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**Asst. Prof. Hasan Shaban Ali
(Ph.D)**

Tikrit University, College of Education for
Humanities

Jihan Kareem Abdalla

Tikrit University, College of Education for
Humanities

* Corresponding author: E-mail :
hasanshali7392@yahoo.com

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E-mail

journal.of.tikrit.university.of.humanities@tu.edu.iq

E-mail : adxxxx@tu.edu.iq

Pronunciation of English Stress by Iraqi Arabic and Kurdish EFL Learners

A B S T R A C T

Stress is one of the main linguistic aspects that deals with greater effort on a syllable or syllables in a word and making them more prominent than other unstressed syllables. This phonetic and phonological feature is probably present in most languages of the world. The present study presents lexical stress patterns influence on Iraqi Arabic and Kurdish EFL learners' pronunciation. The study aims at investigating two different language groups of EFL learners' accuracy scores and errors in the production of English stress and also investigating the effect of first language on their pronunciation of English words concerning Iraqi Arabic and Kurdish EFL learners. The current study hypothesizes the following for the aims to be achieved: there is no difference in the performance of the two language groups in the production of English lexical stress; the presence of high efficiency in the correct assignment of lexical stress on two syllable words and little one in pronouncing three syllable words for all language groups. Lastly, the validity of the data is analyzed acoustically by using Praat software program to verify the auditory analysis and to make certain that stress assignment is precise. One of the main conclusions arrived at, in the present study, is that the performance of the different language groups is better when they produce two-syllable words whereas they reflect poor performance much errors in three-syllable words.

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لفظ النبر في اللغة الانكليزية من قبل المتعلمين العراقيين و الأكراد

أ.م.د. : حسن شعبان علي / جامعة تكريت / كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

جيهان كريم عبدالله / جامعة تكريت / كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

الخلاصة:

النبر هو أحد الجوانب اللغوية الرئيسية التي تتعامل مع بذل جهد أكبر على مقطع لفظي في الكلمة وجعله أكثر بروزاً من المقاطع الأخرى. ربما تكون هذه الميزة الصوتية موجودة في معظم اللغات للمتعلمين .

تهتم مشكلة هذه الدراسة بالتحقيق في إنتاج النبر لكلمات انكليزية بسيطة وفقاً للمتعلمين للعراقيين و الاكراد تهدف الدراسة إلى التحقق من أداء المشتركين لثلاث مجموعات لغوية مختلفة في أداء النبر بصورة عامة ، مع توضيح تأثير اللغة الأولى على نطق الكلمات الإنكليزية الخاصة بالمشاركين العراقيين و الاكراد

تفترض الدراسة الحالية ما يأتي :

1. لا يوجد فرق في جودة الأداء للنبر للمجموعات اللغوية الثلاث.
2. وجود كفاءة عالية في أداء الكلمات ذات المقطعين و أقل كفاءة في أداء الكلمات ذات المقاطع الثلاثة لكل المجموعات .

أخيراً ، يتم تحليل صحة البيانات صوتياً بإستعمال برنامج Praat للتحقق من التحليل السمعي والتأكد من دقة تحديد النبر.

من بين الاستنتاجات التي تم التوصل إليها في هذه الدراسة أن أداء المجموعات اللغوية الثلاث المختلفة أفضل في الكلمات ذات المقطعين من تلك المكونة من ثلاثة مقاطع وأن الأداء الكلي للمشاركين الأكراد افضل من أداء العراقيين بدرجتين تقريباً ولا توجد أهمية إحصائية لهذا الاختلاف

1. INTRODUCTION

Checklin (2012:1) explains that word stress is a fundamental aspect of the phonology of many languages in understanding words and increasing spoken intelligibility. Still, it is an uneasy job for learners to control word stress and stress placement successfully. It is problematic with regard to language teachers to cover in their teaching too. Shakir (2020:1) points to the necessity of dominant stress in perfect speech. Rhythm and intonation in languages are influenced by stress which is deemed as a key to the proper pronunciation of words. Al - Thalab et al. (2018) state that pronunciation is one of the most neglected components in English language teaching and should be taken into consideration in future research as L2 learners face difficulty in producing lexical stress in words in isolation or in connected speech.

