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**Investigating Reading Difficulties in English at the Level of
Pronunciation among EFL Learners
The Case of Second Year learners at Latif Massoud High School-
Branis**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial Fulfillment for
the Requirements of the Master Degree in Sciences of the language

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Dedication

To my dearest parents

My fiancée; Miss Bencharef

To all my brothers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate all praise is to Allah, the Lord of the worlds; and prayers and peace be upon Mohamed His servant and messenger.

First and foremost, we must acknowledge our limitless thanks to Allah, the Ever-Magnificent; the Ever-Thankful, for His help and bless. We are totally sure that this work would have never become truth without His guidance.

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Abstract

Reading is an important skill that should be practiced and improved; however, EFL learners face difficulties when reading in English, specifically at the level of pronunciation. This may result from the lack of concentration and motivation or the difficulty of reading skill. This research work aims to investigate reading difficulties in English at the level of pronunciation among EFL learners in high school, Branis. To test the two research hypotheses that EFL learners may face some difficulties the level of pronunciation when reading in English, and Learners' difficulties may be mainly caused by the learners' motivation, concentration, or the difficulty of pronunciation, we opted for a qualitative approach. We used a questionnaire which was administered to (32) second year EFL learners in high school, Branis. Eventually, after collecting, analyzing and interpreting the obtained results from the questionnaire, the findings assert that students face difficulties at the level of pronunciation when they read in English. Moreover, learners' motivation, concentration, and the difficulty of pronunciation were the main causes of learners' problems, thus, they recommend for more practice. As a result, our two hypotheses were confirmed.

Key words: Difficulties, EFL learners, At the Level of Pronunciation, Reading in English, Reading Skill

List of Abbreviation

EFL: English as a foreign language

E.g.: For example

Et al: And others

RS: Reading skill

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General Introduction

Introduction

Learning English language has taken importance in worldwide communication where English becomes dominant and used all over the world. Teaching and learning English have witnessed development in several fields and these development needs four basic and necessary skills: listening, speaking, writing and reading. This later is considered one of the basic skills of language, and the most difficult skill because it requires the mastery of correct word pronunciation which helps EFL learners to acquire the language. Reading at the level of pronunciation is a significant obstacle that hinders learners in their reading performance.

2. Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, Language is very important factor needed in our daily life. Fruthermore, students have crucial problems in reading especially at the level pronunciation. Thus, improper pronunciation leads to communication breakdowns and misunderstanding.

Reading is a mental process, an act of communication in which the ideal language transferred from the sender to the receiver. It is a complicated stage where the speaker transfers the language from the mind to the vocal cords. Pronunciation is the way of how words combined and articulated by the speaker. This term pronunciation is restricted to make differentiation in the qualities of speech sounds, stress, and tones.

The majority of students of high school find that the reading skill as a challenging task during their English Language learning due to the difficulties of pronunciation and the causes of these problems are learners' motivation and concentration, or the difficulty of pronunciation. Our research attempts to investigate the difficulties of reading at the level of pronunciation in order to explore the problems that face readers of high schools at the level of pronunciation and combination.

3. Aims of the Study

The current research aims to investigate the difficulties of reading in English at the level of pronunciation among EFL learners. Moreover, it tends to determine students problems in reading English especially in pronunciation by highlighting the main difficulties they face

4. Research Questions

We address the following questions for the purpose of answering a certain problem of the present work:

1. What are the difficulties that learners face at the level of pronunciation when they read in English?
2. What are the possible solutions to overcome these difficulties?

5. Research Hypotheses

We hypothesize that:

1. EFL learners may face some difficulties at the level of pronunciation when they read in English.
2. Learners' difficulties may be mainly caused by the learners' lack of motivation, lack of concentration, or the difficulty of pronunciation.

6. Research Methodology

This research will employ the descriptive method because it is the most suitable in order to reach research aims.

6.1. Population and sample

The population of the present study consists of all second year students branch of division (32 students) of High school of Latif Massoud in Branis during the academic year 2019-2020.

The sample (32 students) is the whole population because there is only one group in the high school.

The sample we have received was (32) students. The selection of second year students was by collaboration and help of the teacher

6.2. Data Gathering tools

In order to gather the required data for the current study, a questionnaire will be distributed to students. It attempts to gather the data that is concerned with the difficulties of reading English at the level of pronunciation, and to discover the mistakes and errors that students make in pronunciation.

7. Significance of the Study

The current study is significant to investigate the difficulties of reading in the area of pronunciation that are committed by EFL learners. Also it will shed the light on the possible solutions to develop reading skill especially pronunciation.

8. Data Analysis

The data of this research was gathered online and analyzed by online questionnaire according to the circumstances of the country.

9. Structure of the Dissertation

The present research is divided into three chapters; the first two chapters are theoretical and the third chapter is practical. The first two chapters labeled “theoretical background” where we will explain all the variables that are related to our study.

The first chapter will be related with the first variable. We will begin in the first part with the definition, types of reading and reading sub skills. While, the second part will be related with reading models, reading comprehension difficulties and text selection.

The second chapter will define the second variable which is pronunciation. This chapter will introduce English pronunciation and the approaches and methods to teaching pronunciation. Another part speaks about factors that affects learning pronunciation, features of pronunciation. The third part will discuss common pronunciation problems and the aspects of pronunciation, pronunciation goals and how we speak with foreign accent.

The third chapter is the practical chapter. We explain the methods that are used in the study including the participants, methods and research designs, data collection tools, and the procedures. In the end we will shows the results and interpreting the findings.

Chapter One: Reading Comprehension

Chapter One: Reading Comprehension

Introduction

Nowadays, teaching foreign languages has become very essential, and a complex process in the Algerian educational context. Because of the world-wide changes, teaching and learning foreign languages in Algeria has witnessed development at the level of many aspects. In fact, learning English needs the mastery of the four fundamental skills; namely listening, speaking, reading and writing, to master the language.

This chapter is devoted to review a basic skill called reading. This chapter will introduce definitions of reading from different perspectives, and will present types of reading model. Then it will deal with various strategies that involve readers by reading sub-skills. Reading models are also faced as an additional section in the chapter. In addition to that, there is a stage in teaching reading comprehension. The chapter shows some difficulties that English learners face in the process of reading comprehension. Finally, the last part of the chapter will discuss reading and text selection strategy.

1.1. Definition of Reading Skill

For decades, reading is regarded as one of the most fundamental skills in learning process. Therefore, it was defined from different corners by many scholars. Rivers (1998), defined reading as: “the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and a pleasurable activity”. In addition, reading is composed from two parts, the written form and the oral form. Ur (1996), discussed these two for as: when a read the words, but I don’t know what they mean’ is not, therefore, reading in this sense. He or she is merely decoding translating written symbols into corresponding sounds.”(Penny, 1996, p. 138).

Moreover, Goodman (1973) asserts that reading is a dynamic process proposed by the reader interact in which ideas comes from the text. As he argued that the learner:

[...] interacts with a message encoded by the writer. Concentrates his total prior experience and concepts, he has attained, as well as the language competence he has achieved (Goodman, Analysis of Reading Miscues. In Smith, F. Psychologist and, 1973, p. 50).

In addition, Baudoin, Bober, Clarke, Dobson, and Silberstein (1994) stated that the difficulty of reading occurs in comprehension and recognition of written words and spoken language. Making sense of words either spoken or written is difficult because of the difficulty of concentration of the learner to the words. Adams (1994, 102) as cited in (Bouawina, 2010, p 17) asserts that “decoding the words of the text separately is important to build an overall understanding of the text”. In addition, Pang (2010) defined reading as “complex activity that involves both perception and thought” (Pang, 2010, p. 6). which is that reading skill is a task that involves emotions and productive thoughts to develop this skill for human being.

1.2. Types of Reading

There are different types of reading as follows:

1.2.1. Intensive reading

Definitions of intensive reading defined by different scholars and each scholar speak about specific point of view. Aebersold and Field (1997), assumed that intensive reading is a careful reading, used through comprehension that provided by teachers. Also, intensive reading focuses on reading a text with details that mainly take place in classroom. Nuttal (1982), defined that “The intensive reading lesson is intended primarily to train students in reading strategies” (Nuttal, 1982, p. 17). In other words, it is used to train students to overlap strategies to strategies and techniques that facilitate them to read. However, Harmer (2010) in his view claims that the reader should not stop at every single point or analyze each idea alone, but rather he should make a general comprehension of the text and to extract the meaning by taking the content into account.

1.2.2. Extensive Reading

Hafiz (1989) assumed that extensive reading refers to the readings of learners that might practice outside the classroom. For example, reading books, novels, and news paper articlesetc. He assumed that:

The pedagogical value attributed to extensive reading is based on the assumption that exposing learners to large quantities of meaningful and interesting L2 material willing the long run produce a beneficial effect on the learner's command of the L2.

(Hafiz, 1989, p. 5).

In addition, Day, Bamford, Renandya, Jacobs, and Yu (1998) argued that extensive reading used for pleasure and named by “joyful reading”. The reader enriches his knowledge from the part of expanding vocabulary, and comprehension of spelling forms. Also he/she picks his/her owns books to read. While the teacher guides his/her learner to choose a specific source of books according to their level of comprehension. In other words, this research asserts that reading is a matter of pleasure and the readers pick their preferable books in order to develop their vocabulary and comprehension.

1.3. Reading sub skills

There are different reading strategies that help learners to solve their reading problems and develop their competence in reading. Researchers have worked on this item and studied the benefits of the strategies in the learning process.

As a beginning, Cohen (1990) defined RS as a mental process chosen by the reader consciously, in order to achieve certain reading tasks. In other part, Anderson (1991) assumed that reading strategies is a cognitive process, which readers take to consideration in order to acquire, restore, and retrieved data.

1.3.1. Skimming

Skimming is a quick selective reading where the reader is allowed to gather the information of what the text is about. More specifically moving the eyes in the selected page and read few parts (Grellet, 1981, p. 84). Skimming is an eye select of few parts to know what the general idea is.

1.3.2. Scanning

Scanning according to Wallace (1980) is a quick selective unfocused reading where the reader collects a particular detail when reading such as a name, date, place ...etc. In addition, Baudoin (1997) gives certain steps when scanning a text for a bit of information:

- The reader chooses the target text clearly, before starting looking for it,
- Using an acceptable source.
- The reader runs his eyes all over the print skipping all the unnecessary words.
- He stops only at the information needed and picks it up without going beyond.

1.3.3 Careful Reading

Careful reading is required from the reader to read the text slowly with concentration, and obtains detailed information from the text. The reader should reread the text certain times in order to compare and connect the information that he read and with his prior knowledge of information. In the same meaning Urquhart & Weir (2014, p. 6) argue that the reading process is for the sake of learning and the speed of careful reading takes longer time than skimming and scanning.

1.3.4. Predicting

Prediction consisted important strategies in reading and as a psychological term it is a mental activity which human being makes a decision relying on previous knowledge and understands the context of the text without knowing all the terms that are included in. Christensen (1985), defined prediction in his book as: “the ability to anticipate the occurrence

of an event prior thoughts actual occurrence” (Christensen, 1985, p.15). Which means, that prediction occurs by the ability of taking events and prior thoughts into actual thought.

1.4. Reading Models

Reading models are an important stage in knowledge, just as any process. These models surrounded by various theories and models. Theorists argue that there are three models and each one has its own characteristics. Bottom-up model (letter to semantic), top-down model (semantic to letter), and interactive model is combination of the two last models. In this point of view Richards (1990) sees that reading is: “an integration of top-down processes that utilize background knowledge and schema, as well as bottom-up processes that are primarily text or data driven” (Richards, 1990, p. 77). Reading models are completion of top-down model which based on background knowledge and schema.

1.4.1. Bottom-up reading model

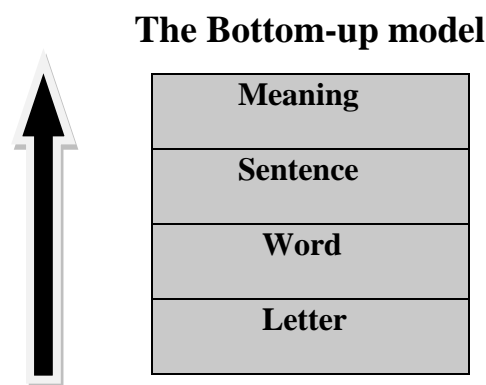
The bottom-up model is essentially a matter of decoding or put what is seen in the text. It is stimuli that takes word images and sounds from outside the world and transforms it to reading. In addition, Carrell, and Eisterhold (1988) assume that reading is just reading game, and the reader pay attention to smallest unit in text to catch the textual input. In general, the reader put what he reads in text his background information that comes from decoding and predicting in order to reach comprehension of the text.

