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**Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra
Faculty of Arts & Foreign Languages
Department of Foreign Languages
Division of English**



**The Role of Pronunciation Practice in Improving EFL
Learners' Oral Proficiency**

**A Case Study of Second Year English Students at Mohammed
Kheider University of Biskra**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master Degree in Applied Linguistics**

Supervisor: Rime Bekhouche

Candidate: Wafa Zerdoumi

Board of Examiners

Dr. Rezig Nadia

University of Biskra

Mrs. Bekhouche Rime

University of Biskra

Mr. Laala Youcef

University of Biskra

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Dedication

To my dear and precious parents

To all my brothers and sisters

To my dear cousin Mehdi

To my beloved aunt Djemaa

To all my friends especially:

Allia, Hassiba, Nuseiba,

Samah, Fatima, and halima

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Initially, I am genuinely thankful for Allah the most graceful and the most compassionate the almightily who has provided me with lots of blessings and surrounded me with peace and stability.

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I am thankful to the students and teachers who filled in the questionnaires.

Special thanks to all the teachers in the English division who devoted their time and effort as well as their skills for our benefits; I admit that they are models of good teachers.

Abstract

The current study investigates the importance of pronunciation practice in the enhancement of students' oral proficiency. The fact that many EFL learners at Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra attend the phonetics course for two years, but they struggle many pronunciation errors which in turn lead to speaking difficulties, what urges the need to conduct this research to find out the reasons behind learners' failure in adequately learning the English pronunciation. In light of this problem, the research' aim is to highlight the crucial role of advocating variant communicative pronunciation practice activities in overcoming learners speaking problems and in the development of an accurate English accent. To achieve this aim and confirm the research hypothesis which states that 'if pronunciation is not well practiced, EFL learners will encounter pronunciation problems and will develop negative attitudes towards the phonetics session', a questionnaire is administered for the teachers of phonetics and second year English LMD students; the questionnaire intends to reflect both teachers and students attitudes about the actual state of teaching phonetics and to raise their awareness about the importance of practice in acquiring the English phonology; it seeks also to diagnose the problems and the reasons that hinder pronunciation practice. The analysis of the findings demonstrated that both teachers and students are highly aware about the significance of the pronunciation practice, but due to a range of inappropriate working circumstances, pronunciation is not sufficiently and efficiently practiced; in fact it is dealt with more theoretically which can be the main cause of learners' pronunciation errors and negative attitudes towards phonetics learning. Accordingly, it is recommended that phonetics should be taught in language laboratories using small groups taught by enough number of qualified teachers given the time and the materials required.

List of Abbreviations

ALM: Audio-Lingual Method

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

CPH Critical Period Hypothesis

Fig: Figure

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

GA: General American

GMT: Grammar Translation Method

IPA: International Phonetic Alphabet

ICT: Information Communication Technology

L1: Mother Tongue/ First Language

L2: Second language

LMD: License Master Doctorate

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United States of America

VS: Versus

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General Introduction

The ultimate aim of learning English as a foreign language or as a second language for the majority of adult learners is to communicate effectively; namely, to have an accurate accent that enables them to understand and to be understood by others, but many of English learners face speaking difficulties due to their bad pronunciation which makes their speech incomprehensible. The fact that pronunciation is a significant element in achieving intelligible speech; it should be the area that teachers focus on and foster in their classrooms to meet their students needs and aims. Pronunciation is seen as one of the most complicated aspect of English language teaching, but by considering the proverb “practice makes it perfect”, the mastery of English pronunciation could be no anymore impossible if phonetics teachers assist their learners with enough, intensive and meaningful pronunciation practice, this will not only help learners to gain accurate English pronunciation, but also to develop positive attitudes towards the phonetics session and English language learning in general.

Statement of the Problem

Teaching pronunciation plays an important role in helping second language learners to acquire the basis of English' phonological rules and to improve their speaking skills .However pronunciation is perceived as difficult and raise a challenge for most of the learners due to its complexity and the difference that exists between the phonological rules the English language and their first language (L1) (Gilakjani, 2011); accordingly, learners need to have an efficient, constant and varied pronunciation practice to ease the learning of pronunciation , yet to make it more successful and enjoyable. However, in the light of the absence of clear, planned framework for teaching pronunciation in the curriculum, and the lack of suitable materials and equipment in the English division at Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra, pronunciation practice is often neglected by most of teachers; undoubtedly, the lack of practice will lead learners to struggle with pronunciation and speaking difficulties and this may result in the development of a negative attitude towards the phonetics session.