1.1 English Syllable

Crystal (2008:467) states that the 'syllable' is a unit of articulation ideally wider than a sole sound and narrower than a word. A word may be uttered 'Syllable at a time', as in (ne-ver-the-less), and a perfect dictionary will state the position of those syllabic divisions in writing, as a result preparing information about the placement of hyphens to words. According to Katamba (1989:153), the 'syllable' is the unit in the sense of which phonological orders are arranged. It is a neatly phonological entity, and cannot be matched with a grammatical or semantic unit. There are syllables such as /ʌn/ as in (unknown) which are co-extensive with the morpheme; other syllable such as /kæt/ 'cat' which are co-extensive with the word; then there are syllables such as /kæts/ 'cats' which stand for more than one morpheme (the root 'cat' and the plural marker-s) and eventually there are syllables such as /mʌn/ and /kɪ/ in /mʌŋkɪ/ which stand for only part of a morpheme. A Syllable (σ) is defined as a phonological unit of sonority and can be illustrated by the degree of airflow hindrance and voicing that appears through phonation. Sonority is backward mutually related with constraint of the articulators in the oral cavity. Sonorous sounds possess a more 'sing-able' quality that is they are more salient in space and length than less sonorous sounds. The syllable structure stands for sonority peaks and permissive borders, and consists of three elements: the onset, the nucleus and the coda. According to phonetic perspective, syllables "are usually described as consisting of a center which has a little or no obstruction to air flow and which sounds comparatively loud: before and after that center, there will be greater obstruction to air flow and /or less loud sound" (Roach, 2000:70). For instance, in the one-syllable word /kʌp/, the vowel /ʌ/ is the "center" in which slight hindering occurs. While we have perfect hindering to the air flow for the plosives around the center /ʌ/. With regard to phonological perspective, Laver (1994:114) sees syllable as "a complex unit made up of nuclear and marginal element". Vowels or syllabic segments are called nuclear elements. Whereas consonants or non-syllabic segments are called marginal elements. For example, in this syllable 'saint' /seɪnt/, the diphthong /eɪ/ forms the nuclear element, whereas the first consonant /s/ and the last cluster /nt/ form marginal elements. It is an uneasy task to assign an accurate definition for this expression, or how to specify the meaningful borders among syllables (Ladefoged, 1975: 218; Ali, 2019:-587 596). For Roach (2000:66) and Crystal (1989:164) the syllable is an essentially

crucial unit in both phonetics and phonology. Hancock (2003: 50) states that a syllable is defined as a cluster of one or more sounds with a summit or essence. In addition to that, Smith and Wilson (1980: 141) point to the significance of the syllable in the need for something greater than a phoneme and smaller than a word.

1.2 The Nature of Syllable

The English syllable possesses two instant constituents, the onset (O) that involves all consonants which pace the nuclear element, (The vowel) and the rhyme (R) which subsumes the nuclear elements (the vowel) in addition to any marginal elements (consonants) that may come after it. As a result, the rhyme is divided into peak (P) and coda (Co). The peak (nucleus) stands for the "nuclear" or most prominent part in a syllable. The onset is considered as the starting of a syllable frontier, and is the most powerful consonantal place. The onset is available in many languages and is permissive or limited in others. They are almost always preferred to codas; when a coda is present intervocalically it will be parsed to the following onset rather than the former coda. For instance, a CVCV structure would be syllabified as CV. CV, and not as CVC. V. (www.linguisticsnetwork.com). In fact, each syllable possesses a nucleus, that is (a vowel) and on occasion called a peak. This is the pulp or the major portion of the syllable. Finally, all syllables possess nuclei and that vowels can always be nuclei. Nuclei are broadly full of vowels. There are no sounds more sonorous than vowels. If a vowel is current, it must be located in the nucleus of the syllable. (www.linguisticsnetwork.com) . It is one of the constituents of the syllable and it involves all the consonants that occur after the vowel (peak). But in the case when there is no a consonant in the final position of a syllable, it is called a zero coda. The coda is elective in most languages. In few languages, it is limited or even forbidden. Ancient Bulgarians do not allow codas, and thus will syllabify a structure as CVCCV to CV.CCCV. Syllables with no codas are named as open syllables, while syllables with codas are called closed syllables (Akmajian, 1984:137).

