

PRONUNCIATION IMPROVEMENT:
STRESS CONVENTIONS FOR
HISPANIC TEFL STUDENTS

A Monograph

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ABSTRACT

Colombian English teachers and university students from TEFL Bachelor's degree programs are required by the Ministry of Education of Colombia (MEN) to improve and develop bilingual skills. However, bilingual skills not only rely on grammar and vocabulary, but also on good pronunciation and listening comprehension skills, which facilitates good communication skills in English. One of the major problems experienced by many adult, native Spanish speakers is the existence of erroneous stress placement in most English words and sentences when reading out loud or speaking in English. This has the potential to confuse English speakers, and as a consequence, this monograph intends to explain why learning and applying stress conventions is essential for adult and Hispanic English learners, and present in the appendices of this work some basic principles and conventions for improving some areas of English pronunciation. This is intended to make communication more intelligible and comprehensible for the audiences of these learners. Adult learners have advantages over children, and these stress conventions can be learned and memorized easily by a motivated adult learner and TEFL student. This will allow them to easily apply the conventions in readings and regular conversations when practicing with a teacher in the classroom and other contexts. In this way, even though there are exceptions to the rules, motivation in adult English learners increases, as well as confidence when participating in advanced English courses, like English conversation.

Keywords: Stress, Conventions, Pronunciation, Adult Hispanics, Orthography

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
INTRODUCTION	9
Significance of the Study	10
Statement of the Problem.....	12
Objectives	13
General Objective	13
Specific Objectives	13
LITERATURE REVIEW	14
Pronunciation in Communication and Comprehension	14
What is Pronunciation?.....	15
The Supra-Segmental Features in Pronunciation.....	17
“The Road Signs” of Communication	19
Rhythm.....	20
Native Spanish Speakers’ Difficulties	20
Stress.....	22
Word-Stress.....	23

Sentence Stress.....	24
Emphatic Stress.....	26
Stress-Placement Conventions by Experts.....	27
Syllabification and Morphological Formation.....	28
Stress Conventions based on Word Type	29
METHODOLOGY	31
Research Approach	32
Research Line.....	34
Research Tools.....	35
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	37
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.....	44
REFERENCES	47
APPENDIX A: INDEX CARDS SAMPLES.....	57
Template	57
Sample 1.....	57
Sample 2.....	58
APPENDIX B: A SUMMARY OF FOCUS WORD PRINCIPLES BASED ON GILBERT'S PYRAMID	59
Convention 1	59
Convention 2.....	59
Convention 3.....	59
Convention 4.....	59
Convention 5.....	59

APPENDIX C: Stress Conventions based on Word Type..... 60

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. English Pronunciation's Features	38
Table 2. English Stress and Orthography for Hispanic English Learners	40
Table 3. Adult Language Learning	42
Table 4. First and Second Syllable Words	60
Table 5. Words that operate as nouns and verbs.....	61
Table 6. Compound Nouns and Verbs	63
Table 7. Words ending in -ee, -eer, -ese	64
Table 8. Words ending in -ology and -osis	65
Table 9. Words ending in -eous and- ious	66
Table 10. Words ending in -ia and -ial	67
Table 11. Words ending in -ic and -ical.....	68
Table 12. Words ending in -ify and -ity.....	69
Table 13. Words ending in -tion and -sion	71
Table 14. Words ending in -ate, -cy and -phy.....	72
Table 15. Exceptions of words ending in “-cy”	73
Table 16. Exceptions on word ending in -ish due to word's evolution	74

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Features of English pronunciation according to Gilakjani (2012, p. 120)17

Figure 2. The Prosody Pyramid according to Judy Gilbert (2008, p. 10).....25

Figure 3. Types of Morphemes by Study.com.....29

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Three years ago, UNAD English Conversation Course directors requested that I assist them from my country of residence in Belize, as an online English instructor. The Skype online meetings that this course offers allows Colombian students of different regions to practice their speech and communication skills. As someone who has become accustomed to hearing native English speakers for various years, I noticed poor developed pronunciation skills in most of my students, especially wrong English stress, when they spoke or read written English. Interestingly, I discovered that most of the students who have begun to learn English with UNAD University from scratch have shown a lower pronunciation level in comparison to other students. Some of the gaps in pronunciation and the lack of confidence that I noticed in my students were related with stress placement and rhythm, especially when they read written English in the form of sentences and questions. However, English pronunciation and students' confidence in these areas can be improved significantly if we address the very issues that relate to the characteristics and functionality that makes English different from Spanish. The purpose of my proposal is to address issues that have not been addressed practically in UNAD English classes, to help foster better pronunciation skills and confidence in these students and other Hispanic English learners.

The reason why basic, but also foundational orthographic rules related with stress and emphasis placement are needed to improve English pronunciation in a Hispanic community, like

UNAD students, is due to the inherent characteristics of the English language, as was mentioned previously. For example: in the English language it is not evident how the written words correspond to the spoken language or vice versa (Jones, 1996), due to its unique history that created a complex alphabetic code, (Hepplewhite, 2012) unless we learn in advance certain conventions and principles that can help us understand the functionality of the English language to pronounce it better. English orthography is one of the more challenging things for Spanish speakers to understand to pronounce the language correctly (Sun-Alperin, 2008).

This monograph will present in the second chapter a literature review and a compilation of the theories, comments and/or discoveries related with English pronunciation that can assist adult Spanish speakers with correct stress placement when reading or speaking in English. In the third section, the type of methodology research and paradigm used in the work are qualitative and pragmatic in nature. Then, in the results and discussion section, the findings will be mentioned and analyzed in chapter four, and the conclusions of the author will be found in chapter 5.

Significance of the Study

In Colombia a few of the key aspects mentioned by the Bilingual Higher Education Agreement and the Ministry of Education's National Plan of Bilingualism is the need for having high quality bilingual teachers, and the need for designing undergraduate programs to strengthen the education they offer to future graduates, primarily in their linguistic competence (as cited in Granados, 2015) Therefore, this study is significant for UNAD undergraduate students to improve in English pronunciation, which is part of that linguistic competence related with bilingualism. After all, bilingualism can only occur when "a speaker can produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language." (Haugen 1956; Lörcher, 2012)

According to Hinofotis and Baily (as cited in Gilakjani 2011) the fault which most severely impairs the communication process in EFL/ESL learners is pronunciation, and not so much vocabulary or grammar; for pronunciation is recognized as a fundamental skill which learners must acquire, primarily because it can impact accuracy and comprehension.

(Lambacher, 1996) This means that if “pronunciation is a key element for learning oral skills in a second language,” (Macdonald, 2002) then any teaching approach for improving English pronunciation will be considered an asset to native Spanish speakers, and appreciated by UNAD English teachers and learners.

Even though this study is going to focus the gaps and weaknesses identified in the pronunciation of UNAD TEFL students (when speaking and reading), it can also impact positively any Hispanic English learner and teacher who may be experiencing the same difficulty. As adult English learners is important to realize “that second language pronunciation is a cognitive skill for which some people may have more natural aptitude and/or interest and motivation than others, but which everyone can learn to a certain degree if appropriate opportunities and effective guidelines are given”. (Gilakjani 2011) For this reason, the significance of this study is related with those spelling-pronunciation conventions that Spanish speakers need to know to be able to stress words correctly when reading words and sentences in English, in basic and intermediary English courses. Another reason why this study is significant for undergraduate TEFL students is based on the fact that one of the main principles for effective adult instruction is to build on adult learners’ existing assets and previous experiences and knowledge they already have. (Condelli, Wrigley, & Yoon, 2009; Gonzalez, Moll, & Armanti, 2005; Knowles, 1973; Marshall & DiCapua, 2013, as cited in Center for Applied Linguistics, 2015) This means that as Spanish native speakers these undergraduate students already know

certain aspects of the Spanish language, like the letters of the Latin alphabet, Latin roots and affixes among other things, that can be used by teacher to motivate English learning.

To conclude, there are two last impacts that this monograph could have on different audiences like elementary and high school students of Spanish speaking countries, (if English teachers see the importance of learning and teaching the stress conventions found in this work) and 2) English teachers from different teaching modalities (online, physical, etc.,) to encourage them to investigate more on the subject and design more practical teaching materials for Hispanic English learners.

Statement of the Problem

English Language learning and improvement in linguistic competence, to develop bilingual skills in English teachers and learners, has been supported by the Colombian Ministry of Education. However, poor pronunciation in English affects greatly the quality of the bilingual skills that are intended to be developed in Colombia, for pronunciation allow speakers to produce complete meaningful utterances in English to improve bilingual skills. Davis (1999) reveals that an area of concern and indeed one of the top priorities of English as a Second Language (ESL) students after completing elementary English courses is pronunciation, despite the fact of living in an English-speaking country. Now, if this problem is happening with ESL students, then what happens with English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, who are indeed learning and practicing English in a non-English speaking country, like Colombia? Specially, when it is evident that poor pronunciation, including English stress, in reading and speaking is one of the most noticeable deficiencies of Spanish native speakers.