Aim of the Study

1. This study seeks to shed the light on the importance of integrating useful pronunciation practice activities in the phonetics session to overcome students' pronunciation difficulties.
2. It aims at reflecting both teachers and students' attitudes towards the importance of phonetics in general, and pronunciation practice in particular.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that hinder the pronunciation practice in Biskra University' phonetics classes?
2. Would adopting effective pronunciation practice activities enhance EFL learners' oral proficiency?
3. Does the lack of practice impact EFL learners' attitudes towards the phonetics session?

Hypothesis

1. If phonetics teachers do not use enough, effective pronunciation practice activities, EFL learners will not be able to pronounce English accurately and will develop negative attitudes towards the phonetics session.

Methodology

The Choice of the Method

This research tackles the importance of pronunciation practice in the enhancement of EFL learner's oral proficiency which is mainly based on definitions and description of the of findings, so it would be more appropriate to opt for the descriptive study that may better fit this kind of study.

Data Gathering Tools

Data is collected through teachers and students' questionnaire as the only instrument for this research. Teachers' questionnaire aims at defining the extent to which phonetics teachers are aware of the pronunciation practice' significance in improving their students' pronunciation proficiency. Students' questionnaire reflects the learners'

attitudes towards the phonetics session in general and pronunciation practice in particular; it also investigates the reasons of their pronunciation difficulties.

Population and sampling

The population of this study is constituted second year English LMD students and two phonetics' teachers at Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra, during the academic year 2014-2015 . Since it is difficult to deal with the whole number of the population which consists of more than 400 students, a sample of 43 students (10 %) is randomly chosen to represent the whole population; However, just 38 students have answered and handed back the questionnaire.

Significance of the Study

Pronunciation is a very significant and influential area in the overall process of language teaching and learning; hence it should be given priority and immense importance by both students and teachers. Even though the phonetics module is taught to second year students at Muhammed Kheider University of Biskra from the first year, many of them still face pronunciation problems and are unable to communicate in English; which evokes doubts on the effectiveness of the strategies and the activities used in the phonetics session. This research is conducted aiming at drawing attention to the importance and the necessity of incorporating useful, and enough practice activities to ease the learning and the acquisition of phonological rules of English as well as to make the phonetics session more motivating and enjoyable.

Structure of the Study

The present research is divided into three main chapters: the first and the second are devoted to the literature review; the last is concerned with the practical part of the study.

The first one presents the sound system of English; it deals with individual sounds (with a description of the manner and place of articulation), and the prosodic features of pronunciation (stress and intonation), and aspects of connected speech (assimilation, elision, etc).

The second chapter provides a brief description of the language teaching methods and a review of the different pronunciation methods. In addition, this chapter tackles

some of pronunciation interrelated issues including: the affective factors, pronunciation learning problems, and teachers vs. students' roles.

The last chapter represents the analysis of the findings provided from both students, and teachers' questionnaires.

Chapter One: Literature Review on the English phonology

1. Introduction

The first chapter is devoted to the study of the sound system of the English language, approaching the nature of the segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation. In the former, a detailed description of the production and the manner of the articulation of the English sounds is presented; whereas in the latter, the main focus is on stress, intonation and the other aspects of connected speech. The presentation of the English sound system in EFL context is of paramount importance in helping the learners to be aware, to understand and thus to grasp the accurate English pronunciation.

1.1 Spelling and Pronunciation

In some languages there is a clear correspondence between letters and sounds, that is, a letter or a sequence of letters have one particular constant pronunciation; however in English there is no fixed rule for the pronunciation of graphemes. For instance, the sound /ʌ/ can have different realizations in the written form (e.g., won, young, funny, flood); in the other hand the letter 'ou' can be presented with different sounds (e.g., enough-/ənʌf/, through-/θruː/, trough-/trɒf/, though-/ðəʊ/, or even journey-/dʒɜːni/. Differently stated, there is a variety of ways to spell one particular sound and different pronunciations for a single letter or a sequence of letters (Harmer; 2005); this may cause problems to the foreign learners as stated by Larry Small: « *one reason that second learners of English experience difficulty with pronunciation is due to the fact that the English sound system is not well represented by the Roman alphabet* » (2005, p. 8).