1.3 English Syllable Structure

With regard to Singh and Singh (1976:196), there are two kinds of syllable structures in English, one of them is simple and the other is complex. The simple kind consists of the following samples. From these four syllable samples, eleven other complicated syllable structures can be concluded. Roach (1983:58) states

that another probable syllable structure which is (CVCCCC) in the following: In both English and Arabic systems, the vowel generally forms the nucleus of the syllable structure. This nucleus can be preceded or followed by consonants. Hartman and Stork (1972:228) state that the syllable is commonly constitutes three parts: ONSET, the initial sound or sounds located before the NUCLEUS, which represents the central part, synchronizing with PEAK of SONORITY, and finally, the CODA, which consists of the final sound or sounds located after the nucleus. Also, another advantage of English syllable is that the syllable structure is affected by stress and this is not found in Arabic. Thus, we notice this fact in normal everyday speech. In unstressed syllables, vowels may be omitted as in the underscore vowels of the following words: "mystery" /mɪstrɪ/ "general" /dʒenrəl/ "memory" /memrɪ/ (Fromkin and Rodman, 1983:104). Gimson (1970:51) refers to the syllable as "a unit at higher level than that of the phoneme or sound segment. Yet distinct from that of the word or morpheme". According to Lass (1984:252) a syllable is divided into an onset (O) and a rhyme (R). The rhyme itself consists of a peak (P) and a coda (Co).

1.4 Arabic Syllable Structure

Indeed, most phonologists assert that standard Arabic has five syllable structures, they are as follows:

- | | | | |
|---------|-------|--------|-------------------------|
| 1- CV | as in | /bi/ | 'in' |
| 2-CVC | as in | /sin/ | 'tooth' |
| 3- CVV | as in | /ma:/ | negative particle 'not' |
| 4- CVVC | as in | /ba:b/ | 'door' |
| 5- CVCC | as in | /nahr/ | 'river' |

(Al-Antaki,1969:242; Al-Ani, 1970:87; Anees, 1975:163; Hijazi, 1978)

Whilst others like (Abdo, 1969:108; Omar, 1976: 25) annex a sixth syllable structure that is: CVVCC as in /dʒa:dd/ 'serious'. In addition, Arabic syllable can be categorized into two groups: a closed and an open. The first one ends with a consonant or two and the second ends with a short vowel (CV) or long vowel (VV). The final group includes either a single long vowel as /i:/ or a diphthong as

/aɪ/. (Ali, 2009: 554-570; Al-Ani, 87; Hijazi, 1978. cited in Mustafa, 1990:36). Closed syllables involve these samples: CVC, CVVC, CVCC, CVVCC, while open syllables include these samples: CV and CVV. As a result for Anees (1975:162) a word in Arabic with its prefixes or suffixes cannot trespass seven syllables at all as in: /f a s a j a k f i: k ə h ŭ m ŭ/.

1.4.1 Iraqi Syllable Structure

Undoubtedly, the classical Arabic is regarded as the origin of all recent Arabic dialects. This indicates that phonological, morphological and syntactical characteristics are participated between these dialects and their origin. There are lots of syllables in Iraqi Arabic words because of the presence of vowels, whether these vowels have length or shortening. Therefore, there is one syllable in /ʃæf/ means 'he saw', two in /ʃæfni/ means 'he saw me', three in /ʃə'wafni/ means 'he showed me', four in /ʃə'wafhija/ means 'he showed it to him' and five in /ʃə'wafithija:/ means 'I showed it to him', it is distinctive that the first syllable of a word in (I.C.) Arabic may start with one or two consonants. Syllables except the first generally start with only one consonant. Accordingly, when there are two consonants in the middle of a word (similar or not), the degree of syllable division is always between the two (Erwin, 1969:28; Ali et al., 2020:44-65). The following samples are the most common of syllables in I.C. Arabic. In words of more than one syllable, the wanted syllable is underscores.

- | | | | | | |
|----------|--------------|------------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| 1- CV | 'stone' | /ʔ səxər/ | 2- CCV | 'chill' | /ʔstəbrəd/ |
| 3- CVV | 'severe' | /ʔqɑ:sɪ/ | 4- CCVV | 'they are brace' | /ʔsba:ʕ/ |
| 5- CVC | 'he greeted' | /səʔləm/ | 6- CVCC | 'feels hot' | /mɪh'tərr/ |
| 7- CVVC | 'your door' | /ʔba:bkəm/ | 8- CVVCC | 'as you like' | /ʔSa:rr/ |
| 9- CCVVC | 'camels' | /ʔdʒma:l/ | 10- CCVCC | 'sponge' | /ʔsfɪndʒ/ |

Concerning the frequency of their models, the first seven groups appear more over and over than the last three while the four open groups are the most repeated of all, and the closed groups are slightly used (Ghalib, 1984:17-18).

