

The Effect of Bubble Cards on Word Stress Errors and Retention of EFL Learners: A Comparison of Turkish and Farsi Native Speakers

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Abstract

The present study recommends an influential teaching English sentence stress technique based on Bubble Cards for instructing sentence stress sufficiently. Males and females have been chosen randomly and homogeneously as Turkish and Farsi groups. A production-test was made from 40 sentences to force the participants read aloud the sentences obviously and their sounds were recorded for evaluating. The test has been implemented as pre-, post-, and delay pot-test. For evaluating its reliability in advance, it was piloted on a small group of participants. The aim of the second delayed test was to subject whether Bubble Cards had more influence on the learners' sentence stress retentions and might save their sentence stress memorizing for a longer period of time. The satisfactory outcomes of the study approved the encouragement of Bubble Cards for studding sentence stress and retention of Farsi group better than the Turkish group.

Keywords: Bubble Cards, word stress errors

1. Introduction

Language learning is found on two mediums, the spoken and the written. A caring mental faculty of considering on spoken medium is that, researchers have appreciated to inquire into the significance of speaking in second language learning. Good speech is vital because speaking has a great power which producing the desired effect on human beings in expressing their perceptives for standing for their souls.

Romero (2006) claimed that speaking target languages cause some significant differences in speaking native languages. In a native language speaking, learners take advantages of language characters which their parents took advantage of them in advance; in a TL speaking, the procedure of speaking become concerned and irritated knowledge obtained by doing which may result in flawed results.

Therefore, having good pronunciation for EFL learners is critical because English is not their native language. If you like to instruct pronunciation to Iranian EFL learners effectively, you must have knowledge or perception of the situation or the fact that "Iran, a multicultural society, is home to a number of language communities speaking Farsi, Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic, and so on."(khadivi, A. & Kalantari, R. 2011). Teaching pronunciation to multilingual and bilingual Iranian EFL learners is hardworking for English teachers. Thus, there should be designing a sufficient teaching method

for teachers to enhance them to master their students in pronunciation. The present paper tries to discover an effective technique in teaching pronunciation especially word stress.

1.1. Pronunciation error

An ability to express the views or positions at an appropriate speech rate in the absence of too many hesitations and false starts is Fluency in pronunciation. Wolf(2001) mentioned that courses ignore paying enough attention to fluency in speaking of target languages. According to Kormos and Dénes (2004), even though two formal statements of the exact meaning of fluency exist: fluency as a “temporal phenomenon” (p.3), fluency “as a spoken language competence”(p.3) , the absence or deficiency of investigations in the systematic investigation into and study of fluency and their sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions suffer the future researches about instructing fluency because researchers have limited information and skills acquired through experience or education about the variables like “accuracy, lexical diversity, grammatical complexity and intonation play in perceptions of fluency”(P.3).

According to Babylon Dictionary, “the ability of using the correct stress, rhythm and intonation of a word in a spoken language” is called pronunciation. Learners’ native languages have a certain disposition towards the pronunciation of target languages. This present state of affairs causes error in pronunciation of EFL learners. The compressions of native language relations between the parts of their complex structures and the target language structures are vital to keeping from happening or arising the error.

Contrastive analysis claims that the similarities and the differences of two bodies of spoken or written words with which people communicate thoughts and feelings will assist forward or complicate learning. (Yiing, 2011).“The differences in syllable structures of the two languages cause phonological errors. For instance: Iranian EFL learners add a vowel before or in between the consonants automatically such as school /esku:l/, and street / esterit/” (Afraz, Ghaemi, &Kheyrikhahnia 2012).

1.2. Errors of word stress

According to consequences or conspicuousness states of being noticed in relation to other words in sentences, sentence stress has a connection to a denoting an individual member of a specified group or class position of stress on vocabularies in sentences in order to exhibit the condition of being different in comparison with other grammatical units usually comprised of a subject and verb (Chang, 2001).

