

A STRUCTURAL AND INTONATIONAL STUDY OF THEME AND RHEME IN ADVANCED EFL LEARNERS' LANGUAGE REPERTOIRE

Muhammed J. Al-Seady

Dept. of English/College of Education/Univ. of Thi-Qar

1. Introduction

Depending on experience and observation, we saw that advanced EFL learners in Iraq are not able to produce and recognize Ths and Rhs (Appendix 1) correctly from the structural and intonational perspectives. Accordingly, this study aims at achieving:

1. A through investigation of English Th and Rh structures and the Ts accompanying them.
2. An investigation of Ths in English and the Ts accompanying them as realized in the discourse of advanced EFL learners in Iraq in their Rec and Pro Levels.

To testify the practical aims, it is hypothesized that the advanced EFL learners in Iraq face difficulties in the structural and intonational Rec and Pro of Ths and Rhs.

To achieve the aims and testify the hypothesis, the study selects a sample constituting (300) subjects representing third and fourth stages of studying EFL in Iraq, which are the High- est stages of studying EFL in Iraq. The learners are supposed to have mastered the English sentence structures and their Ts after studying grammar (3-4 years) and phonology (2 years). The number of subjects is equal in sex and stage of learning: 150 third (75 male & 75 female) and 150 fourth (75 male & 75 female).

The model of analysis in this study is an amalgamation of syntactic and intonational rules coined from Quirk and Greenbaum (1983), Halliday (1967,1970, and 1985), Morley (1985) and Roach (1988). This is explained in 2.

To testify the hypothesis, two tests are constructed. First, an open questionnaire is first made to a number of jury. Then, two tests to measure the learners' Pro and Rec of the

adequate intonational patterns of Ths and Rhs in English are constructed. The jury modifies two items, adds one and modifies the grading system. The two tests are then tried out to measure their easiness/ difficulty and discrimination power (see Appendix 2 and 3). The sentences in Test 1 are read three times in a tape-recorder and the subjects are supposed to pinpoint the Ths and Rhs, and the tones accompanying them while those in

Test 2 are produced by the subjects themselves to pinpoint the above linguistic areas.

2. The Intonational Patterns of Theme and Rheme in English

Functional sentence perspective describes how information is distributed in sentences. It deals with the distribution of Th and Rh. This is part of the information theory, which is brought about by Shannon (1948) (Lepschy, 1972:146-7). Theme (in full), as a term, is invented by the Prague school of linguistics and it designates that known-to-the listener or obvious part of the sentence (The old information) while Rh represents the actual new information said in the clause (Halliday, 1967). Other terms are sometimes used to refer to the same distinction (topic - comment, background-focus, given-new information), etc. However, Ths are realized, not defined, in the first position (Sub) and Rhs are realized in the second position (Pred) (See: Halliday, 1985: 39; and Fries and Francis, 1990:1).

As such, the Th orients the listener towards the message by making him understand that this part of the sentence (Th) represents the old information and the other one (Rh) represents the new one (Fries, 1994). This would help him understand the whole message. In this regard, sometimes an element in a thematisation process might be moved initially to act as a Th.

There are generally three Sub functions: the psychological, which equals where the speaker has to start speech; the grammatical, which is one of which something is predicted; and the logical one, which refers to the doer of the action (Halliday, 1985).

Anyhow, traditional semantic Sub characterizations identify the Subs with the 'actor' or with 'topic'. The notion of actor correlates with the logical Sub rather than the grammatical (Huddleston, 1977: 26.7; and Richards, Platt and Weber, 1985: 114.5):

1. John ate the apple. (Actor)
2. John was here yesterday, (Grammatical Sub)
3. The apple was eaten by John (the logical Sub)

This implies that the Th/Rh distinction is not always the same as the Sub/Pred contrast:

4. John-sat in the front seat. (Th and Rh) 5. In the front seat John sat. (Th and Rh)

In this regard, the notion of topic, which involves what the sentence is about is "extremely an elusive one because of the difficulty of obtaining reliable data about the topics

of particular sentences... Informants tend to differ very much in their judgments (Ibid). The following example, for instance, is about the US and the presidential elections:

6. In the USA, presidential elections are held every four years.

There are, however, the unmarked or the usual expected occurrences of Ths, the marked ones that have less occurrences or the ones that occur as the non-Sub, and the simple, multiple or minor (Morley, 1985: 71.2; and Halliday, 1985: 40.67):

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. a. the Subs in statements: | 7. Ali goes home. |
| b. The finite auxiliary in yes/no questions: | 8. Does he travel abroad? |
| c. The wh-element in wh-questions: | 9. Where are your from? |
| d. Main V in a command: | 10. Buy a new horse. |
| 2. Adjuncts: | 11. There he is. |
| b. Terms of probability and attitude | 12. Definitely, he will come. |
| 3. a. one N group: | 13. The man goes to the market. |
| b. one A group: | 14. At night, I'll see Ahmed. |
| c. One prepositional group: | 15. In a minute, he will disappear. |
| D. two elements: | 16. The man and his wife went to Basrah. |
| e. More than two elements: | 17. Ahmed, Ali and layla traveled abroad. |
| f. Interrogative V group: | 18. 'Do you like tea?' he asked. |
| g. Imperative V group: | 19. 'Come here' I said. |
| 4. C of an adjunct: | 20. But there ^vas nothing. |
| 5. a. The whole clause; | 21. The man who was there yesterday is my friend. |
| b. Empty 'it' plus 'V to be': | 22. It is he who does the work. |
| c. Conjunction: | 23. However hard he tries, he won't achieve it. |
| 6. a. NC: | 24. Joe his name is. |
| b. Co: | 25. Relaxation you call it. |
| c. DCo: | 26. Really good cocktails they made at the party. |
| d. AdjC: | 27. Rich I may be. |
| e. Pred: | 28. (I promised to do) so do it, I shall. |

The Rh (Pred), in this regard, can be predicted, as it generally slots (not equals) the Pred though, as we stated before, this is not isomorphic (See; Quirk and Greenbaum, 1983:

16). The bracketed elements are optional.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. S vstat Aplace (Atime) | 1. She is in London (now) |
| 2. SVstat Cs (Aplace) (Atime) | 2. She is a student (in London now) |
| 3. SVtransOd (Aplace)(Atime) | 3. John heard the explosion (from his office) (when he was locking the door). |
| 4. S Vintens Adj (Aplace) (Atime) | 4. Universities (gradually) become famous (in Europe). |
| 5. S Vtrans mono Od (Aprocess) (Aplace) (Atime) | 5. They ate the meat (hungrily) (in their hut) (that night). |
| 6. S Vdi trans (Qi) Od (Aprocess) (Aplace) (Atime) (concert). | 6. He offered (her) some chocolates (politely)(outside the hall) (before the |
| 7. S Vcomplex Od Co (Aprocess) (Aplace) (Atime). | 7. They elected him chairman (without agreement) (in Washington) (this morning). |
| 8. S intransitive (Aprocess) (Aplace) (Atime) | 8. The train had arrived (quietly) (at the station) (before we noticed it). |

Some RhS can be the ThS in the above and similar sentences. In these cases, the Subs are the RhS and the Preds are the ThS.

In some languages, there are certain markers of ThS and RhS, but in English there are five ways of signaling this distinction, but there is no formal category doing that. Sometimes a word is placed initially in the sentence though it is not its normal position using passive constructions, pronouns and preforms, and accents (Palmer, 1988:159.61):

29. The man over there I do not like very much.
30. The ball was hit by All.
31. He plays tennis and so did Muna.
32. I go to the 'market' (See Appendix 4)(intonation)

Information, being the first of three terms invented by Halliday (in addition to thematization and identifications) is realized by the phonological means. In the unmarked use, the sentence consists of one information unit realized by one tonic group (Allen and Widdowson, 1975:81):

33. // John saw the play yesterday //

The sentence can also be divided into some information units by means of T group:

34. //John// saw the play yesterday //

Sometimes, the information unit can extend beyond clause boundaries:

35. //John saw the play yesterday but said nothing about it//

Within each message, there is a point of information focus that is given prominence while the rest of the tonic unit is considered to be 'given';

36. //' John gave Linda the tape-recorder//

Similarly, in each T unit, there is an element, which carries the tonic stress and accordingly is going to be the tonic syllable (Ibid: 82; and Roach, 1988:122).