In other words, Davies (1995) asserts that bottom-up models are models that process models starts from processing sequences from the bottom level of features of texts to higher level. For instance; start from identifying letters to words, to sounds, and sentences to reach finally to meaning and thinking. Also, Nunan (1994) talked about the bottom-up model that:

This letters or graphemes are matched with the Phonemes of the language. Phonemes, the minimal units of meaning in the sound system of Language are blended together to form words the derivation of meaning is thus the end of processing which language is translated from one representation to another (Nunan, 1991, p. 64).

He argued that this model is concerned with stress the ability to decode the text by self-knowledge and experience to obtain the meaning.

This followed figure is a summary of the function of the bottom up model summarized by the researcher



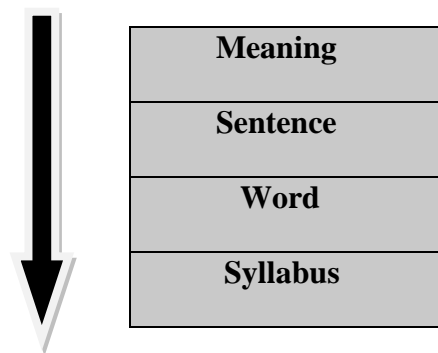
**Figure 1 the
Bottom-up
model**

1.4.2. The Top –down reading model

This is one of the models of reading, inside the dead view, which is opposite to bottom-up model, which defined by Davies (1995) as: “predict that the processing sequence proceeds from predictions about meaning to attention to progressively smaller units, for example, letters, visual features” (Davies, 1995, p. 165).which means that, the focus takes to letter-sounds and what is beneficial is the individual information that guided knowledge and expectations.

This model meaning takes background knowledge in the reading process in which meaning takes presence over the component. In addition to that, it neglects the importance of grammar in higher levels and shed lights on individual knowledge. In this meaning, Clarcke, M.A, and Sibestein (1977) they argued that ideas, information, and thoughts, to adopt a new prediction. (Chall, 1967), Stated that: “systematic direct teaching of decoding should be part of initial reading instruction”. In addition, top-down model includes decoding parts of text and it is a part of systematic teaching.

The Top-down model



**Figure 1 the
Top-down
model**

1.4.3. The Interactive reading model

The model is a combination of bottom-up and top-down models activate together to reach the immediate and quick access of information. It is also called parallel-and-the-interactive-compensatory-model. Stanovich (1980) affirms that:

An interactive model of reading appears to provide a more accurate conceptualization of reading performance than do strictly top-down and bottom up models. They provide a better account of the existing data on the use of orthographic structure and sentence context by poor and good readers

(Stanovitch, 1980, p. 31).

In this part, the bottom-up model and the top-down model works interactively as a chain in reading process, and the reader can hypothesize from the text source. In other part, Rumelhart (1976) assumes that reading skill is an interactive process which contains different levels from letter-level knowledge, letter-cluster knowledge, lexical-level knowledge, syntactic-level knowledge, and semantic-level knowledge. In this model the reader becomes more proficient and less attention in examine comprehension issues. In the same context, Carrell & Eisterhold (1983) assert that the reading process is where both two models collaborate at the same time:

The data that are needed to instantiate, or fill out, the schema become available through bottom up processing; top-down processing facilitates their assimilation if they are anticipated by/or consistent with the listener/reader's conceptual expectations. Bottom-up processing ensures that the listeners/readers will be sensitive to information that is novel or that does not fit their ongoing hypotheses about the content or structure of the text; top down processing helps the listeners/readers to resolve ambiguities or to select between alternative possible interpretations of the incoming data

(Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983, p, 557).

1.5. Teaching Reading Comprehension

Teaching reading comprehension is an important task in which the reader catches the meaning out of the text, and it is also at the same time difficult. Readers are allowed to read a text and choose a specific strategy that should be suitable to the text. For example, reading a scientific text needs specific method, than reading a poem. Talent reader use skimming and scanning in reading comprehension because reader use skimming to extract general ideas of the text and scanning to highlight specific information that are needed from the text.

In other part, training learners to skim are important to learners to extract the main idea of the text. Good readers are readers who look for part of text and ignore reading whole text. To understand the data of the chosen passage readers should use specific pre-reading questions. Finally; pre-reading stage, reading stage, and post-reading stage are strategies that have been suggested to be used in reading comprehension strategies.

1.5.1. Pre-Reading Stage

It is an important stage contains activities shed the light to learner to predict what he cognize about the topic and predict what they read or hear. Harmer (1991) States that with saying:

“We will not get students to interact properly with spoken and written materials unless we ensure that their desire to read or listen has been awakened. Especially where the subject matter of the texts may not be immediately appealing to them we have the responsibility to make students interested and to encourage them to tackle the text with positive anticipation”

(Harmer, 1991, p, 188)

In other words, Campos (2018) speaks about the purpose of reading strategies as:

- Establish a purpose for reading
- Improve vocabulary so students can complete the reading task successfully
- Predict what they are doing
- Establish what they know about a topic

To make this stage easier, a specific activities to be followed:

- Make predictions by using visuals and pictures.
- Asking questions related to the topic.
- Provide vocabularies that are used in the related topic
- Prepare learner for the text.

1.5.2. While-reading stage

It is an activity that helps the learner to focus on the content of the text and recognize its passage silently with the help of the teacher that he takes the role of monitor. The main reason of while-reading stage is help readers to read the text as if it was written in first language. (Richards, 1990, p. 87), defines this stage as:“ an integration of top-down processes that utilize background knowledge and schema, as well as bottom up processes that are primarily text or data driven”. He assumes that this stage is a combination of two reading processes: the top-down process and bottom-up process from using background knowledge and schema.

In addition, this stage attempts many purposes:

- Help students to identify the purpose of the writer by developing the sense of comprehension.
- Develop the linguistic knowledge of the students.
- Develop the comprehension of unfamiliar words.
- Train learners on how to skim and scan.

In other part, Campos (2018) suggested activities that used in this stage. For instance:

- Identifying the topic sentence, and remembering idea of each paragraph.
- Awareness about the general idea and specific idea.
- Identifying connector that are using in the text.
- Involving students to be able to use coding text.

1.5.3. Post-Reading Stage

Finally, this phase is a multiple activity between the learner and the teacher, and allows to the reader finally going further beyond the written text and think about it critically. Also, the teacher plays the role of evaluator in which he sees if the student has reached the process of reading or not, and taking to consideration the new vocabularies that have been understood by the learner in the reading process.

By ending reading comprehension stage, it is important to the teacher to add another task which contains activities and questions that are matched with the text. For instance, giving question to evaluate the comprehension of the reader like true/false questions, false statements, linking vocabularies...etc. Therefore, readers develop their reading comprehension by evaluating themselves according to the vocabulary knowledge that they had. Compos (2018), Classified some post-reading activities that help the reader in understanding the text.

- Making a creative discussion by asking five questions for 3 minutes.
- Quiz your classmates by asking students to prepare five questions about what they read in order to ask their classmates.
- Finding related news after finishing reading that could help learners.

1.6. Reading Comprehension Difficulties

Scholars on reading comprehension argue that students face difficulties when reading. According to, Graham, Beller (2004), assumed that reading comprehension had a crucial interference in developing students' abilities in classroom. Because It is very difficult task in gathering data from the text. In addition, they assume that students' development in reading is related with students' interest, skills, and how they are professional in decoding information, and fluent pronunciation. Also how they are aware about reading processes.

In addition, the complexity of texts influences reading comprehension. Meaning that, readers' fluency in language makes them able to understand deeply the text. Hence, oral ability is important when it comes in the way of acquiring new words and vocabularies from listening skill and to see how the reader is successful in comprehension. Also, having multiple synonyms of vocabularies helps students in knowing the difficult words and understands them according to its context (Dennis, 2008).

Another problem in reading comprehension among EFL learners includes coordinating conjunctions, prepositional phrases, participial phrases, and nominalizations. They tackle the ability of learner to understand and read the context (Nuttall, 2000). In addition to that, Complex sentences are sentences that consist of several clauses, and at times contain conjunctions such as although, because, furthermore, and however. One important category is the idioms and proverbs, which seem to be distinct from the learner's culture so that, he is going to translate a given proverb word by word, thus, he cannot obtain the real meaning but just the literary one. And the problem is that reader will translate each word by alone.

1.7 Reading and Text Selection

Reading comprehension process needs to be successful and play important role by choosing appropriate materials. Selecting appropriate text is important for teachers and learners, and depends on the knowledge and cognitive process of the learner. Actually, learners should select by themselves the type of text that they interest to read. And that what makes to the learner desire to read more and create a kind of motivation and classroom interaction. Shahudullah (1995) assumes that selecting a specific type of text to read for learners presents the linguistic degree and their content of knowledge. He states: "Students" present linguistic level and the level of their content and cultural schemata have to be taken into consideration in selecting texts for them" (Shahidullah, 1995, p. 222).

In addition, Lemov, Driggs & Woolway (2016), explained that selecting a text is a work done by the teacher in which he choose a suitable text for the student and every teacher is aware about the text he teach. Teachers should be able to develop learners thinking how to read and think deeply about outcomes of the text from vocabularies and new slangs. As a result, the students will be able to read any type of texts. Text selection helps learners to

choose something to read. When students want to buy, there is a specific platform for reading skill, and even without taking the manner of the teacher how he defines them.

Pretending that, there are different types of genres and books. But in fact, what students read shows how will they learn to read clearly than the first time that looks obvious. The learners will become more interested and will organize a specific time for reading. Thus, this will improve their reading skill, and it is an important point in developing the reading process. Finally, (Cook, 1990, p. 6) designed the following table which is a comparison between poor readers and good reader during the steps of reading.

	Good or mature readers	Poor or immature readers
Before Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Activate prior knowledge. ✓ Understand task and set Purpose. ✓ Set the appropriate strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Start reading without Preparation. ✓ Reading without knowing why. ✓ Read without considering how. ✓ To approach the material.
During Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Focus attention ✓ Anticipate and predict. ✓ Use fix-up strategies when Lack or understand new terms. ✓ Use text structure to assist. ✓ Organize and integrate new information. ✓ Self-monitor comprehension by: ✓ Knowing comprehension is occurring. ✓ Knowing what is being Understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are easily distracted. ✓ Read to get done. ✓ Do not know what to do when Lack of understanding occurs. ✓ Do not recognize important Vocabulary. ✓ Do not see any organization. ✓ Add on, rather than integrate ✓ New information. ✓ Do not realize they do not understand.
After Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reflect on what was read. ✓ Feel success is a result of Effort. ✓ Summarize major ideas. ✓ Seek additional information. ✓ Outside sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stop reading and thinking. ✓ Feel success is a result of luck.

Conclusion

This theoretical chapter attempt to define the reading skill, and to classify different types and models relaying on point of views of scholars. Also, focus on the reading comprehension stages and implement importance of reading and text selection. Reading skill is important skill in acquiring language. The next chapter will present a theoretical part which deal with definition of the second variable which is pronunciation and face other point of views of scholar

Chapter Two: Pronunciation Skill

Chapter Two: Pronunciation skill

Introduction

Nowadays, technology and science development has created a great demand of intercommunication. In order to create this demand, English has become a language that needed for the whole world, it becomes compulsory to teach in schools and needed all of its aspect especially pronunciation.

This chapter is devoted to present the second variable of the study which is pronunciation. This chapter will define the pronunciation process, and will explain the approaches and methods used to teach pronunciation. Moreover, we will discuss factors and features that affect learning pronunciation. In addition, we will shed light on the difficulties and problems which learners encounter at the level of pronunciation. In the end, we will discuss the importance of this skill, and we will highlight the relation between pronunciation and speaking skill.

