

Teaching English wh-question pronunciation based on one question word

Roland Giscard ONDZÉ OTOUBA,
Université Marien N'GOUABI, Congo
rolandondze@gmail.com,

Yvon-Pierre NDONGO-IBARA
Université Marien Ngouabi, Congo
Congo.yvon.ndongo-ibara@umng.cg

Abstract

This research work aims at scrutinizing different problems that prevent the teaching of English wh-question pronunciation based on one question word at secondary school. In fact, it results from classroom observation and questionnaire that this English language item is mentioned in the English syllabus, but it is not taught and assessed for several reasons. Actually, prospective teachers are not equipped with teaching strategies on this language item during the training period at University. In addition, workshops and seminars are not organised to reinforce the secondary school teachers' awareness on the teaching of this aspect. Finally, the selected teaching item is not part of testing activities. Consequently, teachers lack strategies to teach English wh-question pronunciation. Thus, the 3Ps (Presentation, Practice, and Production) method coupled with a lesson plan have been suggested to show the way English wh-question pronunciation could be taught and assessed at secondary schools.

Keywords: Teaching, wh-question, pronunciation, stress

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche a pour objectif de scruter les différents problèmes qui font obstacle à l'enseignement de la prononciation des questions d'information (wh-question) basé sur un mot interrogatif au secondaire. En effet, les résultats obtenus à partir de l'observation et du questionnaire relèvent que cet enseignement est inscrit au programme officiel du cours de langue anglaise, cependant il n'est pas réalisé dans les salles de classes pour plusieurs raisons. En fait, les élèves-enseignants n'ont pas été équipés des stratégies d'enseignement sur cette notion au cours de leur formation initiale à l'Université. Ensuite, les ateliers et séminaires de renforcement des capacités des enseignants basés sur l'enseignement des items de la prononciation anglaise ne sont organisés. Enfin, cet item d'enseignement ne fait pas parti des items d'évaluations formative et sommative au secondaire. Par conséquent, les enseignants d'anglais manquent de stratégies pour dispenser cet enseignement. C'est ainsi que la méthode des 3Ps (Présentation, Pratique et Production) couplée d'une fiche pédagogique ont été proposées dans cet article pour montrer la manière dans laquelle la prononciation des questions d'information pourrait être enseigné et évalué au secondaire.

Mots clés : Enseignement, wh-question, prononciation, accent

Introduction

This research work aims at promoting the teaching of English sentence stress or pronunciation based on one wh-question word pronunciation at secondary school. As a matter of fact, our main purpose is to equip teachers of English with the didactic techniques about the teaching of wh-question pronunciation. To recall, English distinguishes two forms of wh-questions: *wh-question with one question word* such as, what, how, who, which, where, whose and why, and *wh-question with two question words* such as, how often, how long, which time, what kind, and what time. Hence, the main concern throughout this article is based on *wh-question with one question word*. It is important to highlight that English is taught as a foreign language in Congo, and the main objective is to enable learners to communicate. This work tends to encourage both teachers and learners to face this complex language issue in classes. Thus, two main questions have been asked to undertake this work successfully: (1) what are the problems that block the teaching of wh-question pronunciation at secondary school? (2) How to teach wh-

question pronunciation based on one question word in classes? As a matter of fact, the following hypotheses mention that the non-teaching of wh-question pronunciation could be the result of the lack of training of teachers coupled with the failure of organizing in training services, and as any language issue in the syllabus, the pronunciation of wh-question could be taught through the 3Ps method coupled with the explanatory method in a lesson plan. The lay out of this article covers the following aspects: the previous works on English sentence stress, the data collection method and analysis, the major findings, the pronunciation of English one wh-question word, and the lesson plan.

I- Previous works on English sentence stress

This section deals with the review of some research works related to the teaching of English sentence stress at secondary school. In fact, we are going to focus mainly on the research works of the following authors.

Joanne Kenworthy (1987) focuses his studies on the prominence of words which carry the stress in the sentences. As a matter of fact, Kenworthy thinks that English utterances are understood thanks to the emphasis of the content words by the speaker in order to facilitate the message conveyed. In this respect Kenworthy (1987: 11) argues:

Speakers often decide that they want to give more or less prominence to a particular word. A word may be given more weight because it has been said already, or it may be given more weight because the speaker wants to highlight it. (...) this respect of pronunciation is called sentence stress.

