Review Article

Nasreddin Hodja Tales May Inspire Turkish Foreign Language Gifted and Talented Students to Speak Better English

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Abstract

This study deals with a special methodology to meet the special needs of Turkish gifted and talented students (GTS) in terms of improving their English oral proficiency. Most GTS are known to have been born also “gifted in languages”. Their language awareness shows by their “communicative skills, creative flair and arguing and reasoning”. Their skill in using their native language reflect in their talents in foreign languages by their “strong desire to put language pieces together by themselves, by their creativity and imagination, picking up new words and structures very quickly, constantly asking questions and showing an intense interest in the cultural features of the new language they are learning.” So benefitting from these talents they could easily be oriented to fine-tune their pronunciation and intonation in acceptable norms of phonetics. Turkish GTS having greater ease in learning new skills than their peers and are not usually satisfied with the usual methods and curriculum which do not fit to their vision of perfection at their own pace. The official foreign language training they are offered lacks the method by which they can learn to speak clearly and effectively, which is a skill they need to acquire in order to communicate orally with the rest of the world. Therefore they must be trained in new approaches to bring their proficiency on that line up to higher standards. In order to compensate this vital gap, such GTS need to learn first a special technique called “IPA transcription reading” and practice on relevant materials. In this innovative approach, students first acquire an awareness of the individual sounds and speech rhythm of the target language, i.e. English and practice on them by reading aloud texts written in IPA codes accompanied by their sound recordings and have their performance monitored by their speech instructions until perfection is reached. As for the drilling material to be chosen humor has been found great advantage, as it

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makes learning easier. The best known Turkish philosopher Nasreddin Hodja’s satirical tales, traditionally a great source of inspiration for Turks, has been considered as a great source for such activities. By working hard on the transcriptions Hodja tales, students find not only to express themselves in English more clearly, understandably and fluently, their audience but also their conversation became wiser and more humourous. Because a sense of humor in conversation makes both speakers and listeners feel better as it smoothes out their interactions as a social lubricant. Those GTS grasping the correct norms of English pronunciation after much drilling on transcription are expected to speak English more efficiently and confidently than earlier and than their peers not undergone such training. The desired outcome will of course be achieved through constant practice and monitoring their performances.

Keywords
language gifted-students, gifted and talented students, IPA transcription reading, Nasreddin Hodja

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Introduction
Gifted and talented children often have advanced language skills early in their life, and they also identify exceptional reasoning and problem-solving abilities (Galbraith, 2000). When a gifted boy goes shopping with his mum, people would turn and stare (Freeman, 2015). Even a toddler sometimes would have "extremely grown-up" discussions that are out of character for most young children (ibid). If a child is obviously using language in a way that people would associate with a much older child, then he is judged as a gifted child. Such children are very curious and interested and learn to read spontaneously. The rapid pace at which they learn is something which makes them stand out from their peers even before kindergarten (ibid).

GTS show have extraordinary capacity in intellectual, creative, artistic or leadership areas or in specific academic fields (Mastropieri, 2010). According to Johnsen (2004) their giftedness derives from these attributes. Piaget (1964) claims that a child's ability to use informative language depends on his intellectual development. 4th grade students can handle concrete operations (7-11/12 years), and they can show their intelligence through logical and systematic manipulation of
symbols. As they perform operational thinking, private language or speech for oneself diminishes (Foley and Thompson, 2003). Studies of Scott and Ytreberg (1990) have shown that 8 or 10 years-old children have a language with all the basic elements in place (Saffran, 2001). As they are skillful users of their mother tongue, they are also aware of the main rules of syntax in their own language. Scott and Ytreberg (1990) has found out that by the age of ten, children can understand abstracts, symbols and can generalize and systematize items (Martinez, 2014). This gives one the idea that most children who are eight to ten year old will have some sort of language awareness which they bring with them into the foreign language classroom (Scott, 1990).

Halliwell (1992) suggests on the same line that young children do not come either to the language classroom empty-handed. An already well-established set of instincts along with skills and characteristics helping them to learn another language accompany them. As a matter of fact, little children are already very good at interpreting meaning without understanding exactly the words themselves. They already have a great skill in using some limited language materials creatively and they frequently learn indirectly rather than directly (Rosa, 2008). They take great pleasure in finding and creating fun in what they do, they have a ready imagination and above all they take great delight in talking.