2.1. Definition of Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the act of producing and uttering words and letters. According to Paulson & Bruder (1976, p, 25) pronunciation is very important skill in communication especially in oral communication, and it is the production of sounds in order to make a meaning. Paulson & Bruder (1976) defines pronunciation as: “the production of system of sounds which do not influence the communication of the speaker or listener”.

Cook (1996, P, 157) indicated that “Pronunciation means making meaning by producing sounds, and it is learned by repetition of words and correcting them, and learning pronunciation comes from habits and problems of first language” (as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2016, p, 155). Accordingly, Tergujeff (2011, p, 85), demonstrated that pronunciation guides to abstract activities during second language of foreign language, for

instance, emotions and meanings, ideas and interests, doubts and attitudes. In addition, he maintained that learners must inhibit communication breakdowns or stops by commanding the language being used (Tergujeff, 2011, p. 12).

2.2. Approaches to Teaching Pronunciation

Celce-Murcia, Brihton, & Goodwin (1996, p, 201) argued that the field of modern language teaching developed two approaches to pronunciation skill; the intuitive- imitative approach and the analytic- linguistic approach.

2.2.1 The Intuitive - imitative approach

The term of imitative approach named before the 19th century, and defined by Kelly (2001, p.12) that intuitive approach a word that:“occasionally supplemented by the teacher’s impressionistic (and often phonetically inaccurate) observations about sounds based on orthography”. In this approach the learner will be able to imitate and copy sound and rhythms that are founded in the target language, and imitate the uttered sounds that pronounced by the native speakers, also Kelly (2001, p, 12) presupposes the validity, availability, and reliability of good models to listen to.

The intuitive approach leads the learners to an acceptable pronunciation without any explicit information. Fahiminiya (2014, p, 96), and they assumed that the development of pronunciation skill by imitative approach is not enough and the addition of language lab and audio-lingual method increases the degree of competence from 60% up to 80 %. This figure presents the function of the imitation process. This following figure is a summary from the researcher to provide a diagram about this approach as follows:

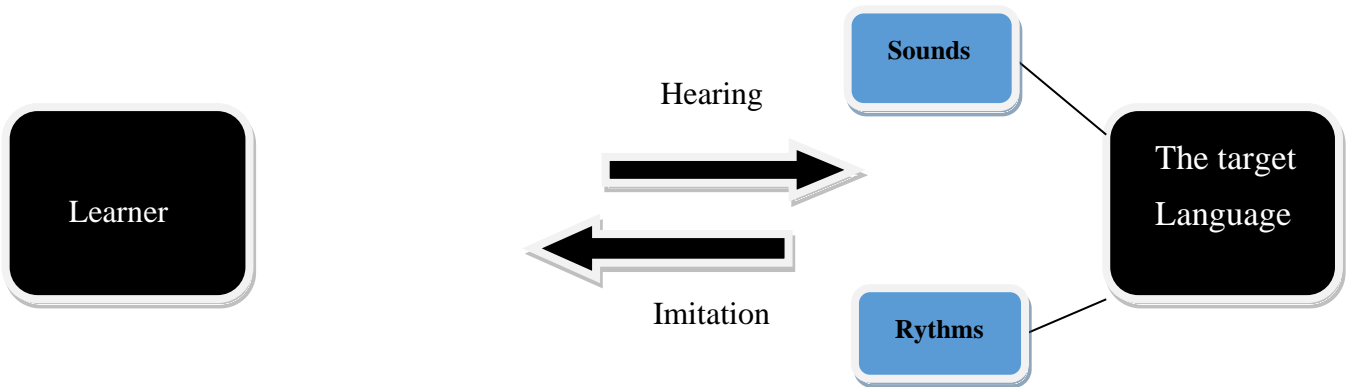


Figure 2 Imitation Process

2.2.2 The Analytic - linguistic approach

Bezahdi and Fahiminiya (2014, p, 120), stated that the analytic approach deals with shedding lights and focuses on the learner's sounds and rhythms that heard from the target language. This means that, phonetic alphabet, charts, and description helps the learners to know how to articulate words, and it is used to complement not to replace the imitative approach.

In addition, it is an approach to learn pronunciation that was developed to reach intervention pedagogy. This figure is presented by the researcher to summarize and provide the linguistic process and its system of work.

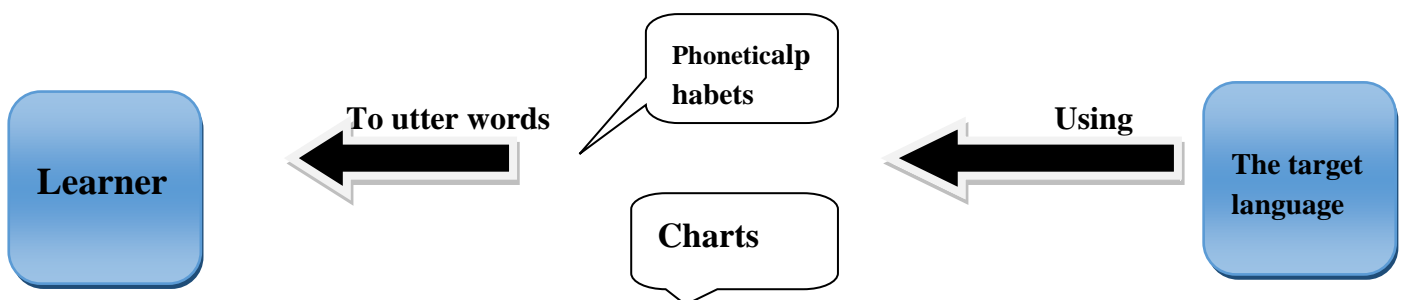


Figure 3 Linguistic Process

2.3 Methods to Teaching Pronunciation

In order to reach a good pronunciation skill to EFL learners, teachers develop some methods and techniques to teach pronunciation successfully. Pronunciation is taught by direct method or reform method, Murcia and Goodwin (1991) as cited in Hişmanoğlu (2006, p, 136) argued that:

The teacher is ideally a native or near-native speaker of the target language presenting pronunciation inductively and correcting through modeling. In the audio-lingual approach, pronunciation is likewise very important and there is a great emphasis on the traditional notions of pronunciation, minimal pairs, drills and short conversations.

That is to say, the direct method is taught by imitations, listening to a model as a teacher. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p, 130) the reform theory emerged by the late of 18th to 20th century influenced by phoneticians like Henry Sweet, Wilhelm Viëtor, and Paul Passy; the founder of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), and resulted from establishing phonetics as a science of analyzing the sound system of language.

He also argued that the direct method had an impact on the development of audiolingualism (in the USA) and the oral approach (in Britain) between the 1940 and 1950., they assumed that teaching pronunciation In this two approaches is taught in explicit way where the moderator produce to the learner a sound or a word with using and explain the articulation of the word by charts or tables and the learner imitates these words or sounds (Celce-Murcia et al, 1996).

In addition, the cognitive method as explained by Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) emerged in the 1960s. It is an approach that began its roots by the Transformational – Generative Grammar of Chomsky 1950. The cognitive approach considered language as a rule governed behavior rather than habit formation.

Another method that is needed to teach pronunciation is called the silent way. My English Pages (2014) explains that the silent way is criticism of the last approaches from audio-lingual approach to cognitive approach. The silent way was developed by Caleb Gattegno, the founder of the Silent Way, in the 1970's. He created solution to develop learning. He argued that this methodology is constructivist and leads the learners to build their own conceptual models of all the aspects of the language.

At the end, communicative approach is the most dominant approach in teaching language. Its emergence started by the beginning of 1980's; it is based on the meaning that correct language depends on communication of real language. For instance, the purpose in developing language is communication. Celce-Murcia and Goodwin (1996) claimed that:

“this focus on language as communication brings renewed urgency to the teaching of pronunciation, since both empirical and anecdotal evidence indicate that there is threshold level of pronunciation for nonnative speakers of English” (Celce-Murcia and Goodwin, 1996, p.7)

2.4 Factors Affecting Learning Pronunciation

Teaching English as a second/ foreign language is a difficult task where the teacher must handle different factors that affect language learning. Zhang (2009, p, 152) asserts that teaching a second language should contain internal and external factors (The age, attitude, and motivation).

2.4.1 Age

There is an observed difference in teaching pronunciation for adults and young learners. Skilner (1972, p, 11) argued that adults who are learning a second language will never succeed to reach the proficiency of the language because learning proficiency is related with the critical period of the learner, and time to learn a foreign language.

Another part speaks about age and learning a second language, asserts that the younger students are capable to acquire language and pronunciation. He assumed that the process to adapt sounds by children is easier than adults. In order to develop pronunciation, adults ought to try harder because they already passed their critical period (Zhang, 2009, p. 27)

In addition to that, critical period hypothesis proposed by Lennberg (1967) who assumed that learning pronunciation of second language needs to be aware of the critical period of children because if they did not learn the language in a specific period the acquisition of the pronunciation will fail.

2.4.2 Attitudes

Attitude is related with learner development of pronunciation of the mother tongue; the learner likes or dislikes it. Sedláčková (2009, p, 33), argued that individuals with a strong feeling of identity linked to their native country will accept a foreign accent less probably, that is, learners with negative attitudes towards the target language are less willing to learn and develop the language skills that are related to this language.

In addition, Sedláčková (2009, p, 33), explained that attitude of learner started when discussing the attitude of the second language learners in relation to their pronunciation and second language acquisition, it is necessary to notice that attitude done by Acculturation, and it is surrounded by the learner's engagement and his inclination to the target culture that makes the learner adopt pronunciation of the target cultural mother tongue.

2.4.3 Motivation

Motivation plays an important role in developing pronunciation. It is seen as a key that influences the rate and success of learning. Dornyei (2001) asserted that learners of low degree of motivation cannot finish the decided goals while learners with high degree of motivation are able to develop the degree of learning the target language. (Dornyei, 2001, p. 117)

2.5 Features of Pronunciation

In order to achieve a good pronunciation, the learner must consider features of language and they are as follows:

2.5.1 Phoneme

Phonemes are the smallest units of sounds in language which can distinguish two words. (Crystal, 2008, p. 31), stated that phonemes is the smallest units in the sound system of the language. He defines phonemes as “the minimal unit in the sound system of a language. In addition, (Richards, 2010) added an example to explain the fact of phoneme. The words **try** and **dry** differ only the first sound /t/ and /d/. And the words **won** and **win** differ only in the vowel sounds /ɒ/ and /ɪ/; therefore, /p /, /t /, / ɪ /and / ɒ / are phonemes of the English language. When considering meaning, the sound realization of phonemes in the speech may totally change the meaning of the word. That is, the use of one sound instead of another makes contrasts in meaning. The number of phonemes is not the same in all languages. Hence, in English, for example, there are 44 phonemes.

2.5.2 Vowels

Vowels are the speech sounds that are produced without any disturb of air flowing from the lungs to the mouth, and they are two type short vowels and long vowels. They might be single vowels sound for instance “hat” /hæt/. And might be compound of vowel sounds that moved from one vowel to another to diphthong “high” /hai/, to might change to trip thongs like: “power” /paʊə/. (Roach, 1991) Explained that, vowels production sounds can develop and change from one vowel sound to diphthong and might goes to trip thongs.

2.5.3 Consonants

Consonants defined by (Richards, 2010, p. 120) as speech sound where comes from the lungs is completely blocked, or partially blocked, or the air is skipped with friction in narrow space. And English consonants are divided into voiced and voiceless

- Voiced consonants are consonants that are produced by closing the vocal cord and making vibration, and the consonant that do not make vibration called voiceless. For instance, / z, v, b/.
- Another feature mentioned under the title of suprasegmental features of pronunciation:

2.5.4 Stress

A term that is used to make a comparison between stressed and unstressed syllabus and it shows the degree of force in phonetics when producing a syllabus (Crystal, 2008, p. 455). In addition, in phonological part, Crystal (2008, p, 454) argued that the main function of stress is making clear comparison of emphasis or contrast in sentence, and he asserted that these degrees are for presenting interrelationship of word that derived from the same roots. Also for American structuralism traditions different types of stress are delivered starting with primary degree, secondary degree, and tertiary degree, to ending with the weak degree. In this path, Harmer (2001, p, 32) provides a definition for stress as point of utterance where the length of the vowel changes and the pitch of the sound increases and the volume of voices rise. In addition, he mentioned that stress in one syllables word is easy to find. Whereas, in two or more syllable is complex to find which syllable is stressed especially when dealing the same word that take the same form of verb and a noun. And also must syllable word is easy because there is often there is more than stressed syllable (Harmer, 2001).