This passage unveils the relevant of teaching and learning English sentence stress. In fact, the author mentions that this language item is attested when the important word of the sentence is highlighted or emphasized. When a word is emphasized, it is pronounced louder and longer. Louder refers to the volume of voice when producing a word and longer refers to the duration when producing a word. Otherwise, we talk about sentence stress, when we refer to the emphasis put on particular words in the sentence so as to help listeners decode the message uttered. Talking about various ways that help both speaker and listener to ease the oral conversations in English, Kenworthy (1987: 32) suggests:

In spoken English there are various ways in which a speaker gives the listener information about the relative importance of different parts of the message. One way of doing this is to put stress on the words which carry the most information (...) the use of stress placement in clause or sentence.

Obviously, Kenworthy tries to underline the two ways that can facilitate the teaching and learning of sentence stress. The first way is related to the identification of the most important words. The second one is focused on the place of the stress mark in a given sentence. As a matter of fact, in English sentences there are two categories of words: function words and content words. Indeed, function words are grammatical words that is they have grammatical function in the sentence. They mostly don't have semantic meaning thus they are generally unstressed in English sentences. Whereas, content words are lexical words; that is, they bear semantic meaning. Thus English speakers tend to put the stress on this type of words because, content words are more important than function words in the sentence. The following sentence in the example (1) illustrates: "*Mam 'bought the 'salt at the 'supermarket*". We notice that *Mam, bought, salt, and supermarket* are content words. If we take off them and remain with the function words such as *the, at and the*, the sentence will make nonsense and it is not understandable. But if we take off *the, at, and the* and remain with *Mam bought salt supermarket* the sentence is not grammatically correct but it is understandable. So, *Mam, bought, salt and supermarket* are the important words in this sentence and they are called content words. These words receive the *main stress* mark when uttering in order to help listener decode the conveyed message of this sentence. However, *the, at and the* are not so important because they cannot stand alone. Their meanings depend on the content words and they are called function words and they do not receive the stress. Elsewhere, these words can be stressed when the idea of contrast is raised or when the emphasis is put on them to convey a particular message.

In this work, Kenworthy has developed some rules that can facilitate the understanding of English sentence stress. However he has not provided teachers with adequate information related to the didactic process in order to facilitate the teaching and learning of English sentence stress at secondary school.

Peter Avery (1992) is concerned with the placement of the stress in English sentences. According to him, this study is possible when teachers and learners are aware of the difference between content words and function words in one side and stressed words and unstressed words in the other side during the teaching and learning process. In this connection Avery (1992:74) writes:

For students to produce sentences that have the appropriate stress Patterns (...) it is necessary that they know which words of a sentence are stressed and which are not stressed. English words can be divided into two groups: content words and function words.

This passage shows that when dealing with English sentence stress placement, the teacher should first explain the terms content words and function words. In fact, Content words are composed of nouns, verbs, question words, adverbs, adjectives, and demonstratives. These categories of words, according to Avery, receive *major word stress*; that is, they are pronounced loudly than others. Whereas, function words are composed of articles, non-content prepositions, auxiliaries, pronouns, conjunctions, relative pronouns. These categories of words are generally unstressed. Insisting on the differences among content words in English sentences, Avery (1992:75) enlightens: “While all content words receive major word stress, one content word within a particular sentence will receive greater stress than all the others. We refer to this as the major sentence stress”. Obviously, the author tries to mention that in English content words cover dissimilarities in production. All content words cannot be pronounced with the same level of stress. The content word which bears the main idea in the sentence is more audible than others and that word, according to Avery, is mostly the last word of a sentence. The following dialogue in the example (2) is an illustration:

- a) What did you buy at `Creeds?
- b) I bought a new `sweater at Creeds

The analysis of the example (2) shows that the sentence (2a) covers three content words: *what*, *buy* and *Creeds*. In fact, the greater stress falls on the last content word “*Creeds*” because the speaker wants to emphasize on the place where the action occurred. However, in the sentence (2b), the word *Creeds* does not receive the *major sentence stress*; that is, it is not the most audible word in this sentence. Here, the speaker stresses the word “*sweater*” because this latter gives more information about the sentence. So, the speaker could shorten the answer and reply “*sweater*”, to facilitate the listener’s understanding. Therefore, “*sweater*” is the *information focus* of the sentence (2b) according to Avery. Thus, the *main sentence stress* can move from one content word to another depending on the focus of information. However, the prediction of sentence stress placement in Avery’s work does not concern on one type of sentence in English, since there are different categories of sentences.

