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CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Yemeni Arabic (YA)

6.1.1. Vowels and Consonants

1. YA short vowels are /a, i/ and /u/.

2. These short vowels contrast phonemically with their longer counterparts. Commonly used allophones of the YA vowels are [e], [e:], [o], [ʌ], [ə].

3. With reference to the structure of monomorphemic words, there are no restrictions on vowel occurrences at various places except initially.

4. No diphthong exists in YA. This explains why Yemeni learners have difficulties in the pronunciation of the English diphthongs.

5. The phonemically long vowels are almost twice as long as the corresponding short vowels.

6. There is evidence that open front vowels are longer than close front vowels, and there is also evidence that close back vowels are longer than close front vowels. a > u > i

7. Vowels in monosyllabic words are longer than those in words of more than one syllable.

8. The more segments there are in a syllable, the less is the duration of the vowel in them.

9. The YA has the following consonant phonemes.
/b t ð d k g q ? m n l f θ ð f s s t s z ñ h ñ h r j w/
10. /t d n/ are lamino–denti–alveolar in YA while they are apico–alveolar in English.

11. As for pharyngealised /tʰ/ and /sʰ/, palatograms show a wipe in the alveolar area as a result of retraction of the place of articulation due to pharyngealisation.

12. No cluster of two consonants starts a word in YA.

13. A maximum of two consonants can occur word finally in YA.

14. Four–element consonant clusters never occur word finally in Arabic, but they occur in English.

15. All the three–element clusters occurring word finally in English present a problem for Arabic learners. This is solved by the process of vowel epenthesis /i/ between the last two consonants creating a syllable division before the first element of the cluster.

16. Long vowels can be followed by a maximum of two consonants geminated in a word like /tʰa:mmah/.

17. No sequence of two vowels occur.

18. All consonants, with no exception, can occur initially, medially, finally or before or after any vowel.

19. No cluster of three consonants occurs word–finally or word medially.

20. No cluster of two consonants occurs word initially.

21. The combinations that do not occur in Arabic and occur in English and therefore constitute a problem are /C–CCC/, CCC–C/, CC–CC/ (where - indicates word boundary).
6.1.2. YA Word Structure:

1. YA syllable structure is C1 V C0–2. The following combinations exist in YA syllable structure:
   1) CV
   2) CVC
   3) CV:
   4) CV:C
   5) CVCC or CVCc
   The first four patterns occur initially, medially and finally. The fifth pattern CVCC occurs finally, medially geminated or in isolation.

2. Every syllable starts with a consonant.

3. Intervocalic single consonant belongs to the following vowel.

4. With an intervocalic consonant cluster of two, the first consonant is assigned to the first syllable while the second is assigned to the second syllable.

5. Pharyngeal fricatives do not cluster among themselves.

6. The following sounds can be grouped as homorganic: [θ,δ], and [ð].

6.1.3. Word Accent

1. Accent in YA functions at the phonetic level. Stress is predictable.

2. The syllable containing a long vowel is generally accented. If there is no heavy weight, the first syllable is primarily accented.

3. When two long vowels co–exist in one word the last long syllable is accented.

4. If there is no long vowel, the first syllable is generally accented.
6.1.4. Rhythm

1. YA has a stress-timed rhythm. However, it differs from English in the comparative force of pronunciation of stressed and unstressed syllables. In English, there is a great difference in force: unstressed syllables can be pronounced very weakly and may almost disappear; stressed syllables can be very explicitly pronounced. In Arabic, the difference in the force of pronunciation of stressed and unstressed syllables is not nearly so extreme: an unstressed syllable can have a full vowel and be pronounced fairly clearly. So the difference in rhythmic patterns of Arabic and English is a difference in degree, not in kind.

6.1.5. Intonation

1. In the YA structure, generally the nuclear word is at the end of the sentence.
2. A falling tone is used in positive statements, negative statements, normal Wh-questions, commands, exclamations, warnings, and re-assurances.
3. The rising tone is used in question tags only or to indicate friendliness in wh-questions, or extra politeness in requests.
4. Fall rise is used in Yes/No Questions.
5. Adverbs in YA generally receives the tonic accent whether it appears initially, medially or finally in the sentence.
6.1.6. Gemination

1. Gemination takes place in YA within morpheme boundaries, monomorphemic words, syllable boundaries and across word boundaries.
2. Gemination can take place word finally only in a monosyllabic word.
3. In YA, gemination takes place in free variation whether preceded by short or long vowels or followed by short or long vowels.
4. The geminated consonant in YA is generally more than double in duration compared to the non-geminated consonant.
5. The voiceless sequences prove to be longer than their voiced counterparts.
6. The geminated consonants have an influence on the preceding and the following vowels where the adjacent vowels are shorter in the case of geminated consonants.