In this example that explained by Roach (1991: 87) about the word “around” where he explained that the stress is on the last syllabus, and the pitch goes from the higher pitch to the lower once and this changes of the pitch product a primary stress.

2.5.5 Intonation

Intonation was defined by Crystal (2008) as “a term used in the study of suprasegmental Phonology, referring to the distinctive use of patterns of pitch, or melody” (p: 252). That means intonation refers to the changes of the voice which goes up and down according to the

context and the content. Intonation takes the role of punctuation in writing and a signal of grammar structure (Crystal, 2008, p. 253).

Other scholar explained the role of intonation as “it is used to convey emotions, involvements and empathy” (Harmer, 2001, p. 28). It means that intonation develops certain messages when developing a question. For instance the question that developed by him: “what is going on”. For example, when the asker raises the tone of the same question is not interested in the answer and in contrast to decreasing the tone of the question (Harmer, 2001, p. 29).

Roach (1991:63) summarizes that intonation is an important element of pronunciation which might indicate the type of sentences that are produced by speaker. In addition, raising the tones of the speaking indicates politeness; furthermore, intonation expresses the attitudes and emotions (Roach1998, p. 135).

2.6 Common Pronunciation Problems

2.6.1 English vowels

EFL students face problems in pronunciation and in producing English vowel sounds because of differences of pronunciation between learners. Gilkjani Alhosein (2011) asserted that differences between learners in vowel sound system, and English vowels system may force learners to produce vowels that are related with their mother tongue. For instance, vowel sound that is frequently mispronounced: ‘FAIR’; students pronounce it well in AIR, WEAR, or CARE, but often pronounce ‘FAIR’ as FIRE. Different spellings can cause confusion. I have also heard student’s mispronouncing (pet, straw, fun, plus, tone, hate and speed). The best way to learn is to listen to these sounds carefully (Gilkjani, 2011, p. 16).

2.6.2. English consonants

English consonant is another problematic field that EFL learners face while producing and articulating consonants. These obstacles were gathered by Avery and Ehrlich (2013:75) as

EFL learners face problems in producing consonants. First obstacle is aspiration, where students fail in aspiration voiceless stop at the beginning of the word /p/, / t / and /k /. Secondly, producing voiceless and fricative voices are difficult for learners to produce, for instance pronouncing the letter /v/ as /f/. Also, learners might mispronounce /p/, /b/ while producing the final stop consonants and makes them over use the voiceless stop for a voiced stop. For example, pronouncing the word “cup” instead of uttering “cub”. (Avery and Ehrlich, 2013). Fourthly, Avery and Ehrlich (1995) asserted that when learners pronounced the first consonant cluster especially the stop p /, / t /, / k /, / b /, /d / and /g/ before / l/ and / r / as in the word blue and drew. Additionally, EFL learners may also find difficulties producing final consonant clusters such as / kt / as in ‘walked’, / ft / as in ‘finished’, / dzd/ as in ‘judged’ and /ld/ as in ‘failed’.

2.7. When to Teach Pronunciation

According to Harmer (2005, p. 186), the first decision that teachers made when they include teaching pronunciation in the English lessons is to predict forms to use them. He devoted some possibilities as follows:

2.7.1 Whole lessons

This possibility speaks that if the whole lesson is devoted for pronunciation it does not mean that the entire time is based for training pronunciation, but the learner might deal with vocabulary and listening skill to go for the pronunciation task. Means that, pronunciation skill is not based only for sounds but it is also related with intonation and stress.

2.7.2 Discrete Slots:

It is also called inserting short; it deals with separating the parts of pronunciation skill as a whole into parts in teaching English pronunciation in classes. These divided sections might be one week for stress and one week for intonation. And it might not bother the students in learning pronunciation skill.

2.7.3 Integrated Phase:

Making pronunciation exercise is successful step in developing pronunciation. For instance, in listening activities learners listen to words and imitate successfully and know how to spell.

2.7.4 Opportunistic teaching:

This possibility deals with taking the problem that found in the course and it is a manner to introduce pronunciation. One or two minutes are enough to deal with problem of pronunciation. (Harmer 2005, p. 187)

2.8 The Importance of Pronunciation:

Nowadays, English is the language used for international communication and speakers need to be able to exchange information effectively, both in oral and written forms.

Morley (1991) assumed that: “intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence” (Morley, 1991, p.13). In other words, she asserts that intelligible pronunciation is an important part in communicative competence. Celce-murcia and Goodwin (1991) agree with her assuming that: “intelligible pronunciation is one of the necessary components of oral communication” (Celce-murcia & Goodwin, 1991, p 8). Also, it is similar with Yates and Zielenski (2009) when they assumed that English learners that have good pronunciation are understood even when they commit mistakes, and are better than learners that who do not have better pronunciation and their grammar is good. Yates and Zielenski (2009) claim: learners with good pronunciation in English are more likely to be understood even if they make errors in other areas, whereas learners whose pronunciation is difficult to understand will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect” (Yates&zielenski,2009, P. 8)

Furthermore, Burns (2003) claims: “clear pronunciation is essential in spoken communication, even where learners produce minor inaccuracies in vocabulary and grammar,

they are more likely to communicate effectively when they have good pronunciation and intonation” (Burns, 2003, p. 5). He assumed that pronunciation should be related with communication because it helps them to communicate positively.

2.9 Pronunciation and speaking skill

According to Pennington (1996), he asserted that learning English as a speaking skill must be associated with an important part in learning which is pronunciation as it is an important skill in acquiring and using the language, pronunciation skill covers many features and concepts from phonetics in theory and training contains the main feature for developing this skill. Clear and good pronunciation may create an easy way for communication to take place and speaking will be more comprehensible.

Speaking operation will never happen correctly if pronunciation is bad and unclear. So that teaching pronunciation should be taken seriously among EFL teachers and learners especially in this modern world. Communication became an international way and English became the world’s modern key to be updated with everything happens rapidly.

Dealing with pronunciation should be enjoyable so that learners will prefer to speak in order to improve their pronunciation even if what they are saying is wrong, knowing that learning without making mistakes is impossible. They must try so they can arrive. EFL teachers must aid their learners by providing what is important to make the process easier and enjoyable. Make them love what they do and what they learn so they can create their own path and career because learning language aspects and especially knowing how to pronounce and speak correctly may add something in their personalities like being confident.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented very useful data considering English pronunciation, its definition and which approach is needed to teach EFL learners. Also it focuses on methods of teaching pronunciation skill, factors, and features that affect this skill. In addition, English

problems have been mentioned to show the difficulties that EFL learners face while learning, and presenting the aspects to teach pronunciation for the learners. Finally, we had included learning pronunciation and importance of this skill in acquiring this language in addition to presenting the relation between pronunciations and speaking skill.

Chapter Three: Fieldwork and Data Analysis

Chapter Three: Field Work and Data Analysis

Introduction

This chapter will present some practical techniques to investigate reading difficulties that EFL learner face at the level of pronunciation. The main aim of this chapter is to elicit answers for the raised research questions and to determine the validity of our hypothesis that says: EFL learners may face problems at the level of pronunciation, or the cause behind these Problems maybe learners motivation and concentration, the difficulty of pronunciation, or the difficulty of the reading skill". Therefore, we have selected for the present work a qualitative method based on one data gathering tool that is semi structured questionnaire for the students who have experienced reading difficulties at the level of pronunciation. The analysis of this work will be by using tge SPSS system and using figures and tables.

3.1 Research Methodology

This research will employ the descriptive method because it is the most suitable in order to reach research aims.

3.2 Population and Sampling

We selected second year students of high school Branis. The sample we have received was (32) students. The selection of second year students was by collaboration and help of the teacher.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

In order to gather the required data for the current study, we opted for a students' questionnaire which attempts to gather data about the difficulties of reading English at the level of pronunciation, and discover the mistakes and errors that students make in pronunciation.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

We are going to analyze data section by section, and each question we will distribute it in figure that represent the percentage of answers of students. In addition, comment and analyzing and discussions, interpretations of questions will be according to the tables and figures.

3.5 Students' Questionnaire

3.5.1 Definition of questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research instrument consists of a set of questions that aims to collect information from the respondents. A research questionnaire is typically mixed of questions (close- ended, open-ended, and long-form questions), and gives the ability to the respondents to express their thoughts.

3.5.2 The Description of the questionnaire

This questionnaire is mainly conceptualized on the basis of what was dealt within the theoretical part of the present research. This questionnaire composed of three sections of six teen questions, and it consists of open-ended questions, which contain yes/ no questions and multiple-choice questions and close- ended questions. The questionnaire objective is to give the opportunity to students of second year high school Branis to give their views about difficulties of reading at the level of pronunciation and to propose solution and suggestions.

3.5.2.1 Section one: background information

3.5.2.2 Section two: students' attitudes on reading skill

3.5.2.3 Section three: The relationship between pronunciation and the reading **skill**

3.5.3 Piloting the questionnaire

Before administering the questionnaire, it is very important to pretest or pilot on a group of people similar to the intended subjects. The goal of piloting the questionnaire is to discover

problems like inappropriate questions or ambiguity before starting the real survey. Therefore, the questionnaire was given to a sample of ten (10) students among second year population. Questions were clear to students; they found vocabularies easy. Few questions have been formulated; particularly those dealing with students' attitude towards reading skill.

3.5.4 Administering the questionnaire

The present study deals with second year high school EFL students in Branis. This questionnaire normally was given hand to hand, but because of the circumstances of the country the questionnaire changes from hand to hand to be delivered online. Eventually we have received thirty two (32) questionnaires. The aim of this questionnaire is to investigate reading difficulties at the level of pronunciation by using students' answers, and to elicit the problems and the suggested difficulties.

3.5.5 Research instrument

To achieve the aim of the present study, responding our research questions and confirming or rejecting our hypotheses and finding out the aims of the research, one data collection tool used for second year student of high school in Branis because of the circumstances of the country the researcher found difficulty in applying another data collection.

3.5.6 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Item 1. Please, specify your gender

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Female	15	47%
b. Male	17	53%
Total	32	100%

Table 1 Pupils' gender

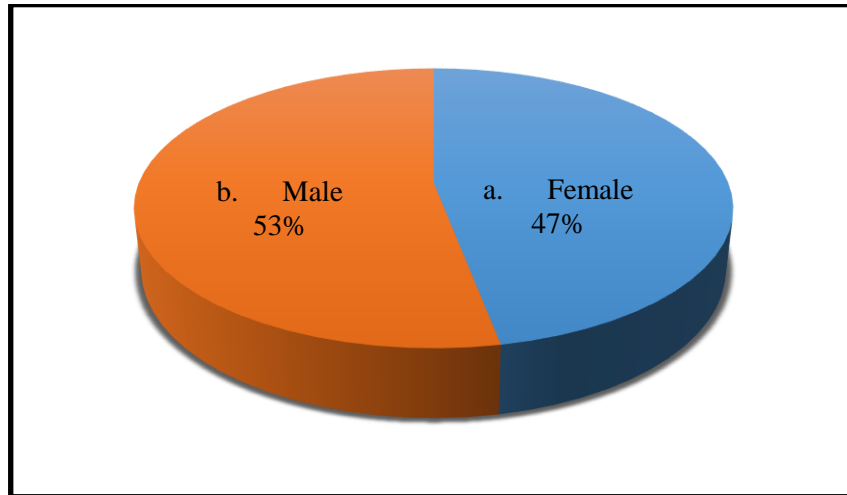


Figure 4 Pupils' gender

The participants total number is 32 students, 17 of them are males (47%) whereas, 15 females (53%). These variations due to the males “interest in learning and testing new tasks”

Item2. Please specify your age

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Under 18	5	16%
b. Over 18	27	84%
Total	32	100%

Table 2 Pupils' age

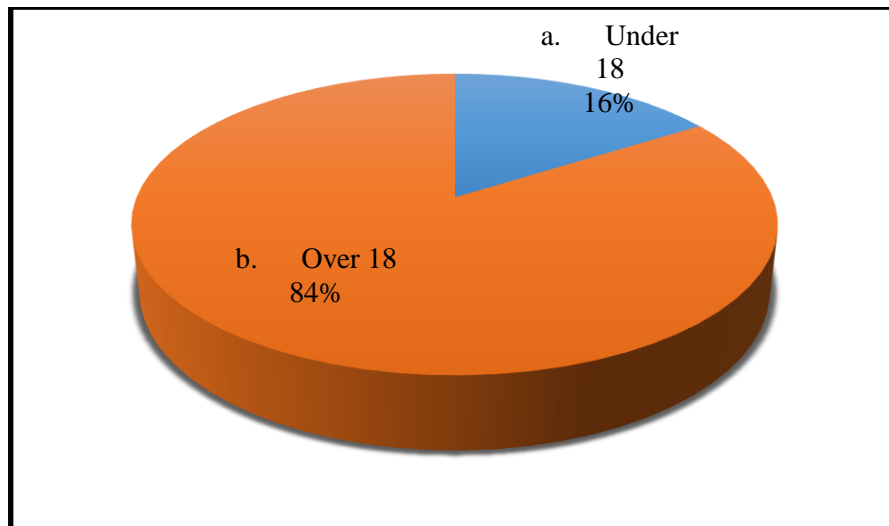


Figure 5 Pupils' age

We notice from figure 6 that most of second year learners are over 18 years old (84%). The difficulties could be the difficulty of scientific branches or failure in studying and passing the

years. About (16%) are aged less than 18 years old. It could be logically normal because they are in the age of second year students.