The matization refers to the options available for arranging the elements of a clause into Th and Rh. In this case, it is realized by the sequence of elements in the sentence or clause. ' The third element referred to by Halliday (1967 and 1970) is

identification, which provides for a distribution of information into identified/identifier and so serves to give prominence to different parts of the message (Halliday, 1967: 210). The following sentences as such do not form a text:

37. No one else had known where the entrance to the case was situated.

38. What John discovered was the case.

Everything, after all, depends on the speaker and listener (thematic structure) relating to what the speaker of a sentence assumes is the focus of information in the utterance compared to what he assumes to be background knowledge (Kempson, 1980: 192.3). The speaker might assume that the listener does not, for instance, know that All plays tennis. That is why, the focus (tonic stress) would be on 'plays tennis', etc. The place where the nucleus falls is the focus of information (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1983: 406). In the following, the nucleus is at different parts of the sentences because the focus of information is different (Ibid: 407):

39. Dylan Thomas was 'born in 'Swansea (end Focus)

40. // 'who was born in Swan sea // ? (Focus at sentence)

41. 'He was 'born in Swansea. (Focus at V)

42. I am painting the living room 'blue. (Focus at the Adj)

As such, the intonational patterns of Th and Rh follow the general tendency to achieve certain functions. This is applicable to statements, questions, commands, etc. With statements, the fall T can be used to express finality, the rise to express nonfinality, the level T to express the routine way of saying things, the fall-rise is used to express limited

agreement and the rise-fall to express surprise. The rise T can be used with yes/no questions, the fall with wh-questions, the fall with commands, etc. (See: Roach, 1988: 117.20). Everything depends on the function to be achieved. Nevertheless, the Th (as representing the old information) will either be unstressed or stressed, but never carrying the tonic stress. Meanwhile the Rh represents the new information. In this regard, still, there is a message, which is prominent, and another, which is given.

In questions particularly declarative ones, the common Ts are those which have low rise, high rise, or mid fall. This expresses surprise, disapproval or the confirmation of ideas

(Halliday, 1971; and O'Connor and Arnold, 1961):

43. I like this.

In addition, yes/no questions can be accompanied with the mid-falling and low rise to express disinterest, hostility, and interest of a person in a particular situation and non-finality;

44. Can John come?

45. Shall we 'go home?

3. The Procedures

3.1 The Tests

To achieve the aims and testify the hypothesis of the study, two tests are designed. Test 1 measures the subjects' productive power of Th and Rh while test 2 measures the same aspect from the Rec side. Since such tests are designed to measure the same area, but from two sides (Rec and Pro), they are paralleled in the aspects measured. This would provide more trustworthy results. Each of the twenty items of the both tests measures

either Rec or Pro of Ths and Rhs, and the Ts accompanying them. Item (1) measures N Ths, transV, Do Rh and also the fall T that continues up to the tail end.

Item 2 measures Ths of the Aplace, Rhs of clauses and clauses which might include more than one tonic unit. Item 3 measures the normal pronoun Ths, trans V and Do and the T that starts with the last lexical word in the clause. Item 4 investigates the As of process, ordinary Rhs and

fall Ts. Items 5-20 investigate Aplace, Adj, finite V, wh-word, auxiliary V, vocative, empty it, a whole clause, question tags, vocative as part and of a clause subordinators, pronouns, and particle 'no' Ths. They also investigate Rhs and their various T types.

3.2 Data Discussion and Results

The subjects' responses to the Th Rec prove that the females are more able to recognize more types of Ths whether corresponding to subjects or not. They are only less enabled in items 4,7,11,19 and 20. Their Inc responses are above the average in these items:

Table (1) The Subjects' Theme Recognition

Items	TMSs				FMSs				TFSs				FFSs			
	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%
1	41	55	34	45	45	60	30	40	50	67	25	33	53	71	22	29
2	40	53	35	47	43	57	32	43	44	59	31	41	46	61	29	39
3	39	52	36	48	42	56	33	44	45	60	30	40	50	67	25	33
4	23	31	52	69	29	39	46	61	27	36	48	64	32	43	43	57
5	31	41	44	59	39	52	36	48	42	56	33	44	49	65	26	35
6	30	40	45	60	32	43	36	57	23	31	52	69	40	53	35	47
7	37	49	38	51	33	44	43	56	30	40	45	60	32	43	43	57
8	37	49	38	51	34	45	42	55	51	68	24	32	43	57	32	43
9	34	45	41	55	20	27	41	73	31	41	44	59	40	53	35	47
10	43	57	32	43	51	69	55	31	37	49	38	51	40	53	35	47
11	50	67	25	33	31	41	24	59	19	25	55	75	34	45	41	55
12	51	68	24	32	53	71	44	29	41	55	34	45	13	17	62	83
13	30	40	45	60	23	31	22	69	19	25	56	75	34	45	41	55
14	51	68	24	32	53	71	52	29	53	71	22	29	59	79	16	21
15	32	43	43	57	13	17	22	73	37	49	38	51	40	53	35	47
16	56	75	19	25	51	68	62	32	53	71	22	29	45	60	30	40
17	13	17	62	83	43	57	32	43	67	89	08	11	61	81	14	19
18	19	25	56	75	50	67	25	33	43	57	32	43	42	56	33	44
19	59	79	16	81	70	93	05	07	13	17	62	83	14	19	61	81
20	70	93	05	07	41	75	34	43	17	23	58	77	17	23	58	77

Both sexes alike are competent in the Pro of Ths and Rhs particularly in items 1,4,5, 9,13, 14, 15, 18, 19 and 20 in the male responses and 2, 8, 9, and 14 in the female ones, which are associated with various Th structures. Their CO responses are high compared to their Inc ones in the above items. Compared to the males, the females are less able to underline and interpret the various types of Ths (see Table 2).

Table (2): The Subjects' Theme Production

Items	TMSs				FMSs				TFSs				FFSs			
	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%
1	35	47	40	53	36	38	39	62	37	49	38	51	41	55	34	45
2	40	53	35	47	35	47	40	53	32	43	43	57	38	51	37	49
3	45	60	30	40	32	43	43	57	35	47	40	53	40	53	35	47
4	29	39	46	61	23	31	52	69	40	53	35	47	37	49	38	51
5	32	43	43	57	24	32	51	68	50	67	25	33	55	73	20	27
6	40	53	35	47	39	52	36	48	43	57	32	43	46	61	29	39
7	36	48	39	52	38	51	37	49	39	52	36	48	42	56	33	44
8	34	45	41	55	22	29	53	71	32	43	43	57	39	52	36	48
9	32	43	43	57	35	47	40	53	15	20	60	80	34	45	41	55
10	40	53	35	47	49	65	26	35	43	57	32	43	46	61	29	39
11	42	56	33	44	32	43	43	57	33	44	42	56	23	31	52	69
12	43	57	32	43	42	56	33	44	49	65	26	35	41	55	34	45
13	32	43	43	57	22	29	53	71	37	49	38	51	42	56	33	44
14	15	20	60	80	29	39	46	61	19	25	56	75	31	41	44	59
15	16	21	59	79	32	43	43	57	74	99	01	01	36	48	39	52
16	63	84	12	16	24	32	51	68	53	71	22	29	60	81	40	19
17	65	87	10	13	67	89	08	11	73	97	02	03	57	76	18	24
18	29	39	46	61	38	51	37	49	55	73	20	27	50	67	25	33
19	13	17	62	83	42	56	33	44	39	52	36	48	42	56	33	44
20	20	27	55	73	37	49	38	51	40	53	35	47	53	71	22	29

The subjects' responses to the Th part of the two tests prove to us that the subjects of both sexes suffer from serious problems in Th discrimination particularly in sentences in which there are no correspondences between Subs and Ths, and Preds and Rhs. This proves to us that the females are more able to produce and recognize more CO responses of Ths in the above items. Both tables prove that the subjects (fe/male) are more able to recognize than to produce. Comparing the grades of each of the items can show this clearly. In this regard, the fourth year subjects are less enabled to produce and recognize the various Th types. They are unable in some aspects of the Pro side (4,5,8,13 and 16 male: 11 and 14 female) and some of the Rec items (4,6,7,9,11,13,15 male: 4,7,12,19, 20 female).

