

The Prosodic Pattern of Words in
Adult-Child Jordanian Arabic

by

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The subject matter of this research is to determine the predominant prosodic pattern of words in naturally occurring utterances and to find out the roles that phonological stress have in structure reinforcement, in conjunction with other parameters such as the distribution of prominent/non-prominent syllables, tone-group boundaries or rhythm. Although description of Arabic stress has been firmly placed in the center of interest, it is only restricted to instances either drawn by elicitation or by introspection. Monahan, P. (2002), for example, makes a three-way distinction based on syllable weight: Light (CV), heavy (CVC or CVV) and super heavy (CVVC, or CVCC) syllables. Unlike Abu Salem (1987) who proposes a trochaic foot structure in Palestinian Arabic (PA), Monahan claims that the preferred foot structure in (PA) is trimetric. He is not sure, for instance, about the presence of a bimoriac foot (LL) and he has not yet seen examples of (LLH)" *op.cit* p 185 . This study is therefore concerned with the description of the basic phonological structures underlying the various types of Jordanian Arabic natural spontaneous utterances . The relevant factors which might have led to select one or the other of prominent syllables are considered.

The corpus of study on which analysis is based consists of texts recorded for conversational exchanges between adult and child in natural conversational settings. There are basically two recognized stress patterns distinguished according to whether the underlying structure of a disyllabic word is (SW) or (WS). Verbs and nouns are analyzed in terms of prominent and non-prominent syllables . They are paired together in the prosodic formation of the foot.

Groupings of pairs of syllables are displayed in Columns I and II. (*See Appendix ff.*)

Results may be stated as the following:

- (i) Patterns with final *super heavy* syllables CVVC, CVCC, CVV , the stress falls on the ultimate syllable
- (ii) disyllabic + patterns with *heavy* CVC penult have the stress falling on the penultimate
- (iii) disyllabic + patterns in which the ultimate syllable is *light* CV, the penultimate *light* (CV) have the stress falling on the antepenultimate .

The trochaic foot (Troche) "stressed-unstressed, a left-headed foot" is more frequent than the iambic foot: "un-stressed-stressed, a right headed foot". The rhythm of language is quantity-sensitive :

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|-------|--------------------|---|
| (i) | strong-weak: | bid.di (CVC-CV)
?in.sa (CVC-
?is.mi(CVC.CV) |
| (ii) | weak-strong-weak : | ra.mee.tu(CV.CVV.CV)
?a.sak.ru (CV.CVC.CV)
war.jii.ni (CVC.CVV.CV)
la.Tax.tu (CV.CVC.CV) |
| (iii) | strong-weak-weak: | Da.ra.bu (CV.CV.CV)
mad.ra.sa (CVC.CV.CV)
mar.wa.Ha (CVC.CV.CV) |
| (iv) | weak-weak-strong | Da.ra.buuh (CV.CV.CVV) |

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