Item3. Your major in high school is

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Experimental sciences	15	47%
b. Mathematics	3	9%
c. Foreign languages	4	13%
d. Letters and philosophy	9	28%
e. Economy	1	3%
Total	32	100%

Table 3 Pupils' Major in High School

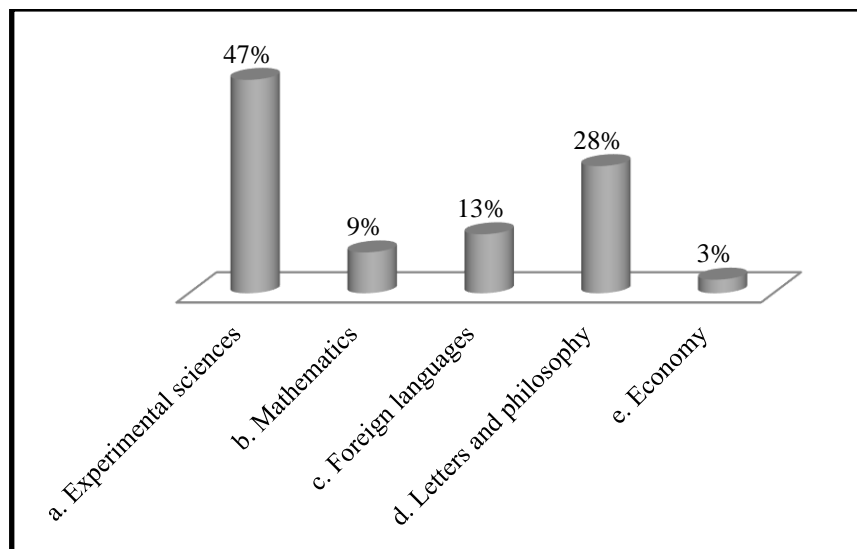


Figure 6 Pupils' Major in High School

We notice in figure 3.7 that the learners of experimental science stream are the highest degree who answers on the questionnaire with number of 15 students (47%). And that due to the fact that learners of scientific branch are flexible with answering exercises and are motivated to answer new ones. In addition students of letters and philosophy were 9 students (28%).and these students were able to learn and study foreign languages than other majors. Also, 1 student who studies economy (3%) and 4 student's foreign languages (13%), and 3 students who study mathematics.

Section Two: Pupils' Attitudes towards the Reading Skill

Item 4: Do you like to read in English?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	26	81%
b. No	6	19%
Total	32	100%

Table 4 Pupils' Attitude towards Reading in English

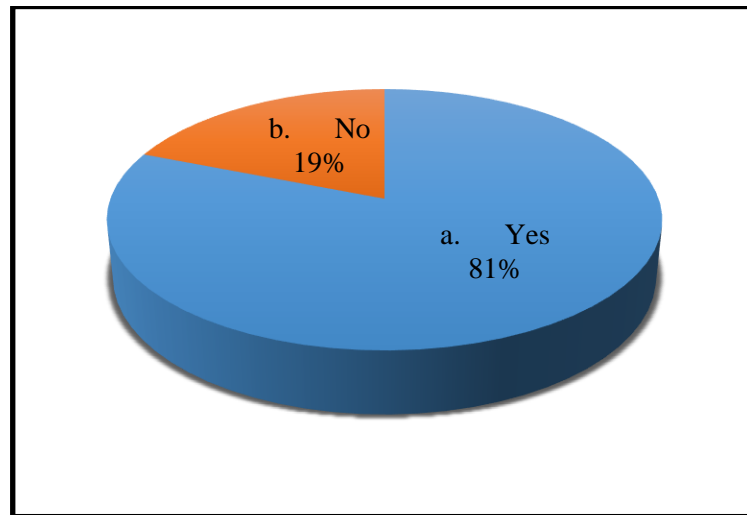


Figure 7 Pupils' Attitude towards Reading in English

According to the figure 3 shows that 26 students (81%) they like to read in English. While, there is 6 students (16%) do not like to read in English.

Justify your answer, please

a) For "Yes"

The justifications of students that they answered with the answer "yes" assumed that English books contain more knowledge to improve the language and open up imaginations, and developing this language pronunciation and learning new words and developing speaking skill.

b) For “No”

Students who answered with “no” they assert that English language is difficult to learn especially difficult vocabularies; they do not understand and grasp their pronunciation while listening.

Item 5.How often do you participate to read in English?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Always	8	25%
b. Sometimes	16	50%
c. Rarely	7	22%
d. Never	1	3%
Total	32	100%

Table 5 Pupils’ Frequency of Participation in Reading in English

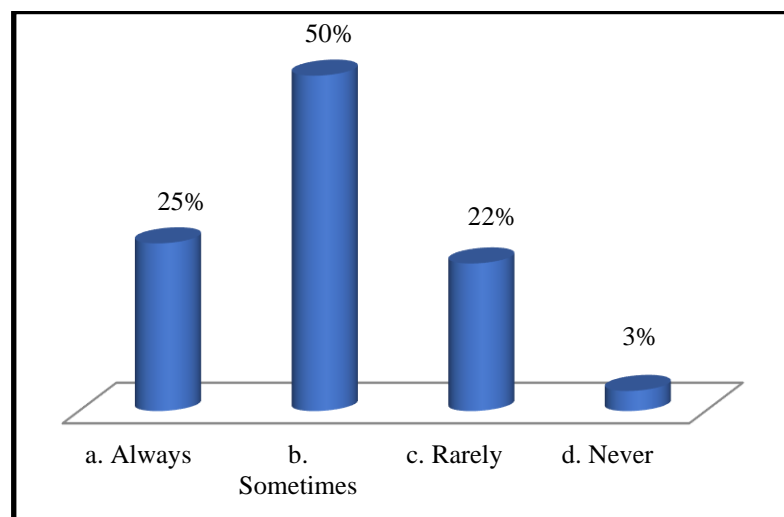


Figure 8 : Pupils’ Frequency of Participation in Reading in English

When asked about the frequency of participation in class, the vast majority (50%) answered with “Sometimes”. The results reveal that when the classes are overcrowded, the teachers are not able to influence every student in classroom to read a written passage for many times to help him/her to develop reading skill. In addition (25%) answered with “Always”. This means that learners might have a high degree of interest to learn English. While, the students who answered with “Rarely” (22%) and “Never” (3%), they may have lack of motivation to be engaged with classroom activities.

Item6. How would you evaluate your reading performance?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Excellent	2	6%
b. Good	19	59%
c. Average	9	29%
d. Poor	2	6%
Total	32	100%

Table 6 Pupils' Evaluation of their Reading Performance

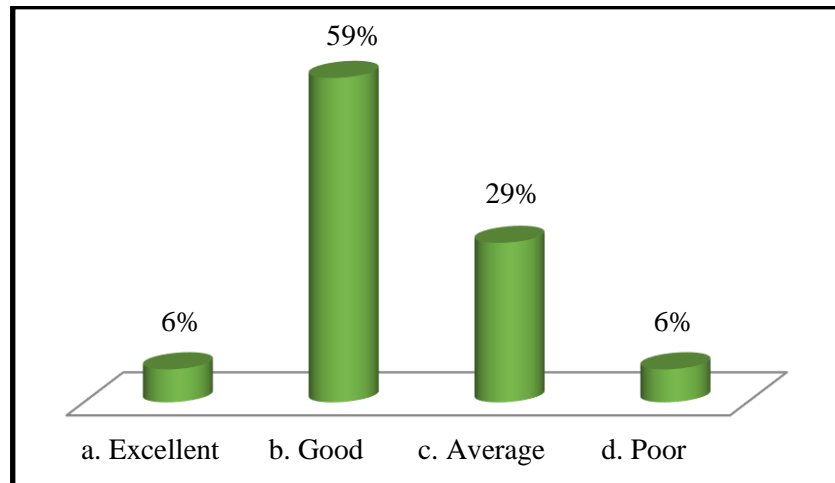


Figure 9 Pupils' evaluation of their Reading Performance

The results show that (59%) of students are “Good” in reading performance whereas only (6%) are “Excellent”. However, (29 %) of learners are “Average”, and (6%) are “Poor”. The results show that the majority of learners are able to read normally in English, and the teacher is monitoring the session of reading logically.

Item 7.What is the difficulties you encounter while reading?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Slow reading speed	3	9%
b. Poor comprehension when reading materials either aloud or silently	7	22%
c. Omission of words while reading	7	22%
d. Reversal of words or letters while reading	6	19%
e. Difficulty in decoding syllables or single words and associating them with specific sounds (phonetics)	9	28%
Total	32	100%

Table 7 Pupils' Reading Difficulties

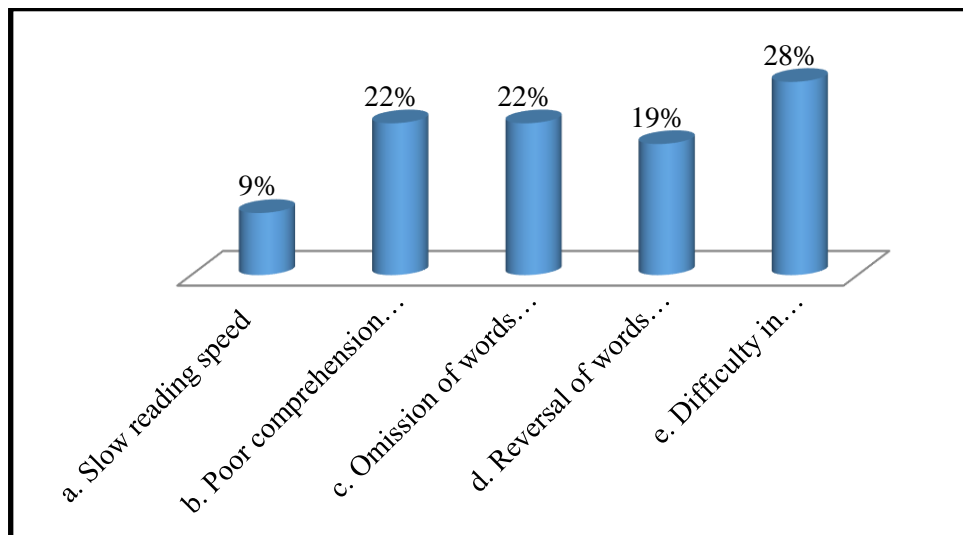


Figure 10 Pupils' Reading Difficulties

As it is demonstrated in **Figure 3.11**, (28%) of student consider decoding syllables or single and associating them with specific sounds (phonetics) in reading English as the main difficulty. While poor comprehension takes (22%) the same as the problem of omission of new words while reading. However, (9%) of learners said their main difficulty is reading slowly. That is to say, second year major difficulties in reading occur in the level of words structure.

