dans l'adaptation de leur interlangue phonologique aux paramètres de la langue étrangère. Le chevauchement linguistique avec la langue française, qui est considéré comme facteur fondamental causant ces erreurs, lui-même découle de la dépendance excessive des étudiants des règles bien établies de la prononciation de l'orthographe française. Ces erreurs articulatoires sont également dues à l'approche de ces étudiants au fil des années au problème de l'accent en anglais. En outre, il y a le manque de connaissances théoriques dans le domaine surtout au niveau du module d'expression et compréhension orales sans oublier l'utilisation rare et peu pratique des dictionnaires. A tout cela s'ajoute la non-exploitation du feedback des enseignants et des études contrastives linguistiques traditionnelles ainsi que des résultats d'études acoustiques, en particulier celles relatives à l'acquisition de la prononciation. La thèse conclut avec un ensemble de recommandations d'ordre linguistique et pédagogique afin d'aligner la performance des étudiants en matière d'accent sur les règles de la langue anglaise.