Richard V. Teschner and M. Stanley (2004) highlight some aspects of stress in English sentences. They demonstrate that the content words in English are selected thanks to the linguistic issues mentioned in the following quotation:

In order to emphasize a word in a sentence, English often employs a heightened form of stress that we call PEAK STRESS. Peak stress combines three effects to highlight a word: pitch, loudness, and sometimes length. Pitch is the frequency of vibration of the sound-producing (...). Loudness is the amplitude or forcefulness of vibration and is perceived as volume-from loud to soft (...). Length is the duration of a sound or syllable. (2004:61)

Indeed, Teschner and Stanley show that peak stress carries three features: *pitch*, *loudness*, and *length*. The mastery of these three features facilitates the identification of the most important word among the content words in a given sentence. Firstly, pitch refers to the different frequency in voice that can be low or high. Thus, there is a specific meaning attributed to each pitch. When the speaker uses a high pitch on a particular word in the sentence, it can mean anger, joyous, surprised, etc. However, when the speaker uses a low pitch, it can mean sadness, deceitfulness, shock, etc. Secondly, loudness is the force and energy we apply on a word in the sentence so that it can be audible. Otherwise, loudness refers to the audibility of the stressed word in the sentence. Finally, the length is the time spent when producing a word in a sentence. That is, the duration that a word has when it is pronounced. Therefore, when a particular word receives peak stress in a sentence, this word is pronounced with higher or lower pitch, depending on the meaning; it is pronounced audibly and longer.

These authors think that a word receives a peak stress for various purposes. In fact, a peak stress on a word in a sentence is used to contrast two things. The contrast can be implicit or explicit. It is implicit when the contradiction is not visible whereas it is explicit when the contradiction is visible. The example (3) demonstrates through the following sentences.

- a. I want to eat a *FRESH* apple
- b. I need a *BLUE* pen, not a *RED* pen.

This example shows that in (3a) the contrastive peak stress on *fresh* is implicit that is, its contrary is not visibly expressed, whereas, in (3b), the contrastive peak stress is explicit, that is, the contrastive aspects are visibly expressed, *BLUE* versus *RED*. In this sentence the speaker is contrasting for the preference of one and the rejection of the other.

In addition, they further more add another function of peak stress in English sentences. They say that peak stress can serve to mark for new information in spoken English. In fact, when the peak is used to *mark emphasis* it can fall on any word in the sentence, it depends on what the speaker is calling attention to, or is presupposing. The following conversation in the example (4) illustrates:

- a. *We are going to visit the house TOMORROW.*
 b. *But it should be tomorrow in MORNING*

The analysis of this conversation unveils that, in 4A the speaker puts the stress on the word “tomorrow” to emphasize on the day the action will happen, whereas in 4B, the emphasis is put on the word “morning” to refer to the moment of the selected day. Otherwise the selection of the words “morning” and “tomorrow” in this conversation is due to the fact that these words give more details related to the moment and the day the target visit of the house will happen. Thus, the peak stress serves to mark new information and gives more details in this conversation.

To sum up, Richard and Stanley have developed the linguistic issues to deal with English sentence stress. The information provided in this work is too general and cannot facilitate the secondary school teachers and learners face this language item when teaching and learning English in classes.

