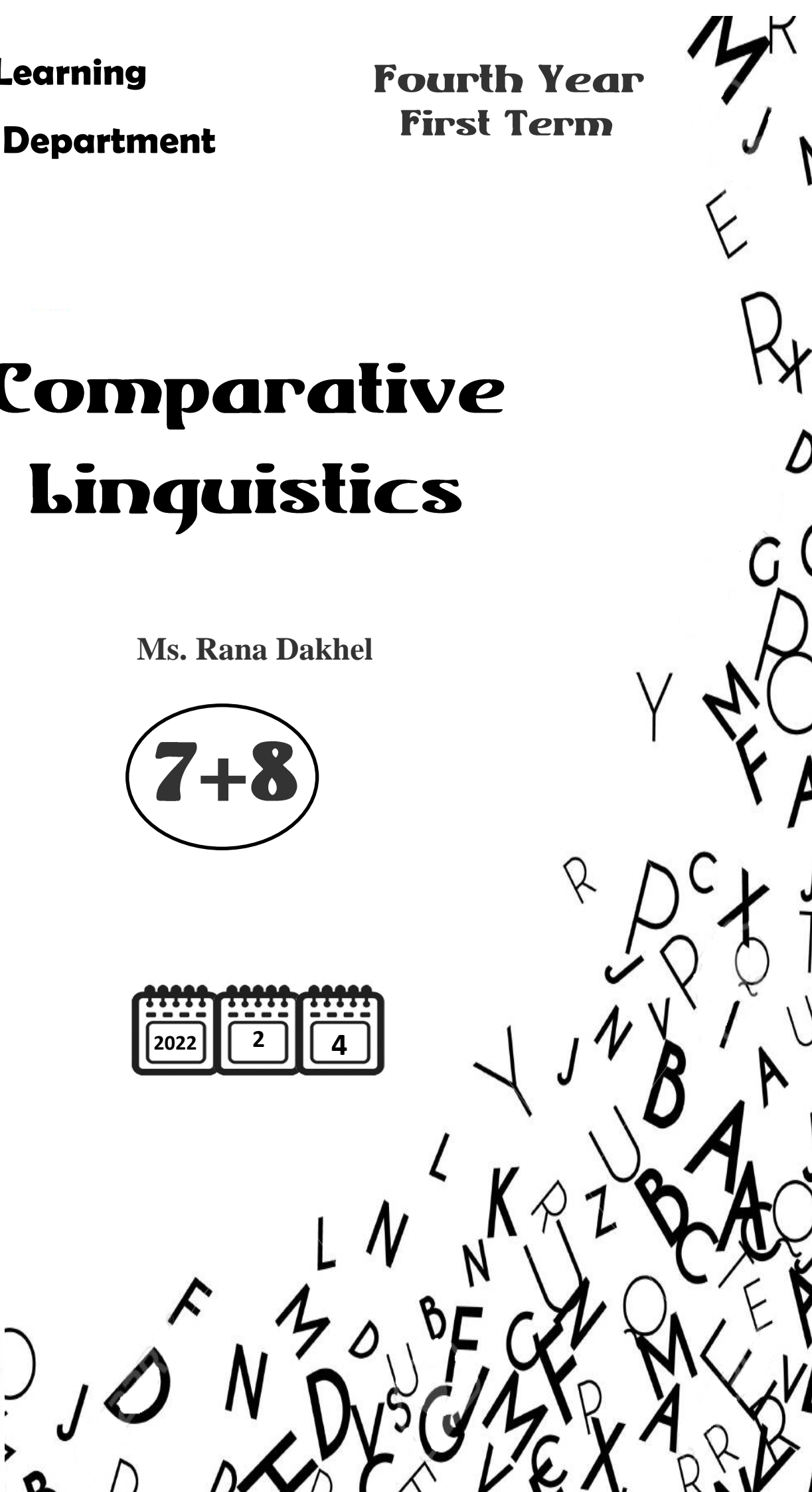


Comparative Linguistics

Ms. Rana Dakhel

7+8



Good afternoon!

Note: in addition to the forth case of the obligatory fronting of the comment, we have the second example:

إنما ذكيُّ عليٌّ.
بالإضافة إلى المثال السابق:
ما ذكيُّ إلا عليٌّ.

How can we translate: إنما ذكيُّ عليٌّ؟

Student: The one who is clever is Ali.