1.5 Kurdish Syllable Structure

According to Weight Principle Theory, Kurdish syllables are categorized into light and heavy ones. The light syllable consists of a short vowel in the rhyme while the heavy one consists of a long vowel in addition to coda. Heavy syllables remarkably receive the stress while light ones receive stress only when there are no heavy syllables. Concerning Weight Standards, Kurdish syllables are grouped as follows: **Light Syllable** cv.cv /xeræ/ 'quick'; cv.cv /həwə/ 'air'; **Heavy Syllables** such as VC.CV:C /əs'tu:r/ 'thick'; VC.CVCC, /əs'fəndʒ/ 'sponge'; CCVC /'dʒwæn/ CCVC 'pretty' /'zjæn/ CCVC 'life' CV: /'ru:ba:r/ CV:.CV:C 'river' /'zəwi:/ CV.CV: 'earth' CVC /hər'zæn/ CVC.CVC 'cheap' /'hewæf/ CV.CVC 'slow'. **Super-heavy Syllables:** CVCC /'tərʃ/; CVCC 'sour' ; /'særd/ CVCC 'cold' ; CV:C /sæ'bu:n/ CV.CV:C 'soap' ; /'fi:ri:n/ CV:. CV:C 'sweet' CCV:C /'bli:t/ CCV:C 'ticket'; /'btʃu:k/ CCV:C 'small' ; CCVCC /'mreʃk/ CCVCC 'chicken' /'brɪndʒ/ CCVCC 'rice' ; CCV:CC /'pzi:ʃk/ CCV:CC 'physician' . Syllables which are super-heavy seem to be limited to the final place of words and several structures, like CCV:C, CCVCC and CCV:CC which do not occur in multisyllabic words (Hasan et al., 2020: 44-65; Hassan, 2016:385-386).

1.6 Syllable Weight

Syllable weight is weighted in 'mora'. A 'mora' is a phonological unit which differentiates diverse syllable structures from one another. Syllable weight is remarkable in the sense that it can manifest matters relevant to language –specific chains on syllable structure. All syllables contain at least one mora, which derives from the nucleus of the syllable. According to English, all of the sound segments in the rime give a share in syllable weight. As a result, CV and a CCCV syllables have the same weight in addition to a number of moras for the intricacy of the onset has no bearing on how the weight of the syllable is weighted. When syllables are recognized by their weight, they are labeled as light, heavy or superheavy. Concerning light syllables, they contain only one mora (i.e. a short vowel and no coda). For instance: 'me' [mɪ] or CV. Heavy syllables consist of two moras. The two moras could both be presented in the nucleus as a long vowel or diphthong as in 'my' [maɪ], CVV or one mora could be presented in the nucleus and the other in the coda as in 'mean' [mi:n] CVC. Finally, superheavy syllables contain three or more moras which can be composed of a short vowel with a complex coda as in

'hits' [hits] CVCC, or a long vowel or diphthong with either a simple or complex coda as in: 'mine' [maɪn], CVVC, or 'mines' [maɪnz], CVVCC. The current research aims at: i. how correctly can English, Iraqi Arabic and Kurdish speakers locate primary lexical stress? ii. How can the different language groups master the pronunciation of stress in two and three syllables?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Data Selection

The researcher selects a list of English words. English simple lexical items are of two and three syllable words selected from dictionary (Oxford). They are shown to a panel of experts to provide the validity and reliability of selection. Then, these simple words are classified according to their grammatical categories, i.e. whether they are nouns, verbs, or adjectives. Each category is analyzed in isolation according to its syllable structure. Finally, the data are analyzed acoustically by using Praat software program in order to verify the auditory analysis and to make certain that stress assignment is precise and accurate.

2.2 Materials

2.2.1 Participants

In this research, the researcher chooses twenty eight of Iraqi Arabic and Kurdish master students and four English native speakers as a (control group). Their age range from 23 to 35 years. The mean of Iraqi group age is (29), Kurdish (27) and English (26).

2.2.2 Stimuli

For this production experiment, the stimuli are 30 words, belonging to (17) English syllable structure, (6) structures for two syllables (12 words) and (11) structures for three syllables (18 words) to be analyzed acoustically by Pratt program. These words are simple, clear and familiar for both speakers and readers. Each participant is given a list containing 30 words which are of two and three syllables.

2.2.3 Word Class

The grammatical categories of these words are nouns, verbs and adjectives. The stress position is unsteady and found in different positions in the word in the sense that the first, second or third syllable may take the primary stress.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The First Research Question

The researcher shows the overall performance of the three language groups in which the correct and incorrect assignment of lexical stress produced by native speakers, Iraqi Arabic and Kurdish participants.

3.1.1 English language group

The total correct scores of native speakers in two-syllable words are (45) 93.75% and the incorrect scores are (3) 6.25% whereas their correct scores in three-syllable words are (51) 70.82% and the incorrect scores are (21) 29.16%. Their correct total performance in two and three-syllable words is (96) 80% and the incorrect is (24) 20%.