There is not only a need for explicit instruction in pronunciation for Spanish native speakers, from the teacher's part, but also an explicit instruction on supra-segmental features of

pronunciation on teaching materials. However, the single most important theoretical problem underlying the practical problem of teaching English pronunciation is understanding how the writing system relates to the spoken language. (Stubbs, 1980 as cited in Jones, 1996) For example, when Hispanic English learners are not familiar with English spelling and pronunciation conventions, then stress (rhythm) is one of the supra-segmental features of English pronunciation that adult Spanish native speakers fail to apply correctly, for syllabication, word stress, sentence stress and rhythm are based on a different orthographic system.

According to Cramer (1998) and Pérez (1996, as cited in Perez 2005), in both Spanish and English, spelling (orthography) is awarded slight importance. Therefore, based on the reasons already mentioned, the hypothesis of this monograph is: English stress conventions are necessary to help improve English pronunciation in Spanish native speakers.

Objectives

General Objective

To analyze why stress conventions are necessary for English pronunciation improvement in native Spanish speakers through a pragmatic approach and content analysis.

Specific Objectives

To explain why suprasegmental features of pronunciation like stress and rhythm are essential for English pronunciation improvement in Hispanic English learners.

To compile content of relevant theories, empirical research and principles for English pronunciation improvement.

To facilitate examples of practical and basic orthographic-stress principles and conventions necessary for UNAD's TEFL beginner and intermediary courses.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will present theories, empirical literature and definitions related with English pronunciation, but more specifically with supra-segmental pronunciation features like stress and rhythm that relates to written English. Chomsky and Halle (1968) say that “it is noteworthy, but not too surprising, that English orthography, despite its often-cited inconsistencies, comes remarkably close to be an optimal orthographic system for English.” In other words, written English can facilitate clues to native speakers and some English learners to produce proper stress, linking and intonation when reading words and sentences in English, (by knowing certain principles and conventions). Therefore, if this is how native speakers learned English, why cannot this be applied to beginner and intermediate English courses addressed to non-native TEFL students, who would appreciate these conventions to improve their own pronunciation, and their teaching performance? In this section, conclusions and results from experts and research publications will show that not only English orthography and pronunciation are connected, but also that mastering supra-segmental features like stress and rhythm can improve intelligibility in Spanish native speakers who speak in English.

Pronunciation in Communication and Comprehension

Fraser (2000) reported that many English learners have major difficulties with pronunciation, and Garrigues (1999) stated that the foundation of effective spoken

communication is good pronunciation. This is recognized as a fundamental skill which students should acquire, primarily because it can affect accuracy and comprehension. Therefore, it is particularly important to integrate pronunciation into beginner classes as it will, from the very beginning, help avoid the risk of fossilization and stabilization of pronunciation (Ratchie & Bhatia, 2008).

What is Pronunciation?

Cook (1996, as cited in Gilakjani, 2016) defined pronunciation as the production of English sounds. Pronunciation is learnt by repeating sounds and correcting them when produced inaccurately. When learners start learning pronunciation, they make new habits and overcome the difficulties resulting from the first language. According to Yates (2002 as cited in Gilakjani, 2016), pronunciation is the production of sounds that is used for making meaning.

Pronunciation is an integral part of foreign language learning since it directly affects learner's communicative competence as well as performance. Limited pronunciation skills can decrease learners' self-confidence, restrict social interactions, and negatively affect estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities according to Gilakjani (2012). Harmer (2001) expressed that the first thing that native speakers notice during a conversation is pronunciation. Grammar and vocabulary are important elements of language and they can be useless if the speakers cannot pronounce those elements or words accurately. Therefore, communicative efficiency can be guaranteed by correct pronunciation, for without correct pronunciation nobody can say that he/she knows the English language perfectly. For this reason, it is important to secure intelligible pronunciation for the English learners.

According to Yates and Zielinski (2009), much attention to English pronunciation indicates that pronunciation has a key role in learning English. If teachers don't present the basic

rules, conventions or principles toward comprehensible pronunciation to their EFL learners, nobody will certainly do it. Morley (1991) expressed that teachers do not teach, but facilitate learners' learning pronunciation, therefore, the role of teachers is like a coach, a speech coach, and a pronunciation coach. According to Fraser (2000) ESL/EFL teachers need to create or have courses and materials to help them improve their effectiveness in teaching pronunciation. However, she also concluded that research in second language education should not be concerned with the importance of teaching pronunciation, but with the methodology of teaching pronunciation. One of the primary goals of teaching pronunciation in any course is — intelligible pronunciation – not perfect pronunciation. Intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence.

Therefore, it is vital that students learning English for international communication learn to speak in an intelligibly and comprehensibly way – not necessarily like natives, but well enough to understand natives and be understood by them. (Morley, 1991). After all, in recent discussions of English-language teaching, the unrealistic idea that learners should sound and speak like native speakers is fast disappearing; for according to Burns (2003) it is more important that English learners and speakers can achieve the following things:

- 1) Intelligibility (the speaker produces sound patterns that are recognizable as English)
- 2) Comprehensibility (the listener is able to understand the meaning of what is said)
- 3) Interpretability (the listener is able to understand the purpose of what is said).

Even when learners produce minor inaccuracies in vocabulary and grammar, they are more likely to communicate effectively when they apply accurate sounds, stress and intonation patterns. (Burns, 2003) In Figure 1 the features of English pronunciation can be identified:

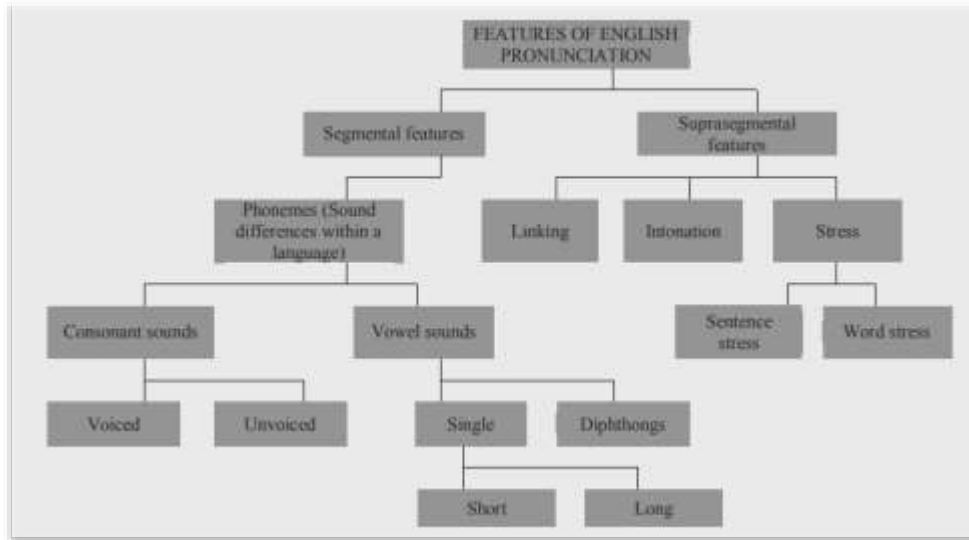


Figure 1. Features of English pronunciation according to Gilakjani (2012, p. 120)

As the reader can see, the features of English pronunciation are divided in two main sections: The Segmental Features and the Supra-segmental Features. In former ESL approaches, segmental features were the major focus for pronunciation teaching (for example, minimal pairs such as ship/sheep). However, while these features are important, more recent research has shown that when teaching focuses on supra-segmental features instead, learners' intelligibility is greatly enhanced. (Burns, 2003). For this reason, the teaching approach must change from emphasizing segmental elements of pronunciation to supra-segmental elements of pronunciation. (Morley, 1991). For this reason, this work is going to focus mostly on the Suprasegmental Features of English pronunciation, like English Stress, and a little bit on the prosodic features of Gilbert's (2008) pyramid.

The Supra-Segmental Features in Pronunciation

Supra-segmental features relate to sounds at the macro level. Advances in research have developed descriptions of the supra-segmental features of speech, extending across whole stretches of language (prosody). English is stress-timed and syllable-timed (for example,

WHAT's his addRESS?) and for this reason "stress (rhythm), linking and intonation are important features for effective pronunciation at the supra-segmental level. (Burns, 2003)

Empirical research and pronunciation materials' writers suggest that teaching supra-segmental before segmental to intermediate and advanced non-native speakers could be more beneficial in a shorter period of time. (Bott, 2005) In fact, Cheng (1998, as cited in Szyszka, 2016) reported that teachers should be choosing meaningful material to be used as models for practicing pronunciation aspects such as stress, and Field (2005, as cited in Gilakjani, 2011) says that a presentation of pronunciation rules for stress and teaching word stress are strategies which can improve student's pronunciation."

