

Students' Ability to Identify Different Tones and the Tonic Syllable in the English Intonation

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Abstract

This study aims at knowing the degree of students' knowledge concerning different tones and the tonic syllable in the intonation of English language. Moreover, if this knowledge could be improved through teaching students these different tones and the tonic syllable. Thus the objectives of this study are to determine to what extent students can identify various tones when hearing them, and also if they can identify the tonic syllable; moreover to show the statistical differences before studying intonation and after studying intonation. To achieve this aim the researcher selected a sample of 92 third year students at Sudan University of Science and Technology and conducted a pre-test to determine their standard before teaching them intonation then a post-test of 30 items of words and sentences was conducted. Statistical analysis of the students' performance showed the following: Regarding single words, students' understanding of the tone *fall* has improved and they became much better in identifying it. When considering the tone *rise* the students still face problem with it. When looking into the *fall-rise* and *rise-fall* tones, students confuse them together. Regarding the level of sentence it has been recognized that the students understanding of the tone *fall-rise* has improved but they still confuse the *rise* and the *fall* tones together. Regarding the tonic syllable the students in the post test have an inclination not to choose the structure words as a tonic syllable. Their understanding in this area has improved.

Keywords: Stress, tone, pitch, intonation