Teacher: This translation can be used to translate: ما ذكيُّ إلا عليٌّ.

You cannot use literal translation. You can say:

Ali is a clever one.

Or:

The only clever one is Ali.

The word (إنما) is one of the exceptive particles.

So: (استثناء) is exceptive and (حصر) is restrictive.

* * *

Note: obligatory means that you must front the object or the comment, optional means that it is up to you to use fronting, and it is used for pragmatic purposes; to draw attention or to correct a certain information, for example.

Last time, we took the example:

ما ذكيُّ إلا عليٌّ.

This is marked; if we want to make it unmarked, we can say:

عليٌّ ذكيٌّ.

When I use the restrictive particle (ما), I have to move the comment (ذكيُّ) to the beginning.

We talked about:

أدوات الحصر و أدوات الاستثناء.

Here, there is a very important point that you have to understand.

ما الفرق بين أدوات الحصر و أدوات الاستثناء؟

يمكن استخدام (إلا) كأداة حصر أو كأداة استثناء. و لكن لدينا أمر مرتبط بالمعنى، ما هو؟
طالبة: في هذه الجملة، نحن لا نستثني علي من الطلاب بل نصفه لأنه مسبق بنفي

الأستاذة: يختلف الحصر عن الاستثناء semantically speaking، حيث يوجد علاقة بين المستثنى و المستثنى منه في الاستثناء، بينما من غير الضروري أن يكون هناك علاقة بين المستثنى و المستثنى منه في الحصر. سأعطيكم مثالين لتوضيح الفكرة:

حضر الطلاب إلا علياً.

هذه استثناء، أما الحصر:

ما حضر إلا علي.

و إذا قلنا: ما حضر الطلاب إلا علياً، فهذه أيضاً استثناء.

عند ذكر المستثنى منه أي حين تكون عناصر الاستثناء موجودة كاملة (المستثنى و المستثنى منه و أداة الاستثناء) تكون الجملة استثناء، أما في حال نقص عنصر من العناصر، تصبح الجملة حصر. إذا أردنا حذف أداة الحصر أو الاستثناء و العودة لحالة (unmarked) ماذا نقول؟
طالبة: ما حضر الطلاب إلا علياً.

Teacher: How can I translate this into English?

Student: None of the students came except Ali.

Teacher: If I want to move this into unmarked in English, what should I say?

Student: Ali is the only student who came.

Teacher: Yes. So, in English, I can move it to the unmarked position, but in Arabic, can we move it?

طالبة: الطريقة الوحيدة هي أن نقول: علي هو الطالب الوحيد الذي حضر.

Teacher: So, we were able to remove the particle. There is a point regarding the marked and the unmarked:

If you can remove the restrictive particle and there is a relation between the topic and the comment, it means that it is exceptive. If you remove this particle and there is no relation, it is restrictive.

I want you to understand this point¹.

* * *

Now, we will talk about:

The Optional Fronting of the Comment:

Case 1:

The topic is definite and the comment is an adverbial phrase; that is why it is optional.

Let us take this example:

البنيت في المنزل.

¹في المحاضرة السابقة قلنا في حال وجود علاقة بين المستثنى و المستثنى منه تكون الجملة استثناء و لكن هنا قامت الدكتورة بتصحيح المعلومة.

This is unmarked. If I want to correct you, I would say:

في الحديقة البنتُ.

Here, I am focusing on (في الحديقة). So here, the fronting is for pragmatic purposes.

* * *

Case 2:

You know that the topic and the comment are both in the nominative case (في حالة الرفع), but sometimes, we have particles that change the grammatical function. For example:

إن و أخواتها.

أن و أخواتها.

كان و أخواتها.

Let us start with (was and its sisters):

What are the sisters of was (كان)?

أصبح - أضحى - أمسى - بات - صار - ظل - ليس - ما برح - ما فتى - ما انفك - ما برىء - ما زال - ما دام.

Note: for transliteration:

a'	ع
h	ح
d	ض
t	ط
s	ص
z	ظ

Now, if I say:

عليٌّ غائبٌ.

This is topic and comment. In English:

Ali is absent.

If I want to make it in the past tense, I would say:

Ali was absent.

In Arabic, we would say:

كان عليٌّ غائباً.

Here, we have a change; the comment becomes in the accusative case

(حالة النصب).

حالة الجر: genitive case

Now, we are just talking about nominative and accusative cases.