Neelam Shahwar (2004) deals with some techniques that can facilitate the teaching of stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns and help foreign learners face the English pronunciation problems during the Learning process at secondary school. As a matter of fact, Shahwar mentions that, in the normal English sentence, (without a particular intention or emphasis) words that receive the stress are normally *content or lexical words*: nouns, main verbs, adjectives, adverbs... However, grammatical words are only stressed under some conditions. Elsewhere, in the following sentences the author (2004:44) suggests some conditions or situations in which content words are not stressed whereas grammatical or form words are stressed in English sentences. The example (5) illustrates:

- (a) *You 'want me to 'come? I 'won't come.*
 (b) *She 'doesn't want to 'come*
 (c) *'My car is 'nicer than 'yours*
 (d) *'Tell me something 'more a'bout it*
 (e) *I am 'talking to 'you.*

The analysis of the example (5a) shows that the content words “want” and “come” are stressed in the first part of the sentence, whereas in the second part the content word “come” which is the main verb is not stressed. It is the negative auxiliary “won’t” which receives the stress. In fact, the speaker wants to express a refusal feeling. As the word “come” is mentioned twice, the speaker doesn’t want to put emphasis on it for the second time. In this context the speaker wants to attract the listener’s attention on the feeling of disagreement toward the verb “come” by uttering audibly the negative auxiliary “won’t”. Likewise, Shahwar tries to illustrate the situation where content words are not stressed in (5b). In fact, this sentence shows that the speaker’s attention is to raise the negative auxiliary “doesn’t” rather than the main verb “want”. Since, the English language is a rhythmic language, in some sentences, certain words are given prominence or emphasis due to the rhythmic pattern of the sentence. In this sentence, the speaker chooses the negative auxiliary to be stressed instead of the main verb “want”, because it is the word which gives the rhythm of the sentence. The speaker wants to show his disagreement to come. Insisting on conditions or situations under which form words are stressed, Shahwar mentions some particular situations where form words are stressed. In (5c) the grammatical words “my” and “yours” receive the stress because the speaker wants to express a comparison between the two cars. The main focus of this sentence is to demonstrate the difference between “my car” and “yours” by selecting the comparative adjective “nicer” realised with a great energy. Otherwise, the author thinks that the possessive pronouns “my” and “yours” are grammatical words but they cover the feature meaning of opposition in the sentence (5c). In fact, when form words are used to convey the message of contrast between two linguistic issues, they are stressed in sentences. Whereas, the sentence (5e) refers to the choice. Here, the speaker chooses “you” instead of others. That is, they prefer to talk to “you”. Thus, the speaker wants to show that the main focus of their talking is addressed to “you”. So, by uttering audibly the word “you” the speaker draws the attention of their listeners during the oral communication in English. In sentence (5d) Shahwar evokes another situation where a preposition which is a form word is stressed. Obviously, the analysis of this sentence unveils that the grammatical word “about” is a polysyllabic preposition. This word has two syllables and it is followed by the pronoun “it” in this sentence. According to Shahwar, when a polysyllabic preposition is occurring before a pronoun, it receives the stress. This is due to the number of syllables in the word “about” which is stressed at the second syllable (a’bout).

In a word, the analysis of Shahwar’s sentences highlights that any English word (either content word or form word) can be stressed in a sentence, depending on the speaker’s intentions conveyed in a given message. That is, the relevance of English words depend on the content pictured by the interlocutors themselves during the conversation. The selection of words to be stressed in English sentences is linked to the meaning conveyed.

As a matter of fact, Shahwar suggests the use of gestures, capital letters and boxes when teaching sentence stress. As a matter of fact, during the teaching and learning process, the uses gestures helps learners to identify the most important words in the sentence, and the use of capital letters refers to the stressed words in the sentence (or underline them). Likewise, the use of boxes: big boxes represent the stressed words whereas, small boxes typify the unstressed words in a given sentence as Shahwar (2004:88) illustrates that: *stress and intonation patterns can*

be 'visualized' with the help of symbols The rhythmic pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables can be shown by dots or squares of different sizes. Apart from this quotation, the following sentence in the example (6) reinforces the author's illustrations about the identification of either stressed or unstressed words in a given sentence: *GIVE me some MONEY*

In this sentence, the words *give* and *money* are written in capital letters to show how they are more important than the others and they should be pronounced loudly. In addition to that, Shahwar underlines that "*stress, rhythm and intonation can be taught through imitation drills*". In fact, imitation drills are techniques which consist in repeating a model provided by a teacher. That is, in the teaching and learning process of sentence stress, the teacher provides a model of sentence to illustrate the conditions of stress in sentences. Also, he/she gives the exact pronunciation of the selected sentence so that learners should repeat following the teacher's pronunciation. Otherwise, Shahwar thinks that the relevance of imitation drills is to motivate the secondary school learners grasp the pronunciation of stressed and unstressed words when communicating orally in English language.