TMSs and TFSs are less able to produce and recognize the Th types compared to fourth year. They are unable to produce 1, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20 male: 2, 8, 9, 14 female and recognize 4, 5, 6, 9, 13, 15, 18, 19 male: 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 19, 20 female. Noticeably, the most recurrent Th problems in the subjects' performance are related to the Sub-Th structural contrast in which there are certain Ths, which are not the Subs of such sentences.

The subjects' Rh Rec responses are presented in Table (3):

Table (3): The Subjects' Rheme Recognition

Items	TMSs				FMSs				TFSs				FFSs			
	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%
1	35	47	40	53	12	16	63	84	40	53	35	47	46	61	29	39
2	17	23	58	77	40	53	35	47	29	31	46	61	36	48	39	52
3	32	43	43	57	21	28	54	72	30	40	45	60	32	43	43	57
4	41	55	34	45	30	40	45	60	19	25	56	75	36	48	39	52
5	43	57	32	43	32	43	43	57	42	56	33	44	42	56	33	44
6	23	31	52	69	19	25	56	75	36	48	39	52	43	57	32	43
7	40	53	35	47	40	53	35	47	38	51	37	49	50	67	25	33
8	39	52	36	48	32	43	43	57	21	28	54	72	56	75	19	25
9	43	57	32	43	70	93	05	07	19	25	56	75	58	77	17	23
10	52	69	23	31	63	84	12	16	20	27	55	73	42	56	33	44
11	53	71	22	29	64	85	11	15	17	23	58	52	30	40	45	60
12	40	53	35	47	65	87	10	13	15	20	60	80	36	48	39	52
13	42	56	33	44	67	89	08	11	39	52	36	48	42	56	33	44
14	43	57	32	43	39	52	36	48	42	56	33	44	43	57	32	43
15	44	59	31	41	42	56	33	44	62	83	13	17	50	67	25	33
16	62	83	13	17	19	25	56	75	70	93	05	07	56	75	19	25
17	36	48	39	52	30	40	45	60	73	97	02	03	63	84	12	16
18	39	52	36	48	32	43	43	57	74	99	01	01	64	85	11	15
19	42	56	33	44	34	45	41	55	09	12	66	88	70	93	05	07
20	40	53	35	47	35	47	40	53	19	25	56	75	49	65	26	35

From Table (3), it is clear that TMSs and FFSs face the least difficulty in Rh Rec (1,2, 3, 6,17 male; 2, 3, 4, 11, 12female). The TMSs face the least difficulty compared to the female ones (1, 2, 3, 4, 5,8, 9,10,11,12,19,20 female). On the Pro side (Table 4), the TFSs and FFSs face the least difficulty making eight difficult items compared to fourteen items which receive the highest Inc responses (1, 3,6, 7,8, 9,11,12,13,14,15,16,17 and 18 TMSs). This indicates that the weakness does lie in the stage in which learners are. It is private achievement and one, which depends on the intelligence of EFL learners.

Table (4): The Subjects' Rheme Production

Items	TMSs				FMSs				TFSs				FFSs			
	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%
1	31	41	44	59	43	57	32	43	41	55	34	45	51	43	57	32
2	42	56	33	44	53	71	22	29	45	60	30	40	53	71	22	29
3	35	47	40	53	37	49	38	51	43	57	32	43	40	53	35	47
4	62	53	13	17	42	56	33	40	44	53	35	47	23	31	52	69
5	52	69	23	31	44	59	31	41	31	41	44	59	14	19	61	81
6	31	41	44	59	37	49	38	51	16	21	59	79	17	23	58	77
7	17	23	58	77	32	43	43	57	20	27	55	73	48	64	27	36
8	19	25	56	75	30	40	45	60	41	31	41	44	12	16	63	84
9	33	44	42	56	20	27	55	73	44	52	69	23	40	53	35	47
10	43	57	32	43	41	55	34	45	49	65	26	35	31	41	44	59
11	22	29	53	46	35	47	40	53	52	69	23	31	34	45	41	55
12	24	32	51	68	36	48	39	52	53	71	22	29	39	52	36	48
13	19	25	56	75	43	57	32	43	41	55	34	45	41	55	34	45
14	22	29	53	71	56	75	19	25	11	15	64	85	45	61	30	29
15	34	45	41	55	71	95	04	05	19	25	56	75	42	56	33	44
16	12	16	63	84	41	55	34	45	23	31	52	69	42	56	33	44
17	13	17	62	83	35	47	40	53	41	55	34	45	43	57	32	43