Hewings (2007) depicts the relationship between spelling and pronunciation as being complex and chaotic, and points out that English learners should be assisted to develop an awareness about the correlation between these two influential aspects, so they can guess the right spelling for the new words they incidentally hear, or pronounce correctly the new words they come across when reading texts. Furthermore, he highlights some regularities in spelling to sound correspondences that can be easy to remember, but have some exceptions. For example:

- The addition of the letter 'e' after a consonant at the end of the word makes the preceding vowel longer; as in these pairs : at /ate, rid /ride, not /note and cut /cute

- The letters ‘c’ and ‘g’ are pronounced /s/ and / dʒ /when they are followed with the vowels ‘e’, ‘i’ and ‘y’ (e.g. gem, city, cycle), otherwise they are pronounced /k /and /g/ (e.g. cold, cup)
- Some suffixes can determine the stress placement in the word ; for example, the suffixes –ic and –ity cause the stress to be placed on the syllable before the suffix (e.g. athletic -/æθlətɪk/, ability -/əbɪləti/)

Words and sentences are constructed by individual sounds (phonemes), namely, consonants or vowels. Even though the two have the same function-combining words-, but each one of them have certain properties that make it peculiar.

1.2 Features of Pronunciation

The English phonological system comprises three features: 1) Segmental features which refer to the single phonemes as vowels and consonants .2) Supra-segmental features which mainly include stress and intonation. 3) The aspects of connected speech.

1.2.1 The Segmental Features of Pronunciation

Pronunciation segmental aspects refer to the individual sounds; namely, consonants and vowels which are defined and described as follows;

1.2.1.1 Consonants

A precise and simple definition of a consonant would be a category of speech sounds which produced with a considerable constriction of the airflow in the vocal tract. (Rogers, 2000)

A more detailed definition is provided by the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics which defines a consonant as:

A Consonant is a speech sound where the airstream from the lungs is completely blocked (STOP), partially blocked (LATERAL) or where the opening is so narrow that the air escapes with audible friction (FRICATIVE). With some consonants (NASALS) the airstream is blocked in the mouth but allowed to escape through the nose.(Schimt, 2002, p. 19)

There are 25 consonant sounds in English which can be distinguished from each other through the description of their production.

1.2.1.1.1 The Classification of Consonants

Consonants are described and classified according to three phonemic criteria: the place of the articulation, the manner of the articulation, and voicing; a summary of all these three elements is provided on Table 1, p. 11

1.2.1.1.1.1 The Place of the Articulation

The place of the articulation refers to the location where the constriction of the airflow is exactly made in the vocal tract shown in Fig. 1, p. 7 (Rogers, 2000). For the production of the English consonants, there are 9 main places of articulation that can be identified; these places are summarized as follows;

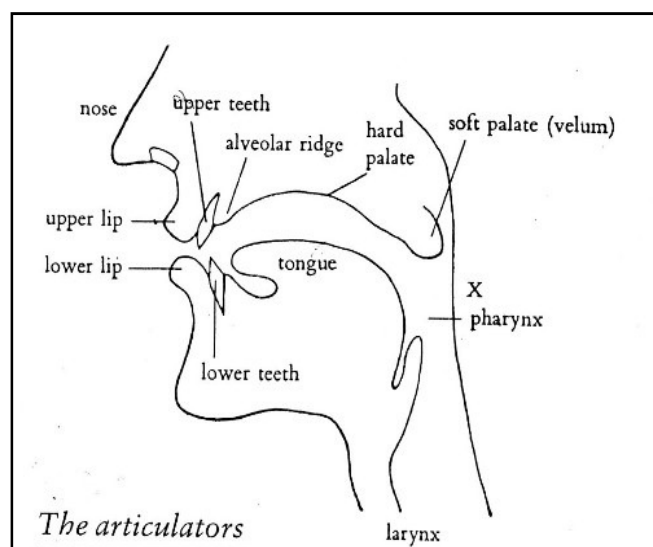


Fig. 1: The Vocal Tract (Roach, 2005, p. 8)

- **Bilabial:** the term bilabial is a compound word that is made of « bi » which means « two » and « labial » which is a Latin adjective for the English word « lips ». /p b m/ are the English bilabial that are formed by pressing the lips to each other (Odgen, 2009).