According to Chang (2010), When Mandarin learners spoke in English; they consider some factors that needing much effort or skill to accomplish to be the decisive factor in the significant places for stress within a sentence. English speakers arrange vocabulary items in groups based on their stress patterns (Brown 1990; Levelt 1989).Brown (1990) claimed that “the stress pattern of a polysyllabic word is a very important identifying feature of the word ,and we find it difficult to interpret an utterance in which a word is pronounced with the wrong stress pattern”(p. 51).

Moreover, the inabilities to succeed in perception of sound and assembly stress arrangements or sequences regularly found cause imprecise in vocabularies such as: dessert/desert, foreign/ for rain, his story/history (Gilbert, 2008). Thus, stress patterns are refusing to recognize by learners unhappily. This issue causes difficulty in making a correct exchange of meanings between individuals through a common system of symbols

1.3. Significant of pronunciation

Fluency has a specified role or position inspeakingat a normal speech rate without too many hesitations in speech . Wolf (2001) believed that the fluency in human communication through

spoken language is the factor which is refusing to recognize by learners in expressing the views and positions of a target language. The failure to appear of detailed inspections and studies in carrying out research into fluency about the action of combining different things of linguistic, temporal, phonological and interactional quantities that may represent any one of a set of values which suffer without complaint papers which have objective reality or being or taking place in the future about fluency teaching.

For fulfilling expectations or needs of communications, teachers must impart knowledge to their learners how they should make the sound of a word or part of a word perfectly. There are some problems in achieving this end such as multilingual and bilingual of EFL learners. By thinking to the multilingualism, and bilingualism situations that require solutions, both the instructive system and the distinct teachers have been disputed the truth or validity of the situations to come up with some sort of act or process of solving the problems (Khadivi & Kalantari, 2011). Thus, instructors need to provide appropriate teaching methods to master their learners in pronunciation.

1.4. Research questions

To achieve the main purpose of the study which is to find out whether Bubble Cards has some impacts on word stress Errors and Retention of EFL Learners, the following research questions have been raised:

Does Bubble Cards have any impacts on word stress Errors and Retention of EFL Learners?

Is there any significant difference between the effect of Bubble Cards on word stress Errors and Retention of Turkish and Farsi EFL learners?

2. Review of related literature

The distinctive attributes or characteristics of exchange of information or ideas is an absolutely necessary principle for everyone, but learners hardly feel concern and interest about providing the perfect way in which a word is pronounced because they make clear on their reciprocal actions and influences on communications .

According to CA, learners might unexpectedly meet and be faced with the states and conditions of being difficult when they acquire knowledge of or skill through study or experience or by being taught a new language. The same kinds in appearance and the differences between languages will enhance or confuse the progression (Tseng, 2008). Moreover, learners have problems in articulating sounds (Bohn & Flege, 1992; Trofimovich et al., 2007).

2.1. Bilingualism in Iran

Iran is a lovely country in southwestern Asia with an area of 636,300 square miles and 77 million people which has different languages and customs. Learners may use their native language which is not the standard language in Iran to talk to in order to advise, pass on information, etc. athome, but they are taught with Farsi which is the standard language in Iran. For this reason, they may have some problems with their second language and target language. Therefore, AsadollahKhadivi and Reza Kalantari found the following:

Up until the 1960s, it was commonly assumed that bilingual students who were learning their second language must inevitably have been at a disadvantage. This notion began to be challenged in the 1970s and 1980s. A closer examination of the results of bilingual students across various subject areas, including mathematics, showed inconsistent results. Although it seemed to be true at times that bilingual students as a whole did not perform as well as their monolingual peers, there were also some results that showed bilinguals excelled. There are a number of notions that need to be considered: whether the students are balanced bilinguals, the level of proficiency that the bilinguals

have in each of their languages, and the environment in which they learn. Balanced bilinguals are bilinguals who have equal proficiency in their languages. (p. 4)

2.2. Teaching stress in pronunciation instruction

There are distinctive invitations to engage in a contest in an opposite position in the teaching. Defining a little set amount of time to do something often causes in adequate correct concentration to instructing pronunciation. Amount of demonstration and the actual application and use of a plan or method are other matters that teacher should separate them by a particular number of steps of descent (Gilbert, 2008). Brown (1977) claimed that “understanding ordinary spoken English, the failure to move beyond the basic elementary pronunciation of spoken English must be regarded as disastrous for any student who wants to be able to cope with the native English situation” (p.159). According to Eltrug (1984), pronunciation errors are occurred by native language interference. Eltrug emphasized Arab learners that cannot articulate the sound of /p/ (As cited in Chang, 1996).