The topic becomes a noun in the nominative case, and the comment becomes a noun in the accusative case when we have was and its sisters.

كان تدخل على الجملة الاسمية فترفع المبتدأ و تنصب الخبر.

Note that here, we are not talking about fronting; we are talking about the grammatical change.

* * *

We have now Verbs of Propinquity:

أفعال المقاربة:

مثل: أوشك - كاد

أوشك الدرس أن ينتهي.

What happens here?

Student: The comment is a verbal sentence.

Teacher: Exactly.

Student: What if we say:

أوشك الدرسُ على الانتهاء.

Teacher: It is different. Let us talk about marked and unmarked position. The unmarked case would be...

Student: انتهى الدرسُ

Teacher: Thank you. Here, it is a verbal sentence not a nominal one.

Student: الدرسُ انتهى

Teacher: Here, it is a nominal sentence; the topic is (الدرسُ) and the comment is a verbal phrase (انتهى).

When we add (أوشك), it becomes (أوشك الدرسُ أن ينتهي); so, there is a change in the tense.

طالبة: و لكن الخبر في هذه الجملة هو المصدر المؤول من أن و ما بعدها و ليس الجملة الفعلية.

Teacher: Yes, but the focus is on the change of the tense; how it was in the past in the unmarked case (انتهى) and became in the present in the marked one (أن ينتهي). Also, (المصدر المؤول) is a verbal noun.

Student: How would the questions in the exam be about these things?

Teacher: I would ask you about the comment, for example, whether it is optional or obligatory.

* * *

Verbs of Beginning:

بدأ - شرع - أخذ

In the exam, I would ask you: if I add (شرع) to the nominal sentence would the comment stay the same or not? Or, true or false questions

شرع الأولاد يدرسون.

* * *

Verbs of Expectation:

أفعال الرجاء و التمني:

لعل - عسى

عسى الأزيمة أن تنكشف.

This is marked case, and there is a change:

The unmarked case is:

الأزيمة انكشفت.

All of these verbs change the grammatical function or tense of the comment.

Now, we talked about the grammatical changes of the comment; what about the topic?

Student: When we add: إن و أخواتها

Teacher: Exactly. If I say:

العلم مفيد.

How do we translate it?

Science is beneficial.

If we add (إن):

إنّ العلم مفيد.

The topic here becomes in the accusative case, and the comment is in the nominative case. If we want to translate it, we would also say:

Science is beneficial.

It stays the same in English. In Arabic, we use (إن و أخواتها) in order to emphasize.

* * *

Verbs of Doubt and Certainty:

أفعال الشك و اليقين.

They have the same function of (إن و أخواتها).

زيدٌ حاضرٌ = ظننتُ زيداََ حاضرًا.

The verbs of doubt and certainty make both the topic and the comment accusative. We notice that the verb in this sentence is followed by object (زيداً) and object compliment (حاضراً).

One of you asked me before about the difference between SVOO and SVOC. This example is a Complement; when there is a relation between the object and the compliment, it is SVOC; otherwise, it is SVOO.

For example:

أعطيتُ الولدَ هديةً.

Is there a relation between (الولد) and (هدية)?

Students: No

Teacher: So, it is SVOO.

We talked about English and Arabic word order. We talked about the comparative between them; now, I want you to give me the contrast in terms of word order.

1. In English, it is always optional to shift themes; in Arabic, we have both obligatory and optional shift.

2. Arabic is more flexible than English in terms of word order. English has a fixed word order.

We have some syntactic constructions like thematization, it cleft, extraposition, etc. in English, but still, Arabic is more flexible.

Arabic sentences can be both nominal and verbal, but English sentences should always have a verb; otherwise it is not considered a sentence.

We can say that in general, English has a fixed word order.

That is all for syntax.

In our next lecture, we will talk about phonetics.

Pay attention that transliteration is different from phonetics. For example, the Arabic letter (ش) is written as (sh) in transliteration but as /ʃ/ in phonetics.

Transliteration = spelling

Phonetics = pronunciation

We will talk about phonetics in detail next week, but for now, let me ask you the following question:

What is the difference between phonetics and phonology?

Phonology is the study of the sound of a particular language.

Phonetics is the study of the articulator (production of sounds), acoustic (e.g. stress, pitch, length of a sound) and auditory (i.e. related to hearing organs) system.

Next lecture, we will talk about the articulator system of sounds: consonants and vowels of both English and Arabic.