The general characteristics of gifted learners are their inherent advanced verbal and higher order thinking skills. Their high aptitude for learning gives indicates that they have a high learning potential for a rapid competence development in foreign languages. Hayes et al. (1998), claims that “there is a strong tie between an ability to express oneself in a language and an ability to learn.” Van Tassel-Baska (2000) strongly urges the teaching of foreign languages to the GT curriculum in order to maximize the linguistic understanding that is in conformity with their abilities.

Yunus (2013) claims that students with high-ability use their gifts to speak are also able to analyze the structure of the target language and compare it to other languages. In another study on the bilingual language development of a gifted child, Hoh (2005) found out that "the gifted child, driven by a strong desire to communicate mental meanings to others, often seems to operate outside of the linguistic and cognitive constraints restricting the general population" (ibid).

What seems to be important here is that especially the teachers of gifted students must be aware of their students’ needs, their learning patterns and ability levels in different areas of foreign language learning. They must focus especially on the oral communication part, because speech training is the ultimate goal of language learning (Okan-Ispinar, 2009). The institutions and the teachers dealing with the training of gifted students must provide this skill to those requiring it. Only through an extensive study of sound and rhythm patterns of the target language can one attain perfection on the oral expression of the target language. And the amount of
practice this skill requires is the choice and the limit of every gifted student who is prepared to afford it (ibid).

**The Nature of “Linguistically” Gifted and Talented Students**

Generally the language-wise GTS are distinguished by these traits (adapted from Lin, 2016):

- Their communicative skills, creative flair, i.e. they love to write or talk on imaginative and coherent ways and elaborate and organize their contents in a way exceptionally for their peers and they do this with great perseverance, and
- Their power of arguing and reasoning by grasping the essence of any content and reorganize it in ways that are that are logical and offer new syntheses or insights.
- They justify opinions convincingly, they use questions and other forms of enquiry to elicit information and take up or challenge others’ points of view.
- Through their awareness of language they understand the nature of language and show a special awareness of features such as rhyme, intonation or accent in spoken language, and the grammatical organization of written texts.
- They show an interest and enthusiasm for language study, including an awareness of the relationship between the sounds and words of different languages that are not apparent to most of their peers.

**The “Foreign Language-Wise” GTS**

Some special students we call foreign “language-wise-gifted” students are those who are more inclined than their peers in learning foreign languages. They also identify their talents by such characteristics (adapted from Renzulli, 2007 and Belin, 2008):

- They are curious about how the new language they want to learn works and investigate its special characteristics
- They show a strong desire to recognize grammatical patterns and functions of new words; they put language pieces together by themselves; they apply principles from what they have learned to new situations and use them in a different context, often with humor.
- They show their creativity and imagination when using language, i.e. they often go beyond the boundaries of their knowledge and wish to initiate exchanges and create a new language.
- They have an outstanding power of retention. They pick up new words and structures very quickly. They are able to use technical vocabulary to discuss language items. They have excellent aural and oral skills and are able to cope with rapid streams of sounds. They identify and memorise new sounds and
‘chunks’ of language. They are able to listen and to reproduce foreign sounds accurately.

- They can apply principles from a known language to the learning of new ones. They make connections and classify words and structures to help them learn more efficiently; they evaluate new language critically, they recognize the grammatical structure of the new language.
- They constantly ask ‘what, how, why, how come’ questions.
- They show an intense interest in and empathy for the cultural features of the new language they are learning; they like to use idioms in the target language and explore the history and the traditions of the language and share knowledge they gather with their peers.
- They have effective communication strategies of their own. They use linguistic-non-linguistic clues to infer meaning. They are flexible in thinking, show flair, intuition and creativity. They try to extrapolate general rules from examples, and can make connections.

