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Avis aux auteurs**Feuille de styles**

La structure d'un article scientifique en lettres et sciences humaines se présente comme suit : Pour un article qui est une contribution théorique et fondamentale : Titre, Prénom et Nom de l'auteur, Institution d'attache, adresse électronique, Résumé en Français, Mots clés, Abstract, Key words, Introduction (justification du thème, problématique, hypothèses/objectifs scientifiques, approche), Développement articulé, Conclusion, Bibliographie.

- Pour un article qui résulte d'une recherche de terrain : Titre, Prénom et Nom de l'auteur, Institution d'attache, adresse électronique, Résumé en Français, Mots clés, Abstract, Key words, Introduction, Méthodologie, Résultats et Discussion, Conclusion, Bibliographie.

Les articulations d'un article, à l'exception de l'introduction, de la conclusion, de la bibliographie, doivent être titrées, et numérotées par des chiffres (exemples : 1. ; 1.1. ; 1.2 ; 2. ; 2.2. ; 2.2.1 ; 2.2.2. ; 3. ; etc.).

3.4. Les passages cités sont présentés en romain et entre guillemets. Lorsque la phrase citant et la citation dépassent trois lignes, il faut aller à la ligne, pour présenter la citation (interligne 1) en romain et en retrait, en diminuant la taille de police d'un point.

3.5. Les références de citation sont intégrées au texte citant, selon les cas, de la façon suivante :

- (Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur, année de publication, pages citées) ;
- Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur (année de publication, pages citées).
- Exemples :
- En effet, le but poursuivi par M. Ascher (1998, p. 223), est « d'élargir l'histoire des mathématiques de telle sorte qu'elle acquière une perspective multiculturelle et globale (...), d'accroître le domaine des mathématiques : alors qu'elle s'est pour l'essentiel occupé du groupe professionnel occidental que l'on appelle les mathématiciens (...) ».
- Pour dire plus amplement ce qu'est cette capacité de la société civile, qui dans son déploiement effectif, atteste qu'elle peut porter le développement et l'histoire, S. B. Diagne (1991, p. 2) écrit :

Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas : de toute manière, les populations ont toujours su opposer à la philosophie de l'encadrement et à son volontarisme leurs propres stratégies de contournements. Celles-là, par exemple, sont lisibles dans le dynamisme, ou à tout le moins, dans la créativité dont fait preuve ce que l'on désigne sous le nom de secteur informel et à qui il faudra donner l'appellation positive d'économie populaire.

- Le philosophe ivoirien a raison, dans une certaine mesure, de lire, dans ce choc déstabilisateur, le processus du sous-développement. Ainsi qu'il le dit :

le processus du sous-développement résultant de ce choc est vécu concrètement par les populations concernées comme une crise globale : crise socio-économique (exploitation brutale, chômage permanent, exode accéléré et douloureux), mais aussi crise socio-culturelle et de civilisation traduisant une impréparation socio-historique et une inadaptation des cultures et des comportements humains aux formes de vie imposées par les technologies étrangères. (S. Diakité, 1985, p. 105).

3.6. Les sources historiques, les références d'informations orales et les notes explicatives sont numérotées en série continue et présentées en bas de page.

3.7. Les divers éléments d'une référence bibliographique sont présentés comme suit :

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TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY OF LENGTH AND LENGTHENING BY FRENCH SPEAKING LEARNERS

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Résumé : Cet article porte sur la quantité ou la longueur, et l'allongement des sons anglais. Il porte aussi sur l'accent tonique et le rythme. Il élucide la nécessité de comprendre quelques traits suprasegmentaux distinctifs afin d'être un bon apprenant de l'anglais car la prononciation importe.

Mots clés : enseignement, apprentissage, prononciation, sons, voyelles, consonnes.

Abstract: This paper deals with quantity or length, and lengthening of English sounds. It deals also with stress and rhythm. It sheds light in the necessity to understand some distinctive suprasegmental features in order to become a good English learner because pronunciation matters.