When we talk about consonants, we have horizontal and vertical; for articulation, we have place of articulation and manner of articulation (i.e. how you produce the sound).

Lecture 8

18\2\2022

Good Morning!

Last lecture, we only took an introduction about phonetics.

We will start with consonants. How can you describe any consonant in English? In terms of what can you describe the consonant /p/, for example?

Student: Voiced or voiceless

Student: Place of articulation

Teacher: Place of articulation, is it horizontal or vertical?

It is horizontal according to the place of the tongue.

We describe any consonant in terms of place of articulation as horizontal, and manner of articulation as vertical (i.e. how you pronounce this consonant).

We pronounce the sound /p/ using only the lips, so we call it bilabial.

What happens when we produce /p/?

Student: We stop the air.

Teacher: So, there is a closing, and then a release; we call it plosive or stop consonant. Is it voiced or voiceless?

Students: Voiceless

Teacher: Excellent. What about /b/?

Students: Voiced, bilabial, and plosive.

Teacher: So, there is only one difference between /b/ and /p/.

Each sound has a distinctive feature; no two sounds are completely similar.

What about /f/? How do you produce this sound?

Student: We use our lips and teeth.

Teacher: So, we call it bilabial-dental.

Student: We let the air pass a little bit.

Teacher: So, we use the lower lip and upper teeth. We have some noise coming out which we call fricative.

It is also voiceless, and /v/ is voiced.

What about /θ/ like in the word /think/?

Student: Dental

Teacher: Yes, we only use our teeth, so we call it interdental or dental. Is it fricative? Yes, it is.

/ð/ as in /there/ is the same as /θ/, but it is voiced.

Now, what is the voice /t/?

Student: Plosive

Teacher: Excellent. We use alveolar ridge; in order to produce the voice /t/, the tip of the tongue touches the alveolar ridge. It is plosive because we have a strong push of air. It is voiceless, and the voiced form of it is /d/.

What about /s/?

Student: Fricative

Teacher: Excellent. The tip of the tongue is close to the alveolar ridge, so some linguists classify it as alveolar. Other linguists classify /s/ and /z/ to alveolar palatal. /s/ is voiceless and /z/ is voiced.

When we say (affricate), we mean that the voice is not closed or released but some place in between.

/tʃ/ and /ʃ/ are voiceless; /ʒ/ and /dʒ/ are voiced.

/tʃ/: chair, /ʃ/: shoe, /ʒ/: vision, /dʒ/: judge, advantage.

/ʒ/ and /ʃ/ are between alveolar and palatal because there is a small difference between /ʃ/ and /tʃ/ and between /ʒ/ and /dʒ/, but all of these four sounds are affricate. Between alveolar and palatal, we have alveo-palatal.

What about /k/?

Students: Plosive

Teacher: Excellent. It is velar. The equivalent voiced voice is /g/.

/h/: plosive, glottal, and voiced

/m/: bilabial, nasal, voiced

/n/: nasal, alveolar, voiced

/l/: voiced, alveolar, lateral

/w/: bilabial, voiced, glides (there is a glide between the two lips); the same applies on /y/: glides, palatal or alveo-palatal, voiced.

/ŋ/ as in /ink/: it is nasal, velar, voiced

/r/: you can say liquids instead of lateral, alveolar or alveo-palatal,

The rest of the consonants are included in the following table.

	B	LD	I	A	P	V	G
Plosive	P			t		k	
	B			d		g	
Affricate					tʃ		
					dʒ		
Fricative		F	θ	s	ʃ		h
		V	ð	z	ʒ		
Nasals	m			n		ŋ	
Lateral				l, r			
Glides	W				y		

Key: B: bilabial, LD: labio-dental, I: interdental, A: alveolar, P: palatal, V: velar, G: glottal

Now, let us talk about some features of the English consonants.

When I say /p/, I feel a strong push of air. Even here, we have cases: if I say /map/ and /pen/, focus on the way we produce /p/ in each of them.

Student: /p/ in pen is more plosive.

Student: There is a kind of stop after the /p/ in map.

Teacher: Thank you. We produce /p/ in map as usual, but in pen, it is more plosive; when /p/ occurs initially in the stressed syllable, we have this **Aspiration**. In other words:

[P^ben] the /p/ is aspirated because it is in the initial stressed syllable.

This transcription inside brackets not slashes means that we are talking about the phonology features of this sound.