Table (1) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of English Native Speakers.

Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect	Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect
cello	CVCV	4	0	magazine	CVCVCVC	1	3
delay	CVCV	4	0	Japanese	CVCVCVC	2	2
moral	CVCVC	4	0	reminisce	CVCVCVC	1	3
damage	CVCVC	4	0	resolute	CVCVCVC	4	0
commerce	CVCVC	3	1	decorate	CVCVCVC	4	0
mature	CVCCV	4	0	demolish	CVCVCVC	3	1
jumbo	CVCCV	4	0	garbanzo	CVCVCVC	3	1
genteel	CVCCVC	4	0	subdivide	CVCCVCVC	3	1
postpone	CVCCVC	3	1	fantastic	CVCCVCVC	3	1
campaign	CVCCVC	3	1	emotive	VCVCVC	4	0
percent	CVCVCC	4	0	interpret	VCCVCCVC	4	0
flourish	CCVCVC	4	0	understand	VCCVCCVCC	2	2
vanilla	CVCVCV	3	1	muscular	CVCCVCVC	4	0
referee	CVCVCV	1	3	commentary	CVCCVCVC	4	0
debonair	CVCVCV	2	2	protocol	CCVCVCVC	3	1
total & percentage		96	24				
		80%	20%				

3.1.2 Iraqi Arabic language group

The total correct scores of Iraqi Arabic speakers in two-syllable words are (120) 71.42% and the incorrect scores are (48) 28.57% whereas their correct scores in three-syllable words are (125) 49.60% and the incorrect scores are (127) 50.39%. Their correct total performance in two and three-syllable words is (245) 58.33% and the incorrect is (175) 41.66%.

Table (2) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of Iraqi Arabic Speakers

word	syllable structure	correct	incorrect	word	syllable structure	correct	incorrect
cello	CVCV	14	0	magazine	CVCVCVC	2	12
delay	CVCV	11	3	Japanese	CVCVCVC	1	13
moral	CVCVC	13	1	reminisce	CVCVCVC	4	10
damage	CVCVC	14	0	resolute	CVCVCVC	4	10
commerce	CVCVC	10	4	decorate	CVCVCVC	5	9
mature	CVCCV	7	7	demolish	CVCVCVC	8	6
jumbo	CVCCV	11	3	garbanzo	CVCVCCV	12	2
genteel	CVCCVC	10	4	subdivide	CVCCVCVC	14	0
postpone	CVCCVC	4	10	fantastic	CVCCVCCVC	7	7
campaign	CVCCVC	9	5	emotive	VCVCVC	13	1
percent	CVCVCC	6	8	interpret	VCCVCCVC	8	6
flourish	CCVCVC	11	3	understand	VCCVCCVCC	10	4
vanilla	CVCVCV	8	6	muscular	CVCCCVCV	13	1
referee	CVCVCV	2	12	commentary	CVCCCVCV	3	11
debonair	CVCVCV	2	12	protocol	CCVCVCVC	9	5
total & percentage		245 58.33%	175 41.66%	total & percentage			

3.1.3 Kurdish language group

The total correct scores of Kurdish speakers in two-syllable words are (128) 76.19% and the incorrect scores are (40) 23.80% whereas their correct scores in three-syllable words are (128) 50.79% and the incorrect scores are (124) 49.20%. Their correct total performance in two and three-syllable words is (256) 60.95% and the incorrect is (164) 39.04%.

Table (3) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of Kurdish Speakers

Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect	Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect
cello	CVCV	11	3	magazine	CVCVCVC	2	12
delay	CVCV	9	5	Japanese	CVCVCVC	2	12
moral	CVCVC	12	2	reminisce	CVCVCVC	3	11
damage	CVCVC	13	1	resolute	CVCVCVC	12	2
commerce	CVCVC	11	3	decorate	CVCVCVC	9	5
mature	CVCCV	7	7	demolish	CVCVCVC	6	8
jumbo	CVCCV	10	4	garbanzo	CVCVCVV	4	10
genteel	CVCCVC	8	6	subdivide	CVCCVCVC	11	3
postpone	CVCCVC	10	4	fantastic	CVCCVCVC	9	5
campaign	CVCCVC	11	3	emotive	VCVCVC	8	6
percent	CVCCVC	13	1	interpret	VCCVCVC	8	6
flourish	CCVCVC	13	1	understand	VCCVCVC	10	4
vanilla	CVCVCV	4	10	muscular	CVCCVCV	14	0
referee	CVCVCV	4	10	commentary	CVCVCVCV	10	4
debonair	CVCVCV	3	11	protocol	CCVCVCVC	10	4
total & percentage		256	164				
		60.95%	39.04%				