Emphasizing on the elements that can be taken into account when teaching and learning English sentence stress, Shahwar (2004:89) enlightens that "*the patterns of sentence stress should also be taught by the use of stress marks and pauses in the sentences chosen for practice. The students should be asked to read the sentences aloud after they finish marking stressed syllables*". Obviously, Shahwar tries to demonstrate that the use of stress mark is very important to show where the stress is located. Indeed, a stress mark is a small vertical line put over the stressed syllables of English words in order to help learners identify and pronounce them loudly when reading a piece of paper. In the same way, Shahwar mentions that pauses are also one of elements that facilitate the teaching and learning of sentence stress at school. In fact, they are different stops between words that the speaker of English as a foreign language should take into account in order to facilitate the understanding of his/her message. Therefore, the misplacing of a pause between two words in a sentence can change the meaning of that sentence.

In short, Shahwar has suggested some linguistic issues that can facilitate the identification of both content words and function words. In fact the relevance of these linguistic issues or rules is to stress any English word accordingly; either content words or function depending on the selected context by the speaker and the listener. In addition to that, Shahwar has selected "imitation" as the appropriate method that can enable the implementation of these linguistic issues when dealing with the teaching and learning of sentence stress at school. However, the linguistic issues suggested in this work are too general and lack the didactic transposition process. That is to say, no precise type of sentence and no learner's level or class have been selected in order to implement these rules accordingly during the teaching and learning process. Moreover, Shahwar has not provided a sample of the lesson plan that can motivate the secondary school teachers and learners face this pronunciation item when dealing with English lessons in classes.

To sum up, this section has dealt with the review of some works related to the teaching of English sentence stress. In fact, the selected authors have oriented their research work on the linguistic issues. They have suggested some linguistic rules that can help to explain certain phenomena occurring in English sentence stress in general. However, the linguistic rules related to English sentence stress should be selected and included in a lesson in order to get learners identify the conditions justifying the pronunciation of any English sentence accordingly, through the teacher's didactic process in classes. Inspiring from the previous works above, our main focus is to deal with the English wh-question stress or pronunciation in the teaching process in secondary school classes.

II- Data collection method and analysis

The purpose of this section is to enlighten the different tools used in this research work in order to collect information related to the teaching and learning wh-question sentence stress at secondary school. As a matter of fact, the classroom observation and questionnaire addressed to teachers of have been selected to collect data about the present topic.

II.1- Classroom observation.

The term "observation" refers to the activity which consist in seeing what is going on in a given area. In this work, the different pedagogical classes of Terminale are the selected area where the different English lessons have been observed during the teaching process. The table below illustrates the checklist of English sentence stress items that we are going to observe if they are taught or not in classes of the selected level.

Table n°1: observation checklist

English sentence stress teaching items		Observation	
Statements	Declarative sentences Imperative sentences Exclamative sentences	Grammar	Pronunciation
		Taught and assessed	Not taught and assessed
Questions	Yes/no questions Wh-questions Tag questions		

This table summarizes what we have observed in the Second classes at senior secondary school. It is worthy to remind that we have made observation in classes of SA, SC, and SD. And then, the result of this observation shows that the following English disciplines; grammar, reading comprehension, language functions and vocabulary are taught, learnt and assessed accordingly in classes of the selected level. Because, teachers of English are trained to teach these language items, they encourage learners to face these English components during the written activities. Therefore, learners are interested and motivated to practice these activities because, they are selected during the formative and summative evaluations. Next, the analysis of these results unveils that the English sentence stress teaching items mentioned in the class of Terminale by the English syllabus are not taught, learnt and assessed as autonomous lessons with their own teaching cards. Besides, no lesson has dealt with English pronunciation in general and sentence stress items in particular when observing teachers of English. However, we notice that teachers mostly try to incorporate English pronunciation items in the teaching process of grammar, language functions, reading comprehension through the description and transcription of English sounds, the reading and repetition of words and sentences. Thus, working on English pronunciation, Ndongo Ibara (2015), Ondzé Otouba (2015), and Kelele Kedi (2019) write that the English grammar, reading comprehension, study of themes, vocabulary and language functions are taught, learnt and assessed in classes except pronunciation items in general and sentence stress items in particular. Elsewhere, the searching of information about the problems that hamper the teaching of English sentence stress has been realised in addition from the questionnaire addressed to teachers of English at secondary school.

