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THE REALIZATION OF STRESSING DISYLLABIC NOUN/VERB PAIR WORDS PRONOUNCED BY ENGLISH TEACHERS IN CIANJUR

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ABSTRACT
This study examines how English teachers in Cianjur pronounce disyllabic noun/verb pairs, as appropriate stress positions vary across word classes in sentences. Therefore, this study aims to uncover variation in the stress patterns of n/v pairs in sentences. The main data were obtained from the English teachers' pronunciation when they had to pronounce sentences containing disyllabic n/v pairs. The sentences are in pairs, which means that in the first sentence the word functions as a verb, and in the second sentence it functions as a noun. The data were analyzed using Praat to help the writer to identify the stress position of disyllabic n/v-pair words that the participants pronounced. This study revealed that participants tend to stress the appropriate disyllabic noun/verb pairs mostly in verb forms, with most participants stressing the n/v pair in the second syllable. The participants also frequently stress the n/v pair words in the same position, although in different word-class categories. In conclusion, there are variations in how the English teacher in Cianjur stresses disyllabic noun-verb pairs.

Keyword: Disyllabic noun-verb pair word, stress.

1. Introduction

In doing communication in English as Non Native Speakers (NNS), the speaker needs to consider several aspects so that the hearer can understand the speaker's intended meaning. The speaker needs to focus not only on appropriate pronunciation but also has to consider other aspects, such as suprasegmental features, including length, pitch, stress, and intonation.

There are many studies on phonological language acquisition, especially on suprasegmental features, such as Altmann (2006), Khamkien (2010), Lepage et al. (2014), Toro-Soto et al. (2007), Waylan et al. (2006), and Weda (2012). Avery and Ehrlich (1987) stated that language learners have various ways of speaking a second or foreign language, and that these can be quite similar to or very different from those of native speakers (as cited in Khamkien, 2010). In addition, Chrabaszcza et al. (2017) described, "Perception of prosodic contrasts (e.g., word stress, tones) is affected by L1 phonology in at least two different ways: the stress pattern in a word (or the type of tone in tonal languages) and the acoustic cues used to realize prosodic contrasts". Therefore, in this study, the writer is going to examine the participants' ability to stress N/V pair words. The participants in this study are NNS of English who serve as English teachers in Cianjur. The writer is going to examine their ability to stress N/V pair words by asking them to read or to pronounce some pairs

of sentences that contain N/V pair words. This study aims to determine whether participants can stress N/V pair words appropriately, especially when they are not Native Speakers (NSs) of English, even though they have learned English for quite a long time.

Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams (2014) stated that stress is a contrastive feature in English, for example, in the word 'subject', when it functions as a noun, the stress position is in the first syllable (súbject); meanwhile, when it functions as a verb, the stress position is in the second syllable (subjéct). So the teachers have to know how to stress the appropriate words.

In contrast, the participants in this study have studied English at a formal institution for quite a long time. Still, they do not frequently interact with English Native Speakers, so this may influence their pronunciation ability; for example, they may not pronounce words or sentences as well as Native Speakers of English.

Based on the background of the study above, the writer formulates the following research questions.

1. Do the participants of this study stress the disyllabic N/V pair words appropriately?
2. If not, how are the variations of stressing N/V pair words pronounced by the English teachers in Cianjur?

Fromkin et.al. (2014) stated that in many languages, one or more syllables in every word need to be stressed. The stressed syllable is marked with an acute accent (ˊ) where it gets stronger stress than the unstressed syllables, for example:

pérvert (noun) as in "My neighbor is a pervert."

pervért (verb) as in "Don't pervert the idea."

As described by the experts, dissyllabic words consist of a stressed and an unstressed syllable. Rouch (2009) stated that the stressed syllable is prominent. Rouch (2009) also described how stress can be viewed from two points of view (production and perception). The production of stress depends on the use of muscular energy; to pronounce a stressed syllable, the speaker uses more muscular energy than when pronouncing an unstressed syllable. On the other hand, from the perceptual point of view, the main characteristic of a stressed syllable is prominence. Four different factors make the stressed syllable become prominent, such as stressed syllables are louder than unstressed syllables, the length of the syllable, and every voiced syllable is said on some pitch (for example, if all of the syllables are pronounced with low pitch except one syllable (which is louder), the high-pitched syllable can be heard as stressed. Low-pitched syllables are unstressed; lastly, a syllable can be prominent if it has a vowel of different quality from the neighboring vowels. In addition, Ladefoged (2001) explained that acoustic frequency, intensity, and/or duration can be used to determine the suprasegmental features, especially stress. Stressed syllables are usually

louder and longer than the unstressed syllables (as cited in Kang, 2008)