6.1.7. Emphasis

1. Emphasis is realised without disturbing the phonological structure of the word.
2. Emphasis in YA can be achieved at by reduplication or by addition of some particular word(s).
3. Emphasis is realised within the word proper, extra gemination of a consonant and over prolongation of a vowel.
4. This phenomenon is carried over into English where double consonant in orthography (and sometimes single consonant) is doubled in the Yemeni spoken English.
5. Emphasis can also be realised in YA by geminating a consonant word initially and word finally.

6.1.8. Assimilation

1. The most attested sort of change in assimilation in YA is in the place of articulation.
2. Nasal /n/ is the highest amenable sound to assimilate.
3. Changes as to voicing are not very much significant in YA.
4. Eleven voiced sounds are amenable to completely assimilate.
5. Devoicing occurs in YA because of the influence of progressive assimilation.
6.2. Yemeni English (YE)

The chart below summarizes the degree of conformity to RP with regard to segmental and suprasegmental features as produced by the speakers.

![Chart showing degree of conformity to RP in Segmental and Suprasegmental Features]

It shows that the speakers are in conformity with RP by 91.5% with regard to consonants, 47.5% concerning vowels, 41% concerning stress patterns and 27.2% in intonation. That is to say that the degree of conformity to RP is high at the segmental level and low at the suprasegmental level. As far as the segmental level is concerned,
the speakers have a higher degree of conformity to RP in respect of consonants rather than vowels. Similarly, at the suprasegmental level, the degree of conformity to RP in stress patterns is higher than in intonation patterns.

6.2.1. Vowels and Consonants

1. YE has a 14-vowel system. The following are the vowels of YE:
   /i, i:, a, a:, o, o:, o, u, u:, e:, ai, au, ei/.  

2. The following RP vowel phonemes are not found in YE: /e, æ, æ:, ə, əu, ei, iə, eə, uə/. ( /ə/ is not used initially in YE),

3. The speakers pronounce /ai, au/ as [a:i] and [a:u] respectively. They also tend to add [r] in [i:r], [e:r] and [u:r] as an equivalent to the RP /iə, eə, uə/ respectively.

The majority of the speakers substituted segments as given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substitution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/i/ for the RP /e/</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/a:/ for the RP /æ/.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/a:/ for the RP /a:/</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/o/ for the RP /ə/</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/u:/ for the RP /u/</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/e:/ for the RP /ə:/ (generally followed by /r/)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/a/ for the RP /ə/</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ə:/ for the RP /əu/</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/e:/ for the RP /eI/</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. The number of divergence was almost nil in the case of RP /iː/, /ɪː/, /uː/, /aʊ/, /aɪ/; and the divergence was 65% in the case of /ɔː/, /ʌ/ and /ɒ/.

5. YE consonant phonemes are /p, b, t, d, k, g, tʃ, dʒ, f, v, θ, ð, s, z, s, 3, h, m, n, ɳ, l, r, w, j/.

6. The speakers have problems with /ʒ, tʃ, p/ and /v/. /ŋ/ is generally followed by /g/ in final position. Other consonants were pronounced properly, with some phonetic differences from RP consonants.

7. /p,t,k/ are generally unaspirated. /r/ is generally pronounced wherever it is reflected in spelling. Double consonants in spelling are generally pronounced with gemination.

8. All the divergences were attributable to the pull of the mother tongue, the lack of training, the orthography and false analogy.

6.2.2. Word Accent and rhythm

1. Whenever the speakers encounter a heavy syllable, they tend to stress it; (heavy syllables include long vowels and diphthongs).

2. Influenced by gemination in YA the speakers tend to geminate the English words that have double consonants in spelling and thus stress the syllable which includes the gemination.
3. With regard to contrastive stress, the speakers get the verb more correctly than the noun, (ex: export).

4. Generally, most of the errors are attributable to the pull of the mother tongue, inappropriate teaching and the orthography.

5. The speakers tend to accent the suffix 'fy' of words such as certify and identify, where the degree of conformity to RP is below 20%. Other divergences observed by most of the speakers are the words ending with 'ic', as in photographic, words ending with 'ette' as in cigarette, and words ending with 'ate' as in participate. The degree of conformity to RP in 'ic', 'ette' and 'ate' patterns are 21%, 10% and 22% respectively.