Mental and emotional factors affect the learning pronunciation as well, and the speaking skill is a personal factor. The individual sense or perception affects the speech-rhythm. This rhythm in learners’ native language is instructed and working by itself with little or no direct human control. Therefore, it is usual that learners emotionally sense unsecure and anxious when they listen and speak the rhythm of other languages. This obstacle to communication is unconscious and it is stressful for learners when they want to share or exchange information or ideas well (Gilbert, 2008).

For removing this psychological obstacle to communication and other distributions, a teacher should consider the purpose of pronunciation learning. Learners should aware of the core basic constituent participles of spoken English for understanding the language. By converting to a new purpose of pronunciation as an instruction course; teachers and learners may remove their aggravation, eagerness, and so forth (Gilbert, 2008).

Moreover, Gilbert (2008) claimed, in English, rhythmic and melodic signals provide road signs to enhance listeners pursue the intentions of the speaker. These signals clarify intentions and relationship “between ideas so that listeners can readily identify these relationships and understand the speaker’s meaning. When English learners speak in class, they are typically not thinking about how to help their listeners follow their meaning. Instead, they are often thinking about avoiding mistakes in grammar, vocabulary, and so on” (p. 2). Giving a presentation or during reading aloud in a classroom, native speakers also usually have erred. They become reflected in “making mistakes and may ignore their listeners altogether. But it is particularly important for English learners think about their listeners and master the rhythmic and melodic signals essential to “listener friendly” pronunciation” (p. 2).

Aoyama et al. (2007) believed that children acquire knowledge of rhythm of their first language in an unconscious manner and in an automatic manner without any aggravations and eagerness very early in life. Children can transfer this unconscious motion to any L2 and target language in childhood. For this reason, when a child studies another language; the new language will be understood through the filter of that native tongue language. This is known as interference from the L1 sounds. Native language by interference from its rhythm makes errors (as cited in Gilbert, 2008).

According to Gilbert(2008), every syllabic word has a main stress syllable. “This is [a] part of each word’s signature, so to speak” (p. 14). When you study words, the stressed syllable presents the top of the facts or knowledge provided or learned that it can move from one place to another to listeners and readers. Listeners and readers comprehend that the words through interaction so that the sound in the top syllable must be clear for comprehension. Gilbert (2008) found that “when

students learn a new word, they need to know which syllable in that word will be the peak syllable when the word is chosen as the focus of a tight group” (p.14).

2.3. Bubble Cards

Lee (1995) mentioned that playing games in classrooms by teachers, supporting English teaching in several viewpoints. Thus, playing games on courses by instructors provide opportunities for interacting with a foreign language easily and sufficiently. Games enhance EFL learners to exchange their interactional and transactional acts by using “all four skills, and creates a real life situation for using language” (as cited in Chirandon, Laohawiriyanon, & Rakthong, 2005, p.2). Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby (2005) “suggested that games were the effective means sustaining students’ interest and getting rid of anxiety in class”(as cited in Chirandon, Laohawiriyanon, & Rakthong, 2005, p. 2) . Therefore, teachers need to design an appropriate teaching method to support their learners in pronunciation, and for satisfactory communications, teachers should teach their students how they can pronounce words significantly.

In this way, Richards, Hull, & Proctor (2005) believed in Bubble Cards which is a game of methods for teaching a specific subject which may be used with texts for teaching speaking fluency, and stress; they suggested the game in their learners’ book which is called *Interchange English Book*, teachers’ edition, as a new idea for enhancing teachers and students. Richards et al. (2005) claimed that this technique “provide an innovative way to teach a variety of exercises in the Student’s Book; [Bubble Cards] makes classes livelier, more interactive, and more varied” (p. 149). The researcher uses this method for solving the problem of EFL learners’ stress syllables.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants in the present paper were 55 Iranian Turkish and Farsi native speakers learning English as their foreign language in in Quchan, north- east of Iran. Twenty nine participants were Turkish native and twenty six participants were Farsi native speakers. They were selected in their Turkish and Farsi groups randomly. All of the participants were homogenous. Their levels were intermediate. They were selected male and female in a random way. They were teenagers. Participants were not notified the research study, serial tests, the treatment and so forth. They supposed; they participated in a natural institute’s semester.