Key-words: teaching, learning, pronunciation, sounds, vowels, consonants

Definitions:

1.1. Length and lengthening

The length or quantity of a sound is its physical duration, viz. the amount of time on which it is stretched in a given word or phrase. Lengthening is the concrete manifestation or realization of length, which is, the right or wrong fact of giving a particular sound or phrase a given duration. It can be taken here in its negative (side) connotation. Length is the normal occurrence of duration in a given sound whereas lengthening is the abnormal and unusual occurrence of quantity in a given sound. All sounds are not lengthened or do not admit length or lengthening in English, and many learners do not take such a poignant problem into account.

1.1.1. Which sounds are lengthened?

The sounds which can be held on continuously (during a longer or shorter period of time) are called continuants. They are vowels, nasal consonants, rolled and fricative consonants, the frictionless continuants and the stops or plosive consonants. Let us examine the length of English vowels and consonants.

1.1.2. Length of vowels

The length of English vowels is determined by their nature or position, by their situation within a word or phrase, by the nature of sounds preceding or coming after them, or by their being stressed or unstressed. Some rules have been edicted by phoneticians. The

most remarkable ones are those given by the late Daniel Jones in his monumental and complete book entitled *An Outline of English Phonetics*.

Jones posited there five rules concerning the vowels of English and to others devoted to the length of English consonants. We give, here, a summary or reformulation, viz, a simplification of Jones' rules following the essential points on which they have been postulated.

Bye the way, we begin with the long vowels. Five vowels ([i:], [a:], [ɔ:], [u:], [ɜ:]) are longer than the others in similar situations. The term "situations" stands, here, for the environment and prominence. By virtue of their outstanding length in comparison with the other vowels, those five vowels are called "the long vowels" of English. Here below are some illustrations:

- beat /bi:t/
- card /ka:d/
- morning /m ɔ:nɪŋ/
- boot /bu:t/
- perfect /pɜ:fɪkt/

Moreover, diphthongs have about the same length as long vowels. So diphthongs and long vowels have these characteristics in duration (absolute length), there are circumstances under which they tend to become shorter than usual (before a voiceless consonant, in unstressed syllables, before a nasal consonant or [l] followed in turn by a voiceless consonant, in stressed syllables which are immediately followed by an unstressed syllable).

Meanwhile, it must be noted that even short vowels are subject to some variations of length. But those variations in length are not very significant.

1.1.3. Length of consonants

Length of consonants, so variable, is not like the one of vowels. However, foreign learners should bear in mind that:

- Final consonants which are preceded by a short vowel are longer than when preceded by a long vowel or a diphthong.

Here is an illustration:

- + The /n/ in "sin" is longer than the /n/ in "seen" and "scene".

- liquids which are followed by a voiced consonant are longer than those followed by a voiceless consonants

e.g.: + the /n/ in "winds" is longer than the /n/ in "hint"

+ The /l/ in "bold" is longer than the /l/ in "falt"

+ The /m/ in "number" is longer than the one in "jumper"

- liquid consonants are also usually long when they are preceded by a short vowel followed by an unstressed syllable which begins with /l/ or /w/

e.g.: the /l/ in "million" is longer than the /m/ in "somewhere"

- plosive consonants preceded by a stressed short vowel and followed by another

consonants are rather longer

e.g.: the /k/ in “act” is longer than the /k/ in “jacket”

The /p/ in “description” is longer than the one in “perhaps”

-when a consonant follows a stressed short consonant, it is usually stressed to create emphasis

In the following utterances, consonants are lengthened

+I never heard such a thing (/n/ in “never” and /h/ in heard are lengthened)

+Numbers and numbers of things (/n/ is lengthened in both “numbers”).

After such reformulations, it is necessary to talk about English sounds which allow length of a much clearer appreciation of the phenomenon of lengthening. We will talk of vowels and diphthongs (by vowels we mean short and long vowels) before exploring those among the consonants which are concerned by the gist of our study.

