

A Comparative Analysis of Segmental and Suprasegmental Features of the Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GAM)

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Abstract:

This is a comparative analysis of the Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GAM). The researcher adopted a theoretical approach. Two dialects: the RP and CAM are adequately and specifically considered. They represent widely two standard dialects of English language used in the United Kingdom and the North America. They are equally the dialects taught to non-native learner of English outside the United Kingdom and the North America. In order to arrive at comprehensive findings, the researcher examines the segmental and suprasegmental features of the RP and CAM. The segmentals are vowels and consonants, while the segmentals are stress, rhythm and intonation. Also, in order to adequate information for this research, books, articles and (from the World Wide Web) on the RP and GAM are consulted. The findings reveal that there are similarities and differences in segmental and suprasegmental features of the RP. The study concluded that

Keywords: Comparative Analysis, Segmental and Suprasegmental, Received Pronunciation, General American Gam

Introduction

Phonology etymologically is a Greek word coined from *phono logy*. *Phono* means sound or voice, while *logy* means study. Thus, it is a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of system with reference to their distribution and patterning languages. The study of Phonology is concerned with the organization of speech within specific language” (2). Accordingly, Crystal notes in the Cambridge Encyclopedia of English that the aim of phonology is to “discover the principles that govern the way sounds are organized in languages and explain the variations that occurs” (4). In other words, phonology involves the study of how a language speaker systematically uses these sounds in other to express meaning. Phonology enables speakers to understand the principles regulating the use of sounds.

In discussion of phonology reference is often made to Phonetics as it describe how sounds can be made and perceived (2). The phonology of English equally enables the speakers to understand its suprasegmental features. English phonology therefore, is the study of the sound system in English. Like all languages, the spoken English has variations in its pronunciation, both diachronically and synchronically from dialect, hence English sounds are segmented (units) known as vowels and consonants. The suprasegmental features (stress, intonation, etc.) also constitute the sound system of the English language. According to Onuigbo, “suprasegmental features (stress, intonation, etc.) are necessary for the proper functioning of English sounds in the actual speech process” (1). In other words, these suprasegmental features help users of the language assign different meanings to an expression. For instance, an expression such as “You can go” can be a statement; question, or command.

British and North American dialects are regarded as the standard dialects of English language. That is why it is not surprising that non-native speakers try as much as possible to master either the British or North American dialect or both, even as they unconsciously carry over the intonation and phonemic inventory from their mother tongue into their English speech. However, notwithstanding the lofty positions of British and American English, their different dialects have given, rise to different pronunciations even within their identified geographical locations. In other words, different pronunciations of British and American English are influenced by the phonemic inventory of regional dialects of British and American English, respectively. Hence, native English speakers can often identify precisely where a person comes from. A study of these two standard dialects of the language reveals element of pronunciation differences. These pronunciation differences as already observed are based on various regional dialects of English that exist in the United Kingdom and the North

American countries. As non-native speakers strive as much as possible to master the two or either of them, there is the need to examine them comparatively, in order to ascertain precisely, how they differ. This no doubt will facilitate non-native speakers' mastery of the two dialects or either for effective teaching of, and communication in the language. It will equally enable native speakers to be aware of different dialects that exist in the language. Thus, the study of the phonology of a language becomes very important for the full understanding of its speech. In view of the above, this study assess comparatively the segmental and suprasegmental features of the Received Pronunciation and General American.