To conclude, Gilbert and Brown add the following:

Students who are taught about English prosodic patterns (rhythm and melody often report improved understanding of speech on TV, in movies, and in face-to-face conversation.

Why is this? One reason is that prosodically-trained students have learned to understand how rhythmic and melodic cues are used to organize information and guide the listener.

Another reason is that these students have learned to notice how prosody changes, how words sound. (Gilbert, 2008, p. 6)

From the point of view of 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 a native English situation. If the student is only exposed to carefully articulated English, he will have learnt to rely on acoustic signals which will have denied him when he encounters the normal English of native speakers. (Brown 1977, as cited by Gilbert, 2008)

“The Road Signs” of Communication

Gilbert (2008) states the following about rhythm and melody in English learning:

In English, rhythmic and melodic signals serve as “road signs” to help the listener follow the intentions of the speaker. These signals communicate emphasis and make clear the relationship between ideas so that listeners (native speakers) can readily identify these relationships and understand the speaker’s meaning. Unfortunately, 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. But it is particularly important for English learners to think about their listeners and master the rhythmic and melodic signals essential to “listener friendly” pronunciation, or in other words, intelligible pronunciation. (p. 2)

Learners typically do not use or recognize the cues that native listeners count on to help them follow meaning in a conversation. As a result, conversational breakdowns occur. Emphasis that conveys the wrong meaning or thought groups that either run together or break in inappropriate places, cause extra work for the listener who is trying to follow the speaker’s meaning. If the burden becomes too great, the listener simply stops listening. In fact, the time spent helping students concentrate on the major rhythmic and melodic signals of English is more important than any other efforts to improve their pronunciation. (p.2)

Gilbert (2008) mentions that “practicing pronunciation without prosody is like teaching ballroom dancing, only the students must stand still, practice without a partner, and without music.” Gilbert (2008) says the following about why English teachers must help their students understand the importance of identifying and practicing “prosodic road signs”, including reductions, when learning English. It is common for students to emphasize every word when

they are anxious to be understood. This gives an impression of agitation or insistence that they may not intend, and it certainly diminishes the effectiveness of the prosodic “road signs” that the listener needs. The same is true if they speak in a monotone, another common way of dealing with uncertainty in a new language. (Gilbert, 2008 p.14)

Rhythm

English is what is known as a stress-timed language. Because English rhythm is stress-timed, a wrong stressing will lead to a wrong and misleading rhythm. “Comprehensibility depends on rhythm, and therefore the placing of stress within words can play a large part in determining how well a native English hearer will understand the foreign speaker”. (Fudge, 1984) This seriously affects both intelligibility and listening comprehension. According to Aoyama (2017), “it is natural that L2 English learners are predisposed to use the rhythm of their first language.

Gilbert (2008) says the following about the unit of English rhythm in one of her Cambridge publications about teaching pronunciation:

It is important to know that the basic unit of English rhythm is the syllable, and while the number of syllables in a word is usually obvious to a native speaker of English, “L2 English learners that are accustomed to different phonological rules may not hear the syllable divisions in the same way, although an understanding of English rhythm involves more than the ability to identify and count syllables. It also involves an ability to hear and produce the word stress patterns of English. (p.4)

Native Spanish Speakers’ Difficulties

There are several factors to this, but according to the emphasis of this work two reasons will be given. The first reason is that even though both the English and Spanish orthographic

systems have alphabetic foundations and similarities, according to Koda (2007) and Perez (2005), the Spanish language is easier to pronounce when reading Spanish, for the language is more shallow or transparent than the English language, presenting a much more notable phoneme–grapheme correspondence, which is the relationship between the letters and the sound they produce. (Koda, 2007; Perez, 2005) The English orthographic system, however, is deep and more complex for as Barry (1992), Goulandris (1992), and Seymour (1992) have pointed out, the spelling of words and groups of letters do not always sound as they are written. (Pérez, 2000) For this reason, written English becomes a challenge for Spanish speakers (Sun-Alperin, 2008) when reading out loud.

The second reason for native Spanish speakers for reading or speaking in English with the wrong stress-placement is based on research made by Face (2005), and others like Eddington's (2004) and Waltermire's (2004, as cited in Face 2005) for according to research Spanish speakers take syllable weight into account as they perceive the location of stress within a word. Face (2000) says the following about Spanish stress and English stress based on his findings:

In Spanish unmarked stress is determined by the final segment of the word. When the final segment is a vowel (i.e., the final syllable is light), unmarked stress falls on the penultimate syllable, and when the final segment is a consonant (i.e., the final syllable is heavy), unmarked stress falls on the final syllable. When the final syllable is light, unmarked penultimate stress is generally perceived, but this tendency is even stronger when the penultimate syllable is heavy. In addition, when the penultimate syllable is also light, a heavy antepenultimate syllable will attract stress away from the penultimate syllable more often than will a light antepenultimate syllable. Therefore, any heavy

syllable that is not the rightmost heavy syllable in the word does not attract perceived stress in this way. (Face, 2000)

As a result, Spanish native speakers generally perceive stress according to unmarked stress patterns. However, this same tendency is not as strong for students learning Spanish, not even the most advanced students, and this is likely related to a tendency for antepenultimate stress in English. While descriptions of English stress placement are very complicated, generally based on morphology, not mentioning a default pattern, findings provide evidence of an antepenultimate default for English stress, or at least the influence of English tendency for stressing early in a word. Thus, while a separate language system may be in development, it is certainly not as strong as the native system. (Face, 2000)

This is the main reason why Hispanic English teachers and other ESL teachers can't ignore or neglect the fact that stress conventions are needed when teaching English to native Spanish speakers. As long as Hispanic English learners continue to stress English words incorrectly, that is, on wrong syllables of monosyllabic, disyllabic, trisyllabic, and polysyllabic words, their speaking in English will not be intelligible, neither comprehensible to others when hearing them speaking. For the above reasons, this study does not only emphasize on the importance of stress and rhythm to improve intelligibility and comprehensibility, but also on the connection that exist between written English and stress conventions related with pronunciation, that by knowing them in advance they can be identified by reading written words and sentences.

Stress

Fudge (1984) describes stress as one phonological element that is single out within another, longer, phonological element.” It is important to notice “that English speakers tend to store vocabulary items according to their stress patterns.” (Brown 1990; Levelt 1989, as cited by

Gilbert 2008) Therefore, a stress error is particularly damaging to communication. Brown (1990) and Gilbert (2008) put it this way:

The stress pattern of a polysyllabic word is a very important identifying feature of the word . . . We store words under stress patterns . . . and we find it difficult to interpret an utterance in which a word is pronounced with the wrong stress pattern – we begin to “look up” possible words under this wrong stress pattern. (p.51)

It is unfortunately that English learners tend to ignore stress patterns when they learn vocabulary. Not only can this lead to intelligible pronunciation problems, but it can also lead to problems with comprehension. After all, if learners have failed to learn the stress pattern for a new word, they may also fail to recognize that word when it occurs in audio or spoken form. (p.6)

Word-Stress

Word stress or lexical stress essentially picks out one syllable within a multi-syllable word. In English, the syllable singled out in a given word is nearly always the same one, irrespective of the context: the word arrived, for example, is always arRIVED, and never ARrived. (Fudge, 1984) According to Farlex International (2017), there are only two consistent rules about word stress in English, and these ones are:

- 1) Only one vowel sound within a syllable is stressed; stress is not applied to consonant sounds. Example: FI(ai)ght, PEn, Apple (silent e)
- 2) Any given word, even one with many syllables, will only have one syllable that receives the primary stress in speech. Some longer words also receive a secondary stress. (By definition, single-syllable words only ever have a single stress, though certain **function words** can be unstressed altogether) Example: FAther, MIL-i-ta-ry

According to Farlex International (2017), every word in English has one syllable that receives the primary stress – that is, it is vocally emphasized more than any other syllable. Some longer words also have a secondary stress, which is more emphatic than the unstressed syllables, but not as strong as the primary stress.

Some examples with primary stress in CAPITAL letters and the secondary stress in *italics* are: AB-sen-tee, dis-be-LIEF, in-for-MA-tion, MIL-i-tar-y, etc. Although secondary stress is unpredictable, primary stress, on the other hand, can be often predicted according to other conventions.

Sentence Stress

Sentence stress or prosodic stress refers to emphasis placed in pronunciation on certain words or phrase within a sentence. (Fudge, 1984) “Sentence stress is generally determined by whether a word is considered a “content word” or a “functional word,” and the vocal space between stress words creates the rhythm of a sentence”. (Farlex International, 2017)

In the most basic pattern, content words will always be stressed, while function words will often be unstressed. This is common knowledge for native English speakers.

Content Words

A content word (also known as a lexical word) is a word that communicates a distinct lexical meaning within a particular context, like nouns (e.g., dog, John, happiness, luggage) verbs (e.g., run, talk, decide) adjectives (e.g., sad, good, easy) and adverbs (e.g., slowly, never, beautifully). All have meaning that is considered lexically important. Content words will always have at least one syllable that is emphasized in a sentence, so if a content word only has a single syllable, it will always be stressed.