If others, please mention them:

Students mentioned another difficulty which they encounter while reading; new complex words. When EFL learners read, it is hard for them to pronounce and understand the meaning of some words.

Item 8.How do you overcome your reading problems?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Avoiding participation to read	1	3%
b. Read carefully	15	46%
c. Re-read for mistakes and content	5	16%
d. Be patient with unfamiliar forms	5	16%
e. Asking for teacher or mate's assistance	6	19%
Total	32	100%

Table 8 Pupils' Methods to Overcome Reading Problems

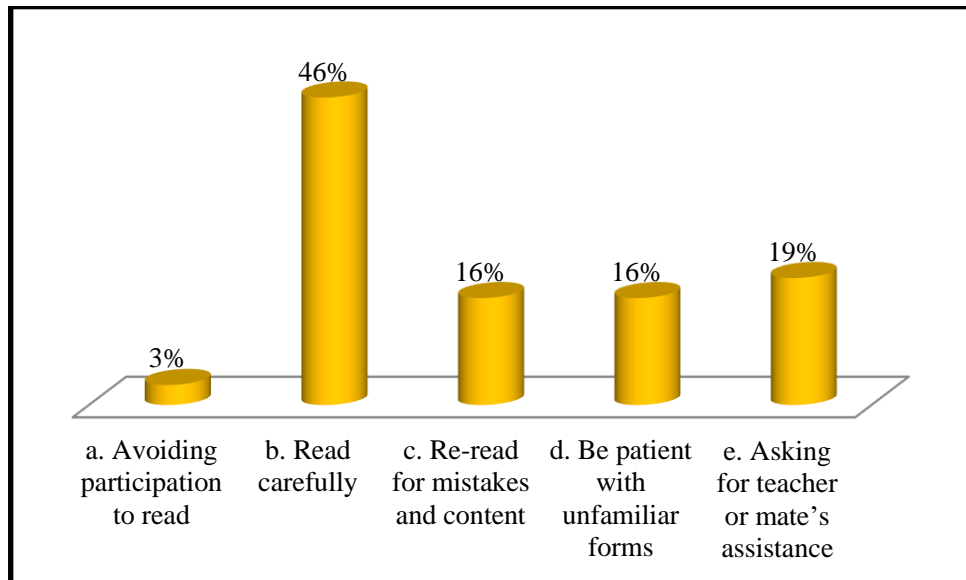


Figure 11 Pupils' Methods to Overcome Reading Problems

The majority of learners (48%) answered with reading carefully, and (19%) answered with asking for teachers and mates assistance. Moreover, (16%) of students answered that they choose to be patient with unfamiliar words, and re-read for mistakes and content. While a minority of students (3%) answered that they avoid participation to read.

If others, please mention them:

In addition, the majority of students like reading many books and using dictionaries to search about misunderstood meanings of vocabularies. Also, repeating word spelling and translation helps them to overcome these difficulties.

Item9. What do you do to improve your reading skill?

The results of the point of views of students was watching movies and listening to music (understanding their meanings). Also, practicing pronunciation of words before reading to the audience. Furthermore, they stated that translation of words and reading loudly are the main techniques.

Section Three: The Relationship between Pronunciation and the Reading Skill

Item 10. How important for you as a student to sound natural when speaking in English?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Very important	15	47%
b. Important	14	44%
c. Not important	3	9%
Total	32	100%

Table 9 The Importance of Sounding Natural when Speaking in English

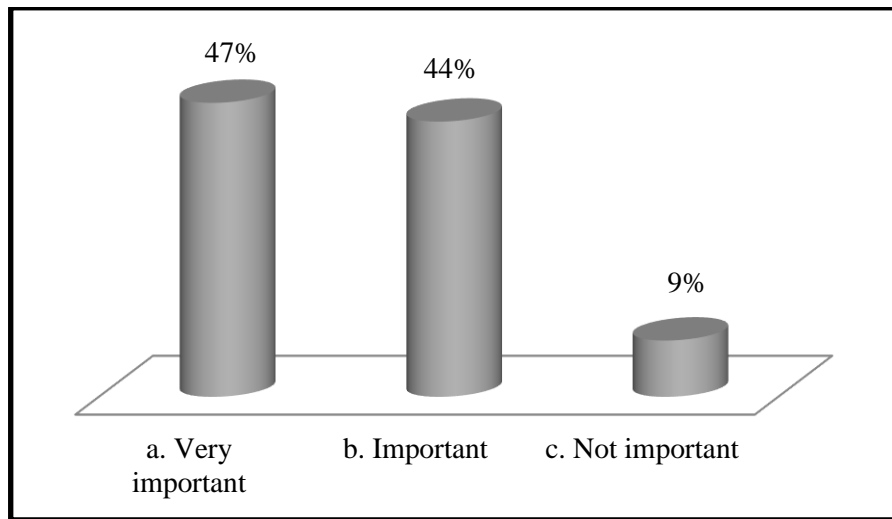


Figure 12 The Importance of Sounding Natural when Speaking in English

It is noticed that (15) students (47%) believe that sounding natural is “very important” while (14) students (44%) believe that sounding natural when speaking English is “important”, but (9%) only assume that sounding natural is “not important”.

Item 11. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your pronunciation? (1= low; 10= high)

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. 1/10	0	0%
b. 2/10	2	6%
c. 3/10	0	0%
d. 4/10	3	9%
e. 5/10	10	32%
f. 6/10	2	6%
g. 7/10	4	13%
h. 8/10	11	34%
i. 9/10	0	0%
j. 10/10	0	0%
Total	32	100%

Table 10 Pupils' Self-rating of their Pronunciation

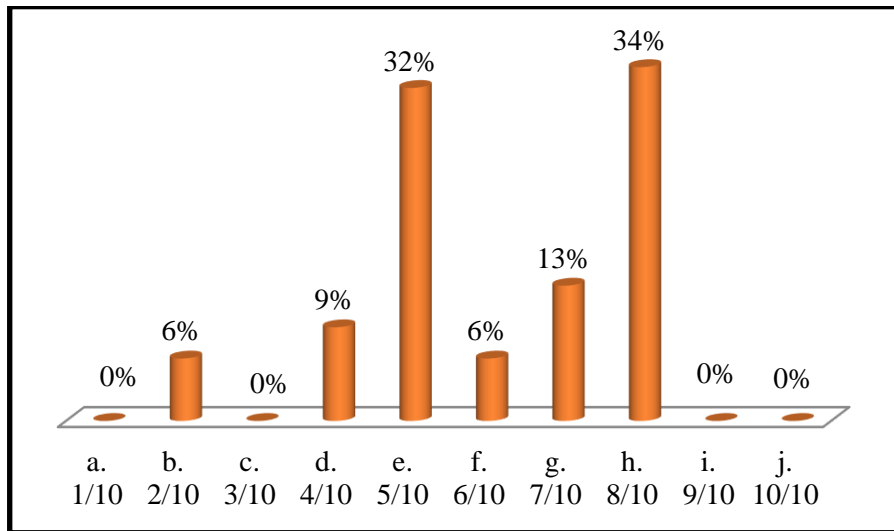


Figure 13 Pupils' Self-rating of their Pronunciation

Results in **Figure 3.14** show that pupils self-rating were nearly all of the students rating between: “4/10 to 8/10”. (34%) of students their self-rating was “8/10”, but 6% of them was 2/10 only. In addition, (32%) their rating was 5/ 10 whereas 6% was 6/10. Finally, (13%) of the students their rating was “7/10”, and 9% answered in the average of “4/10”. This means that the majority of students have average pronunciation.

Item 12.How often do you study pronunciation in the classroom?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Every lesson	12	38%
b. Once a week	16	50%
c. Once a month	4	12%
Total	32	100%

Table 11 Pupils' Frequency of Studying Pronunciation in the Classroom

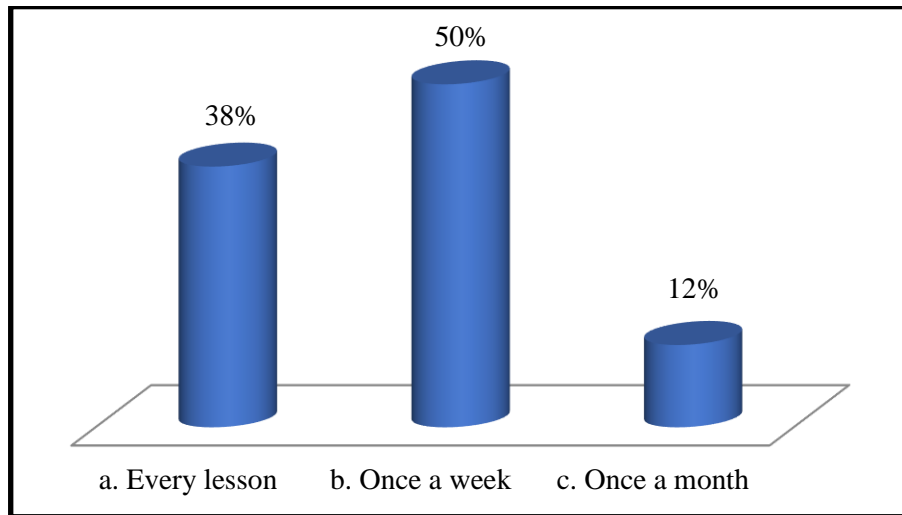


Figure 14 Pupils' Frequency of Studying Pronunciation in the Classroom

The results show that frequency of study pronunciation in the classroom was “Once a Week” as (50%) of learners answered. However, others (38%) answered that it was “Every Lesson” while (12%) of learners answered that it was only “Once a Month”.

If others, please specify

In addition, minority of students answered that times to study pronunciation in classroom two days a week or from 2 to 3 weeks, and that related when they tackles new difficult words.

Item 13. Among the following pronunciation aspects, which one you find more difficult to achieve? (You may choose more than one aspect)

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Supra-segmental aspects of pronunciation (stress, intonation, pitch)	11	34%
b. Segmental aspects of pronunciation (vowels, consonants, diphthongs)	8	25%
c. Fluency	4	13%
d. Accuracy	2	6%
e. More Than one aspect	7	22%
Total	32	100%

Table 12 Pupils' Most Difficult Pronunciation Aspect(s) to Achieve

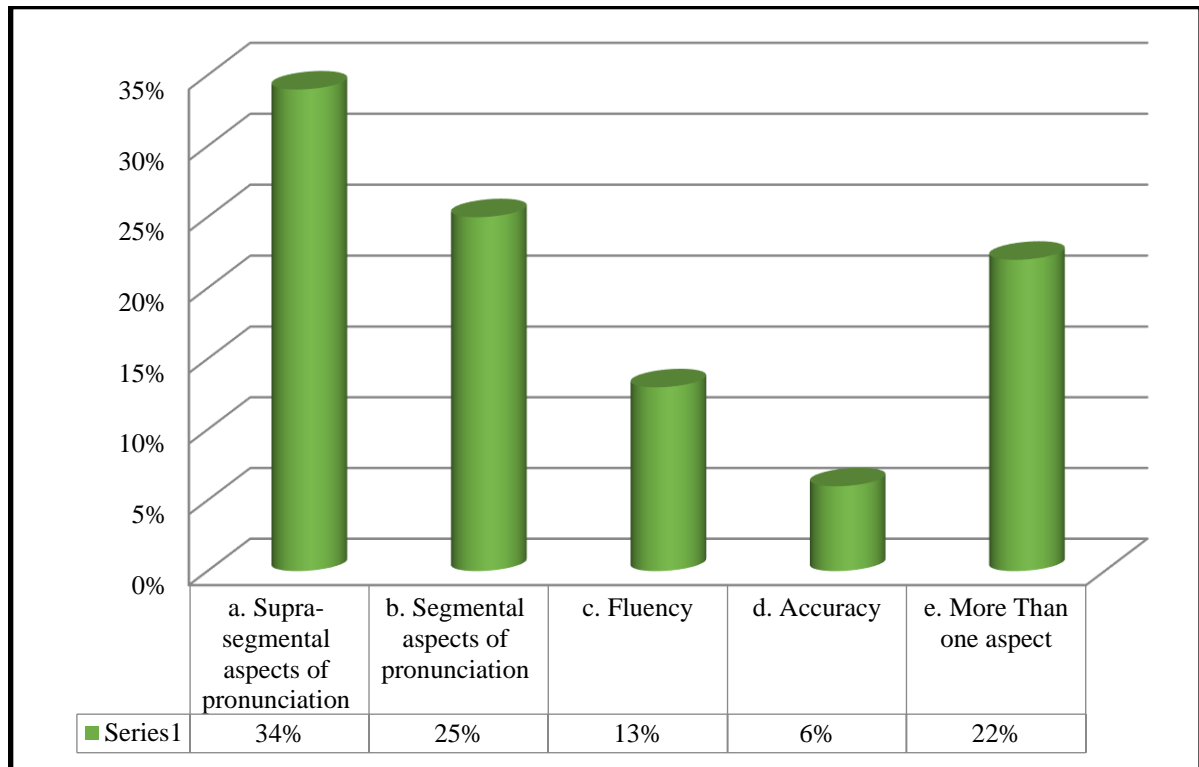


Figure 3.16 Pupils' Most Difficult Pronunciation Aspect(s) to Achieve

The results show that the majority of learners (34%) found the difficulty of pronunciation in the supra-segmental aspects of pronunciation (stress, intonation) whereas (25%) answered that the difficulty is in the segmental aspect. Also 13% of students answered that fluency is difficult aspect and (6%) of learners found that they have problem in the accuracy level. In addition, (22%) found difficulties in more than one aspect. That means students suffer from pronunciation field especially in internal aspects of pronunciation.