2. Presentation of the English vowels and consonants

English is said to have pure vowels and diphthongs, and consonants which are classified according to the manner and place of articulation. Let us examine the vowels of English.

2.1. Vowels

“A vowel is a speech-sound produced without audible stopping” of the breath by the tongue, lips etc. (*Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary, Fourth Edition. Oxford: OUP, 1989, p.1428.*). English vowels are classified under “pure” vowels and diphthongs. A pure vowel is produced with the speech-organs remaining approximately stationary whereas diphthongs are made with the speech organs performing a clearly perceptible movement. To make things clear, let us posit that pure vowels consist of short as well as long vowels.

Vowels are described in relation to the primary cardinal vowels. A famous diagram has been designed, on the purpose, by the late Daniel Jones. On the basis of that diagram, we will place English vowels. But, let us first give the diagram devised by Jones.

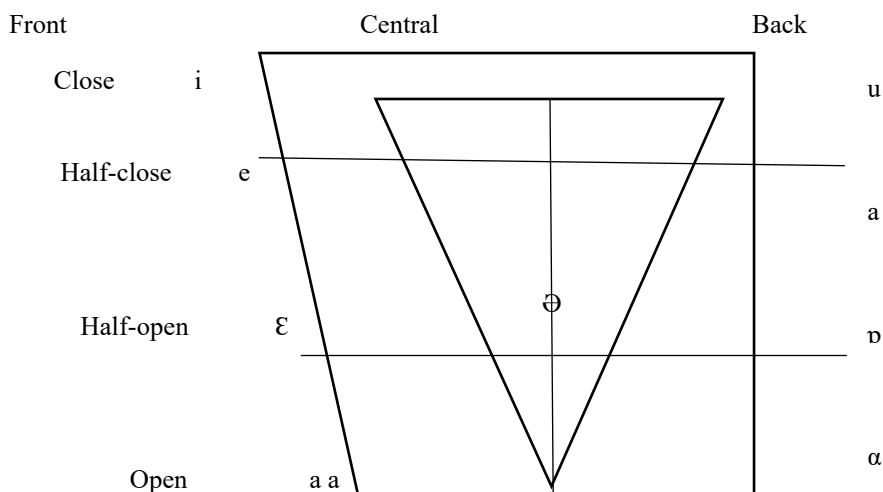


Fig1: The easiest vowel positions in English

This geometrical figure represents the tongue-positions. It is conventional and shaped according to the requirements of the practical language teacher. Cardinal vowels are the ones produced with remote tongue positions from neutral position and are classified according to the height to which the tongue which is raised and according to the part of the tongue which is raised highest.

On the basis of the height of the tongue we classify vowels under close vowels (i _U), half-close vowels (e_o), half-open (e-ɔ) and open vowels (a-a).

In the production of close vowels, the tongue is raised as high as possible. In open vowels, the reverse is happens, viz the tongue is raised as low as possible.

Half-close vowels are produced with the tongue occupying one third of the distance between "close" and "open" whereas half-open are produced with the tongue occupying two-thirds of the distance from "close" and open in mere estimation.

According to the part of the tongue which is raised, vowels, are can classified under front and back vowels.

Front vowels are produced with the front (tip) of the tongue raised towards the hard palate. Back vowels are produced with the back of the tongue raised towards the soft palate. Central vowels are those in which the highest point of the tongue is in the centre of part of the (vowel figure) tongue. This brief survey of the cardinal vowels leads us to the vowels we are concerned with: the English pure vowels.

2. 1.1. Long vowels

They are five in number : (/u: /, /ɔ:/, /ɜ:/, /i: / and /ɑ:/). We have to place them first within the diagram before giving detailed information about them. That information will be their placement, their influence on the lip position, or behavior.

2.1.2. Short vowels

They are seven in number ([e], [u], [ɪ], [ə], [ʊ], [æ], and [ʌ]). First of all we must place them in the chart before discussing them as with the long vowels.