18	30	40	45	60	41	55	34	45	40	53	35	47	45	61	30	29
19	42	56	33	44	52	69	23	31	32	43	43	57	19	25	56	75
20	44	59	31	41	31	41	44	59	30	40	45	60	35	47	40	53

The problems facing the subjects' Rh Rec and Pro occur in third and fourth years (fe/male) In the Rec side, the FFSs and TMSs prove to be more competent than others. The TMSs are less able in Rh/Pro while the FFSs are less able in the Rec side. On the other hand, the TFSs lack the control of the Rec side compared to the fourth (Pro). The FFSs face greater problems than the third ones while the TFSs face more problems than the fourth.

The results of measuring the subjects' Th/Rh T Rec prove that FFSs are more competent than all the other groups: TMSs (6, 7, 8, 11, 13 & 14), FMSs (3, 8, 13, 14, 15, & 16) and TFSs (7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19 & 20). Surprisingly, TFSs represent the group in which the maximum number of Inc answers occurs while FFSs represent the more competent group in which the least Inc responses occur. All such details are available in Table (5):

Table (5); The Subjects' Theme / Rheme Tone Recognition

Items	TMSs				FMSs				TFSs				FFSs			
	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%
1	59	79	16	81	63	84	12	16	64	85	11	15	67	89	08	11
2	41	55	34	44	42	56	33	44	46	61	29	39	52	69	23	31
3	45	60	30	40	32	43	43	57	52	69	23	31	75	100	0	0
4	63	84	12	16	42	56	33	44	54	72	21	28	39	52	36	48
5	41	55	34	44	56	75	19	25	56	75	19	25	47	63	28	37
6	32	43	43	57	57	76	18	24	41	55	34	44	72	96	03	04
7	34	45	41	55	71	95	04	05	14	19	61	81	65	87	10	13
8	37	49	38	51	32	43	43	57	23	31	52	69	67	89	08	11
9	41	65	34	35	41	55	34	45	40	53	35	22	69	92	06	08
10	42	56	33	44	45	60	30	40	35	47	40	53	36	48	39	52
11	32	43	43	57	41	55	34	45	12	16	63	84	52	69	23	31
12	41	55	34	44	52	69	23	31	23	31	52	69	54	72	21	28
13	36	48	39	52	32	43	43	57	40	53	35	47	63	48	12	16
14	37	49	38	51	15	20	60	80	60	80	15	20	65	87	10	13
15	42	56	33	44	21	28	54	72	34	45	41	55	67	89	08	11
16	43	57	32	43	41	55	34	45	09	12	66	88	70	93	05	07
17	44	59	31	41	36	48	39	52	72	96	03	04	73	97	02	03
18	52	69	23	31	42	56	33	44	53	71	22	24	42	56	33	44
19	53	70	22	30	43	57	32	43	15	20	60	80	45	60	30	40
20	59	79	16	21	47	63	28	37	14	19	61	81	49	65	26	35

In so far as the subjects' Th / Rh T Pro is concerned, the FFSs commit the highest number of Inc responses while the FMSs commit very few errors. That is why, they represent the more competent ones (see Table 6):

Table (6): The Subjects' Theme / Rheme Tone Production

Items	TMSs				FMSs				TFSs				FFSs			
	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%	CO	%	Inc	%
1	52	60	23	31	52	69	23	31	40	53	35	47	44	59	31	41
2	21	28	54	72	40	53	35	47	36	48	39	52	46	61	29	39
3	52	42	23	58	52	70	23	30	53	47	40	53	52	69	23	31
4	16	21	59	79	53	71	22	29	39	52	36	48	54	72	21	28
5	17	23	58	77	40	53	35	47	40	53	35	47	36	48	39	52
6	52	42	23	58	39	52	36	48	49	65	26	35	32	43	43	57
7	29	39	46	61	40	53	35	47	53	71	22	29	14	19	61	81
8	33	44	32	56	40	53	35	47	59	79	16	21	19	25	56	75
9	40	53	35	47	50	67	25	33	62	83	13	17	32	43	43	57
10	39	52	36	48	62	83	13	17	64	85	11	15	34	45	41	55
11	43	57	32	43	63	84	12	16	65	87	10	13	52	69	23	31
12	44	59	31	41	73	97	02	03	66	88	09	12	57	76	18	24
13	29	39	46	61	74	99	01	01	67	89	08	11	13	17	62	82
14	31	41	44	59	09	12	66	88	19	25	56	75	12	16	63	84
15	36	48	39	52	52	56	33	44	30	40	45	60	38	51	37	49
16	41	55	34	45	45	57	32	43	42	56	33	44	32	43	43	57
17	37	49	38	51	51	65	26	35	43	67	32	33	49	65	26	35
18	40	53	35	47	47	75	19	25	44	59	31	41	73	97	02	03
19	42	56	33	44	44	70	23	30	52	48	21	52	74	99	01	01
20	18	24	57	76	76	21	59	79	56	75	19	25	73	97	02	03