Training of GTS in the World and in Turkey in view of Foreign Languages Teaching

At the turn of the twentieth century, advancements in education and psychology brought empirical and scientific credibility to the field of gifted education. The early studies of giftedness in the 1920s and 30s evolved from research on mental inheritance, subnormal children, construction of instruments to measure both the sub and supernormal, and the realization that graded schools could not adequately meet the needs of all children (Obied, 2014). Pioneers, such as Lewis Terman and Leta Hollingworth, spearheaded the movement and conducted some of the first widely published research studies on gifted children (ibid). The field of gifted education continued to evolve mainly in response to the changing needs of every country involved, especially after the Soviet Union’s launch of Sputnik in the late 1950s (ibid). Toward the close of the twentieth century, the Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act funded such entities as the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented and provided grant monies for gifted education research (NAGC, 2016) In turn, a call was made for additional research and programming in the field of gifted education. The issuance of national standards by the National Association for Gifted Children also helped solidify the field's intent and provide school districts across the country with a set of programming criteria. Published in 2004, A Nation Deceived reported on the advantages of acceleration for gifted children, which illustrated America's inability to properly meet the needs of its most able students despite the overwhelming research supporting acceleration (Colangelo, 2004). The twenty-first century represents a new era where the possibilities are limitless and, hopefully, the future for gifted and talented children will be a national
priority (NAGD, 2016). As special focus is placed on the technological aspect of GTS training especially since the emergence of computer-assisted language learning CALL presented great opportunities for the 21st century (Gündüz, 2005). The educational technology provided for GTS’ second/foreign language education will be effected dramatically through the introduction of CALL as the new technologies rapidly advance language teaching capabilities and challenge practitioners to provide optimum learning environments for the future (Butler-Pascoe, 2011).

As for the GTS in Turkey, the State Anatolian High Schools have been the most prominent examples during the last 50 years apart from some private institutions (Demirel, 1983). They were founded in 1970s and selected their students via a general exam mostly based on their academic achievement. In those schools, students attended first a prep class at the beginning in which they took an extensive course in a foreign language (mostly English), and then continued on with their education in that language. The practice continued until 2005 then except for the 10, and then the foreign language hours were dropped. The focus in mainly on the teaching of mathematics and science performance and the performance of the graduates is above the national average; therefore the gifted and talented students’ needs could partially be met by these schools, if not in English but particularly for math and science courses (Eyre, 2003). Apart from that school there are 60 Science and Art Centers (Bilim ve Sanat Merkezleri) around the country to serve the current 682 thousand GTS (Biamag, 2016). In such centers English instructed is given on a voluntary basis and by the level and the pace of the GT students enrolled in the course as a separate group. Within a special “Support Program” outlined by the Ministry of Education curriculum the instruction is given mostly on “drama activities” and activities on the GTS’ oral self-expression is focused (Van BİLSEM, 2016).

Apart from the Education Ministry’s Science and Art Centers providing supportive education to GTS in Turkey, there are also such formations as research and implementation centers within every university campus. One of them is the “Center for Special Education Research” at Bülent Ecevit University where GTS are given special education and training. The director of the center Assoc.Prof. Hasan Sait Tortop has founded a new program titled “Program for the Gifted Students’ Bridge with University (EPGBU)” for academically gifted students (Tortop, 2013). As highly able students learn better and faster than their peers, they could benefit more from such a special instruction allowing them to speak more clearly and intelligibly.

What is the Best Way to Learn the Correct Speech Norms?
The most preferred of the four skills of learning English (i.e. reading, listening, writing and speaking) is naturally the fourth one as it allow the learner oral
communication with confidence and competence (Segura Alonso, 2012). Because students communicating effectively feel satisfied as they are able to express their ideas and opinions, share experiences, and build relationships with others. But when they struggle to express themselves, they feel unvalued and insecure (Eyre, 2003). As human beings, we all want to participate in group discussions and have an impact on the society around us. By speaking better English, people all over the world can hear our voice (Gates, 2015). But one must do it according to certain acceptable norms otherwise miscommunications, misunderstandings occur in everyday interaction. People, despite their desires to communicate successfully, misunderstand each other due to mispronunciations or wrong stress placement in words (Anwar, 2010).