Research Methodology

The approach to this study is mainly a comparative analysis of two standard dialects of English language: the Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (CAM). Books, journals and articles that discuss the similarities and differences of the segmental and suprasegmental features of the RP and CAM will be compared adequately. This will enable the determination of the extent they are related to, and differ from each other for effective teaching of, and communication in the language. Also for a specific comparative analysis, Peter Roach's work on Received Pronunciation and the latest work in Wikipedia on General America are the two models represented

The Received Pronunciation (RP)

The study of British dialects of English establishes the existence of different accents as a result of many dialects of English: United Kingdom. The Received Pronunciation as a term was mentioned in H.C. Wyld's *A short History of English* and in /ie/ Jones's *An Outline of English Phonetics*. The history of the Received Pronunciation dates back to ages and it captures a mixture of the Midland and Southern dialects spoken in London. The Received Pronunciation is recognized as a kind of having its base in the educated pronunciation of London countries (the countries surrounding London). In other words, Received Pronunciation is generally accepted as the standard accent of English in the United Kingdom and is now as the BBC English. The uniqueness of the Received Pronunciation makes it the most recommended for foreign learners and since it is most familiar as the accent used by most announcers and newsreaders on BBC and British Independent Television Channels, a preferable name is BBC Pronunciation.

The Received Pronunciation or BBC Pronunciation is seen as a dialect that is uniquely prestigious amongst British accents. It is also called the Queen's (or kings) English or Oxford English, because it is spoken by the Monarch and the Oxford University was identified with it. This explains why many foreign learners that have interest in British English often talk about the Queen's English, making the RP or BBC pronunciation, a generally accepted accent of English in the United Kingdom and outside (apart from the North American Regions). The Received Pronunciation has three different forms, 'iz; Conservative, General and Advanced. The Conservative RP represents the speech of the older speakers with certain social background; the General RP is considered neutral depending on age, occupation or social status of the interlocutors, while the Advance is associated with the speech of younger generation of British speakers. Thus, the uniqueness of RP makes it to be used as the standard for English in most books on general phonology and Phonetics and is represented in the pronunciation schemes of most dictionaries.

It is important to observe that the RP or BBC pronunciation is regarded as a non-rhotic accent of English, that is, (r) is only pronounced if it is followed by a vowel sound. Other accents areas that are non-rhotic re Australian, South African and Estuary, African, most of England, Wales, most of New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, Malta, most of the Caribbean, etc. Also to observe is the fact that the modern style of RP is the accent taught to non-native speakers that study British English. That is why non-RP Britons outside the United Kingdom modify their pronunciation to closer RP as to communicate with non-native English speakers. The British dialects of English or RP clearly illustrate different pronunciation patterns of English words in the United Kingdom. Scot Shay identified that "English developed into a borrowing language of great flexibility resulting in an enormously varied and large vocabulary" and accounts for different accents of English in the United Kingdom and beyond.

In Great Britain, three varieties of English language feature prominently namely: English English, Scottish English and Welsh English. They represent the varieties of accents in Britain. Also, these varieties have other varieties that depict various counties in England, Scotland and Wales and one can identify a mixture of rhotic and non-rhotic accents. The segmental features of Received pronunciation/BBC pronunciation identified in Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary are twenty vowels and twenty-four consonant sounds. Peter Roach in *English phonetics and phonology* (2000) illustrates twenty-five vowels and twenty-four consonants: Thus the model resented in this research is Roach (2000):