3.2 Instruments

3.2.1. The Pre-Test, Post-Test and Delay Post- Test of a Production-Test

40 words were selected randomly for making a production-test after 100 syllable words had instructed to the two groups. The production-test was selected to make the participants read the syllabic words clearly and their sounds were recorded for evaluating. The quantity of items was 40 syllabic words that include two syllable words stress on the first syllable, two syllable words stress on the second syllable, three syllable words stress on the first syllable, three syllable words stress on the second syllable. They were chosen randomly. The tests were validated by the SPSS 16 Software. Also the reliability of the test was trusted by the SPSS 16 software. The duration of each exam was 40 minutes. The test was performed as same pre-tests, post-tests and delay post-tests for each group. Delay post-tests were needed for evaluating the participant’s retentions. The participants were not enabled to use dictionaries or cheat during the each exam. The sample of the test is presented in appendix A. However, it was piloted on a small group of subjects to estimate its reliability before using the test for the purpose of data collection. By using Cronbach’s Alpha, the reliability of the test was .739

3.2.2. Sample TOFEL Test

The study interrogated the homogeneity of the participants with a sample TOEFL test to select the participants who have a same knowledge and proficiency level before the pre-test.

3.3. Procedure

This study was held within four months. The participants were homogenous. The participants in the present paper were 55 Iranian Turkish and Farsi native speakers learning English as a foreign language in one institute's semester in Quchan, Iran. Twenty nine participants were Turkish native speakers and twenty six participants were Farsi native speakers. They were chosen in their groups randomly. For assigning participants in their groups, Sex was controlled randomly. Participants were not informed about the research study, serial tests, the treatment and so forth. Each group studied a same 100 syllable words. After teaching the 100 syllabic words to the two groups, participants in both groups receive the production-test as a pre-test. Then two groups received the treatment one week later. According to Richards, Hull, & Proctor (2005), the treatment is Bubble Cards is a game which a teacher gives each student one response card and one bubble card. The teacher explains that the bubbles represent the syllables in a word, and the big bubble represents the syllable with the most stress in a word. The teacher explains the task. Students go around the room and match their Bubble card with a response card. Then they make a short conversation that includes the response. Students complete the task. Each time students match cards, replace their cards with new ones. The participants in Farsi group and Turkish groups received the same production-test as a post-test one week after the treatment. After one month, the participants received the same production-test as a delay post-test for evaluating their retentions. The production-test was same for the pre-test, post-test and delay post- test

4. Results

In order to see whether there is any significant difference in learning grammar among learners in control and experimental group, the results of the descriptive analysis were analyzed as follow (see Table 1).

Table 1. Mean pre- and posttest gain scores of samples in Turkish and Farsi group.

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
Experimental	29	8.13	2.662	.486	4	13
Control	26	.24	2.026	.405	-3	4
Total	55	4.55	4.622	.623	-3	13

The outcomes of data analysis (ANOVA) in table 2 show that there is a statistically considerable difference between Turkish and Farsi groups because obtained F value of 148.110, was found to be significant at .001 level ($P=.000$). In other words, the candidates in Turkish group have outperformed the ones in the Farsi group in syllable stress learning when they were taught by game of teaching syllable stress based on Bubble Cards . This confirms that use of Bubble Cards increased word stress learning in quality because the EFL learners learn effectively.

Table 2. Results of ANOVA for pre- and posttest gain scores of samples in experimental and control group.