In order to learn to speak English correctly one must first get to know the specific sounds (vowels and consonants) and their combinations, then the rhythm and stress pattern used in that language. We must be especially careful with the weak and strong forms of syllable pronunciations i.e. on which syllable the stress is placed and the correlation of stressed syllables with one another. Another very important factor is where to link words and where to pause (IPA) is an organization to establish norms for almost all languages in the world for acceptable pronunciation and stress pattern, so speaking English by their standards is a great help to learn good pronunciation. The IPA symbols showing such phonetic features (IPA) represent both individual sound-units and where the stress, linking and breaks should be used in utterances. Apart from studying the IPA transcriptions, the learner needs an advisor to check his progress especially a native if possible. The speaker’s speed is an important factor when speaking. If we speak fast, our listener will find it hard to understand us. To improve one’s spoken English the best thing to do is to talk with a native speaker. However that is not always possible and our environment may not provide sufficient opportunities for oral practice. Internet is a great help to listen to spoken English and we can even find speaking partners through Skype, Facebook etc. Of course learning correctly at the first stage is a sure way of avoiding mistakes or repeating them.

**IPA Phonetic Notation Featuring Segmental and Suprasegmental Features**

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is an alphabetic system of phonetic notation based primarily on the Latin alphabet (ibid). It was devised by the International Phonetic Association as a standardized representation of the sounds of oral language. The IPA is designed to represent only those qualities of speech that are part of oral language: phones, phonemes, intonation, and the separation of words and syllables (ibid). It has developed consistently ever since it was first started in 1886 in Paris by a group of French and British language teachers, led by the French linguist Paul Passy (Kohler, 1981). The idea of making the IPA was first suggested by Otto Jespersen in a letter to
Paul Passy (Jule, 1989). It was developed by A.J. Ellis, Henry Sweet, Daniel Jones, and Passy. Since its creation, the IPA has undergone a number of revisions. After major revisions and expansions in 1900 and 1932, the IPA remained unchanged until the IPA Kiel Convention in 1989. Apart from the addition and removal of symbols, changes to the IPA have consisted largely in renaming symbols and categories and in modifying typefaces. Extensions to the IPA for speech pathology were created in 1990 and officially adopted by the International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association in 1994 (ICPLA, 2015). The English text of Tales of Nasreddin Hodja in this article was adapted from Charles Downing (1964) and the notation is based on the last IPA listing of Prof John Wells’ (Wells, 2008) principles on individual word transcription from his Longman Pronunciation Dictionary. The broad transcription with the addition of meticulous additions of triphthongs and especially of suprasegmental elements such as primary-secondary-tertiary stress distinctions, linking and juncture are based on the author experimentations and findings shared by many of his colleagues (Hartono, 2015).

Segmental Features

Wovels


Long Wovels: [aː] ask, alm, palm, almond, calm, half, pass, father, laughter [iː] beat, seat, leave, sheet, receive, brief, negro, secret, genial [ɔː] all, walk, talk, salt, lawyer, caught, daughter, bought [uː] two, too, do, food, fool, group, souvenir


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Four-Vowel Clusters: [ɪaːʊ] Iowa; • [ɪaːʊ] I  owe [ɪaːʊ] fifty  hours, sixty  hour week, the  ours [ɪaːʊ] miaowin, meaowin [ɪʊə] you  earn; • [ɪʊə] you  were, voyeur, voyeurism [o:ʊə] coordination; go  or die [o:ʊə] coerce, coercive; so  urge him!, go  earn, know  earth [ʊə:ɪə] require, enquire, acquire, wire, choir, wireless, wiring