In fact, Gilbert (2008) states in her book, *Teaching Pronunciation*, that the **focus word** inside a “thought group” or sentence is usually a *content word*, for content words carry a great deal of information and are therefore more likely to be the most important word in a thought group or sentence. On the other hand, structure words, which are less information-heavy words are usually de-emphasized, and English speakers usually reduce (or weaken) them. In fact, reductions help to intensify the contrast between the focus word and the words that surround it. (Gilbert 2008)

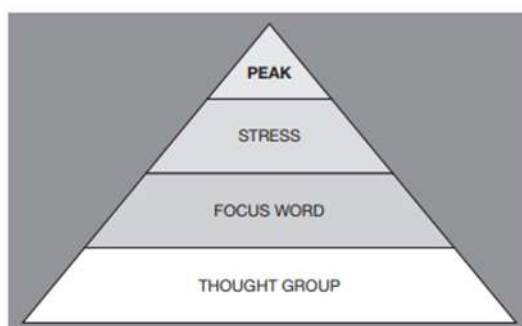


Figure 2. The Prosody Pyramid according to Judy Gilbert (2008, p. 10)

Function Words

A function word (also known as structure word) is a word that primarily serves to complete the syntax and grammatical nuance of a sentence. These include pronouns (e.g., he, she, it), prepositions (e.g., to, in, under), conjunctions (e.g., and, but, if, or), articles (e.g., a, an, the), other determiners (e.g., this, each, those), and interjections (e.g., ah, grr, hello). However, in addition to these parts of speech, function words also include a specific subset of verbs known as auxiliary verbs (e.g., be, do and have) and modal auxiliary verbs (e.g., can, may, must, will, and others.). Not forgetting to unstress WH- questions and negatives in a sentence, when they are being read or spoken.

Emphatic Stress

The convention regarding the stress and rhythm of content words and function words is consistent in normal (sometimes called “neutral”) sentence stress. However, English speakers also place additional emphasis on a specific word or words to provide clarity, emphasis or contrast. Consider the following “neutral” sentence, with no stress highlighted at all: *Peter told John that a deal like this wasn't allowed.*

Now, let's look at the same sentence with emphatic stress applied to different words, and the implied meaning starts to change:

Peter told John that a deal like this wasn't allowed

(This emphatic stress clarifies that Peter, as opposed to someone else, told John not to make a deal)

Peter **told** John that a deal like this wasn't allowed

(Emphasizes the fact that John had been told not to make a deal)

Peter told **John** that a deal like this wasn't allowed

(Clarifies that John was told not to make the deal, not someone else)

Peter told John that a deal like this **wasn't** allowed

(Emphasizes that Peter said the deal was not allowed, indicating that John thought or said the opposite)

Which word the speaker picks out will depend on the situation in which he finds himself, and about which he wants to inform the hearer. For example: *John hasn't arrived* can be uttered in three ways:

1) John hasn't *arrived*,

2) John *hasn't* arrived, and

3) *John* hasn't arrived.

Stress-Placement Conventions by Experts

According to experts it is possible to predict where stress placement will fall in an English word based on several characteristics and conventions. Fudge, (1984) emphasizes the following information about word-stress, based on his own experience and agreement with other experts like Chomsky Halle (1986), Kingdon (1958) and Paul Kiparsky (1982):

Chomsky and Halle (1986) identifies stress placement based on the following:

The segmental make-up of the word, i.e. whether particular vowels are long or short, and whether consonants occur singly or in sequences of more than one. Each word is divided into 'clusters'.i.e. sequences beginning with a vowel and ending immediately before the next vowel, or at the end of the word if there are not further vowels. The difference between 'weak clusters/syllables' (which consist of a short vowel followed by at most one consonant) and 'strong clusters/syllables' (short vowel followed by two or more consonants, or long vowel followed by any number of consonants) is crucial in determining certain differences in stress-placement.

Kingdom (1958) identifies stress placement based on three types of compounds:

'Romanic' – consisting of root plus affixes (suffixes and prefixes)

'Greek' – consisting of root plus root, where the roots are not able to stand on their own as complete words;

'English' – consisting of root plus root, where the roots are independent words.

Fudge (1984) adds the following about Kingdom's contribution on stress-placement:

The great contribution of Kingdon's work is to show how suffixes affect stress-placement in Romanic-type compounds, and how the final root of a Greek-type

compound exerts the greatest influence in that type of word. He demonstrates, furthermore, that in many cases the suffix or the final root can have only one possible effect on the overall stress pattern. For example, the suffix- *ity* always causes stress to be placed one syllable back in the word, while the ending *-metric* invariably attracts stress on its own first syllable.

Fudge and Paul Grande (1968, as cited in Fudge, 1984) agree on the following approach to English stress: It is the last suffix in the word (ignoring inflections and a few other suffixes) that imposes its properties on the word. If there are no suffixes, then a different principle operates; stress falls on the last syllable, but one of the words, or the last but two, depending on properties of the various syllables. Of course, there are some exceptions to this principle, that's why is more accurately to call them conventions, instead of rules.

Syllabification and Morphological Formation

Fudge (1984) states the following about syllables and morphemes:

It is important for the reader or language learner to know not only how syllables there are, but also exactly where the syllable boundaries are to be placed. This is so because stress placement is often dependent on the number of sounds occurring in a particular position within a syllable. However, syllabification is not the only way of dividing words into parts. Some words can segment according to their morphological formation, i.e. into affixes and roots. Each of the basic parts into which a word may be divided in this way is called a morpheme. (Fudge, 1984)

Sometimes, morpheme boundaries will coincide with syllable boundaries, as in **kindly**, which is morphologically kind+ly as well as syllabically kind-ly. But there is not guarantee that

this will always be the case; **farmer** is morphologically farm+er, but syllabically far-mer; **goes** is morphologically go+es, but cannot be divided syllabically at all.

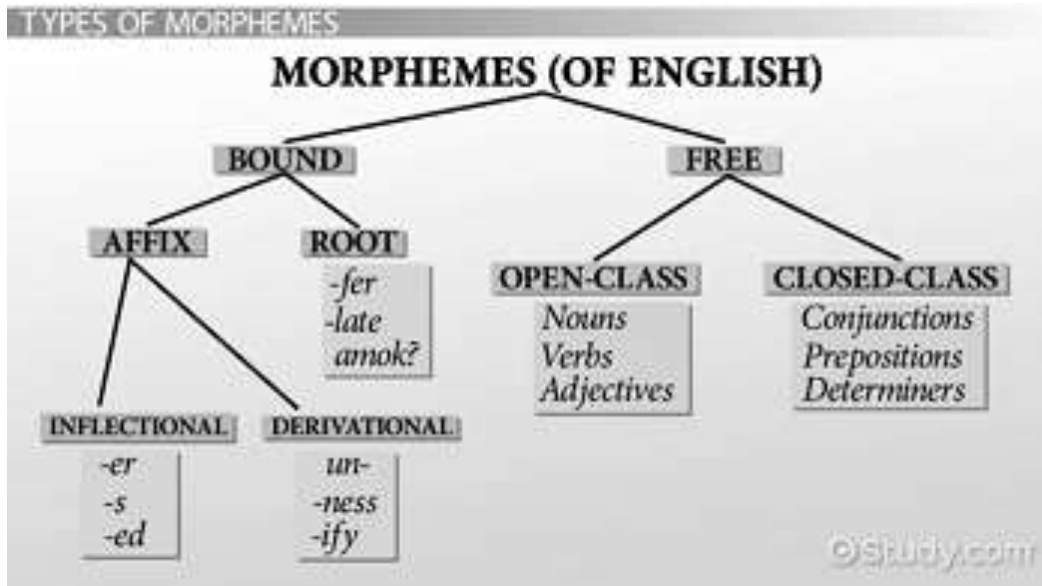


Figure 3. Types of Morphemes by Study.com

Stress Conventions based on Word Type

Below are some examples of conventions that determine stress placement on morpheme or word type:

- 1) Nouns and adjectives with two or more syllables will have stress placed on the first syllable.
- 2) Verbs and prepositions tend to have their stress on the second syllable.
- 3) Single-word compound nouns, whether they are conjoined by a hyphen or are simply one word, stress is almost always placed on the first syllable.
- 4) For most single word compound verbs, stress will be on the first syllable. However, if the first element of the compound is a two-syllable preposition, stress will be placed on the second element.

5) Reflexive Pronouns receives primary stress on -self – selves.

6) Certain suffixes will reliably dictate where stress should be applied within a word.

Suffixes like: “-ee”, “-eer”, “-ese”, “-ology”, “-osis”, “-eous”, “-ious”, “-ia”, “-ial”, “-ic” and “-ical”, “-ify”, “-ity”, “-tion” and “-sion”, “-ate”, “-cy”, “-phy”.