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	849.610	1	849.610	148.110	.000
Within Groups	304.027	53	5.736		
Total	1153.636	54			

Three weeks after the Turkish and Farsi learners of both groups were inquired to participate in a delayed posttest again. The purpose of this test was to see which method of instruction had more impact on the learners' word stress retentions and could improve their word stress learning for a long period of time. Interestingly enough, here again the participants of the Turkish group could perform better than the Farsi group (See table 3).

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation for both groups after three weeks.

Group Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Turkish Group	29	17.453	0.812
Farsi Group	26	15.987	0.692

5. Discussion

In a native language speaking, learners take advantages of language characters which their parents took advantage of them in advance; in a TL speaking, the procedure of speaking become concerned and irritated knowledge obtained by doing which may result in flawed results. Therefore, having good pronunciation for EFL learners is critical because English is not their native language. If you like to instruct pronunciation to Iranian EFL learners effectively, you must have knowledge or perception of the situation or the fact that "Iran, a multicultural society, is home to a number of language communities speaking Farsi, Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic, and so on." (khadivi, A. & Kalantari, R. 2011). Fluency has a specified role or position in speaking at a normal speech rate without too many hesitations in speech. Wolf (2001) believed that the fluency in human communication through spoken language is the factor which is refusing to recognize by learners in expressing the views and positions of a target language. For fulfilling expectations or needs of communications, teachers must impart knowledge to their learners how they should make the sound of a word or part of a word perfectly. There are some problems in achieving this end such as multilingual and bilingual of EFL learners. By thinking to the multilingualism, and bilingualism situations that require solutions, both the instructive system and the distinct teachers have been disputed the truth or validity of the situations to come up with some sort of act or process of solving

the problems (Khadivi & Kalantari, 2011). Thus, instructors need to provide appropriate teaching methods to master their learners in pronunciation.

As discussed earlier, the participants in Turkish group have outperformed the ones in the Farsi group in word stress learning. This approves that use of Bubble Cards intensified word stress learning of Iranian bilingual EFL learners very much so. The intention of the second delayed test was to find out which method of teaching had more effect on the learners' word stress retentions and could encourage them word stress learning for a longer period of time. Again, the participants of the Turkish group could perform better than the Farsi group.

6. Conclusion

Chirandon, Laohawiriyanon, and Rakthong (2005) believed that "using games in the classroom is one of recommended techniques" (p. 2). Thus, playing games on courses by instructors provide opportunities for interacting with a foreign language easily and sufficiently. Games enhance EFL learners to exchange their instructional and transactional acts by using "all four skills, and creates a real life situation for using language" (as cited in Chirandon, Laohawiriyanon, & Rakthong, 2005, p. 2).

Brown (1990, 151) claimed the significance of acknowledging English word stress; Brown declared that the indispensability of knowing stress syllable of a word is very important because listeners cannot recognize the word stress. This makes failures and listeners fail the speakers' information.

Generally speaking, a child acquires knowledge their native language in an unconscious manner with a set of sounds. When a child acquires knowledge another language; the new language will be understood through the filter of that mother tongue language. This interference is known from the L1 sounds. Thus, the thing that is difficult to achieve is the next language because a child supplements new sounds to the first set and disturbs the extremely accurate set. English teachers have great troubles in teaching pronunciation to their multilingual and bilingual Iranian EFL learners. Thus, teachers may require conceive a sufficient teaching method to become proficient with their learners in pronunciation.

The outcomes and findings of the present study establish the truth or correctness of the significance of instructional method of English word stress teaching and foremost it encourages the utilizing of Bubble Cards in the English word stress learning and retentions of EFL learners, especially the Turkish participants.

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Appendix A

The production-test

Two syllable words stress on the first	Two syllable words stress on the second	Three syllable word stress on the first	Three syllable word stress on the second
Airway	Expense	Battery	Corruption
beefcake	Batik	Cornea	Cosmetics
bath tub	Control	Trafficking	Translation
Failure	Convene	Sunglasses	Destruction
Refund	Coquette	Charity	Courageous
batter	Receipt	Amperage	Commuter
Bedroom	People	Programmer	Creation
Bathroom	Hotel	Servitude	Explosion
bebop	Supply	Applicant	Credenza
Button	Guitar	Punishment	Employment