Vowels of the RP/BBC Pronunciation

Seven Short Vowels

I as in bit

e as in men

æ as in bat

ʌ as in but

ɑ as in pot

ʊ as in put

ə as in attend

Five Long Vowels

ɪ: as in beat

ɜ: as in bird

ɑ: as in card

ɔ: as in board

u: as in food

Eight Diphthongs

iə as in beard

eə as in scarce

ʊə as in fuel

ei as in paid

ai as in tide

ɔi as in void

əʊ as in load

aʊ as in loud

Five Triphthongs

eiə as in layer

aiə as in liar

ɔiə as in loyal

əʊə as in lower

aʊə as in power

Consonant Sounds of the RP/BBC Pronunciation Nasals

m (bilabial) as in men

n (alveolar) as in now

ŋ (velar) as in sing

Plosives

p (bilabial) as in pot

b (bilabial) as in ball

t (alveolar) as in cat

d (alveolar) as in ma

k (velar) as in king

g (velar) as in bigger

Affricates

tʃ (post-alveolar) as in church

dʒ (post-alveolar) as in judge

Fricatives

f (labio-dental) as in fish

ʃ (post-alveolar) as in shop

v (labio-dental) as in leave

θ (dental) as in faith

ð (dental) as in father

s (alveolar) as in sat

z (alveolar) as in visa

h (glottal) as in fiope

ʒ (post-alveolar) as in vin

Approximant

w (bilabial) as in won

r (alveolar) as in rule

j (palatal) as in yam

Lateral

l (alveolar) as in light

GAM and its Segmental Features

The study of American phonology of English also exposes many accents, as a result of many regional dialects of English in North American (mostly in the USA and Canada). A brief history of General American indicates that it has its origin in the dialect of the Inland North region that comprises Michigan and Northern. General

American also known as standard Midwestern, standard spoken American English or American Broadcast English is one of the most homogenous and widespread accents of Anglophone North America. It differs from Southern American English; several north eastern accents and other distinct regional accents and social group accent like African American vernacular English. Also General American is regarded by Americans as the most neutral and free of regional characteristics. General American is regarded as a rhotic accent, that is, (r) is pronounced in all positions it occurs in words. A study of North America English indicates that the accents of most speakers of North America English are rhotic. Other areas with rhotic accents are Barbados, Ireland, Scotland, some parts of Speakers of Indian English and Otago and Southland (in the far south of New Zealand's South Island). However not all North America English is rhotic: for instance in the USA, the speech of the Coastal South of Eastern New England, and of New York City is to a considerable extent non-rhotic.

As in the case of the Received Pronunciation and other standard dialects of most societies, the General American is not a dialect of the entire nations of the United States and Canada. Its acceptance as prestigious is based on the fact that it is the speech of many newscasters, and as already noted most neutral and free of regional characteristics. This unique feature of being neutral and free of regional characteristics, makes General American an accent general taught to people learning English as a second language in the USA. Similarly, people outside the USA that study American English are taught General American. The segmental features of American English according to Francis in *The structure of American English* consist of eighteen vowels and forty-six consonants. Daniel Jones in *Cambridge Pronouncing Dictionary* identifies sixteen vowels and twenty-five consonants. Recent work in Wikipedia on "General American" establishes nineteen vowels and twenty-five consonants. Thus, the model represented in this research is the Wikipedia on "General American":

Vowels of General American (GAM)

Fourteen Monothongs

I	as	in	react
U	as	in	influenza
I	as	in	sit
U	“	“	pull
e	“	“	pet
o	“	“	horse
ə	“	“	potato
ə	“	“	mother
ɛ	“	“	bet
ɪ	“	“	bird
ʌ	“	“	cut
ɔ	“	“	caught
æ	“	“	path
a	“	“	dog

Five Diphthongs

ai	“	“	<u>high</u>
ei	“	“	<u>bait</u>
aU	“	“	house
ɔi	“	“	<u>boy</u>
oU	“	“	<u>boat</u>

Consonants of General American Nasals

M (bilabial) as in men

n (alveolar) as in now

ŋ (velar) as in sing

Plosives

p (bilabial) as in pot

b (“ “) “ “ cab

t (alveolar) “ “ tap

d (“ “) “ “ death

k (velar) “ “ seek

g (velar) “ “ begin

Affricates

tʃ (post-alveolar) as in chart

dʒ (“ “) “ “ june

Fricatives

f (labio – alveolar) as in self

v (“ “) “ “ victory

θ (dental) “ “ three
 ð (“ “ “) “ “ they
 s (alveolar) “ “ ss
 z (“ “) “ “ viga
 ʃ (post – alveolar) “ “ shop
 ʒ (“ “) “ “ measure
 h (glottal) “ “ house

Approximant

ɹ (r) (alveolar) as in run
 j (palata) as in young
 (m) (velar) as in whine
 w (“) as in watch

Lateral

l (alveolar) as in laugh

Similarities and Differences of Segmental Features of the RP and GAM

The Vowels

Vowels are sounds produced without any obstruction of airstream. The vowels of RP and GAM are related as well as differ in one way or the other. Vowels of the RP are divided into monothongs, diphthongs and triphthongs. The monothongs consist of seven short and five long sounds; the diphthongs comprise eight sound while the triphthongs are five in number. But, the vowels of General American, are nineteen. They are made up of fourteen monothongs and five diphthongs and are commonly described as having lax and tense vowels and wide diphthongs. These clearly show that the vowels of Received Pronunciation are more in number than the vowels of General American.