If others, please mention them

Students' comments about most difficult pronunciation aspects were about problems in pronouncing some letter together and disability to read with speed.

Item 14. Which of the following aspects do you believe that it influences your pronunciation mostly?

Option	Percentage	Percentage
a. Mother tongue influence	8	25%
b. Teacher's pronunciation	9	28%
c. The type of pronunciation activities	7	22%
d. Inadequate exposure to the correct pronunciation	8	25%
Total	32	100%

Table 13 Aspects that Influence Pupils' Pronunciation

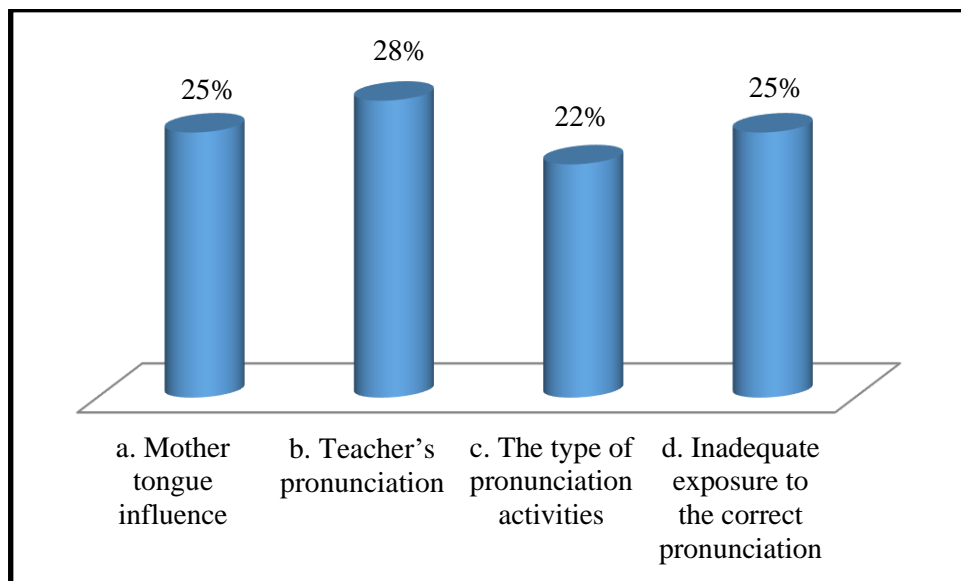


Figure 15 Aspects that Influence Pupils' Pronunciation

Results show that pupils' pronunciation influenced by different aspects. (28%) of learners answered that teachers pronunciation, and (25%) of learners are influenced by the mother tongue language. (25%) related with inadequate exposure to the correct pronunciation. In addition, (22%) of students assumed that the type of pronunciation activities is an influenced aspect.

Item 15. According to you, what kind of relationship exists between pronunciation and reading skills?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Pronunciation affects reading performance	7	22%
b. Reading develops pronunciation	16	50%
c. They are interrelated	9	28%
Total	32	100%

Table 14 Kind of Relationship between Pronunciation and Reading Skills

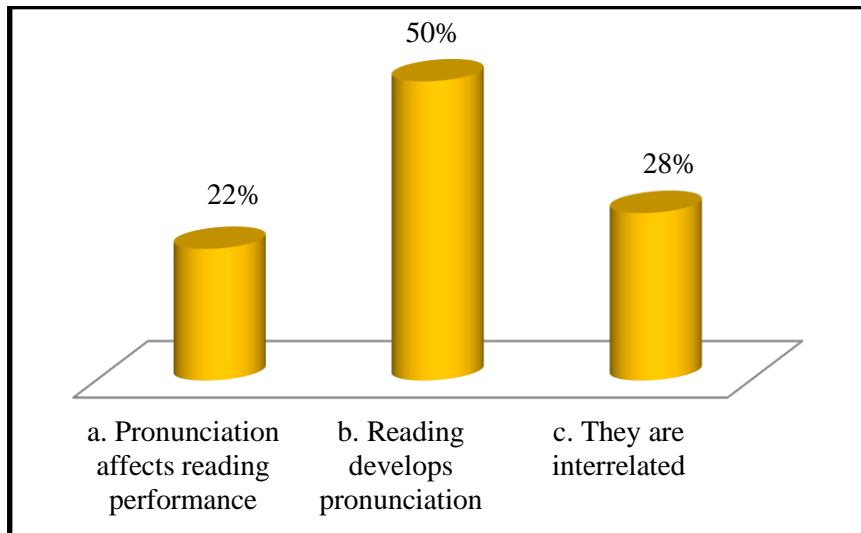


Figure 16 Kind of Relationship between Pronunciation and Reading Skills

As the above figure 3.18 illustrates, the majority of students (50%) answered that reading develops pronunciation, and 28% of students assumed that they are interrelated. However, 22% of students answered that pronunciation affects reading performance.

Justify your answer, please

1. For “Pronunciation affects reading performance”

Students who stated that pronunciation affects reading pronunciation assume that if they cannot pronounce well they will find difficulty in reading, so pronunciation is the basis because if they cannot pronounce correct, reading performance changes even loses its real meaning.

2. For “Reading develops pronunciation

Students stated that reading develops pronunciation, because good reading makes a good pronunciation. So, the more you read; the better pronunciation develops.

3. For “They are interrelated”

Students stated that they are interrelated because if you learn to pronounce some words correctly you can read correctly. In addition, pronunciation is reading, so when you speak you can read.

Item16. What do you do to develop your pronunciation?

In this question most of students answered that in order to develop the pronunciation skill they should listen carefully to their teachers and repeat words in order to develop pronunciation skill. In addition, listening to music, watching English movies, and using dictionaries will develop pronunciation skill.

Pupils' Comments and Suggestions

The major comments and suggestions of students were that learning a foreign language is hard because of the mother tongue effects, and they assumed that teachers' wrong pronunciation affects students' pronunciation. In addition, we should add internet and electronic devices to develop English language at the level of pronunciation.

3.5.7. Interpretation and Discussion of the Results

Based on the results obtained from the questionnaire that was delivered to second year high school in Branis in the current research which is entitled; "Investigating Reading Difficulties in English at the Level of Pronunciation among EFL Learners. Case study of second year learners at Latif Massoud High School Branis"

In this section, the results show that students of second year in high school Branis are genders, male (53%) and female (47%). Also, the majority of students (84%) are above 18 years old. This means that students are aware about their answers and choices. Concerning their major in high schools; majority of students (47%) are studying experimental science, which means that this major more motivated to learn English than others because the scientific branches are more motivated to learn a foreign language.

In this section (81%) of students show a positive attitude towards reading skill. They stated that they are motivated to read English. This shows their interest to develop their proficiency in reading because the majority of them are interested in learning new vocabularies. Also, the

minority (19%) who shows no interest in reading, they assumed that they found difficulty in understanding some words. Besides, second year students are supposed to be familiar with words and might face few difficulties in some of them.

The half of students (50%) stated that they “Sometime” participate in English. The engagement of the students in reading in English plays an important role in developing reading skill. This is due to the fact that reading performance of students differs from those in their native language. In addition, majority (59%) of students’ evaluation of their reading performance was “Good”. This is because of their interest in developing reading skill. For example, the weaknesses of the skill is that an Arabic learner when reads a text and try to understand the meaning of the vocabularies, they think in Arabic and mother tongue affects their reading performance. This means that students are less likely to be given opportunities for practicing reading in class because of lack of time in session.

Students’ difficulties in reading are attributed to different causes. Difficulty in decoding syllabus or single words and associating them with specific sounds was the major one according to students’ answers. This is due to the fact that native learners have the fluency to read better than EFL learners. Also, learners assumed that they have difficulties in omission of words especially letters. For example, the word “listen”, when we pronounce it, the letter /t/ should be omitted. Also, students suffer from reversal of words and poor comprehension while reading. In addition, students often had difficulties in slow reading speed.

On the other hand, the majority of students (46%) answered that to overcome these difficulties, it is necessary to read carefully because repeating the words several times allow the students to correct the mistakes they made. In addition, asking teachers or mates assistance and be patient with unfamiliar forms. Also, minority of students answered by avoiding participation, and this minority lack motivation to develop reading skill in English.

As far as the students select the major solutions to develop this skill, comments that suggested are reading books, journals, and translation of words.

Concerning the degree of sounding natural, the majority of students answered with “very important and important to read like a foreign speaker”. This means that they are conscious about the importance of sounding natural like native speakers and improving their pronunciation skill. (85%) of students answered in self- rating pronunciation from “5/10” to “8/10” which means the majority of learners are medium and above average in pronunciation, and they can pronounce words with few difficulties. In addition, half of the students stated that the frequency of studying pronunciation in classroom once a week. In addition, most of students reported that they lack practice of pronunciation especially when taking new vocabularies.

As far as reading at the level of pronunciation is concerned, all of pupils face difficulties in pronunciation in all aspects. The majority of students face difficulties in the internal aspects of pronunciation. Students suffer from Supra-segmental aspects of pronunciation (stress, intonation, pitch) and Segmental aspects of pronunciation (vowels, consonants, diphthongs). For example, it is hard for students to put stress on the letter, or using the pitch of sounds. While the minority of learners argues that they have difficulties in fluency, accuracy, and more than one aspect. For this sake, the majorities of students suffer from the internal aspects of pronunciation and difficulties in using stress of words, pitch, and intonation.

On other point, a question was raised about which aspect influence pronunciation and the answers of students were nearly equal. The major influence was teacher pronunciation because the pronunciation of the teacher plays an important role in developing this skill according to students. In addition, mother tongue language and inadequate exposure to correct pronunciation, and exercise that are related with pronunciation. This is what makes (50%) of students assume that reading affects pronunciation because reading allows students to analyze

the text and pick up new words and understand how they pronounced, the more you read the better you pronounce. 28% of students answered that reading and pronunciation are interrelated because reading develops pronunciation and pronunciation affects reading performance; a good pronunciation means a good reader, and to pronounce well needs to learn and to read well. Other students (22%) stated that pronunciation affects reading performance. Means that, if learners have not the ability to pronounce well, they will not be able to read.

Answers were delivered by students when they asked about solutions to improve pronunciation, the majority of answers argued that watching films, listening to English songs, reading books, and use dictionaries was the preferable solutions. As a result, students suggested that pronunciation will develop by listening to music, watching movies, and reading books.

3.6. Summary of the Qualitative Results

The present study aimed at investigating reading difficulties at the level of pronunciation among EFL learners. Moreover, it tends to determine students problems in reading English especially in pronunciation by highlighting the development of reading skill. Accordingly, it is also attempted to increase student's awareness about the importance of reading at the level of pronunciation.