II.2- Questionnaire addressed to teachers of English.

The questionnaire addressed to teachers of English covers some questions related to pronunciation teaching items in the English syllabus, the stress teaching issues and the teacher's background about the teaching of wh-question sentence stress. That is, the strategies they use to teach wh-question sentence stress in classes.

Question n°1: Is English sentence stress mentioned in the syllabus?

We ask this question to know whether teachers are aware of the general and specific objective of English sentence stress included in the English syllabus at secondary school.

Table n°2: English syllabus reference about sentence stress

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	100%
No	00	00%
Total	10	100%

The results from the table above unveil that teachers of English are aware that sentence stress is mention in the English syllabus for the English courses. As a matter of fact, 100% of teachers from secondary school know the existence of this language item in the syllabus. To illustrate, they have mentioned its General Objective (1. *Understanding oral messages*, 2. *Expressing oneself orally*), Specific Objective (1.3. *Decoding specific messages*, 2.3. *Articulating language sentence stress*), and the content (*Articulating language: 1. Intonation in connected speech*, 2. *Liaison, Assimilations, Blending*) of the selected item in their answers. This means that the secondary school teachers are quite familiar with the different English pronunciation items mentioned in the national syllabus of English language in the Congo.

Question n°2: Which English sentence stress item do you often teach?

The objective of this question is to inquire the sentence stress items teachers of English often teach when training learners in English language.

Table n°3: The English sentence stress items

Sentence stress items	Respondents	Percentage
Statements	07	75%
Questions	03	25%
Total	10	100%

Obviously, the teaching of English sentence stress is related to the study of statements and questions. In fact, the table above shows that a lot of teachers of English are interested in sentences stress based on statements whereas, a few of them select sentence stress based on questions. However, the two groups confuse the teaching of either statement stress or question stress to some pronunciation activities they practice with learners when dealing with dialogues, songs or reading comprehension. As matter of fact, these language items should be taught in the angle of pronunciation in order to facilitate the identification of the most important words in these structures by the secondary school learners orally.

Question n°3: What type of question stress do you often teach?

This question is asked to know if the secondary school teachers of English are interested in the teaching of different types of wh-question sentence stress in classes. The table below illustrates.

Table n°4: The taught items of question sentence stress.

Question stress types	Respondents	Percentage
Wh-question	05	50%
Yes/no question	05	50%
Tag question	00	00%
Total	10	100%

The analysis of this table shows that from these types of question stress, wh-question and yes/no question have been chosen by teachers of English whereas, tag question is not often taught. In fact, by selecting wh-question and yes/no question, both groups of teachers refer to the teaching of wh-question and yes/no question in English grammar. Therefore, these teachers confuse the way to teach these language items in pronunciation to the way they are taught in grammar.

Question n°6: Have you been trained to teach English pronunciation items?

The objective of this question is to know whether teachers of English have been trained to teach English pronunciation items such as sound, stress, and connected speech. The table below demonstrates.

Table n°5: Teachers' training background.

Responses	Respondents	percentage
Yes	00	00%
No	10	100%
Total	10	100%

The results of the table above unveil that no teacher of English has been trained to teach pronunciation items at secondary school. Therefore, teachers are not familiar with the teaching of wh-question sentence stress. This is attested through the classroom observation where no lesson about wh-question has been taught during this period. In fact, they teach pronunciation items through reading comprehension. However, pronunciation items should have been taught as separate lessons in the same way other English disciplines are taught. The lack of training on the teaching of pronunciation items pushes teachers to mix pronunciation items with other English disciplines such as grammar and vocabulary lessons.

III- Major Findings.