In the RP and General American monothongs are similarly grouped into front; central and back. Contrastively, while the RP are further divided into close, mid and open (indicating long and short sounds), General American are further grouped into close, near-close, close -mid, mid, open-mid and near-open (indicating plain and rhotacized) as illustrated, below:

Monothongs of the RP BBC pronunciation

	Front		Central		Back	
	Long	Short	Long	Short	Long	Short
Close	I:	i			U:	U
Mid		e	ɜ:	ə	ɔ:	
Open		æ		ʌ	a:	a

Monothongs of General American (GAM)

	Front	Central		Back
		Plain	Rhotacised	
Close	I			U
Near – close	I			U
Close – mid	e			O
Mid		ə	ə̃	
Open – mid	ɛ		ɛ̃	ʌ, ɔ
Near - open	æ			a

The classification of monothongs of RP as already observed indicates seven short and five long sounds. The short sounds are i, e, æ, ʌ, ʌ, U, and ə. Their descriptions show that:

/i/ is defined as front and close vowel (because the front tongue) is raised, while the lips are spread slightly during articulation. Examples are: lip, sister, sit, tick, etc.

/e/ is a front and mid vowel (front tongue is raised), that is articulated with slightly spread lips. Examples are: men, bet, get, set, etc.

/æ/ is identified as front and open vowel (front tongue is raised). Its production involves slightly spread lips. Examples are: man, cat, lap, .sat, etc.

/ʌ/ is a central and open vowel (tongue is in central position) which Involves the neutrality of lips: Examples are: cut, country, hut, much, etc.

/a/ is a back and open vowel (back tongue is raised), its production involves slightly rounded lips. Examples are: lot, pot, potash, morrow, etc.

/U/ is a back and close vowel (back tongue is raised) that in rounded lips during production. Examples are put, could, hoorah, etc.

/ə/ is called schwa and is identified as unstressed central and mid vowel (tongue is in central position). The lips are neutral during production. Examples are: *perhaps about, again, around, etc.*

The long vowels are I:, u:, ɜ:, o: and a:. Their descriptions indicate:

/i:/ as a front and close vowel (front tongue is raised), and t production involves slightly spread lips. Examples are police, key!, keen, keep, etc.

/u:/ as a back and close vowel (back tongue is raised) which involves moderately rounded lips during production/articulation.

Examples are *shoot, cool, cooland, hoon, etc.*

/ɜ:/ as a central and mid vowel (tongue is in central position)

which involves the neutrality of the lips. Examples are *bird, girl, serve, search, etc.*

/ɔ:/ as a back and mid vowel (back tongue is raised) and the lips are well rounded during production. Examples are *Porch, sordid, sort, thought, etc.*

/ɑ:/ as a back and open vowel (back tongue is raised) and the lips are neutral during articulation. Examples are *pass, laugh, chance, father, etc.*

The classification of monothongs of General America as observed indicates fourteen sounds. This makes them differ in terms of number from the RP. But they are related to the RP based on the fact that their articulations/productions, involve the height of the tongue the tongue part used and the position of lips. Also, some monothongs identified and described in the RP such as /i/, /U/, /e/, /a/, /æ/ and /ʌ/ are the same in General American. This implies that words that have these sounds are pronounced the same way by speakers of the RP and General American. On the other hand, while /i/, /u/, /o/, /ə/, /ɛ/, /ɜ/, /ɔ/ and /ɑ/ characterize General American, /ɑ:/, /o/, /i:/, /u:/, /ɜ:/ and /ɔ:/ belong to the Received Pronunciation.