Consonants: [b] IN. battery, beach, bring, blow, bought, break, broken; MD. terrible, algebra, maybe, symbol; FN. bribe, curb, cab, lab, grab [dʒ] IN. jobless, gin, gym, jam, joke, just; MD. adjective, adjust, dungeon, tragedy, grandeur; FN. bridge, abridge, oblige, village [ʧ] IN. church, challenger, change, chalk, choosing, chairman; MD. bachelor, kitchen, acheivement; FN. march, itch, catch, match [d] IN. door, drive, dream, dry, draw, dreadful; MD. study, pedal, children, garden, sudden, harden; FN. field, God, good, cold, sand [ʤ] IN. the, that, these, those; MD. mother, breathing, weather, worthy, loathing; FN. smoothe, loathe, breathe, teethe, clothe [f] IN. flee, fly, father, fun, food, frequently, frozen, French, photo; MD. offer, rifle, nephew, surface; FN. surf, rough, tough, laughter [g] IN. give, gave, given, girl, gate, game, get, guilt, guitar MD. begin, began, forget • [ɡ] IN. grown, ground, great, finger; MD. exit, exist, existence; trigger; FN. dog, doggie, dug, frog, dig, drag [h] IN. here, hurry, hesitation; MD. inhale, forehead, behaviour; • [f] IN. hat, hut, holiday, whole; MD. ; behind, alcohol; FN. Allah [ʒ] IN. genre, gendarme, azure; MD. measure, pleasure, usually, vision, visionary, treasure; FN. garage, barrage, corsage, prestige [k] IN. came, key, kiss, camera, chemistry MD. orchid; • [k] IN. cook, clock, clear; MD. focus, focal, anxious, anchorage, secret, microbe, soccer, account;
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FN. ask, talk, headache, mosque, rock, Munich [l] IN. lead, led, leave, left, light, little; MD. blown • [l] MD. silly, folly, Billy, spelt, Molly, jolly; FN. milk, label, tell, bold, dull, till, call [m] IN. made, mid, mode, matter; immoral, immediate, comic, MD. smoking, smiling, smashed, hamper, warmth, glimpse, caramel, tremor, camera; FN. home, same, come, bloom, shame, stream [n] IN. name, nature, net, not; MD. international, unreal, winter, snowball, unknown; FN. again, gone, inn, fountain, learn, brain, men [ŋ] MD. singing, English, single, longer, younger, Washington, anxious, thank, ink, sink, banker; FN. nothing, strong, sung, bang [p] IN. pair, pear, peach, prisoner, pain, piece, payment; MD. repair, airplane, appear; FN. sap, sip, cup, stop, help, sleep, type [r] IN. rock, rib, row, wrung; MD. foreign, orange; • [ə] FN. errand, err, stirring, repair, where, forever, singer, traveller, governor [s] IN. ceiling, sad, safe, seven, sister; stay, slip, cigarette; Ceasar, MD. concert, closeness; FN. moss, less, hiss, miss, race, peace [ʃ] IN. shop, shell, sheep, ship, Chicago, chef, chauffeur, champagne; MD. ocean, facial, brochure, precious, sociable, social, appreciate, superficial; FN. brush, push, crash, fish, Blanche [t] IN. time, tough, try, Thames, train; MD. written, botle, rotten, Britain, certain, vital, mortal; FN. straight, right, start, burst, brushed [θ] IN. theatre, thread, thumb, think, through, thin, throw; MD. author, wealthy, method, worthless; FN. south, warmth, month, death [v] IN. value, voice, very, victory, vital, vote, van; MD. several, service, clever, Stephen; FN. eve, disprove, love, curve, grave, five [w] IN. well, water, wag, wig, wit, wet, want, wait, world; MD. awake, swimming, sweet, question, quiet, quake, quarrel, language [j] IN. yellow, young, unionist; MD. new, nephew, beautiful, opinion, cute, familiar, beyond, cucumber, argue, tortilla, European [z] IN. zone, zapping, zoology, zebra, zip; MD. crazy, dizzy, disaster, nosy, resign; FN. rise, erase, buzz, rayss, advise, Mars, swims

Suprasegmental Features

**Linking Varieties:**

**Final Consonant INITIAL Vowel Linking** [cns-vw]: bread and butter; head and shoulders; a lot of us; the plane is arriving; great anger; whenever either of the wives would ask him;

**Final Vowel INITIAL Vowel Linking** [vw-vw]: to an apple; the apple; to eat; Hodja asked; Hodja answered; you earn; to Aksehir; go a mile; one after the other; his wife again told him
Linking R [ə r]: better off; far away; more ice; mother and son; where ignorance is; either ate it or; clever uncle; for a penny; later a man; where are; owner of a shop; forty year old elephant;

Intrusive R [vwl(r)vwl]: the idea of; law and order; vanilla ice cream; Casanova in Hell; I saw it; Brenda and Eddie; China and Japan

Elision: [t+t] wan(t) o go (wanna go), go(t t) o (gotta go); [g+t] goin(g t) o go (gonna go); [r] comfo(r)table; [h] tell (h) im, tell (h) er, give (h) im, give (h) er; [ð] give (th) em, tell (th) em; [f] fi(f) th;