7) Suffixes that don't affect word stress: “-age”, “-ish”, “-hood”, “-less”, “-ness”, “-ous.”

8) However, for verbs ending on “-ish”, the primary stress occurs on the syllable immediately before “-ish”. (Farlex International, 2017)

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study is presented as a monograph, and this modality of research is based on the established guidelines of the School of Education (ECEDU) from the National Open and Distance University (UNAD), with the purpose of elaborating a bachelor's degree thesis on the TEFL field. The author of this monograph developed a qualitative research. In other words, a research methodology that focuses more on the depth and quality of the information than on the quantity or standardization. It relies on the collection of qualitative data through literature research and on content analysis of the chosen topic. What is content analysis? According to Krisppendorft, K. (2004) content analysis is defined as:

A research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the context of their use, (p.24) and when texts have meaning relative to particular contexts, discourses or purposes and validating evidence, which is the ultimate justification of the content analysis (p. 30).

The intention with this monograph was to present a qualitative research based on content analysis, with a pragmatic approach in mind, due to the findings found and shared in the literature review section, that focused on the importance of English stress and stress conventions for English pronunciation improvement in adult and Hispanic English language learners. In Colombia, for example, adult English learners rely mostly on written English for learning,

reading and speaking English, regardless of the methodology and materials used, like reading what the English teacher writes down on boards, teaching materials or present in videos with captions or lyrics.

Before proceeding with the next subsection, “research approach”, it is important to know what some researchers say about the epistemological orientations that influence or mold qualitative research methodological frameworks. According to Trauth (2001), qualitative research states that “interpretivism is the lens most frequently influencing the choice of qualitative methods”. However, there are some reservations to make against such views, for Myers & Avison (2002) write that “it should be clear that the word ‘qualitative’ is not synonym for ‘interpretive’. Therefore, qualitative research may be or may not be interpretive, depending on the underlying philosophical assumptions of the researcher,” and Wicks & Freeman (1998) who have added “pragmatism” as a third alternative besides “interpretivism” and “positivism”. Fishman (1999) has taken a similar stand in this as well.

In fact, Braa & Vidgen (1999) state that a research-methodological framework consists of three epistemological orientations in Research: 1) aiming for explanation and prediction, 2) aiming for interpretation and understanding and 3) aiming for intervention and change. Therefore, this shows that the knowledge character within pragmatism is thus not restricted to explanations (key form of positivism) and understanding (key form of interpretivism), but also includes other knowledge forms which is essential in pragmatism, such as prescriptive (giving guidelines), normative (exhibiting values) and prospective (suggesting possibilities).

Research Approach

Why is “pragmatism” the approach or orientation of this qualitative research being used on the field of EFL/ESL, and especially with Hispanic English learners? Generally speaking,

pragmatism is concerned with action and change and the interplay between knowledge and action, which makes it appropriate as a basis for research approaches that are looking to intervene into the world and not merely observing the world. In fact, it is the goal of this monograph to promote change and action by encouraging the teaching of stress conventions, to help Spanish native speakers improve in their English pronunciation, when reading written English, as well as facilitating some English stress conventions samples to English learners and teachers in the appendix section of this work.

According to Morgan (2007), a pragmatic approach is ‘to rely on a version of abductive reasoning that move back and forth between induction and deduction to connect theory and data’, when required. Pragmatism allows the potential and possibility to work back and forth between qualitative data and quantitative data, which often is viewed as incompatible. However, it offers researchers the opportunity to search for useful points of connection between these two types of data when is needed. This paradigm and approach allow the author to convert observations into theories and then assess those theories through action or personal experience when needed. (Morgan 2007)

Pragmatists argue that there is impossibility of ‘complete objectivity’ or ‘complete subjectivity’ in conducting research, and rejects the idea that researchers have to choose their position between a pair of extremes of either locating their research and research findings in a completely specific to a particular context (constructivism) or designing their research with a generalized set of principles (positivist). Thus, instead of focusing on the issue of context, pragmatism places the central focus on the idea of “enhancing transferability” on the strength of the relation between cause and effect in quantitative data and on the trustworthiness and reliability of the qualitative data (Morgan 2007, Shannon-Baker 2015). In other words, rather

than trying to make the research results with either context-bound or generalizable, pragmatists i based on the belief that theories can be both contextual and generalizable, and aim to investigate the factors that ‘affect whether the knowledge we gain can be transferred to other settings.’ (Morgan 2007, 75, Shannon-Baker, 2015). Thus, pragmatism breaks the boundary between positivist, interpretivism and constructivist, and creates a connection between them when looking for what is meaningful from all. (Shannon-Baker, 2015) Therefore, by selecting and teaching those stress conventions that are useful and practical for adult Spanish native speakers to know and practice for English pronunciation improvement, a pragmatic approach has been used in this research, with the intent of producing change and action in ESL/EFL classes, including the online meetings of the “English Conversation” course of the UNAD TEFL program.

Research Line

The lines of research, as defined in Art. 24 of the Statute of Research of the Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia, (2016). These lines consist of research groups that approached problems cooperatively and interdisciplinary in an organized and systematic way. These lines of research are based on a specific field of knowledge which is articulated with researchers, projects, problems, methodologies and activities that make intellectual production possible. For this reason, UNAD university offers different research lines for students to choose from to present their research projects.

The research line for this monograph is: Bilingualism in distance education mediated by technologies, for one of the main objectives of this research line is to analyze and revise the teaching-learning processes of a foreign language distance learning modality program mediated by TICs, which is a way to combine technology, information and communication to make engaging and motivated digital-age lessons.

The various reasons why this study has been included in this line of research was based on the following points: First, the target audience that was mentioned in the problem statement of this work, as having poor stress in English pronunciation, were students of an Open and Distance TEFL program from a National Open and Distance University (UNAD). Second, the English and Spanish languages are both involved with this target audience already mentioned, and other Hispanic English learners. Third, the stress conventions facilitated in this study could encourage the improvement, the creation and implementation of online teaching materials, as well as increasing the efficacy of e-learning tools and didactic activities to motivate English pronunciation learning in Spanish native speakers. Fourth, Colombian and Hispanic English teachers in general, and undergraduate TEFL students, can be motivated to improve their pronunciation skills and implement a more explicit, direct and clear teaching approach toward students, to improve English pronunciation and motivate them to accomplish important short-term goals in this area. Finally, English pronunciation can be improved by learning cognitively and metacognitively the importance and usefulness of these stress conventions in English pronunciation. The strategies and online activities used to practice and master these conventions in online live meeting can be pursued and developed even more by this line of research (to strengthen A1 to B2 English classes).

Research Tools

Different tools were used in the elaboration of this research paper. A reliable internet service that allowed the author to make research in data bases like, Google and Google Scholar, to find empirical and research studies relevant to the ESL/EFL field, and other various disciplines. The purchase of two books in Amazon.com, related with English stress and spelling

conventions related with pronunciation, to be able to research and write a more accurate and precise literature review.

The author's computer hard drive and Google Drive were also used as research tools. These tools helped with the compilation, gathering and organization of all the relevant information found, by placing it into separated folders. These folders also became useful tools of research by helping the author to find information related with the following topics and subtopics: "EFL Learners and Teachers," "English and Spanish," "Online Language Learning", "Orthography", "Pragmatic Approach to Latino Students in ESL", "Pronunciation", "Stress", "Research Type and Methods", "Spelling for Pronunciation", "Colombia", "Adult Learning", "Brain Science on reading and Language Learning", among other titles. The most relevant data and references used were written in an Excel matrix, to assist the author with her content analysis (the equivalent of Index Card Templates, see Appendix A). The excel matrix contain the author, the year, the citation and the analysis of the sample taken.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the literary review, this monograph presents some proven results and analysis on the necessity for adult Hispanic TEFL students to understand the importance of Supra-segmental features of English pronunciation, like stress and rhythm, when reading out loud and speaking in English. For example: It was mentioned that UNAD students who began to learn the English language from scratch relying on the UNAD TEFL bachelor's degree program had more noticeable pronunciation problems, gaps and errors, for they could not perform well either on listening comprehension quizzes.

Not only the literary review was selected from a pragmatic perspective, but also this section. In other words, the selection of relevant results, findings and the discussion itself have been guided and influenced by this approach. After all, a pragmatic approach is to rely on a version of abductive reasoning that move back and forth between induction and deduction to connect theory and data, when needed, and it allows the possibility to work back and forth between qualitative data and quantitative data, when needed. (Morgan, 2007) In fact, it allows the author to make useful connections and selections of various ESL/EFL studies on English stress, written English and orthographic conventions for Hispanic ESL learners, etc., to propose a different way to instruct English pronunciation on UNAD TEFL programs, and other teacher development courses in Colombia.