For NNS, it must be difficult to determine which syllable should be stressed, especially in English the position of stress in words (disyllabic and more) is not as simple as other languages, as described by Rouch (2009) that many writers have said English word stress is so difficult to predict, so that it is best to treat stress placement as a property of the individual word, to be learned when the word itself is learned. Therefore, Rouch (2009) also said that we need to consider the following information to determine the stress position:

1. It is simple or complex words.
2. The grammatical categories
3. The total number of syllables in a word
4. The phonological structure of the syllable

As stated by Rouch (2009), the grammatical categories can influence the position of the stressed syllable in a word. Weda (2012) described how a similar two-syllable word with different class categories has different stressed syllable positions, for example, in noun/verb pairs. In dissyllabic noun-verb pair words, the stress position of the verb is at the second syllable; meanwhile, the stress position of the noun is at the first syllable. For example:

VERB	NOUN
im'port	'import
pro'test	'protest
sub'ject	'subject
add'ress	'address
pre'sent	'present
de'sert	'desert
ab'sent	'absent
per'mit	'permit

Table 1. Dissyllabic noun-verb pair words

This study employs the qualitative method. The data were obtained from seven English teachers in Cianjur. The writer asks the participants to read five pairs of sentences that contain n/v words.The participants in this study are seven NNS of English who serve as English teachers in Cianjur. The writer will ask the participants to pronounce five pairs of sentences which contain N/V pair words, such as:

NO	WORDS	N	V
1	**Subject**	Let's change the **subject**.	He'll **subject** us to criticism.
2	**Access**	She could no longer **access** her bank account.	The guests could not gain **access** to the gated community.
3	**Protest**	They **protest** the government's regulation	Sarah continued her **protest** until they admonished her
4	**Visit**	He will **visit** his uncle	He enjoys his **visit**

5	**Increase**	I want to **increase** my vocabulary	Crime is on the **increase**

Table 2. List of sentences read by the participants

To analyze the data, the writer utilized Praat. Praat is software used to help many researchers to analyze speech in phonetics. In this study, the writer used Praat as a tool to help the writer to find the stress position of n/v words in sentences.

2. Results

In this study, seven respondents are accustomed to using English because they have learned it in formal institutions. On the contrary, they are not native English speakers, so it is quite possible that they cannot pronounce English as well or as perfectly as native English speakers, especially in very detailed aspects such as suprasegmental features, specifically word stress. In English, there are different stress positions for similar words, which can have different word-class categories in a sentence. For example, the word 'subject' can be a noun in the sentence "Let's change the subject", but it can be a verb in the sentence "He'll subject us to criticism". When it has a function as a noun, the stress position is in the first syllable; meanwhile, when it has a function as a verb, the stress position is in the second syllable, but this rule is only applicable to dissyllabic (two-syllable) n/v pair words. If the word contains more than two syllables, the rule is different. The following is the assessment of participants' stress positions when pronouncing n/v word pairs. 'Y' is a sign that informs that the respondents of this study have pronounced the noun/verb pair words appropriately based on the theory.

RESP	Subject(N)	Subject (V)	Access (V)	Access (N)	Protest (V)	Protest (N)	Visit (V)	Visit (N)	Increase (V)	Increase (N)
RESP. 1	**Y**	**Y**	**Y**		**Y**		**Y**			**Y**
RESP. 2	**Y**		**Y**		**Y**		**Y**	**Y**	**Y**	**Y**
RESP. 3		**Y**	**Y**		**Y**	**Y**	**Y**		**Y**	
RESP. 4			**Y**	**Y**		**Y**				**Y**
RESP. 5	**Y**		**Y**		**Y**		**Y**		**Y**	
RESP. 6	**Y**	**Y**		**Y**	**Y**		**Y**		**Y**	
RESP. 7	**Y**		**Y**	**Y**	**Y**	**Y**	**Y**	**Y**	**Y**	

Table 3. The Assessment of Participants' Stress Positions

Based on the table above, the participants tend to stress the appropriate syllable mostly in verb parts. As we can see, they mostly place stress (in dissyllabic pairs) on the second syllable, as in access (v), visit (v), and increase (v), with six participants who appropriately stressed those words. In contrast, there is a different data result from the n/v pair word 'subject'. Most of the participants stress the word 'subject' appropriately when it functions as a noun, which means that most of the participants tend to stress the word 'subject' in the first syllable. Therefore, it means that there is an exception in the word 'subject', where most of the participants appropriately stress the word 'subject' as a noun rather than as a verb.

From the data above, we can also see that the participants' stress placement results vary, which means that no participant consistently uses the appropriate stress placement in all n/v pairs. Based on the table, some participants are only able to stress a pair of words appropriately, while the seventh participant can stress three pairs of words appropriately. For additional information, the following sound visualizations were created using Praat.