[ə, æ] temp(e) rate, veg(e) table, comfo(r)table, inte(r) national

Assimilation: [dəmbi, stli] (don’t be silly!), [fupol] (football), [ˈkʌbəd] (cubby)

Plosion: [d’l] middle, little, it’ll (lateral); [d’n] couldn’t, mightn’t, hadn’t (nasal)


Stress Patterns:


Junctures:

Shorter Sustained Juncture [–ː]: [ˈælənˌsɛd → ˈkamˌhɪəˌv] [ɔːri du ˈnot oːnəʊ həˌneɪm → adˈmɪtɪd həˈdʒəˌv] [ˈwɔtˌsəʊˌubənəs kənˌsɪl –dəˌdʒənənəs rəˌviələ] –

Longer Sustained Juncture [–ːː]: [əˈfjuːˌtaimz → həˈdʒəˌvˈbrətˌhʊmˌsəmˈmɪt → ˈdɹæŋkənənəs rəˌviələ] –
Using Popular Stories to Teach ELT Students Speaking Skills

The main objective of EFL teaching must be to help students to communicate fluently in the target language although most teachers still believe that an EFL class should focus on mastering linguistic elements only. The recent trend in EFL teaching however indicates the necessity of integrating literature because of its rich potential to provide an authentic model of language use (Pardede, 2016). Among literary genres, short stories seem to be the most suitable choice for this due to their potential to help students enhance the four skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing-more effectively because of the motivational benefit embedded in the stories (ibid).

Out of the four learning skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing) most preferred is speaking as it involves oral communication with confidence and competence. Because when we communicate effectively we are able to express our ideas and opinions, share experiences, and build relationships with others. But when we struggle to express ourselves, we feel unvalued and insecure. As human beings, we want to participate in group discussions and have an impact on the society around us. By speaking better English, people all over the world can hear our voice (Gates, 2015). In order to learn to speak English like any new language we first need to get to know the specific sounds (vowels and consonants) and their combinations, then the rhythm and stress pattern of that language. We must especially be careful with the weak and strong forms of syllable pronunciations i.e. on which syllable the stress is placed and the correlation of stressed syllables with one another. Another very important factor is where to link words and where to pause. International Phonetic Association (IPA) is an organization to establish norms for almost all languages in the world for acceptable pronunciation and stress pattern, so speaking English by their standards is a great help to learn good pronunciation. The IPA symbols do not only represent individual sound-units, but also show where the stress, linking and breaks should be used by special signs. Tempo is an important factor in speaking; when we speak fast, our listener will find it hard to understand us, when we speak slowly then they get bored. To improve one’s spoken English; the best thing to do is to talk with a native speaker. However that is not always possible and our environment may not provide sufficient opportunities for oral practice.
The Internet is a great help to listen to spoken English and we can even find speaking partners through Skype, Facebook, etc. Of course, learning correctly at the first stage is a sure way of avoiding mistakes or repeating them. Tales of Nasreddin Hodja can promote speaking in English. By studying vowels, consonants, their combinations and stress patterns through accompanying recorded materials on the Internet and practicing on them one can easily and quickly grasp the basics of English phonetics. Repetition is very important in remembering and using new vocabulary. Such stories often have an imaginative or fantastic element to them. This arouses interest in learners and makes them more motivated to talk about the story. Successful speaking activities connect the learners with authentic situations and expose them to real-time processing of language. Such activities provide opportunities for spontaneous and private speech. Therefore, speaking activities involve pair and group work so that learners can feel more relaxed. Moreover, there should be a minimum of teacher-correction so as not to undermine fluency. The solid principle of learning based on involvement is essential, and so is “the practice that makes the skill perfect”. Now before everything else we must go through the fundamentals of phonetics which are the “segments” and “suprasegmentals” of the target language.

Who is Nasreddin Hodja and How can His Tales Inspire Turkish Students to Speak Better English

Nasreddin Hodja, the 13th century populist philosopher and wise man of Akşehir is famous throughout the world for his subtle humour. His tales have traditionally been used for pedagogic purposes also including ELT (English Language Teaching) and specifically for drama and pronunciation practice (Yurtbaşi, 2015).