Table 1

English Pronunciation's Features

Results	Analysis
<p>An empirical research on Effectiveness of Teaching Pronunciation to Malaysian TESL Students, concluded that teachers needed to incorporate both suprasegmental and segmental features of pronunciation. Ninety one percent (91%) of 74 students overwhelmingly rated segmental as more useful in an intensive English program. (Morley, 1991) However, another study based on different types of English pronunciation instruction, where a group of students was instructed in segmental features (i.e., individual consonant and vowel sounds) and another group was primarily taught the prosodic features of English, (like rhythm and melody) Derwing and Rossiter (2003) do not advocate eliminating segment-based instruction altogether. However, if the goal is to help students become more understandable when they speak, their findings suggests a</p>	<p>Even though both suprasegmental and segmental features of pronunciation are needed for English pronunciation instruction and/or improvement, without a sufficient threshold- level mastery of the English prosodic system, English learners will not advance much, despite their efforts done in drilling individual sounds. For Example: It was wrong stress placement on words and sentences what has affected the performance of English Conversation students in English oral exams, when they were required to speak in English and respond to questions.</p> <p>On the other hand, teachers are often hesitant to tackle rhythm and melody in class because these topics are perceived as complicated and full of nuance, and textbooks on the subject tend to be intimidating because they present so many rules. However, while prosody analysis can become complicated, teaching a</p>

stronger emphasis on prosody signs.

Therefore, stress, emphasis and de-emphasis in words and/or sentences are “prosodic road signs” that are essential for English learner to know and identify in advance to perform better in English pronunciation. (Ratchie & Bhatia, 2008; Gilbert, 2008). In fact, when students are anxious to be understood they emphasize every word, and this certainly diminishes comprehension in the listener. (Gilbert, 2008) For comprehensibility and accentedness were considerably linked to pronunciation measures such as word stress and rhythm, besides grammatical accuracy and lexical type frequency. (Trofimovich, 2012, as cited in Isaacs, 2012)

Pronunciation must be included into beginner classes to help not only avoid the risk of fossilization and stabilization, but also to improve 1) intelligibility, 2) comprehensibility and 3) interpretability in students’ pronunciation. (Ratchie & Bhatia, 2008; Burns, 2003)

threshold level of understanding of the core system is actually quite simple at its most basic level. In fact, stress conventions can facilitate a simple and most basic system for adult learners in beginner and intermediate English courses.

If students who are taught about English prosodic patterns often report improved understanding of speech on TV, in movies, and in face-to-face conversations. (Gilbert, 2008) Then, prosodic signs like rhythm and stress patterns are essential for ESL/EFL learners to practice hearing and speaking at home and in class, so they can be understood by others and gain confidence. It is important to keep in mind that those English learners who can’t perform well in Listening comprehension, neither can perform well in English Conversation courses. For this reason, listening comprehension activities should focus also on identifying thought groups in sentences and stress patterns in syllables and words. After all, comprehensibility depends

	<p>on rhythm and stress placement within words, for this can play a large part in determining not only how well a native English hearer will understand the foreign speaker, but also how effective the listening comprehension becomes in English learners. (Bourjan, 2003)</p>
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Table 2

English Stress and Orthography for Hispanic English Learners

Results	Analysis
<p>According to an empirical study, adult Thai students, from first year at Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat university, were reported to have stress placement problems when pronouncing most words in English, and the need for stress to be included. (Field, 2005; Kenworthy, 1987, as cited in Yahgklang, 2013)</p>	<p>As we can see, not only Thai university students had problems with stress placement, but also Malaysian English learners, as well as UNAD TEFL students from Colombia. Why? Because it is natural for English learners to be predisposed to transfer the rhythm and stress patterns of their first language to the second language, as Fudge (1984) suggests. This also happens with native Spanish speakers as well. However, the English language has its own rhythm and stress patterns, that differs from the Spanish language, and this needs to be acknowledged.</p>

One of the most important theoretical problem underlying the practical problem of teaching English pronunciation is understanding how the writing system relates to the spoken language. (Stubbs, 1980) It is English orthography what makes it more challenging for Spanish speakers to learn to pronounce English correctly. (Sun-Alperin, 2008)

Not only does written English use punctuation as an aid to separate thought groups and stress words and sentences correctly, but adult language learners can always reread a piece of text if they become confused about the organization or grouping of information, for comprehension. (Gilbert, 2008)

Adult Hispanic English learners rely more on reading and writing English texts for their learning experience, due to their previous familiarity with the Spanish language and the Latin alphabet. This, somehow, make them feel more confident to begin learning English, when they identify the same letters of the alphabet, and many cognate words that both the English and Spanish language share in common, by having the same Greek and Latin influence.

Even though the written system of English may be challenging for Spanish native speakers to master it, is not impossible to become familiar with its orthographic conventions related with word stress and pronunciation. This useful tool can become quite practical, encouraging and effective for students learning experience, specially TEFL students who want to become English teachers. If the English's orthographic system is quite different from Spanish, Sun-Alperin (2008), then a guideline on English stress

	conventions should be facilitated. Otherwise, bilingual skills in Colombian English students and teachers can't materialize in a near future.
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Table 3

Adult Language Learning

Results	Analysis
<p>One of the main strengths of adult learners is that they have the ability for logical and critical thought, which is contrary to children. (Fenghua Yao, 2011) And as a result the following six principles of the Center of Applied Linguistics, 2015 apply to effective adult language instruction, which based on research are: a) Adult learners' existing assets and interests. b) Methods relate with adult learners' goals. c) Communication modalities are integrated. d) Promotion of input that is just above the learner's current level with illustrations and explanations. e) Explicit teaching of specific features of the language and promotion of critical thinking skills. f) Encourages</p>	<p>If adult learners have the capabilities to learn and memorize in a logical and critical manner, then any reference or guideline that is useful for their needs and practical situations will be appreciated. They will understand why stress conventions are important to know and practice in the first place, for learning and improving in English pronunciation. By English learners knowing Spanish, they can use the reservoirs of experience they already have to use it as a resource for learning and practicing English, especially when similarities are shared between the two languages. By adults knowing why and how things are done in an explicit way, they become more interested in</p>

responsibility and progress in the learning experience.

practicing authentic communication tasks, using the four modalities of the language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) understanding better the nature and structure of the second language they are learning. This helps them make significant process.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Stress conventions are necessary for adult Hispanic English learners who desire to improve in English pronunciation, for various reasons. First, it helps improve the intelligibility and comprehensibility of what they say when they speak, and when others are listening to them, either by reading out loud a text or speaking in conversation. Second, native Spanish speakers take syllable weight into account as they perceive the location of stress within a Spanish word, therefore, they should also be more conscious and aware of the importance of stress patterns and rhythm in English, especially, if they want to perform better in conversations and English oral exams. Third, adult native Spanish speakers, like TEFL and ESL students, rely mostly on written English as a language learning tool for they already know the Latin alphabet, and how to read. Finally, the good news about the stress conventions and principles is that they can be learned, memorized, practiced and mastered by adult learners, when learning to identify segments or syllables in English words and sentences, for this encourages them to improve on the suprasegmental areas of English pronunciation.

Suprasegmental features of pronunciation, like stress, rhythm and intonation, are essential for English pronunciation improvement in English learners, specially adult native Spanish speakers, who have their own stress patterns, for these are route signs that contributes to intelligibility (the speaker produces sound patterns that are recognizable as English)

comprehensibility (the listener is able to understand the meaning of what is said) and interpretability (the listener is able to understand the purpose of what is said) when applied correctly. Therefore, if there is only time to teach awareness of the core system and practice these vital rhythmic and melodic cues, as well as certain critical sounds (e.g., the grammar cues at the end of words and other segmental features) students will have achieved a great deal of communicative competence. However, if these prosodic cues are not taught, then efforts at achieving communicative competence by drilling individual sounds will prove frustrating to adults, and discouraging for English learners.

There was enough material to compile content about the importance of English stress for ESL/EFL learners, however, not much academic sources on English stress conventions themselves, to help ESL/EFL learners improve in their English pronunciation. For this reason, the content of this monograph, with its appendices, becomes a useful reference to help Hispanic English learners understand why stress placement is important in English pronunciation and how important the ‘body of knowledge’ of stress conventions become to them for stressing words correctly when reading and pronouncing monosyllabic and polysyllabic words, based on syllabification rules or the morphological nature of words. The results of this monograph are considered successful, in regard to the objectives of this monograph.

Finally, this monograph can encourage further research on the topic of stress conventions and encourage the creation of more word-bank lists by English teachers, that exemplify the stress conventions or principles mentioned here, and maybe find new ones. This brief compilation can also motivate the design and innovation of teaching materials and ESL curriculums for native Spanish speakers living in their home countries or in English-speaking countries, and motivate non-native English teachers to become better prepared and specialized in

areas and skills that native English teachers don't have, and neither can offer, when they do not know the particularities of the first language that their students have, to explain concepts better to them.