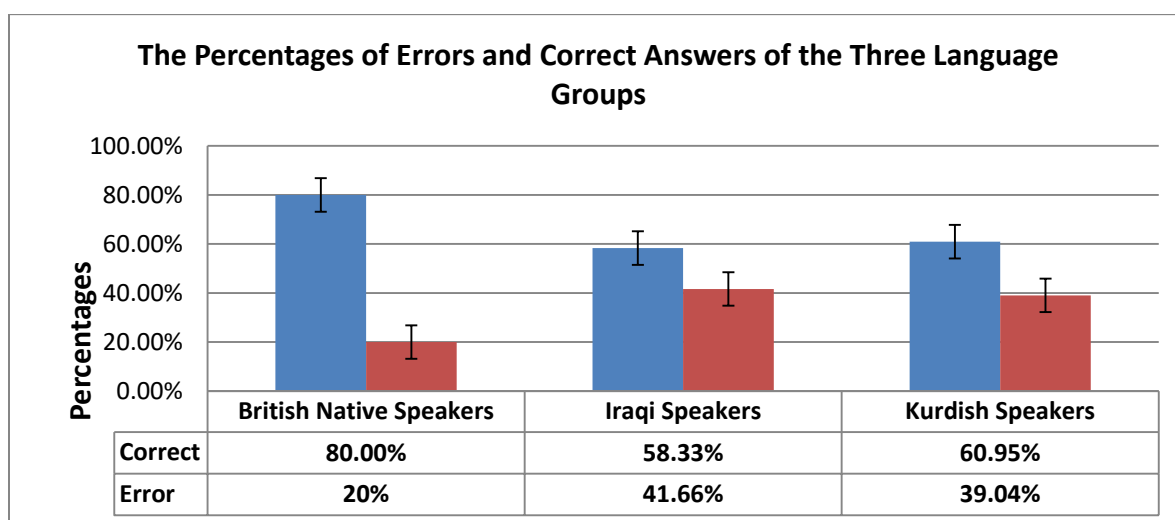


Fig.1 Overall Percentages of Correct and Incorrect Responses of Different Language Groups

English language group correct responses are 80.00% while incorrect responses are 20.00%, Iraqi Arabic language group correct responses are 58.33% while incorrect responses are 41.66% and Kurdish language group correct response is 60.95% while incorrect responses are 39.04%.

3.2 The Second Research Question

The researcher shows the performance of the three language groups concerning two and three-syllable words.

3.2.1 English language group

Tables (4) and (5) show the correct and incorrect scores of two and three-syllable words uttered by native speakers. The correct total is (45) 93.75 % whereas the incorrect one is (3) 6.25 % according to two-syllable words and concerning three-syllable words (51) 70.82% is correct while (21)29.16 % is the incorrect one.

Table (4) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of Two Syllable Words Uttered by Native Speakers

Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect
cello	CVCV	4	0
delay	CVCV	4	0
moral	CVCVC	4	0
damage	CVCVC	4	0
commerce	CVCVC	3	1
mature	CVCCV	4	0
jumbo	CVCCV	4	0
genteel	CVCCVC	4	0
postpone	CVCCVC	3	1
campaign	CVCCVC	3	1
percent	CVCVCC	4	0
flourish	CCVCVC	4	0
total & percentage		45 93.75%	3 6.25%

Table (5) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of Three-Syllable Words Uttered by Native Speakers

Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect
vanilla	CVCVCV	3	1
referee	CVCVCV	1	3
debonair	CVCVCV	2	2
magazine	CVCVCVC	1	3
Japanese	CVCVCVC	2	2
reminisce	CVCVCVC	1	3
resolute	CVCVCVC	4	0
decorate	CVCVCVC	4	0
demolish	CVCVCVC	3	1
garbanzo	CVCVCVC	3	1
subdivide	CVCCVCVC	3	1
fantastic	CVCCVCVC	3	1
emotive	VCVCVC	4	0
interpret	VCCVCVC	4	0
understand	VCCVCVC	2	2
muscular	CVCCVCVC	4	0
commentary	CVCCVCVC	4	0
Protocol	CCVCVCVC	3	1
Total & Percentage		51 70.82%	21 29.16%

3.2.2 Iraqi Arabic group

Tables (6) and (7) show the correct and incorrect scores of two and three-syllable words uttered by Iraqi Arabic speakers. The correct total is (120)71.42% whereas the incorrect one is (48)28.57 % according to two-syllable words and concerning three-syllable words (125) 49.60 % is correct while(127) 50.39 % is the incorrect one.