Another example:

Still:

It is plosive consonant. Is it aspirated? Yes. This word represents one stressed syllable. It is aspirated, but neutralized because it is preceded by the /s/.

The voiceless English consonants /k, p, t/ are aspirated when they occur initially and stressed in the words.

Note: we have two kinds of transcription;

Phonetic Transcription: when you write the sounds between two slashes /man/.

Transcription for phonological features.

Let me give you another example:

Try to pronounce the following two words and notice the difference:

Leaf - peal

You can sense that /l/ in 'leaf' is lighter in pronouncing than 'peal' which is heavier. Also, 'feel' is heavy.

Here, we have a very important term which is **Allophones**.

It is when we have different phonemes for the same phoneme. For example, the allophones of the phoneme /p/ are: p without aspiration, p with aspiration, and neutralized p.

The allophones of the phoneme /l/ are: clear /l/ as in 'leaf', and dark /l/ as in 'feel'. Also, /l/ is usually voiced, but sometimes, it can be devoiced. For example: plate. Here, the /l/ is devoiced because it was preceded by a voiceless plosive consonant.

* * *

Now, look at this word:

Sudden /'sʌdn/ ['sɒdn]

This word has two syllables; we have a strong syllable and a weak syllable.

It is correct to write the transcription as /'sʌdən/, but it is more correct to write it as /'sʌdn/ because /n/ here is **syllabic**.

Syllabic means that you do not need to add this schwa. So, you add the schwa between brackets: /'sʌd(ə)n/.

Another example: the word 'little': /'lɪt(ə)l/. Also here, there is no need for the schwa: /'lɪtl/.

Bottom: /'bɒt(ə)m²/

* * *

Now, if we talk about /r/ in the British accent, this sound is not produced when it occurs at the end of the word. For example:

Car: /kɑ:(r)/ or water /'wɔ:tə/.

This is case number 1. Case number two is when it occurs between a sequence of two consonants:

² In the dictionary, the schwa is actually added; if it was (button), the transcription would be /'bʌt(ə)n/; the schwa is not needed.

Card: /kɑ:d/

Supermarket /'su:pəmɑ:kɪt/

If we want to pronounce the word: comfortable /'kʌmfɪtəbl/.

So, /r/ is not pronounced because it occurred between two sequence of consonants.

Dictionary /'dɪkʃənri/

(The teacher talked about the different pronunciation of the word 'comfortable' in the American accent.)

The word heart is pronounced in the British accent as /hɑ:t/, and in the American accent /hɑ:rt/.

The handout:

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Phonology is the study of the sound system of a particular language. Phonetics, in contrast, is the study of the articulatory, auditory and acoustic properties of speech sounds. Phonology subsumes the study of the segmental phonemes of a language (consonants and vowels) and the supra segmental features that are superimposed on the segmental phonemes. These features are length, stress, and rhythm. This lecture deals with the phonological systems of both English and Arabic. It is organized as follows: Section 2 presents a description of the English and Arabic consonants. Section 3 presents a description of the vowels and diphthongs of the two languages.

2.2 CONSONANTS

Consonants are usually described in terms of the manner of articulation, place of articulation, and voicing. Throughout the description of the English and Arabic consonants, emphasis will be placed on those phonetic and phonological features that are specific to each of the two languages

2.2.1 English Consonants

English has twenty-four consonants. Table 1 presents these consonants defined in terms of place and manner of articulation.

The following are some of the features that are specific to the pronunciation of English consonants.

(a) Aspiration

English voiceless stops /p, t, k/ are aspirated when they occur word-initially in stressed syllables. Aspiration refers to the puff of air/breath that occurs between the release of the stop and the production of the following vowel, e.g., **pen** /pen/, **ten** /ten/ and **kin** /kin/. Aspiration is neutralized when the

sibilant /s/ precedes the voiceless stop in syllable initial position, e.g., **step** /step/. However, in syllable-final position these voiceless stops are unreleased and unaspirated.

(b) Syllabic consonants

A syllabic consonant is one that forms a syllable by itself, i.e., without a vowel. English has three syllabic consonants /l/, /n/ and /m/ that occur finally in a word. For example:

little /lɪtl/ sudden /sʌdn/ bottom /bɒtm/

The syllabic lateral and nasal consonants in the above words are pronounced with lateral and nasal plosive respectively. The former means that the stop sound is released by the lowering the side of the tongue, whereas the latter means that the stop is released by lowering the soft palate so that the air escapes through the nose.