This section summarizes the major findings related to the teaching of English pronunciation in general and wh-question sentence stress in particular at secondary schools. The first major finding is the teachers' incapacity to deal with wh-question sentence stress. As a matter of fact, teachers are incapable of teaching wh-question sentence stress because, they lack the appropriate teaching strategies and learning activities that can help them train the secondary school learners. That is, during their training period at university, teachers have not received information about how to teach pronunciation items in general and wh-question sentence stress in particular. In this context, Lamy Nkounkou (2017: 65) mentions that *"This incapability of creating strategies and exercises on English pronunciation is due to the fact that teachers themselves still have great problems of pronunciation in English"*.

So, the background they have on phonetics and phonology is too scientific that they transcribe, describe and make learners repeat English pronunciation items in classes. Yet, these methods cannot help learners to master and practice pronunciation when learning English at school. The second major finding is the lack of workshops or seminars on the teaching of wh-question sentence stress at secondary school. In fact, the teaching of sentence stress is mentioned in the English syllabus from the class of 6ème to “Terminale”. However, the school inspectors of English do not organise workshops or seminars on how to teach pronunciation items such as wh-question sentence stress. Emphasising on the inconsideration of the teaching of this language item by these inspectors, Kelele Kedi (2020: 151) highlights that:

“inspectors from secondary schools do not care about the use of English language by learners in oral communication. The priority is items based in exams and classwork. This means that their main objective is just to prepare learners for exams but not to help them communicate in English orally”.

This passage shows why teachers of English are not interested in the use of English language orally by learners. In fact, teachers encourage only learners to use the English language in written form. That the reason why sentence stress items are not taught and take into account during the formative and summative evaluations. The last major finding is related to the incapacity of teachers to provide some strategies and learning activities concerning the teaching and learning of wh-question sentence stress. Thus, they have problems to teach English wh-question sentence stress respecting the different steps of the teaching card in order to motivate the secondary school learners implement the issue in oral and written activities during the English learning process. Therefore, it is relevant to deal with this language item in order to encourage both teacher and learner to face it in classes.

IV- Teaching one wh-question word pronunciation

The purpose of this section is to provide the teaching and learning strategies that can help both teacher and learners face the study of the English wh-question sentence stress in the Second class. These strategies are gathered in a plan lesson centred on the 3Ps method which is structured as follows: Pre-requisites, Presentation, Practice, and Production.

Pre-requisites checking: This stage consists in checking whether learners are familiar with some aspects related to the different forms of English wh-questions (*with one question word*: what, who, how... and *with two question words*: how often, how much, which colour...). Here, the teacher selects the wh-question with one question word and asks learners to provide some sentences with the selected item such as:

- 1- What are you doing?
- 2- How does this telephone work?
- 3- Who have taken it yesterday?
- 4- Where is your father?
- 5- Which is the best between both?

Presentation: This step shows the illustrations and explanations justifying the teaching of English wh-question pronunciation with one question word:

A- Illustrations

- 1- What did you eat?
- 2- Who is your father?
- 3- Where is my telephone?
- 4- Why did you take it?
- 5- When did he travel to London?

B- Explanations

In wh-question pronunciation with one question word, the stress falls on the word which the question is about, the individual word stress is respected and it has a falling intonation.

Practice: This step helps learners put into practice what they have understood from the teacher’s explanations. They are requested to repeat the selected sentences after the teacher’s pronunciation and provide their own oral production following the teacher’s model above.

Production: In this step, learners are requested to write their sentences on the board explaining the stress placement in their wh-question sentences and then pronounce them freely. The teacher asks learners to copy the lesson in their copybooks.

Level: Second class

Subject: English

Matter: Pronunciation

Title of the lesson: *Wh-question pronunciation based on one question word*

G.O.2: Expressing oneself orally

S.O.2.3: Articulating language sentence stress.