Table (6) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of Two Syllable Words Uttered by Iraqi Arabic Speakers

Word	Structure	Correct	Incorrect
cello	CVCV	14	0
delay	CVCV	11	3
moral	CVCVC	13	1
damage	CVCVC	14	0
commerce	CVCVC	10	4
mature	CVCCV	7	7
jumbo	CVCCV	11	3
genteel	CVCCVC	10	4
postpone	CVCCVC	4	10
campaign	CVCCVC	9	5
percent	CVCVCC	6	8
flourish	CCVCVC	11	3
Total & Percentage		120 71.42%	48 28.57%

Table (7) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of Three-Syllable Words Uttered by Iraqi Arabic Speakers

Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect
vanilla	CVCVCV	8	6
referee	CVCVCV	2	12
debonair	CVCVCV	2	12
magazine	CVCVCVC	2	12
Japanese	CVCVCVC	1	13
reminisce	CVCVCVC	4	10
resolute	CVCVCVC	4	10
decorate	CVCVCVC	5	9
demolish	CVCVCVC	8	6
garbanzo	CVCVCCV	12	2
subdivide	CVCCVCVC	14	0
fantastic	CVCCVCVC	7	7
emotive	VCVCVC	13	1
Interpret	VCCVCCVC	8	6
understand	VCCVCCVC	10	4
muscular	CVCCVCVC	13	1
commentary	CVCVCCVC	3	11
Protocol	CCVCVCVC	9	5
Total & Percentage		125 49.60%	127 50.39

3.2.3 Kurdish language group

Tables (8) and (9) show the correct and incorrect scores of two and three-syllable words uttered by Kurdish speakers. The correct total is (128) 76.19% whereas the incorrect one is (40) 23.80 % according to two-syllable words and concerning three-syllable words (128) 50.79 % is correct while (124) 49.20 % is the incorrect one.

Table (8) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of Two Syllable Words Uttered by Kurdish Speakers

Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect
cello	CVCV	11	3
delay	CVCV	9	5
moral	CVCVC	12	2
damage	CVCVC	13	1
commerce	CVCVC	11	3
mature	CVCCV	7	7
jumbo	CVCCV	10	4
genteel	CVCCVC	8	6
postpone	CVCCVC	10	4
campaign	CVCCVC	11	3
percent	CVCVCC	13	1
flourish	CCVCVC	13	1
Total & Percentage		128	40
		76.19%	23.80%

Table (9) The Correct and Incorrect Scores of Three-Syllable Words Uttered by Kurdish Speakers

Word	Syllable Structure	Correct	Incorrect
vanilla	CVCVCV	4	10
referee	CVCVCV	4	10
debonair	CVCVCV	3	11
magazine	CVCVCVC	2	12
Japanese	CVCVCVC	2	12
reminisce	CVCVCVC	3	11
resolute	CVCVCVC	12	2
decorate	CVCVCVC	9	5
demolish	CVCVCVC	6	8
garbanzo	CVCVCCV	4	10
subdivide	CVCCVCVC	11	3
fantastic	CVCCVCCVC	9	5
emotive	VCVCVC	8	6
interpret	VCCVCCVC	8	6
understand	VCCVCCVCC	10	4
muscular	CVCCCVCV	14	0
commentary	CVCVCCCV	10	4
protocol	CCVCVCVC	10	4
Total & Percentage		128 50.79%	124 49.20%

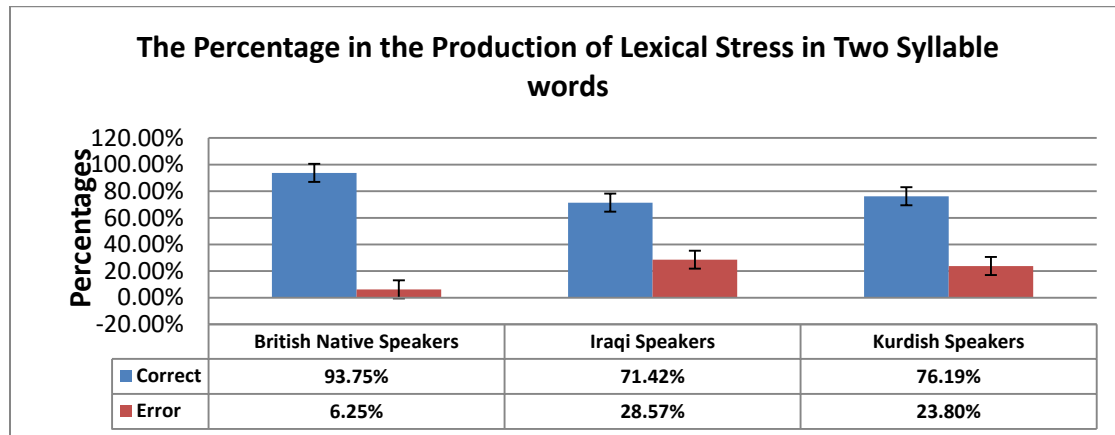


Fig. (2) The Overall Percentages in Two-Syllable Words of the Different Language Groups.