2.1.3. Diphthongs

In English Standard Pronunciation (RP), there is a large number of diphthongs. A diphthong, contrary to a pure vowel which remains constant and does not glide, consists of a movement or glide from one vowel to another. In terms of length, the diphthongs must be regarded as the long vowels.

However it is worth keeping in mind that the first part or vowel of diphthong is much longer and stronger than the second part, that is, as the glide to the second part happens, the loudness of the sound decreases, viz the second part must be shorter and quieter. That implies that, in producing English diphthongs the last part must not be made too strongly. In English we have eight diphthongs, divided into centring diphthongs that i.e diphthongs gliding towards the schwa [ə], and closing diphthongs towards [ɪ] and [U]. That is why we have three groups in the typology of diphthongs according to the ending in [ə], [ɪ] and [U] as shows the following diagram.

2.2. The consonants

In this part we focus on consonants which allow lengthening, viz nasal and lateral

consonants, the stops or the plosive consonants. We have to bear in mind that those consonants are lengthened owing to the sound which follows or precedes them that is why or according to their position.

In consequence of that, final consonants are longer when they are preceded by a short vowel. Other instances have already been given in which consonants are lengthened or longer than usual.

Consonant description is done thank to the following figure.

	Place of articulation							
Manner of articulation	Labial		Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
	Bilabial	Labio-dental						
Plosive	p(vl) b (vd)			t(vl) d(vd)			k(vl) g(vd)	
Affricate					tʃ(vl) dʒ(vd)			
Nasal	m(vd)			n(vd)			ŋ(vd)	
Lateral				l				
Fricative		f(vl) v(vd)	θ(vl) ð(vd)	s(vl) z(vd)	ʃ(vl) ʒ(vd)			h(vl)
Semi-vowel						j(vd)	w(vd)	
approximant						r(vd)		

Fig.2.English consonants chart

vl=voiceless

vd=voiced

After designing such a chart, we abstract (some of) the consonants we are concerned with in our study for a detailed description. Let us remind that a consonant is defined, as “a sound in which the air flow from the lungs is not allowed to pass through the mouth without something interrupting it” (*Hook and Rowel 1991:34*)

2.2.1. The plosive consonants

There is a double movement or mechanism in the production of plosive consonants:

- 1) the air passage is completely closed, which implies that the air is compressed, and
- 2) the passage is opened suddenly to let the air through, which produces an explosion or an explosive sound.

There are six plosive consonant phonemes in English: /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/.

2.2.2. The nasal consonants

They are three in number: /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/. A detailed description is necessary to grasp all instances of lengthening. However, it should be important to remind that those nasal consonants are produced with a complete closure of the mouth-passage (then the soft palate is held in its lowered position), and a lowering of the soft palate so that the air

can freely pass out through the nose.

2.2.3 Lateral consonants

We can distinguish in English, at least two kinds of lateral consonants though they one letter stands for them (/l/). They are the "dark" (/ɫ/) and the "clear" (/l/). The clear l only occurs before all vowels and before /j/ whereas the dark (/ɫ/) does before all other consonants, and in final position. To produce both consonants.

The tip of the tongue must touch the tooth ridge in such a way that a complete closure in the middle of the month takes place. There must be, yet, a passage for the air on one or both sides the tongue. The soft palate is raised and vocal cords vibrate. In short, both sounds are alveolar lateral consonants. Meanwhile we have to note that the difference between dark and clear l that the former is articulated with the back of the tongue raised in the direction of the soft palate, while the latter is produced with raising the front of the tongue in the direction of the hard palate. This can be simply expressed in these turns: dark l-sounds have the resonance of back vowels and clear l that of front vowels.

-dark l = ɫ (believe, relieve)

-clear l = l (life, liberty)

2.2.4. Fricative consonants

They are front with the air-passage narrowed in some degree so that, when the air is expelled by pressure from the lungs we hear a kind of hissing sound.