(c) r-deletion

The consonant /r/ is not pronounced in British English when it occurs word finally or in a sequence of two final consonants as in the following examples:

far /fa:/, card /ka:d/

But, word-final /r/ is pronounced when the next word begins with a vowel as in the phrase 'more and more'. This /r/ is referred to as "linking" /r/.

In American English; however, the consonant /r/ is pronounced in the above contexts. Moreover, speakers of American English distinguish between the pronunciation of "heart" and "hot" by producing /r/ in the former word but not in the latter. Speakers of British English, in contrast, distinguish between the two words by vowel quality.

(d) /t/, /d/

In American English /t/ and /d/ change into a flap /D/ when they occur after a stressed vowel as in "latter" and "ladder".

(e) /l/

English /l/ has two allophones: clear and dark. The former occurs before vowels, as in **leaf**, while the latter, which is velarised, occurs at the end of a word or before a consonant as in **feel** and **field**. Clear /l/ is produced with the front of the tongue raised, while dark /l/ is produced with the back of the tongue raised. Devoiced /l/ is the third allophone. It occurs when preceded by /p/ or /k/ in a stressed syllable as in **play**, **climb**.

2.2.2 Arabic Consonants

Arabic has twenty-eight consonants. Table 2 presents these consonants in terms of place and manner of articulation.

Table 2: Arabic Consonants

	L	LD	I	D	A	P	V	U	Ph	G
Plosives	b			t, ʈ d, ɖ			k	q		ʔ
Affricates						j				
Fricatives		f	θ ð	s, ʃ		ʃ	x g		ħ ʕ	h
Liquids										
Trill					r					
Lateral					l					
Nasal	m				n					
Glides	w					y				

Key: L: labial, LD: labiodental, I: Interdental, D: Dental, A: Alveolar, P: Palatal, V: Velar, U: Uvular, Ph: Pharyngeal, G: Glottal

Among the features specific to the pronunciation of Arabic consonants are:

emphatic vs. non-emphatic sounds, gemination, glottal stop, back consonants,
and /r/.

(a) Emphatic vs. non-emphatic consonants

Arabic has four pairs of consonants that are distinguished by tafkhiim تفخيم 'emphasis'. They are: /t, ʈ/, /d, ɖ/, /s, ʃ/, /ð, ð/.

/t/ as in taaba تاب 'he repented' /ʈ/ as in ʈaaba طاب 'he recovered'

/d/ as in dalla دلّ 'he directed' /ɖ/ as in ɖalla ضلّ 'he went astray'

/s/ as in sayf سيف 'sword' /ʃ/ as in ʃayf صيف 'summer'

/ð/ as in ðalla ذلّ 'he became despised' /ð/ as in ðalla ظلّ 'he remained'

(Emphasis is marked by a dot underneath the consonant.)

The production of emphatic consonants is characterized by contraction of the muscles of the pharynx, raising of the back part of the tongue towards the palate and protrusion of the lips. Besides these four pairs, emphatic /l/ may occur in a very restricted context.

Emphatic /l/ occurs only in the divine name al-laah الله. The following pair of words shows the emphatic vs non-emphatic /l/:

* wallaahu والله 'and God',

* wallaahu ولاه 'he appointed him governor'

In connected speech, the pronunciation of emphatic /l/ is conditioned by the type of vowel that precedes it. For example, emphatic /l/ occurs when preceded by /u/ and /a/, whereas non-emphatic /l/ occurs after /i/. The following examples illustrate these conditions.

* laa ʔilaaha ʔillaa llaah لا إله إلا الله

‘There is no deity but God’.

* raḥmatu llaahi ‘alayh رحمة الله عليه

‘May God bless him.’

* bismi llaah بسم الله

‘In the name of God.’

(b) Gemination

Consonants occur single or doubled (geminated). A sequence of two identical consonants is described as gemination *tashdiid* تشديد 'strengthening'. The geminate consonants are long. This consonantal length is phonemic in Arabic as shown in the following minimal pair.

* kataba كَتَبَ 'he wrote',

• kattaba كَتَّبَ 'he made (someone) write’

It should be noted that geminate consonants may occur medially and finally. For example:

* madda مَدَّ he stretched.