The findings drawn from the analysis of the obtained data using one collection data methods were positive in many aspects. The results of students' questionnaire showed that the majority of students motivated to read in English in which they assumed that reading is a basic skill in learning a foreign language. A great number of students their average is good. In addition, students of second year EFL learners encounter difficulties in reading at the internal level of reading from decoding and omission of words, reversal and comprehension. This is due to fact that they face problems when reading new words.

However, the majority of students stated that reading carefully is the most suitable method to overcome reading problems, and asking teachers or mates helps students to overcome these difficulties. In addition, the vast answers of students were about the methods to improve reading skill by reading books, listening to songs, watching movies, and using dictionaries or translation. That is, EFL learners find that sounding natural is very important because of the awareness of pronunciation skill.

As shown by the results of students' questionnaire, the frequency of studying pronunciation was two times a week when they face difficulties in pronunciation only. To have an idea about the difficult aspect in pronunciation we found that the internal aspects of the word are the difficulties that EFL learners' face while pronunciation from intonation, stress, pitches, vowels and consonants. This is due to the fact that facing new complex vocabularies enables students to pronounce them. Unsurprisingly, students of EFL learners influenced by teachers' pronunciation at first, mother tongue language, inadequate exposure to the correct pronunciation, and inappropriate types of pronunciation.

Moreover, majority of students stated that the relationship between pronunciation and reading skill are interrelated because of learning pronunciation of letter facilitates to learners combine words correctly. Also, good pronunciation means a good reading, and to read well you should pronounce well. That is to say pronunciation is reading and reading is pronunciation. Regarding students' methods to develop pronunciation skill; they use reading books, watching movies, using dictionaries, translations, and talking to native speakers. The students' questionnaire also helped us to gather suggestions in order to develop pronunciation skill by speaking with foreign people and taking into consideration Arabic language influence.

Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the field work of the study that consisted of two parts. The first part focused on the theoretical background of the research methodology of the study; namely: research approach, research design, population, sampling, and data collection methods. The second part aimed to check whether the use of research papers as a technique develops EFL learners reading at the level of pronunciation. The results obtained from the analysis of the students' questionnaire reveal the major points that have been conducted in this research. It actually provides the respondents with a general overview about our work. The analysis of the students' questionnaire allowed us to draw up on the following conclusion; there is a serious gap in our second- years high school students "ability to read in English at the level of pronunciation". This may be instrumented in student's lack of vocabulary language. Second year high school students are very conscious and motivated to read and pronounce English. In addition to this, the findings of this questionnaire will certainly help teachers and researchers to design useful activities and choose the appropriate strategies for teaching reading English at the level of pronunciation and helps students to enrich their performance in reading and pronunciation.

General Conclusion

Reading is definitely a fundamental creative skill; consequently, our case study sheds the light on the role of teaching reading at the level of pronunciation to improve EFL learners. Therefore, we have overview the importance of teaching words pronunciation to help the second/foreign language learners develop their reading as to boost their level in reading.

This research work was divided into three chapters; the first two chapters are devoted to the theoretical background of this study, while the last chapter represents the field work.

Through the first chapter, we attempt to highlight the important elements that are related to reading skill. Firstly, we started by giving a definition. Later in this chapter, we shed the lights on reading and speak about important aspects of this skill. Then, the focus shifted to speak about reading models for which we attempted to provide strategies for teaching reading to EFL learners.

For the second chapter, we spot lights on pronunciation skill and its factors and aspects that needed. In addition, we speak about features and impotence of pronunciation.

For the third chapter of this study is devoted to the field work which represents the practical part of our study in which we attempted analyze and interpret the data collected through one data tool; namely the students questionnaire.

In order to confirm the validity of research hypothesis and to reach our aims, we conducted a descriptive research for which one data tool was chosen, namely students' questionnaire. The questionnaire was administrated to (32) high school students. Moreover, those students were chosen randomly in order to receive point of views towards the proposed hypothesis.

Accordingly, the obtained results that gathered from the questionnaire proved that students have possitive attitude towards the importance of reading. In other words, students assumes that the difficulty in decoding syllables or single words, reversal of words while reading, and slow reading speed are considered the main problems that students suffer while reading. In other words, students asserts to overcome this problems is to read carefully, asking teachers or

mates, and re-read carefully, avoiding participation. In addition, students become aware about the importance of sounding natural. So they study two times a week when they face difficulty with words. Moreover, the obtained results showed that EFL learners find difficulties in the internal aspects of pronunciation from stress, intonation, vowels and consonants.

Through the analysis and interpretation of the data collected; through discussions of findings, the research questions about the difficulties of reading at the level of pronunciation and the possible solutions to overcome these difficulties were answered. In addition, the collected findings confirmed the validity of our research hypothesis which states that learners face difficulties when reading at the level of pronunciation, and the cause of these difficulties may be learner's motivation and concentration, or reading problems in reading skill.

Time constrains and the current conditions of the country due to the spreading disease and the closure of schools was the major limitations of the study as well as it was carried over in short period that enables us to go deeper in research. Since the study was confined to a group of high school students of Branis, thus the results obtained out of such sample may not be enough to generalize it to represent all the Algerian high schools. From this research which may be interesting to be investigated such as investigating reading in oral speaking.

Limitations of the study

The present study aimed mainly to investigate reading difficulties among EFL learners at the level of pronunciation. The research faces some obstacles that faced by the research progress. In our study we have faced some difficulties. Initially, the lack of sources about reading at the level of pronunciation as well as research papers was the main obstacles that affected our research progress; precisely, in finding books and articles, because they were rare on the net and absent at the local library. Also, the difficulty of finding students to answer the questionnaire because of the current conditions of the country and suspension of studies Furthermore, due to students charged timetable, some students refused to answer the questionnaire (in piloting phase) while others did not answer some questions. Besides, the

student feedback was limited because their unfamiliarity with the importance of reading at the level of pronunciation.

Recommendations

From the findings obtained out of this study, the following recommendations have been drawn and directed to teachers, students, and Or administration.

1. For Teachers

Teachers should be aware of the important role of reading at the level of pronunciation in education, and they should attempt to make their students aware of the significance of reading and the different factors that affect students at the level of pronunciation in their educational success. Also, they should provide their students with an effective instruction on reading so that they can ameliorate this skill because it is a teaching skill and explicit instruction is needed for its development. In addition, teachers should use observation method in class while reading because it allows them to guide students to discover the weaknesses of poor reading. Classroom discussion is important for EFL learners to make them aware about the problems they make and to develop their poor reading at the level of pronunciation.

2. For Students

Students should be conscious and motivated more to read in order to strengthen their skills and aware about the importance of reading in their educational career. Moreover, students should ask about any problems they face in reading in order to overcome these difficulties and follow the instructions provided by the teacher so that they can do their reading skill easily.

3. For Administration

The administration should provide the needed equipments and offer a comfortable physical setting for the sake of implementing reading and pronunciation effectively.

Finally, for further researchers are advised to search deeply about the difficulties they observe in order to handle research work that benefits the society.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Students' Questionnaire

A Questionnaire for Secondary School Pupils about their Reading Difficulties at the Level of Pronunciation

Dear student

You are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire, which is designed for the sake of gathering useful information to accomplish a master's dissertation about "Investigating Reading Difficulties in English at The Level of pronunciation Among EFL Learners in high school in Branis". Your collaboration will be of a great help for us. Please, tick (√) in the appropriate box (es) and give full answers whenever necessary.

Thank you for your time, effort and collaboration.

Researcher's name:

KERMICHE Hamza

A Second Year Master Student

Sciences of the Language

University of Biskra

Supervised by:

Mrs. Houda DJOUAMA

2019-2020

Section One: Background Information**Q1. Please, specify your gender:**

- a) Male b) Female

Q2. Please, specify your age:

.....

Q3. Your major in high school is:

- a) Experimental sciences
- b) Mathematics
- c) Foreign languages
- d) Letters and philosophy
- e) Economy

Section Two: Students' Attitudes about the Reading Skill**Q1. Do you like to read in English?**

- a) Yes b) No

Justify your answer please

.....

.....

Q2. How often do you participate to read in English?

- a) Always
- b) Sometime
- c) Rarely
- d) Never

Q3. How would you evaluate your reading performance?

- a) Excellent
- b) Good
- c) Average
-

d) Poor

Q4. What are the difficulties you encounter while reading?

- a) Slow reading speed
- b) Poor comprehension when reading material either aloud or silently
- c) Omission of words while reading
- d) Reversal of words or letters while reading
- e) Difficulty decoding syllables or single words and associating them with specific sounds (phonics)

If others, please mention them:

.....

.....

Q5. How do you overcome your reading problems?

- a) Avoiding participation to read
- b) Read carefully
- c) Re-read for mistakes and content
- d) Be patient with unfamiliar forms
- e) Asking for teacher or mate's assistance

If others, please mention them:

.....

.....

Q6. What do you do to improve your reading skill?

- a) Yes b) No

Section Three: The Relationship between Pronunciation and the

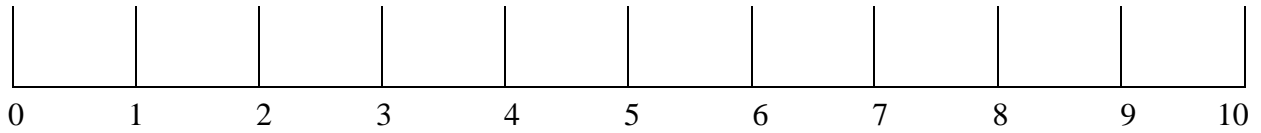
Reading Skill

Q1. How important for you as student to sound natural when speaking in English?

- a) Very important
- b) Important

c) Not important

Q2. On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you rate your pronunciation? (1 = low; 10 = high)



Q3. How often do you study pronunciation in the classroom?

- a) Every lesson.
- b) Once a week.
- c) Once a month
- d) Other

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Q4. Among the following pronunciation aspects, which one you find more difficult to achieve?

- a) Supra-Segmental aspects of Pronunciation (stress, intonation, pitch)
- b) Segmental Aspects of Pronunciation (vowels, consonants, diphthongs)
- c) Fluency
- d) Accuracy

If others, please mention them:

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Q5. Which of the following aspects you believe that it influences your pronunciation mostly?

- a) Mother tongue influence
- b) Teacher's pronunciation
- c) The type of pronunciation activities
- d) Inadequate exposure to the correct pronunciation

Q6. According to you, what kind of relationship exists between pronunciation and reading skill?

- a) Pronunciation affects reading performance
- b) Reading develops pronunciation
- c) They are interrelated

Justify your answer please

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Q7. What do you do to develop your pronunciation?

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If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free

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Thank you for your time, effort and cooperation

المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة المعدة الى التحقيق على اسباب المشاكل التي يواجهها تلاميذ اللغة الانجليزية لثانوية البرانيس في القراءة خصوصا على مستوى النطق. فالمشكلة الاكثر تداولاً في مجال تعليم اللغة الانجليزية للسنة الثانية ثانوي علي ان التلاميذ يواجهون مشاكل في القراءة و بالتحديد النطق , وهذا لكون التأثير الغالب من طرف النطق المنتهج من طرف الاستاذ او صعوبة القراءة باللغة الانجليزية ككلها. و بناءا على هذه الحقائق فالفرضية الاساسية المطروحة في هذه المذكرة هي ان تلاميذ اللغة الانجليزية لثانوية البرانيس يواجهون صعوبات في القراءة على مستوي النطق او لانهم يعانون من نقص في التركيز و الارادة. لدعم هذه الفرضية او تنفيذها اعتمد في هذا البحث على الدراسة الوصفية القائمة على الملاحظة كمنهج علمي لتقصي الحقائق, كما استعملت فيه استبيان يضم مجموعة من الاسئلة المدروسة كوسيلة اساسية لجمع البيانات من اجل تحليلها. و منها قد تم توجيه هذا الاستبيان الى تلاميذ اللغة الانجليزية السنة الثانية لثانوية البرانيس , وكما تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تحديد المشاكل و الصعوبات التي يواجهها تلاميذ ثانوية البرانيس للغة الانجليزية. و في الاخير اظهرت نتائج البحث العلمي ان القراءة خصوصا على مستوى النطق لها صعوبات سببها التمارين المنتهجة لتطوير هذه الخاصية و النطق الذي يستعمله الاستاذ.