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APPENDIX A: INDEX CARDS SAMPLES

Template

Author:	Analysis
Year:	
Citation:	

Designed by Giselle Bautista Garcia

Sample 1

Author:	Analysis
Koda	
Year:	
2007	
Citation:	Due to the orthographic nature of the
The Spanish language is easier to pronounce when reading Spanish, for the language is more shallow or transparent than the English language, presenting a much more notable phoneme–grapheme correspondence, which is the relationship between the letters and the sound they produce.	Spanish language and its clear phoneme-grapheme correspondence, Hispanic English learners and teachers need to be more aware of syllabication rules, stress conventions based on word form, and the British alphabetic code of English facilitated by Hepplewhite.

Sample 2

Author:	Analysis
Fudge	
Year:	
1984	
Citation:	Native Spanish speakers take syllable weight
“Comprehensibility depends on rhythm, and therefore the placing of stress within words can play a large part in determining how well a native English hearer will understand the foreign speaker”. (Fudge, 1984)	into account as they perceive the location of stress within a word, which means they need to be more aware of the importance and difference that exist in English rhythm and stress patters for their listeners to comprehend them in their communications.

APPENDIX B: A SUMMARY OF FOCUS WORD PRINCIPLES BASED ON GILBERT'S
PYRAMID

Convention 1

The stressed syllable of a focus word is extra-long, extra clear, and has a pitch change.

Convention 2

The focus word in a sentence is usually a content word.

Convention 3

Structure words are usually de-emphasized to contrast with the focus word. This contrast makes it easier for the hearer to notice the focus word.

Convention 4

At the beginning of a conversation, the last content word in a clause or sentence is usually the focus word.

Convention 5

After a conversation begins, the new thought in each sentence is the focus word.

Adapted from Clear Speech (Gilbert 2005)

APPENDIX C: STRESS CONVENTIONS BASED ON WORD TYPE

1. Nouns and adjectives with two or more syllables tend to have stress placed on the first syllable. Verbs and prepositions tend to have their stress on the second syllable.

Table 4

First and Second Syllable Words

First Syllable		Second Syllable	
Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Prepositions
APP.le	CLEV.er	a.PPLY	a.BOUT
BOTT.le	COMM.on	be.COME	a.CROSS
BUSI.ness	DIFF.i.cult	com.PARE	a.LONG
CHERR.y	FA.vor.ite	di.SCUSS	a.MONG
CLI.mate	FEM.i.nine	ex.PLAIN	a.ROUND
CRIT.ic	FUNN.y	ful.FIL	be.HIND
DIA.mond	HAPP.y	in.CREASE	be.LOW
EL.e.phant	HON.est	ha.RASS	be.SIDE
EN.ve.lope	LITT.le	la.MENT	be.TWEEN
FAM.i.ly	MAS.cu.line	ne.GLECT	des.PITE
IN.ter.net	NARR.ow	pre.VENT	ex.CEPT
KNOWL.edge	OR.ange	qua.DRU.ple	in.SIDE
MU.sic	PLEAS.ant	re.PLY	

PA.per	PRE.tty	suc.CEED	out.SIDE
SAM.ple	PUR.ple	tra.VERSE	un.TIL
SATCH.el	QUI.et	un.FURL	u.PON
TA.ble	SIM.ple	with.HOLD	with.IN
TEL.e.phone	SUB.tle		with.OUT
TON.ic	TRICK.y		
WIN.dow	UG.ly		

2. Initial-stress-derived nouns: When a word can operate as either a noun or a verb, the English language differentiates the meanings by shifting the stress from the second syllable to the first (or initial) syllable. In other words, these nouns are derived from verbs according to their initial stress.

Table 5

Words that operate as nouns and verbs

<i>Word</i>	Noun	Verb
<i>conflict</i>	CONflict	conFLICT
<i>contest</i>	CONtest	conTEST
<i>contract</i>	CONtract	conTRACT
<i>desert</i>	DESert	deSERT
<i>discount</i>	DIScount	disCOUNT
<i>export</i>	Export	exPORT
<i>import</i>	IMport	imPORT
<i>increase</i>	INcrease	inCREASE

<i>invite</i>	INvite	inVITE
<i>object</i>	OBject	obJECT
<i>permit</i>	PERmit	perMIT
<i>present</i>	PREsent	preSENT
<i>project</i>	PROject	proJECT
<i>protest</i>	PROtest	proTEST
<i>rebel</i>	REbel	reBEL
<i>record</i>	RECord	reCORD
<i>refuse</i>	REFuse	reFUSE
<i>refund</i>	REFund	reFUND
<i>rewrite</i>	REwrite	reWRITE
<i>subject</i>	SUBject	subJECT
<i>survey</i>	SURvey	surVEY
<i>update</i>	UPdate	upDATE

3. Compound Nouns: Single-word compound nouns, whether they are conjoined by a hyphen or are simply one word, stress is almost always placed on the first syllable.
4. Compound Verbs: For most single word compound verbs, stress will be on the first syllable. However, if the first element of the compound verb is a two-syllable preposition, stress will be placed on the second element.

Table 6

Compound Nouns and Verbs

Single-word Compound Nouns	Single-word Compound Verbs
Back.PACK	AIR.condition
Bath.ROOM	BABy.sit
Draw.BACK	COPy.edit
Check-IN	DAY.dream
Foot.BALL	DOWN.load
Hand.BAG	ICE.skate
Green.HOUSE	JAY.walk
Hair.CUT	KICK.start
Log.IN	PROOF.read
Motor.CYCLE	STIR-fry
On.LOOK.ER	TEST-drive
Pas.SER.BY	WATER.proof
Son-IN-LAW	Over.HEAT
Table.CLOTH	(two syllable preposition)
Wall.PAPER	Under.COOK
Web.SITE	(two syllable preposition)

5) Reflexive Pronouns: These pronouns receive primary stress on -self – selves.

Example: my.SELF, her.SELF, him.SELF, it.SELF, one.SELF, your.SELF, your.SELVES,
them.SELVESs

6) Suffixes: Certain suffixes will reliably dictate where stress should be applied within a word. For example:

a) Stress is placed on the suffix itself in words ending in “-ee”, “-eer”, “-ese”, even though they have different functions.

-ee indicates someone who benefits from or is the recipient of the action of a verb.

-eer indicates someone who is concerned with or engaged in a certain action.

-ese is attached to place names to describe languages, characteristics of certain nationalities, or (when attached to non-place names) traits or styles of fields or professions.

Table 7

Words ending in -ee, -eer, -ese

-ee	-eer	-ese
absenTEE	auctioNEER	ChiNESE
attenDEE	commanDEER	JapaNESE
detaiNEE	domiNEER	journALESE
interviewEE	engiNEER	LebaNESE
licenSEE	mountaiNEER	legaLESE
mortgaGEE	muskeTEER	MalTESE
paroLEE	pioNEER	PortuGUESE
refeREE	profiTEER	Siamese
refuGEE	puppeTEER	studenTESE
traINEE	rackeTEER	TaiwaNESE
warranTEE	volunTEER	Vietnamese

- a) Suffix ending in “-ology” has its primary stress on the syllable in which “-ol-” appears. This suffix is used to denote fields of scientific study or discourse; set of ideas, beliefs, or principles; or bodies of texts or writings.
- b) Suffix ending in “-osis” has its primary stress in the syllable in which “o-” appears. This suffix is used to form the names of diseases, conditions, and other medical processes.

Table 8

Words ending in -ology and -osis

-ology	-osis
a.strol.o.gy	ac.i.do.sis
bi.ol.o.gy	ap.op.to.sis
car.di.ol.o.gy	cir.rho.sis
e.col.o.gy	di.ag.no.sis
ge.ol.o.gy	en.do.me.tri.o.sis
i.de.ol.o.gy	fib.ro.sis
lex.i.col.o.gy	hyp.no.sis
meth.o.dol.o.gy	mi.to.sis
neu.rol.o.gy	mis.di.ag.no.sis
psy.chol.o.gy	ne.cro.sis
ra.di.ol.o.gy	os.te.o.po.ro.sis
so.ci.ol.o.gy	prog.no.sis
tech.nol.o.gy	sym.bi.o.sis
u.rol.o.gy	tu.ber.cu.lo.sis

zo.ol.o.gy	vi.ro.sis
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- a) Stress is placed *on the syllable immediately before* the following suffixes: “-eous”, “-ious”, “-ia”, “-ial”, “-ic” and “-ical.”

Table 9

Words ending in -eous and- ious

“-eous”	“-ious”
ad.van.ta.geous	am.phib.ious
bount.teous	bo.da.cious
cou.ra.geous	contagious
dis.cour.teous	dubious
ex.tra.neous	ex.pe.di.tious
gas.eous	fa.ce.tious
hid.eous	gre.gar.ious
ig.neous	hi.lar.ious
misc.e.la.neous	im.per.vious
nau.seous	ju.di.cious
out.ra.geous	la.bo.rious
pit.eous	mys.te.rious
righ.teous	ne.far.ious
si.mul.ta.neous	ob. vious
vi.treous	pro.di.gious
	rebellious

	superst it ious te. na .cious up. roar .ious vi. car .ious
--	---

The suffix “**-ia**” is used to create nouns, either denoting a disease or a condition of quality. The suffix “**-ial**” is used to form adjectives from nouns, meaning “of, characterized by, connected with, or relating to.” **Note:** Like suffix “**-ia**”, **I** is either pronounced individually or else becomes silent and changes the pronunciation of the previous consonant. In a handful of words, **I** blend with a previous vowel sound that is stressed before the final A.