* sadd سَدَّ a dam

(c) The Glottal Stop al-hamza الهمزة

The Arabic phonemic glottal stop occurs in initial, medial and final positions in a word. For example:

* ʔabb أب 'father',

* saʔala سَأَلَ he asked

* samaaʔ سماء 'sky' suʔaal سُؤْال 'question' miʔa-a مِئَة 'a hundred’

It also occurs as a geminate, as in

* taraʔʔasa تَرَأَسَ 'he headed'

We should note that although the hamza *همزة* is a fully functioning phoneme, it is not an orthographically independent letter.

(d) Back Consonants

Arabic has six back consonants, four fricatives and two stops. They are:

* Velars: /x, g/

* Pharyngeals: /ħ, ʕ/

* Glottals: /h, ʔ/

Since the glottal stop has been described earlier, we will only describe here the other five guttural consonants.

(i) Velar fricatives /x/ and /g/

Velar consonants are articulated with the back of the tongue almost touching the soft palate (velum). The following minimal pairs represent the voiceless and voiced velar fricative.

/x/ xadd خذ ‘cheek’ /g/ gad غد ‘tomorrow’

xaalii خالي ‘my uncle’ gaalii غالي ‘expensive’

(ii) Pharyngeal Fricatives /ħ/ and /ʕ/

Pharyngeal articulation occurs in the pharynx. In the production of these pharyngeal sounds, the muscles in the pharynx are tensed up. For the voiceless /ħ/, this produces a very strong fricative. Voiced /ʕ/ is not accompanied by much friction. The following minimal pairs represent the voiceless and voiced pharyngeal.

/ħ/ ħaddada حدّد ‘he specified’ /ʕ/ ʕaddada عدد ‘he enumerated’

/ħ/ baaha باح ‘he revealed’ /ʕ/ baʕa باع ‘he sold’

(iii) Glottal Fricative /h/

Glottal articulation occurs in the larynx. The voiceless glottal fricative /h/ is always pronounced, whether it occurs in initial, medial or final position, e.g.,

* word-initial: huwa هو ‘he’, hunaa هنا ‘here’

* word-medial: qahwa قهوة ‘coffee’, qahr قهر ‘oppression’

* word-final: miyaah مياه ‘water’, safiih سفیه ‘silly’

(e) /r/

The Arabic /r/ sound is produced by tapping the tip of the tongue against the alveolar. It is always pronounced, i.e., initially, medially and finally.

* word-initial: raʔs رأس ‘head’, ramaa رمى ‘he threw’

* word-medial: bard برد ‘cold’, ʔard أرض ‘earth’

* word-final: naar نار ‘fire’, mahr مهر ‘dowry’

This consonant is trilled when it is geminated; e.g., qarrara قرر . 'he decided'

CONTRAST

Having described the inventory of consonants in English and Arabic, we will now highlight the contrasts that hold between the two inventories.

First, the following English consonants have no counterparts in Arabic: /p, v, g, ʒ, dʒ,/. Although /p/ does not occur in Classical Arabic, /b/ is devoiced before a voiceless consonant, as in:

- * ḥabs ḥaps حبس 'prison'
- * kabt kapt كبت 'suppression'

Similarly, /v/ does not occur in CA, but it occurs in the word **hivz** حفظ 'learning by heart' (instead of hifz).

Second, the following Arabic consonants have no counterparts in English:

/t, d, ð, ʂ, x, g, q, h/.

Third, the English flap /r/ is only pronounced word-initially, e.g., **ride**. In British English, it is silent in medial and final positions. e.g., farm /fa:m/ and far /fa:/. In contrast, the Arabic trill /r/ is pronounced in all contexts.

Fourth, gemination is phonemic in Arabic but not in English.

2.3 VOWELS AND DIPHTHONGS

Consonants are described in terms of manner and place of articulation, whereas vowels are described in terms of the position of the tongue and the shape of the lips. Three parameters are important for the description of vowels: vertical tongue position (high, mid and low), horizontal tongue position (front, central and back) and lip shape (spread, neutral and rounded). A diphthong is a sequence of vowel plus glide within the same syllable. In other words, its production involves a transition from a vowel to a glide.

2.3.1 English Vowels and Diphthongs

English has twelve vowel phonemes, shown in Table 3.

Table 3: English Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
High	I: (beat) I (bit)		u: (boot) U (put)
Mid	e (bet) ɜ: (bird)	ə (alone) ʌ (but)	ɒ (hot) ɔ: (bought)
Low	æ (pat)		a: (father)

The schwa /ə/ occurs in unstressed syllables and is the most frequently used vowel. It usually substitutes for any unstressed vowel.