2.2.5. Frictionless continuants

A well-known fact is that all fricative consonants may be pronounced with a certain audible friction. But whenever a voiced fricative consonant is produced with a reduced friction so that that friction becomes practically imperceptible, that sound is called a frictionless continuant. Some voiced consonants have the same or almost the same articulatory positions as fricatives, but with no audible friction. The imperceptibility of the friction finds explanations in either the fact that less exhaling force is used than for the other fricative, or to the fact that the aperture at the place of articulation is wider in a sense. Both factors can be combined to explain imperceptibility of friction.

-At the beginning of a stressed syllable /r/becomes a frictionless continuant ("arrange", "red"...)

- Frictionless continuants variants of /w/ and (j) are also heard in the place of the semi-vowels /w/ and /j/ because of the weakness of the exhaling force, the continuants /w:/ and /j:/ become consonantal.

III. Lip-rounding and lip-spreading

In this chapter we cast a glance at the lip position and at the degrees of length.

3.1. Lip position

It is very important an element in the analysis of vowel quality. We deliberately deal with the latter characteristic for a better comprehension of the phenomenon of lengthening. The lips, and this we remind, in a vowel articulation, may have three positions: spread, rounded or neutral. We can even simplify the grouping under the terms rounded and unrounded.

3.1.1. Lip rounding

We have two degrees of lip rounding, viz. close lip rounding and open lip rounding: both degrees can be illustrated by what happens with cardinal u (close lip rounding) and cardinal ɔ (open lip rounding). It must be retained that lip rounding is very important a variable, to use Roach's term, of vowel quality. In lip rounding, the corners of the lips are brought towards each other and the lips themselves pushed forward as in [u], and [ɔ]. To take up the unrounded positions, two possibilities must be taken into account, i.e. lip-spreading and neutral lip position.

3.1.2. Lip spreading

When the lip are spread in the production of the vowel, we notice then that the corners of the lips are moved away from each other, as for performing a smile. The best illustration is with [i]. The last possibility is now to be explained.

3.1.3 Neutral lip position

At this stage we can neither notice rounding nor spreading. The lips seem to be at stand still. Good illustration is in the production of words like "bird" where the vowel production is done in absolute neutral lip position.

3.2 Degrees of length

Length like stress, has degrees, i.e. concrete manifestations. Those degrees are dealt with according to the variability of sound quantities. Two degrees, may be distinguished, for the sake of simplification, which are called long and short. Meanwhile, if desirable, a third degree which is intermediate can be talked of which is termed medium or half long. The long degree is marked by means of a colon (:) -placed right after the sound concerned while the intermediate or half-long one is just marked by a colon deprived of the low -point like (•) before the sound which is concerned. A concrete illustration is: beat / bi:t) and bead | bi•d/. Following that "beat" sounds longer than "bead". The third degree is unmarked as in /bid/ (bid)

IV. Fortis-Lenis

4.1. Phonological approach

In the distinction of sounds such as [t] and [d], one should not only restrict the dissimilarity in presence or absence of voice. It is true to say that _ as it is usually the case=" the main difference between the sounds in question is voice, whether it be present or absent. This leads often to the down-to-earth equations which follows:

$$\begin{aligned} [t] &= [d] - \text{voice or} \\ [d] &= [t] + \text{voice} \end{aligned}$$

The meaning to give to these mathematical operations is that the only distinction between the sounds under review is voice (absent or present).

While, such voiceless /voiced pairs should be distinguished by other physical features. The fact that the voiced sound [d] is articulated sometimes with "relatively weak energy, whereas those which are always voiceless are relatively strong"(A C. Gimson 1989:34). Following these transformations, [d] is regarded as weak or lenis and

[t] as strong or fortis. Which factors do actuate in this phenomenon?