6. There is no consistency in the speakers' patterns of stress.

7. Yemeni speakers have some problems in the area of rhythm, particularly unnecessary pauses, inappropriate linking.

8. Structural words are generally not weakened (ex: I've ⇒ I have, I'm ⇒ I am).

6.2.3. Intonation

1. There is a good deal of similarity between RP and YE in the location of the tonic accent. The type of the fall used by the Yemeni speakers is, however, different from that of the RP in the sense that low fall is used most of the time in YE.

2. With regard to tonality, the majority of speakers were able to divide tone groups correctly. However, some of the speakers, when encountered long sentences, tended to divide them incorrectly in two tone groups, while others made unnecessary stops.
6.3. Pedagogical Implications:

1. The following vowel phonemes are difficult to be accommodated by the Yemeni speakers. Special care is to be taken when teaching them.

   /æ/ Learners have to be careful not to confuse /æ/ with /a/, or /a:/.  

   /o/ Yemeni speakers always substitute /u/ and /o/ for /o/. Thus special effort has to be made to pronounce /o/ correctly.

   /ɔ:/ The learners have to be taught to produce it.

   /iə/ A clear distinction has to be drawn between /iə/ and the long vowel /iː/.  

   /eə/ Care should be taken not to confuse /eə/ with the long vowel /eː/.  

   /uə/ This vowel is confused with the long vowel /uː/ and sometimes with the insertion of [r]. Thus distinction between the diphthong and the long vowel has to be clear in the heads of the learners. The consonants /p, ʒ, ŋ, tʃ/ are difficult for Yemeni speakers, so students have to be encouraged to pronounce them correctly. /p, t, k/ are not aspirated syllable initially in Yemeni English.

   As Yemenis have no syllabic consonants like English, the Yemeni speakers normally may replace the English syllabic /l, m, n/ by their non-syllabic /l, m, n/ preceded by a vowel. Thus special care is to be taken when teaching syllabic consonants.

   Special care should be taken when teaching two and more initial and final clusters of English.

2. When introducing words to the learners for the first time, word accent should be taught side by side from the outset. Great effort should be made to change the
students' attitudes towards word accent. In other words, the students should be
aware to the fact that they are not free to place the accent on any syllable they
want.

3. Learners should be taught to link words logically in their spoken language, to
divide tone groups properly and to avoid unnecessary pause while speaking.

4. Learners should be taught to speak in chunk rather than in scattered words.
They should also be taught to divide the sentence correctly into tone groups.
Special care should be given to rising tone, rise fall and fall rise.

5. With regard to the diphthongs /au/, /ei/, speakers tend to replace the
monophthongs /o:/ and /e:/ respectively. However, this replacement can be
found in some English varieties. Therefore this process might not lead to
misunderstanding as long as the length of the vowels is taken care of.

6.4. Epilogue

It is recommended that all the findings of this thesis be incorporated by the
authorities in Yemen into the teaching materials for better outputs in the intermediate,
secondary and tertiary level. The findings are useful for the curriculum planners,
syllabus designers, material producers as well as for the English language teachers.

This study restricts itself to the investigation of the phonological similarities and
differences of English and Yemeni Arabic. It gives a detailed description of the
potential problems that the Yemeni learners face when learning spoken English. Based
on the findings of the current study, a design of a remedial spoken English course for
the Yemeni learners is recommended. The course should cover the segmental and
suprasegmental features and mainly emphasise the difficulties that the Yemeni learners encounter as shown in this study.

Although the description of the Yemeni Arabic in this thesis has been useful in determining the similarities and differences between the two languages, the researcher feels that the areas of rhythm and intonation could be further explored. A thorough explanation of the functional and attitudinal meanings of intonation in Arabic is recommended. Equally important, there is a scope for further explorations in the area of rhythm as it is one of the major areas of difficulty for the foreign language learner.

In order to make YE intelligible internationally, care has to be taken to acquire RP sounds (such as /d/ and /s:/). Word accent, the use of the weak forms, and the intricacies of English tones also have to be focussed.

Other features such as monophthongization of RP /au/ and /eI/ are not a matter of priority as long as the length of the vowels are kept.

It is but natural that YE will bear the flavour of Arabic but if the important features as highlighted in this chapter are taken care of, YE can be intelligible, acceptable and also effective internationally.

The question whether the educationists in Yemen should aim at national intelligibility or international intelligibility is a matter of standards. It is always advisable to aim at a higher level even if one cannot hit a target so high. Therefore the suggestions made in this thesis will help, it is hoped, in raising the level of teaching of English, particularly spoken English in Yemen.