The figure above shows the overall percentages in the production of stress in two-syllable words according to the three different language groups. English language group correct responses are 93.75% while incorrect responses are 6.25%, Iraqi Arabic language group correct responses are 71.42% while incorrect responses are 28.57% and Kurdish language group correct responses are 76.19% while incorrect responses are 23.80%.

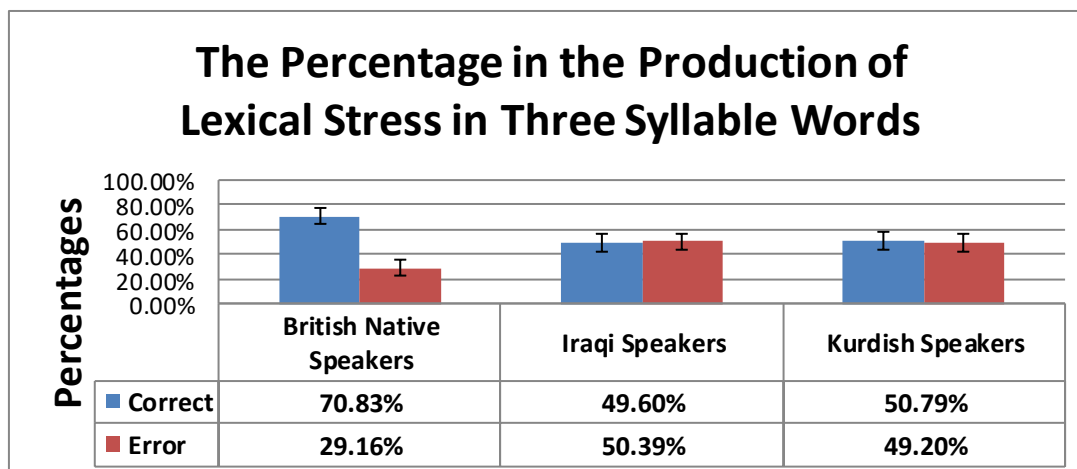


Fig.3 The Overall Percentages in Three-Syllable Words of the Three Different Language Groups

The figure above shows the overall percentages in the production of stress in three-syllable words according to the three different language groups. English language group correct response is 70.83% while incorrect response is 29.16%, Iraqi Arabic language group correct response is 49.60% while incorrect response is 50.39% and Kurdish language group correct response is 50.79% while incorrect response is 49.20%.

4. Discussion

It should be noticed that the results stated here and discussed in this section are the authentic pronunciations of the participants. The researcher chooses three different groups of three languages, English (the control group), Iraqi Arabic and Kurdish in order to make certain of the stress placement and as a result to compare their performance. This study highlights three-word classes nouns, verbs and adjectives each of two and three syllable words. In the first research question concerning English participants generally, 80 % of their responses are correct while 20 % are errors whereas in the first research question according to Iraqi participants overall, 58,33 % of their pronunciation are correct and 41,66% are errors, while the first research question regarding Kurdish participants largely, 60,95% of their responses are correct and 39,04 % are errors. The second research question concerning English speakers shows that 93,75 % of correct responses according to two syllable words and 6,25 % of errors, whereas the three syllable words 70,83 % of correct articulation and 29,16 % of errors. In the second research

question with regard to Iraqi speakers 71,42 % of their responses are correct in the two syllable words and 28,57 % are incorrect. Regarding three syllable words, 49,60 % is correct and 50,39 % is incorrect. And in the second research question for Kurdish speakers 76,19 % of their responses are correct in two syllable words and 23,80 % are incorrect, But in three syllable words, 50,79 % is correct and 49,20 % is incorrect.

5. Conclusions

The final results are various according to all groups, native speakers fulfill the best performance among all the groups then Kurdish and Iraqi group at last in the first research question . Syllable numbers influence the performance of EFL learners in different languages, it should be noted that the performance of the three language groups in two-syllable words is better than three-syllable ones as shown and written in the second research question.

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