The descriptions of /i/, /u/, /o/, /ə/, /ɛ/, /ɜ/, /ɑ/ and /ɔ/

Show that:

/i/ is a front and close vowel (front tongue is raised) and lips are slightly spread during production. The sound is generally described as a non-phonemic symbol of English. Examples areas happy and react. It is relatively long and tense' unlike /ɪ/ that is "lax and short. Also the sound tends to be "diphthongal" which means it is realized as long /i:/ as in the RP.

/u/ is a back and close vowel (back tongue is raised) that involves rounded Bps. It is also a non-phonemic symbol of English. An example is influenza, Also .when final, it can be "diphthongized" which makes it to be realized as long /u:/ as in the RP. /o/ is a back and close-mid vowel (back tongue is raised) in which the lips are rounded during articulation. It is sometimes called "close o" and appears in English chiefly as the first element of the diphthong /U/ or [ou]. It can represent the long /ɜ:/ of the RP.

/ə/ is a centrally and it's centrally rhotacized and mid vowel (tongue is in central position) and its articulation involves neutralized lips. This sound is like /e/, only that the tip of the tongue is curved up toward the alveolar ridge as in the formation of /r/. It is in fact quite similar to /r/ differing in only two aspects: it is a true vowel rather than a glide, and the front tongue is lower than the usual position or [r] (104). It is also referred as "r-coloured schwa" and to a large extent; it represents the schwa /ə/ that occurs in some words in the RP. Examples are *perspire, pertain, mother, father, bean feaster, bearder, etc.*

/E/ is a front and open mid (front tongue is raised) in which the lips are spread. If stressed, it occurs initially and medially, but not finally. It represents the /e/ in the RP. Examples are bet, protect, etch, etc.

/ɜ/ is a centrally rhotacised and open-mid vowel (tongue is in the central position) and it involves the neutrality of the lips. It is known as "r-coloured bird vowel", and it represents the /ɜ:/ Of the RP except that the In sound is somewhat heard. Examples are: *bird, ferrisburg, Perth, perspiration, serve/servo, etc.*

/ɑ/ is identified as a back and near-open vowel (back tongue is raised) and the lips are neutral during articulation. It represents the "broad A" /ɑ:/ in the RP, making some words to be pronounced /ɑ:/. It represents also the short /ɑ/ of the RP in some words. Examples are: *dog, don, Dominic, doll,, dodge, compromise, comprehend, etc.*

/ɔ/ is a back and open-mid vowel (back tongue is raised) which results in slightly rounded lips. It is an "open o" and varies considerably in length degree of rounding and degree of tenseness. it represents the short /D/, long /o:/ and long /ɜ:/ of the 1W which makes some words to be pronounced as /ɑ:/ or /o:/ especially where they are /n/ or /o:/ in the RP. Examples are *caught, song, solve, doriqen, dorit, god, sort, long, sore, bother, borrow, cot, etc.*

Diphthongs are sounds produced as a result of glide from one sound to another. Usually the first sound is much stronger and longer than the second during production. The sounds that glide are monothongs already described. The diphthongs of RP are eight and are grouped into closing and centering, while the ones of General American are five and are divided into unrounded front and rounded back as depicted below:

Diphthongs of the RP/BBC Pronunciation

Closing	Centring
/ei/	/iə/
/ai/	/eə/
/ɔi/	/ʊə/
/əʊ/	
/aʊ/	

Diphthongs of General American. (GAM)

	Offglide is a front Vowel	Offglide is a back vowel
Opener component Is unround	/ei/ /ai/	/Au/
Opener component Is round	/ɔi/	/oU/

The description of diphthong of Received Pronunciation indicates that indicates that /ei/ is the sound that begins from /e/ as in set to /i/ as in kid.

Examples are: late, ate, mate, gain, etc.