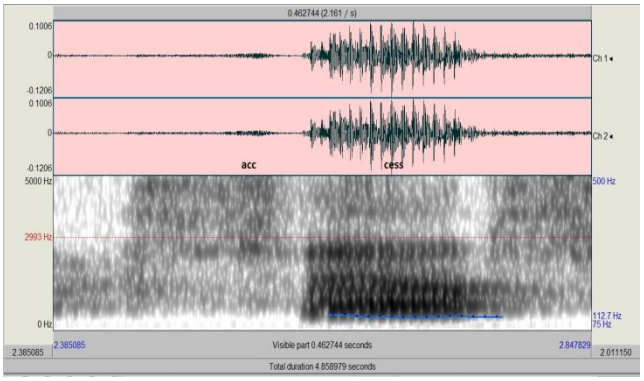

Figure 1. Praat visualisation for the word 'access' (v)

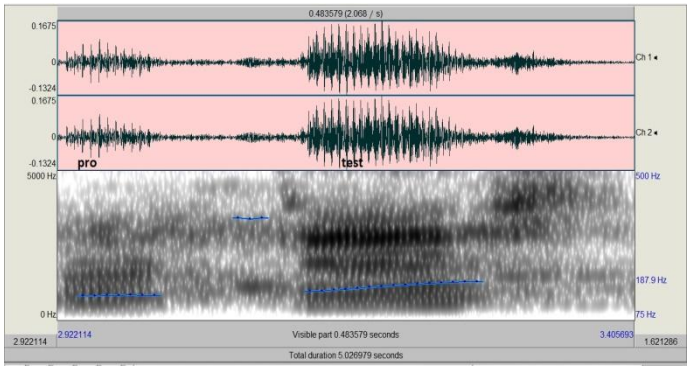

Figure 2. Praat visualisation for the word 'protest' (v)

Both of the pictures are the visualizations of the sounds for the words 'access' in the sentence "She could no longer access her bank account" and the word 'protest' in the sentence "They protest the regulation", so that we can conclude that the words 'access' and 'protest' above are verbs. As we can see, the second syllable is the stressed syllable because they have higher pitch than the first syllable.

Another data point from the table showed that most participants use the 'inappropriate' (or different from the theory) stress placement in the word 'visit', which functions as a noun in the sentence. There are only two participants who appropriately stress the word 'visit' (n) in the first syllable. On the other hand, there is an interesting

result from the n/v pair word 'visit' which shows that most participants do appropriate stress in the word 'visit' which functions as verb, so that it is one of the proofs that most of the participants do the stress placement of the n/v pair words in the same position which is in the second syllable for the n/v pair word 'visit'. The same thing also occurs in the data n/v pair words 'access' and 'protest'. The following are visualizations of the sounds of the words 'protest' as a verb and a noun from the first participant.

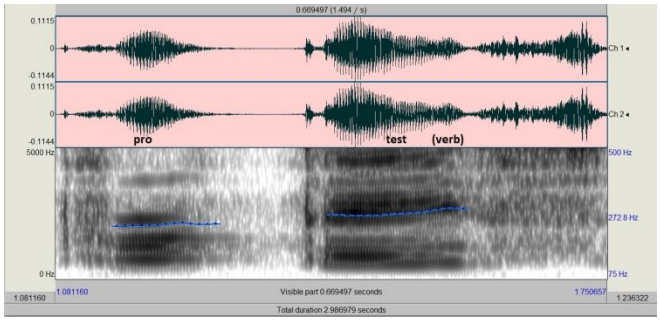

Figure 3 Praat visualisation for the word 'protest' (v)

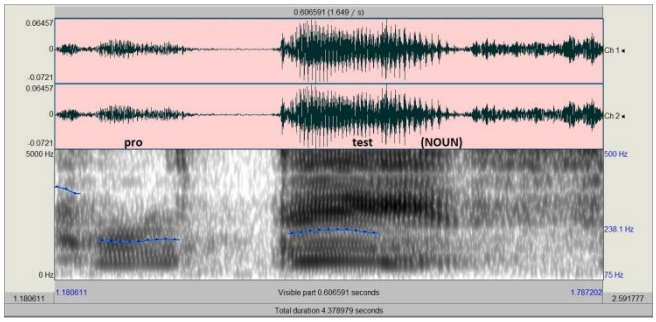

Figure 4. Praat visualization for the word 'protest' (n)

Both pictures are visualizations of the sounds produced by the first participant. The left picture is the visualization of the sound for the word 'protest' in the sentence "They protest the regulation" so that it has a function as a verb, meanwhile, the right picture is the visualization of the word 'protest' in the sentence "Sarah continued her protest until they admonished her" so that it is a noun. As we can see, the second syllable in both pictures has a higher pitch than the first, so this shows that the first participant places the stress on the word 'protest' as a noun and a verb in the same position, which is the second syllable.

Conclusion

The participants in this study tend to stress the appropriate syllable mostly in verb parts, where most participants stress the n/v pair in the second syllable. The participants also frequently stress the n/v pair words in the same position, although in different word classes.

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