4.2. Fortis-lenis correlation

Dealing with that correlation equates revealing the way in which the sounds members of the consonantal class /p, t, k, f, s, ʃ, tʃ/ are alike or different from their counterparts in the other consonantal class /b, d, g, v, z, ʒ, dʒ/, because apart from voicing or devoicing we shall find out the distinction resides to mostly in the degree of breath (force of exhalation) and muscular effort involved in the articulation of those voiceless /voiced pairs. These factors are all the more important since:

- a) Fortis consonants (/p, t, k, f, s, ʃ, tʃ/) are voiceless intervocally while lenis consonants (/b, d, g, v, z, ʒ, dʒ/) are not in the same case.
- b) Fortis plosives (/p, t, k/), are aspirated and voiceless in initial of stressed syllables whereas /b, d, g/ are devoiced, unaspirated if initial and preceded by a voiceless consonant.
- c) Vowels, nasals and laterals before lenis are lengthened. We have to note that fortis consonants have an initial allophonic manifestation similar to some degree of aspiration. That is why fortis/lenis should be regarded as a phonological phenomenon which, induces allophonic realization in aspiration, tenseness, laxness, voicing or devoicing.

V. Rhythm: Stress and length

In English, stress refers to the muscular energy devoted to the production of syllables or sounds. That "degree of force" is greater in stressed syllables or sounds (vowels here) than in unstressed ones. One feature is common to all stressed syllables, i.e. prominence. Four criteria make a syllable prominent. They are loudness, length, pitch and vowel quality, as stated by Peter Roach (1983:74). Length, we have already mention, refers to the physical duration of a given sound or syllable. It has an important effect on stress, as pitch does. That is why only both factors are sufficient to give prominence to a given sound or syllable. On the basis of the impact of length on stress, we deem it relevant to see the real dependence of length on stress or on the rhythm of the sentence. Because there is a narrow link relationship between rhythm and length as depicted by Jones (1976: 237-243).

5.1. Quantity

Quantity refers to the physical duration of sounds. Length is a quantitative feature, viz, it refers to the amount of time devoted to the production and reception of a sound. Length refers to quantity. Both terms are interchangeable. As for quality, it is the timbre, the resonance of a given sound. The difference between quantity and quality can be illustrated as follows: perfect/'pɜ:fekt/ is longer than perfect/pə'fekt/. Quantitatively speaking the stress in the first explains the vowel transformations from /ɜ:/ to /ə/, and from /e/ to /ɪ/ respectively in the first and second syllables. By virtue of the distinctive function of the stress, we can sustain that quality is dependent on quantity. A long vowel turns into a short one according as the stress moves from it to another, which induces the length of the latter.

5.2. Length as a sign of prominence

Length often accounts for prominence. If the following words "a monarch" and "a desert", we find out that the first syllable of both words is more prominent, viz longer than the second. If we add something to both word, having: monarchical and desertification, we realize that the second syllable of both words becomes lengthened to the detriment of the first:

-monarch/'mɒnəʃk/ →/mə'na:kɪkl/
 -desert/'dezət/ →desertification /dɪ,zɜ:tɪfɪ'keɪʃn/

Following these instances of qualitative transformations (transformation of the quantity into quality), we deduce that length is a sign of prominence manifested under stress occurrence in both illustrations. Meanwhile, whenever a syllable in which occurs a long vowel or a diphthong is followed by unstressed syllables, that vowel or diphthong is shorter than if the syllable were a final one or followed by another stressed syllable. We dare add that the greater the number of following unstressed syllables the shorter is the stressed vowel. For the /i:/ in leader/li:də/ is shorter than the one in lead /li:d/. We can even materialize those contrasts as follows: leader/li'də/ and lead/li:d/↔ [i:] >[I'].

Conclusion:

The more we ponder over length and lengthening, the more we imagine the difficulties of non-English speakers and learners. Teaching items like tape recorders and CD-ROM readers exist.

Are learners of English drilled in listening and pronunciation skills? Learners are taught listening comprehensions by lab monitors during the first and second year at university. We have checked and found that some remedial means such as radio listening, listening comprehension courses, songs and games in the classrooms should be very useful. We have undertaken primary research and books we came across helped a lot. All in all, we realize that our learners still suffer from interferences and negative transfer.

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