/ai/ starts from sound that resembles /ʌ/ as in country to /i/ as in lid. Examples are: rice, mice, eye, light, etc.

/ɔi/ begins from /o:/ as in spot to /i/ as in lit. Examples are: coil, voice, joy, toy, etc.

/əʊ/ is the sound that begins from schwa /ə/ as in above to /ʊ/ as in put. Examples are: go, sow, boat, both, etc.

/aʊ/ starts from sound similar to /a:/ as in part to /ʊ/ as in could.

Examples are; mouse, louse, house, how, etc.

/iə/ starts from something close to /i/ as in pit, to schwa /e/ as in around. Examples are: here, fierce, weird, beer, etc.

/eə/ begins from /e/ as in bed to schwa /ə/ as in again. Examples are: hair, air, heir, mayor, etc.

/ʊə/ starts from /ʊ/ as in foot to schwa /ə/ as in acquire.

Examples are: four, tour, your, poor, etc.

The descriptions of diphthongs of General American show that the four closing diphthongs in the RP, that is, /ei/, /ai/, /ɔi/ and /aʊ/ are the same with General American, while /əʊ/ represents the diphthong /oʊ/ in General American. What this means is that while the four closing diphthongs in the RP are the same with those of GAM (that is, all the words pronounced with /aʊ/, /e/, /ɔi/ and /ai/ are the same in the RP and GAM), the /əʊ/ in the RP differs from the /oʊ/ in General American. Hence, all the words pronounced as /əʊ/ in the RP are pronounced as /oʊ/ in General American. Examples are:

RP	GAM
sold/səʊt/	Sold/soʊd/
boat / bəʊt/	Boat/bout/
both/bəʊθ/	both/bəʊθ/
go / geʊ/	go / geʊ/
coach /kəʊtʃ/	coach /kəʊtʃ/

Also the three centering diphthongs in the RP are not recognized in General American. Hence words pronounced as /iə/, /eə/ and /ʊə/ in the RP are pronounced as /i/, /e/ and /ʊ/ or /u:/ respectively. Example are:

Words	RP	GAM
fuel/ʊə/	fjʊəl	fju:l
tour/ʊə	tʊə	tur
here/iə/	hiə	hir
bear/iə/	biə	bir
air/ eə	eə	er
heir/ eə	eə	er

The vowels of RP further have triphthongs which described as being the most complex English sounds. This means that they can appear difficult to pronounce and also not easy to recognize. They involve a glide from the first sound to second and then third, making each to be a three-sound vowel.

There are five triphthongs which consist of five diphthongs (already described) and the schwa /ə/ sound in each for the realization of three sounds in one vowel. They are:

/ei/ plus /ə/ = /eiə/ as in *layer, player*

/ai/ plus /ə/ = /aiə/ as in *liar, fire*

/ɔi/ plus /ə/ = /ɔiə/ as in *loyer, royal*

/əʊ/ plus /ə/ = /əʊə/ as in *power, hour*

The article on General American by Wikipedia does not recognize triphthongs. The same applies to some books consulted on “American English”. However, Daniel Jones’s Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary identifies all of them as the combination of the diphthongs (already described) and the “r-coloured” schwa /ə/ except /ɔiə/ as indicated below:

/ei/ plus /ə/ = /eiə/ as in *layer*

/ai/ plus /ə/ = /aiə/ as in *liar*

/Oʊ/ plus /ə/ = /oʊə/ as in *lower*

/aʊ/ plus /ə/ = /aʊə/ as in *power*

The analysis of the RP and GAM also shows that as a result of fewer vowel distinctions before intervocalic /r/ in GAM than in the RP, ‘marry’ and ‘Mary’ are homophones, while ‘mirro’ and ‘furry’ rhyme with ‘nearer’ and ‘hurry’ respectively in GAM and never in the RP. In the same vein the merger of relevant vowels has made ‘pure’ and ‘poor’ to merge or rhyme in the RP and not in GAM, while there is the merger of “/a/ and /ɑ/” in GAM which makes them to be pronounced with the RP “broad A” as in “father-bothor” and “cot-caught” merge. More importantly is the fact that the split of relevant vowels such as “trap = bath” split distinguishes the /æ/ in some words from /ɑ:/ in others in the RP (illustrating the famous broad A in the RP). On the other hand, GAM has “short A” /æ/ in the RP words that have /ɑ:/ before “f, ft, in, nch, nd, nt, sk, sp, ss, st, and th” (Mencken 334). Examples are:

Words	RP	GAM
Ask	/ɑ:sk/	/æsk/
Dance	/dɑ:nts/	/dænts/
Pass	/pɑ:s/	/pæs/
Laugh	/lɑ:ft/	/læf/
calf	/kɑ:f/	/kæf/

However, GAM like the RP uses ‘broad A’ before ‘lm’, some ‘th’, ‘r’, and ‘r’ and with a consonant as indicated below:

Words	RP and GAM
Bar	/bɑ:/
Cart	/kɑ:/
Part	/pɑ:/
Park	/pɑ:/
Harm	/hɑ:/
father	/fɑ:/

Also of interest in this analysis is that the ‘ile’ (suffice) is pronounced /ai/ in the RP, but pronounced as superscript /e/ or syllabic /i/ in General America. Examples are *fragile, volatile, sterile, missile, etc.* In the same vein, the short /ɑ/ in the RP does not exist in GAM, making words pronounced as /ɑ/ in the RP to be pronounced as long /ɑ:/ or long /ɔ:/ in General America. Examples are *chop, foray, glom, gloss, pot, etc.*

Similarities of Suprasegmental Features of the Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GAM)

Stress and Rhythm

The Received Pronunciation and General American are regarded as stress-timed rhythm. Stress-timed rhythm is also known as “Isochronous” which means equal in intervals of occurrence; where unstressed syllables occur, these are squeezed in to maintain the overall rhythm of an utterance. Unlike the syllable-timed in which all syllables, whether stressed or unstressed, tend to occur at regular time-intervals and the time between stressed syllable will be shorter or longer in proportion to the number of unstressed syllables. The following are examples of words that have similar stress pattern in the RP and GAM: cre’ate, de’bate, equ’ate, or’ate, re’lates, ‘mandate, ‘probate, etc. In the same vein, most of longer ‘-ate’ verb, that is, those that have more than two syllables have the same stress pattern in the RP and GAM. But a few that are stressed in first syllable in the RP are stressed in second syllable in GAM. They include:

RP	GAM
‘elongate	e’longate
‘infiltrate	in’filtrate
‘remonstrate	re’monstrate
‘tergiversate	ter’giversate

Conclusions

English like other languages has spoken and written aspects. As a result of different dialects of the language, different accents have become evident. In other words regional differences of a language seem to be realized predominantly in phonology. This clearly explains the effect and influence of the spoken aspect of English among its users, as phonological variations tend to hinder effective communication. However, there are two regional standards of English namely: British and American. These two regions equally have different dialects, but two standards: the Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GAM) are identified as the ones widely recognized in Great Britain and North America respectively, as well as the ones taught to non-native learners of English language. Thus, the analysis compared these two standard dialects: the RP and GAM and discovered their similarities and differences for effective teaching of, and communication in English language.

Recommendations

It is a fact that language does not consist of letters, but of sounds and until this fact has been brought home to us, our study of W will be little better than an exercise of memory. Based on the above words and the findings discussed, that the following recommendations are made in order to facilitate effective teaching of and communication in English language:

The spoken aspect of the language should be given adequate attention. As already noted, language does not consist of letters, but of sounds, it becomes obvious that communication in any language is more prominent in speech. Hence, the sounds of a language are the basis for effective communication. Also, since regional differences are realized predominant in phonology, it becomes clear that the importance of English phonetics and phonology cannot be overemphasized.

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