Long vowels occur in English, but vocalic length is not phonemic. For example, the vowel in the word **bead** is relatively longer than the one in the word **beat**. This feature of relative length is determined by the voicing of the following consonant. In general, a vowel is longer when it is followed by a voiced consonant than by a voiceless one. However, relative length is not the feature that distinguishes these two words. They are distinguished by the different final consonants /d/ and /t/.

Besides the lengthening of vowels before voiced consonants, vowels are nasalized before nasal consonants, as in **seen**, **soon** and **sing**.

Besides the twelve vowels, English has eight diphthongs. They are:

/aɪ/ as in right /raɪt/

/ɔɪ/ as in boy /bɔɪ/

/eɪ/ as in play /pleɪ/

/əʊ/ as in go /gəʊ/

/aʊ/ as in now /naʊ/

/eə/ as in care /keə/

/ɪə/ as in here /hɪə/

/ʊə/ as in sure /ʃʊə/

2.3.2 Arabic Vowels and Diphthongs

(a) Phonemes

Arabic has a triangular vowel system that consists of three pairs of short and long vowel phonemes as shown in Table 4. (Vowel length is indicated by writing the vowel twice.)

Table 4: Arabic Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
High	ii i		uu u
Low		aa a	

Vocalic length in Arabic is phonemic, that is, pairs of words may be semantically distinguished by vocalic length. The following minimal pairs show the contrast between short and long vowels.

/i/ vs. /ii/: sin سن 'tooth' and siin سين 'the letters'

/a/ vs. /aa/: kataba كتب 'he wrote' and kaataba كاتب 'he corresponded with'

/u/ vs. /uu/: ʕud عُد 'come back' and ʕuud عود 'lute'

NOTE: A distinguishing feature of Arabic vowels is madd مَدّ 'length', which is similar to consonantal length, i.e., gemination. The long vowels are referred to as ḥuruufu l-madd حروف المد 'the letters of prolongation'. They are al-'alif الـالف 'the /aa/', al-waaw واو 'the /uu/', and al-yaa' الي 'the /ii/'. They are twice the length of the short counterparts.

Arabic also has two diphthongs. They are:

/aw/ أو as in yawm يوم 'day' and 'aw أو 'or'

/ay/ أي as in dayn دين 'debt' and 'ayy أي 'which'

The Arabic vowels never occur initially. If they do, they are preceded by the glottal stop 'hamza هَمْزَة ?.

Examples: ?anaa أنا 'I', ?amal أمل 'hope', ?insaana إنسان 'a human being'

CONTRAST

The preceding presentation of English and Arabic vowel systems reveals the following differences. First, the English vowel system is more elaborated than the Arabic vowel system. That is, English has more variation in phonemic vowel quality than Arabic does. Therefore, it is predicted that Arab learners of English will experience some difficulty in producing some of the English vowels, especially the mid vowels, which are non-existent in Arabic.

Second, the following English vowels have no counterparts in Arabic /e, ə, ɔ:, ʌ, ɜ:, D, əʊ/. Arab learners of English, therefore, are expected to make erroneous substitutions. For example, they will tend to produce **sit** and **set** as /sit/, and **coat** and **caught** as /kɔ:t/.

Third, unlike Arabic vowels, English ones are lengthened before voiced consonants and nasalised before nasal consonants.

Fourth, the English schwa /ə/ in connected speech commonly replaces an unstressed vowel. For example, the vowels in function words are usually unstressed and are reduced to a schwa, such as **of** əv/ in 'the name of the game' and **to** /tə/ in 'to study'. Arabic vowels are never shirred over in this way; they maintain their characteristic quality. It is, therefore, predicted that

Arab learners of English will tend to produce the original vowel in these function words rather than the schwa.

Fifth, English orthography sometimes does not reflect the correct pronunciation of the vowels. For example, the double -oo- in the words foot and fool is pronounced differently, that is, it is pronounced open and short in the first but close and long in the second. This non-correspondence or disparity between spelling and pronunciation does not occur in Arabic except in the assimilated /l/ sound of the article, as in **ash-shams** الشمس 'the sun'. Therefore, it is predicted that Arab learners of English will tend to produce a long vowel whenever they come across a word that has a sequence of two identical vowels, i.e., /ee/ and /oo/.

Thank you very much!

See you next week