On comparing the subjects' Th Rh T Rec and Pro, the maximum number of Inc responses are produced by the TMSs respondents (16). The FFSs come second here (13). Most of the Inc responses can be attributed to the T appropriacy to the type of sentence, the tonic syllable position, the extension of the T to the whole class, the location of stress, the structure of the tonic unit, etc. Our advanced EFL learners are not competent in such aspects. The items in which Inc responses occur are in Table (7):

Table (7): The Items of Incorrect Responses

Groups	Th		Rh		T		Total
	Rec	Prod	Rec	Prod	Rec	Prod	
TMSs	10	12	05	14	06	10	57
FMSs	08	13	17	09	06	02	55
TFSs	10	07	12	08	09	04	50
FFSs	07	05	12	08	01	09	42
Total	35	37	46	39	22	25	195

As clear in Table (7) above, the TMSs commit the highest number of Inc responses while the FFSs commit the least. This implies that our male learners are incompetent in this linguistic area.

This incompetence renders high on Rh Pro and low on Rh Rec, Vertically, the highest Inc items occur in Rh Rec. This definitely breaks the tradition of considering learners to be more competent in Rec than Pro, at least in this aspect.

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

The study concludes that:

1. The subjects produced similar responses on the Rec and Pro of Ths, Rh and their Ts (103:101).
2. The subjects' most problems center on Rh Rec and Pro (85) compared to Ths (72) and their Ts (47).
3. The TMSs and TFSs face more difficulty (107) than the fourth year ones (97) do in all the cited linguistic areas and in the Rec and Prod types.
4. The males are more incompetent than the females (112:92).
5. The Rec/Pro division does not play a significant difference in Ths, Rhs and their Ts.
6. The stage of learning has a role to play on recognizing and producing Ths/Rhs and their Ts. This is applicable to sex. In descriptive terms, sex and stage of learning determine our description.
7. Advanced EFL learners face difficulties in the Rec and Pro of Ths and Rh from the structure and intonational perspectives. That is why, the study hypothesis is accepted.
8. Our EFL learners in the departments of English in Iraq are incompetent in Th/Rh linguistic area. This is partly due to the idea that our colleges teach (in syllabus items and technique of presentation) through syntactic terms (Sub and Pred). These terms are never referred to in our syllabus items in spite of a four- year grammar teaching in the departments of English
9. The Ts of English are not given due room and time. Intonation is only taught for four weeks (12 lectures) in our courses.
10. Sometimes it is the system of English, which makes it difficult for learners to cope with the materials and at other times it is the negative transfer between Arabic, the learners' mother tongue, and English. Depending on the different parts of the paper, we suggest that;
 1. The information approach ought to occupy a time in the syllabus items.
 2. Sufficient time is suggested for teaching the suprasegmentals of English since the allocated time is insufficient,

Bibliography

- Allen, J. p. B and Corder, S. P.(eds)(1975). The Edinburgh Course in Applied linguistics (vol. 2). Papers in Applied Linguistics. London: OUP.
- Allen, J. P. B and Widdowson, H. G. (1975). "Halliday's Functional Grammar". In Allen and Corder (eds) (1975).
- Fries, P. (1994). "Themes, Methods of development and texts. "In On subject and theme: from the perspective of functions in Discourse. Hasan and Fries (eds), PP. 7.48.
- _____ and Francis, G. (1990). " Exploring theme problems for research". The 17th Systemic Congress, Scotland.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1967). Some aspects of thematic organization of the English clause". In Kress (ed) (1967).