Table 10

Words ending in -ia and -ial

“-ia”	“-ial”
ac.a. de .mi.a	ad. ver .bi.al
bac. ter .i.a	be.ne. fi .cial
cat.a. to .ni.a	bac. ter .i.al
de. men .tia	con.fi. den .tial
en.cy.clo. pe .di.a	def.e. den .tial
fan. ta .sia	ed.i. tor .i.al
hy.po. ther .mi.a	fa. mil .i.al
in. som .ni.a	gla .cial
leu. ke .mi.a	in.flu. en .tial
mem.or.a. bil .i.a	judicial

nos.tal.gia	me.mor.i.al
par.a.noi.a	o.ffi.cial
re.ga.li.a	pro.ver.bi.al
su.bur.bi.a	ref.e.ren.tial
tri.vi.a	su.per.fi.cial
u.to.pi.a	terr.i.tor.i.al
xen.o.pho.bi.a	ve.stig.i.al

The suffix “-ic” and “-ical”, both form adjectives from the nouns to which they attach, and for both, *the primary stress is placed on the syllable immediately before “-ic”*.

Table 11

Words ending in -ic and -ical

“-ic”	“-ical”
a.tom.ic	an.a.tom.i.cal
bur.eau.crat.ic	bi.o.log.i.cal
cha.ot.ic	chron.o.log.i.cal
dem.o.crat.ic	di.a.bol.i.cal
en.er.get.ic	e.lec.tri.cal
for.mu.la.ic	far.ci.cal
ge.net.ic	ge.o.graph.i.cal
hyp.not.ic	his.tor.i.cal
i.con.ic	in.e.ffec.tu.al
ki.net.ic	lack.a.dai.si.cal

la.con.ic	mu.si.cal
mag.net.ic	nau.ti.cal
no.stal.gic	op.ti.cal
opp.or.tu.nis.tic	par.a.dox.i.cal
pe.ri.od.ic	psy.cho.an.a.lyt.i.cal
re.a.lis.tic	rhe.tor.i.cal
sym.pa.thet.ic	sy.mmet.ri.cal
ti.tan.ic	ty.ran.ni.cal

Note: While this pattern of pronunciation is very reliable, there are a few words (mostly nouns) ending in “-ic” that go against it like: *a.RITH.me.tic*, *HER..e.tic*, *LU.na.tic*, *POL..i.tics*, *RHET.o.ric*.

The suffix “-ify” is used to form verbs, most often from existing nouns or adjectives. While the primary stress is placed immediately before “-i-,” the second syllable of the suffix “-fy,” also receives a secondary stress. However, the suffix “-ity” is used to create nouns from adjectives. The I is pronounced in an individual syllable, *with the word’s primary stress occurring immediately before it*.

Table 12

Words ending in -ify and -ity

“-ify”	“-ity”
a.cid.i.fy	a.bil.i.ty
be.at.i.fy	ba.nal.i.ty
class.i.fy	ce.leb.ri.ty
co.di.fy	dis.par.i.ty

dig.ni.fy	e.qual.i.ty
dis.qua.li.fy	func.tion.al.i.ty
e.lec.tri.fy	gen.e.ros.i.ty
fal.si.fy	hu.mid.i.ty
horr.i.fy	i.niq.ui.ty
i.den.ti.fy	jo.vi.al.i.ty
mag.ni.fy	le.gal.i.ty
mo.di.fy	ma.jor.i.ty
no.ti.fy	nor.mal.i.ty
ob.jec.ti.fy	ob.scur.i.ty
pa.ci.fy	prac.ti.cal.i.ty
per.son.i.fy	qual.i.ty
pu.ri.fy	rec.i.proc.i.ty
rat.i.fy	scar.ci.ty
so.lid.i.fy	tech.ni.cal.i.ty
tes.ti.fy	u.na.nim.i.ty
ver.i.fy	ve.loc.i.ty

The suffix “**-tion**” and “**-sion**” are both used to create nouns, specially from verbs to describe an instance of that action. Depending on the word the sounds made by “-tion”, and “-sion” *will be part of the stressed syllable* or the final unstressed syllable:

Table 13

Words ending in -tion and -sion

“-tion”	“-sion”
au.diti.on	a.bra.sion
bi.sec.tion	a.ver.sion
can.ce.lla.tion	co.llisi.on
di.screti.on	com.pul.sion
ex.haus.tion	di.ffu.sion
flo.ta.tion	di.men.sion
grad.u.a.tion	e.ro.sion
hos.pi.tal.i.za.tion	fu.sion
ig.ni.tion	i.llu.sion
jur.is.dic.tion	in.va.sion
lo.co.mo.tion	man.sion
mod.i.fi.ca.tion	ob.sessi.on
nom.i.na.tion	o.cca.sion
ob.struc.tion	per.cussi.on
pros.e.cu.tion	pro.pul.sion
re.a.li.za.tion	re.missi.on
se.cre.tion	sub.ver.sion
tra.diti.on	su.spen.sion
u.ni.fi.ca.tion	trans.fu.sion
vi.bra.tion	ver.sion

a) Stress is applied *two syllables before the suffix “-ate”, “-cy” and “-phy”*.

Suffix “-ate” is most often used to create verbs, but it can also form adjectives and nouns.

In words with three or more syllables, the primary stress is placed two syllables before the suffix.

Suffix “-cy” attaches to adjectives or nouns to form nouns referring to “state, conditions, or quality,” or “rank or office.” However, this suffix has a number of exceptions. See later.

The ending “-phy” is actually part of other suffixes, most often “-graphy,” but also “-trophy,” and “-sophy.” See examples below.

Table 14

Words ending in -ate, -cy and -phy

“-ate”	“-cy”	“-phy”
ac.cen.tu.ate	a.dja.cen.cy	a.tro.phy
bar.bit.ur.ate	a.gen.cy	biog.ra.phy
co.llab.o.rate	bank.rupt.cy	bib.li.og.ra.phy
diff.e.ren.ti.ate	com.pla.cen.cy	cal.lig.ra.phy
e.nu.me.rate	cor.re.spond.en.cy	cin.e.ma.tog.ra.phy
fa.cil.i.tate	de.mo.cra.cy	dis.cog.ra.phy
ge.stic.u.late	ex.pec.tan.cy	eth.nog.ra.phy
hu.mil.i.ate	flam.boy.an.cy	fil.mog.ra.phy
in.ad.e.quate	fre.quen.cy	ge.og.ra.phy
le.git.i.mate	in.sur.gen.cy	his.to.riog.ra.phy
ma.tric.u.late	in.fan.cy	i.co.nog.ra.phy

ne.cess.i.tate	in.ef.fi.cien.cy	ocean.og.ra.phy
o.blit.e.rate	lieu.ten.an.cy	or.thog.ra.phy
par.tic.i.pate	ma.lig.nan.cy	phi.los.o.phy
re.frig.er.ate	pro.fici.en.cy	pho.tog.ra.phy
stip.u.late	re.dun.dan.cy	ra.di.og.ra.phy
tri.an.gu.late	su.prem.a.cy	so.nog.ra.phy
un.for.tu.nate	trans.par.en.cy	the.os.o.phy
ver.te.brata	va.can.cy	ty.pog.ra.phy

Note: Unlike some of the other suffixes, suffix “-cy” has a number of exceptions. For these, the primary stress is placed three syllables before the suffix.

Table 15

Exceptions of words ending in “-cy”

Exception “-cy”	Exception “-cy”
ac.cur.a.cy	in.ti.ma.cy
can.di.da.cy	lit.er.a.cy
com.pe.ten.cy	le.git.i.ma.cy
del.i.ca.cy	occ.u.pan.cy
ex.tra.va.gan.cy	pres.i.den.cy
im.me.di.a.cy	rel.e.van.cy
	surr.o.ga.cy

- 5) Generally, the suffix “-ish” do not affect word stress. However, for verbs ending on “-ish”, the primary stress occurs on the syllable immediately before “-ish”. This use at the end of verbs is the result of word’s evolution in English. Here are a few examples:

Table 16

Exceptions on word ending in -ish due to word’s evolution

a.ston.ish	gar.nish
bran.dish	im.pove.rish
cher.ish	lan.guish
de.mol.ish	nour.ish
ex.tin.guish	pub.ish
fur.nish	re.ple.ish
	tar.nish

Adapted from The Farlex Grammar Book III