Date: Friday, November 4th 2022

Duration: 55min

Document: Spoken English: Flourish Your Language

Performance objective	Teaching strategies	Learning activities	Evaluation	Time	Observation
P.O: by the end of the lesson learners should be able to stress wh-question sentence through its different forms. P.O 1: By the end of the lesson learners should be able to provide conditions explaining the pronunciation of English wh-questions with <i>one question word</i>.	I. Beginning 1.Warming up The teacher greets and asks learners the date of today. 2. Pre requisites The teacher asks learners to provide the different forms of English wh-questions and their examples. The teacher selects the wh-question with one question word and asks learners to provide sentences using wh-question with one question word	Answer 1 Good morning sir Today is Friday, September 23rd 2021 Answer 2 1-Wh-question with one question word (what, who, how...) 2- Wh-question with two question words (how often, how much, which colour, ...) Answer 3 1-What do you think about? 2- Who did you tell the story? 3- Where are you going? 4- How are you?	Task 1 Good morning class? What is the date of today? Task 2 Provide the different forms of the English wh-questions and their examples. Task 3 Provide sentence using wh-question with one question word.	5min	
	II. Day lesson: <i>Wh-question pronunciation based on one question word.</i> 1-Presentation The teacher provides the illustrations and explanations about the teaching of English wh-question sentences with one question word.	Learners follow attentively the teacher's explanation about the conditions and listen carefully to the teacher's pronunciation of the selected sentences.		15mn	

	Illustrations 1-What did you eat? 2- Who is your father? 3- Where is my telephone? 4-Why did you take it? 5-When did he travel to London? Explanations In wh-question with one question word, the stress falls on the word which the question is about, the individual word stress is respected and it has a falling intonation. 2- Practice The teacher asks learners to pronounce the above wh-question sentences after him then asks learners to provide their own examples orally. 3- Production. The teacher asks learners to provide their own examples on the board with the stress patterns and then pronounce them. The teacher asks learners to copy the lesson in their copybooks. III. Evaluation 1-Applied exercise. The teacher asks learners to give the stress patterns in these sentences	Learners pronounce the above sentences and provide their own example orally. Answer 1-Where have you been? 2- Who found the book? 3- How was your day at work? 4- Who is the person in the corner? Learners copy the lesson Answer 1- Who has taken my book? 2- How does he find it? 3-What have you eaten this morning? 4-When do you leave tomorrow?	Task 4 Pronounce the above sentences and provide your own examples orally. Task 5 Write your own examples on the board with the stress patterns and pronounce them. Task 6 Copy the lesson in your copybooks. Task 7 Give the stress patterns of the following sentences 1-Who has taken my book? 2- How does he find it 3-What have you eaten this morning? 4- When do you leave tomorrow? Task 8	10min 10mn	
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	2- Follow up activity. The teacher asks learners to say whether the stress placement in these sentences is true or false.	Answers 1- False 2- True 3- False 4- True	Say whether the stress placement in the following sentences is true or false. 1-Where does Maria comes from? 2-What does my father desire? 3-Where did the cat live? 4- How did the children behave?	10min	
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Conclusion

This research work has investigated the problems that hamper the teaching of English wh-question pronunciation at secondary school. Before embarking on the scrutiny of the core aspects of our research problem, it has been worthy to consider first, the prerequisite on the understanding of this topic. It has dealt with the key concepts and the relevance of wh-question sentence stress on pronunciation at secondary school. Second, the state of art regarding the available literature on this issue. In this respect, it has been reviewed some works in order to sort out what has been already done and their limit on this language item. Third, the techniques and tools we have used to conduct this piece of work. It has been used the classroom observation and questionnaire addressed to teachers of English. Finally, the analysis and interpretation of the data collected lead to the conclusion related to two research questions. Dealing with the first question, it has been demonstrated that wh-question sentence stress is not taught, although this language item is mentioned in the English syllabus. As a result, teachers generally confuse the teaching of English wh-question sentence stress in pronunciation to the teaching of English wh-questions in grammar. In fact, while teaching English grammar and particularly wh-questions, teachers repeat the structure of this sentence type. Here, the focus is the structure of wh-questions rather the identification of where the stress falls in that sentence. The data confirms that teachers do not teach the pronunciation of wh-question sentence. This incapability to teach the pronunciation of English wh-question sentence is twofold. Firstly, the school inspectors are responsible for this failure since they do not organise in training services to reinforce teachers' capacity. In addition, the secondary school teachers have not been trained to teach such item during the training period at University. As a matter of fact, teachers are not motivated to face wh-question pronunciation in classes. Concerning the second question, teachers do not attempt to create some strategies that could help learners understand this language issue. So, this research work has sorted out that wh-question sentence stress could be taught, learnt and assessed like other English aspects thanks to 3Ps method and adapted sample of teaching card has been provided in order help teachers deal with this language issue in classes.

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