- _____. (1970). A Course in Spoken English: Intonation. Oxford: OUP.
- _____. (1985). An Introduction to Functional Grammar. London: Edward Arnold.
- Huddleston, R. (1977), An Introduction to English Transformational Syntax. London: Longman.
- kempson, R. M.(1980). Semantic Theory. Cambridge: CUP.
- kress, Q. (Ed) (1976). Halliday: System and Function in Language. London: OUP.
- Lepschy, G. C. (1972). A Survey of Structural Linguistics. London: Faber and Faber.
- Merely; G. D. (1985). An Introduction to Systemic Grammar. London; Macmillan.
- O'connor,J. D. and Arnold, G. F. (1973), Intonation of Colloquial English. London: Longman.
- Palmer, F. R. (1988). Semantics. 2nd Ed. Cambridge: CUP.
- Quirk, R. and Greenbaum, S. (1983). A University Grammar of English. Twelfth Impression. London: Longman.
- Richards, J. Platt, J. and Weber, H. (1985J. Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics. London: Longman.
- Roach. P. (1988). A Course in Phonetics and Phonology: A practical Course for Foreign Students. Cambridge: CUP. •

Appendix (1): A List of Abbreviations

Adjectiv	Adj
Adverb(ial)	Adv
Complement	C
Correct	CO
Direct Object	Od
Direct Objective Complement	OdC
English as a Foreign Language	EFL
Fourth Female Subjects	FFSs
Fourth Male Subjects	FMSs
Incorrect	Inc
Indirect Object	Oi
Intensive	intens
Noun (Nominal)	N
Objective Complement	Co
Predicate(s)	Pred(s)
Production	Prod
Recognition	Rec
Rheme(s)	Rh(s)
Static	Stat
Subjective Complement	Cs
Subject(s)-(doers of the action)	Sub(s)
Theme(s)	Th(s)
Third Female Subjects	TFSs
Third Male Subjects	TMSs

Appendix (2): A Copy of the Recognition Test

Note: Pinpoint the themes and rhemes of and the tones used with the following:

Theme Rheme Tone

1. Men should behave morally.
2. In the bus, I met him.
3. What pleasure is his happiness.
4. Fortunately, the rain falls.
5. For a while, I stayed there.
6. Joe he is.
7. He gave me an umbrella.
8. He escaped at night.
9. Stop your car.
10. Show me your ID.
11. Do you like ice- cream?
12. All the boys and the girls are happy.
13. It is worthy of spending time on.
14. The lady whom you saw in the party died in a car accident.
15. You answer seriously. Don't you?
16. Jackdean, be a good girl.
17. Wherever you go, I'll go.
18. He seems tired.
19. The boy was hit in the match.
20. Neither the teacher nor the headmaster attended the party.

Appendix (3): A Copy of the Production Test

Note: Pinpoint the themes and rhemes, and the tones used with the following:

	Theme	Rheme	Tone
1. The man does not like sweats.			
2. In the garden I met him.			
3. I met the man.			
4. Finally, I dropped my gun.			
5. In a minute, I'll see him.			
6. Rich he is.			
7. I gave Ali a book.			
8. I do not know your name.			
9. Come here.			
10. Where do you spend your holidays? I said			
11. Does he travel abroad?			
12. John, Bartley and Alexander went to Canada.			
13. It is Linda who saw the crime.			
14. The man who was there is my friend.			
15. You are students. Aren't you?			
16. John, come here.			
17. Nevertheless, you might come.			
18. They elected him chairman.			
19. The bull was hit by Ali.			
20. No one else was here.			

Appendix (4): Some Phonetic and Phonological Symbols

' primary stress.

– Secondary stress.

,

\.Fall Tone

/ Rise Tone

- Level Tone

v Fall.rise Tone

8 Rise. fall Tone

// // Tone-unit boundaries.

Note

1 The jury includes: Dr. Ala'H. Oda (Assis. Prof.)2. Dr. HashimA. Hussain (Assis. Prof.) 3. Dr.Abdul Hameed Nasir (Assis. Prof.) 4. Abdul Kareem Lazim (Assis. Prof) 5. KAadum K. Ali (Assis. Prof).