Such familiar stories as the tales of Nasreddin Hodja can promote speaking English and they often have an imaginative or fantastical element to them (Jianing, 2106). This arouses interest in learners and makes them more motivated to talk about the story. Successful speaking activities connecting the learners with authentic situations, expose students to real-time processing of language (Chou, 2016). Such activities provide them with opportunities for spontaneous and private speech. Therefore, speaking activities involve pair and group work so that learners can feel more relaxed, possibly with a minimum of teacher-correction so as not to undermine their fluency (Jones, 2007).

Conscientious English teachers can motivate their GTS by combining their humoristic intelligence with their aspirations to expose their linguistic abilities. They can do this by leading them to learn and polish up their pronunciation by IPA’s standard and acceptable norms (either in RP or GA). Teachers can ask their students to study specific English vowels, consonants, their combinations and stress patterns through on the listing along with their accompanying recorded materials on
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YouTube and practice them loudly so that they should easily and quickly grasp the basics of English phonetics. By doing that they not only learn to speak intelligible English but also get inspired by Nasreddin Hodja’s age-old wisdom. This could then be very well the case of the pedagogic motto which goes like “What is learned in pleasure is learned in full measure.” (Rhyme).

Methodology
After each and every one of the English segmental and suprasegmental features have been thoroughly grasped in the listing given above the following 36 tales of Hodja can be used for practice. All of these tales (adapted from Charles Downing (1964) are very well known by Turkish GTS have been transcribed, orally recorded and uploaded in YouTube (Texts in Phonetic Transcription) by this author for drilling purposes. GTS are urged to practice them loud either by themselves alone or with their mates in pair; but their progress must definitely be monitored and evaluated by their instructors occasionally. Competitions provide great impetus to excel, and success is the result for consistency in practice. Involvement and repetition on the part of the learner are the key issues in this respect. The solid principle of learning based on “involvement” is essential in English speaking, as stated in Benjamin Franklin’s quote: “Tell me I forget, show me I may remember, but involve me then I’ll learn.” (Humes, 2001). And so in order to reach perfection in crystal clear pronunciation in English, GTS must go through the relevant drills in order to produce the segments and suprasegmentals above and practice them on these thirty-six Nasreddin Hodja tales below very carefully if they don’t want to run into road accidents in their oral proficiency.

The IPA Transcriptions of Thirty-Six Nasreddin Hodja Tales (Downing, 1964 /Yurtbaşi, 2015)

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04 [də ˈdɛizə, ˌrɛmədæn] -- 1 [ɪn ˈræmə, ɗæn → ə ˈspreɪ əmənə θə, ˈmɔzləms → 2 ʃədʒa bɪˈgænˌɔɪt → bæt ˈpʊtɪŋə, ˈstɔnˌɪn ə ɔklə → 3 tə əʊnˌuˌwɪtʃ, ˌdɛz−ɪt ɪt əʊn ˈwʊdz] 4
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Nasreddin Hodja may inspire …


12 [ˌwəsə təˌgəʊu] -- 1 [ˌdəˌəˌpɪrəˌaːskt ˌfədəˌdə ˌə ˌtə ˌwəsəˌwɪ ˌəˌfʊdˌgəʊ uː ˌənˌəˌfjuːnət
Nasreddin Hodja may inspire ...
Nasreddin Hodja may inspire ...
Nasreddin Hodja may inspire …
Nasreddin Hodja may inspire ...

17 [əˈjaw ˈgot də, lɪvə − oblat ə ˈwit ˈnut ɪn, ˈdoːiːt ðət − 18 bɪˈkoʊz, ar əˈstɪfl ˈhaw ə ˈresəpɪ]


Nasreddin Hodja may inspire …
Nasreddin Hodja may inspire …
Conclusion
The GTS in foreign languages need a special training than their peers matching their own pace and desire to excel. In their individualized education programs, they could be offered a special technique called the IPA transcription reading to promote their
oral English proficiency. The system involves the discovery of sound-units and stress-linking-juncture features of the speech in the target language by the learner and practicing them on a well known text. As for drilling purposes 36 traditionally well known tales from Nasreddin Hodja have been selected with a view to combine pleasure with speech practice. While gifted students enjoy the wit and fun of the most humoristic literary piece of Turkish literature, they also grasp and practice the basic pronunciation rules of the language they are learning leading them to speak English more clearly and intelligibly.

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