/p/ **pin, creepy, loop**

/b/ **bee, lobby, rub**

/m/ **moo, summer, loam**

- **Labiodental:** /f v/ are the English labiodentals that are made with the lower lip articulating against the upper teeth (Yule, 2006).
/f/ **fun, daffy, laugh**
/v/ **veal, movie, glove**
- **Dental:** The English language has two dentals /θ ð /which produced with the tip of the tongue slightly touching the back side of the teeth (Odgen, 2009).
/θ/ **thin, ether, health**
/ð/ **then, either, loathe**
- **Alveolar:** This place of articulation includes the largest number of English consonants which are /t d s n l/ ; the production of alveolars involves the tip of the tongue hitting the alveolar ridge (Rogers, 2000).
/t / **top, return, missed**
/d/ **done, sudden, loved**
/s/ **see, messy, police**
/z/ **zap, lousy, please**
- **Palatoalveolar:** /ʃ ʒ dʒ tʃ /are sounds that are produced by moving up the tip of the tongue towards the part of the palate just behind the alveolar ridge (Forel & Puskas, 1986).
/ʃ/ **shof, assure, mesh**
/ʒ/ **treasure, vision, rouge**
/tʃ/ **chin, etching, roach**
/dʒ/ **jam, edgy, ridge**
- **Retroflex:** The /r/ sound is the only retroflex in English; it is made when the tip of the tongue gets closer to the rear part of the alveolar ridge (Rogers, 2000). Notice: the /r/ sound is sometimes included with velars.
/r/ **run, airy, car**
- **Palatal:** The only English palatal is /j/ which is produced when the front of the tongue is raised up against the palate (Rogers, 2000).
/j/ **yell, onion, fuse, few**
- **Velar:** Velar sounds are /k g ŋ w /; these consonants are articulated when the tip of the tongue is against the velum or the soft palate, noting that the production of /w/ sound involves a rounding shape of the lips (Forel & Puskas, 1986).

/k/ **k**iss, **l**ocker, **s**ock

/g/ **g**un, **r**ugger, **s**ag

/ŋ/ **s**inger, **b**ang

/w/ **w**et, **a**n~~ny~~way, **b**ow

- **Glottal:** The English language has one glottal /h/ which is made when the air passes through the glottis as it is narrowed (Fore & Puskas, 1986).

/h/ **h**air, **b**ehind, **a**dhere

Having determined the speech organs that are responsible for the production of each consonant is the first step; the next step is defining how the speech organs modify the airflow to create the various consonants.

1.2.1.1.1.2 The manner of the articulation

The manner of the articulation refers to the degree and the type of the obstruction formed in the vocal tract (Rogers, 2000).

- **Plosives** (stops): the production of stops involves a complete blockage of the air at a particular point in the oral cavity for a short moment; as soon as the air is released, it creates an explosive voice called plosion. Sometimes it may be accompanied with a sound like /h/ called aspiration. English plosives are /p b/, /t d/, /k g/ (Roach, 2002).
- **Fricatives** : when producing a fricative, there is slight restriction of the air stream which forces it to pass through a tightened passage resulting in the creation of friction sound as in /f v/, /θ ð/, /s z/, /ʃ ʒ/, /h/ (Alkhuli, 2008).
- **Affricates** : An affricate is a cluster of two sounds : a stop plus a fricative that have roughly the same place of articulation and which behave as one single sound ; the English language has two affricates / dʒ/ , / tʃ/ (Ben Ammar, 2006).
- **Nasals** : Nasal consonants are produced when the soft palate is lowered completely obstructing the air to escape from the oral cavity ; as a result it takes its way through the nasal cavity creating these nasal consonants /m/, /n/, /ŋ/ (Rogers, 2000).
- **Approximants (Liquids)**: In the production of approximants, speech organs are approximated or close to each other, but this does not cause any friction as for

fricatives and affricates. There are two types of approximants: glides (/j/ as in «yes » , /w/ as in « water ») and liquids (/l/ as in « lay », /r/ as in « ray ») (Ben Ammar, 2006).

The last step in identifying consonants is voicing, that is, which consonants that are produced with vibration in the vocal cords (voiced), and which ones produced without vibration (voiceless).

1.2.1.1.1.3 Voicing (Phonation)

The term voicing is typically related to the state of the vocal cords that are situated in the larynx (see Fig. 2, p.10) and which can be either wide apart (see Fig. 3, p. 10) as in the normal breathing and in the production of the voiceless consonants like /p/, /t/, /s/, /f / , or they can be brought together (see Fig. 3, p.10), that is, the edges of the vocal cords are touching each other ; so the air is forced to pass through a narrow passage creating vibration; in other words, producing voiced consonants like /b/, /d/, /z/, /v/. The following three figures show the larynx and the two positions of the vocal cords (Roach, 2005).

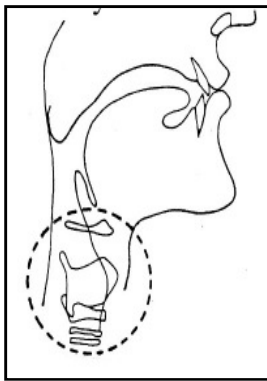


Fig. 2: The Larynx

(Roach, 2005, p. 27)

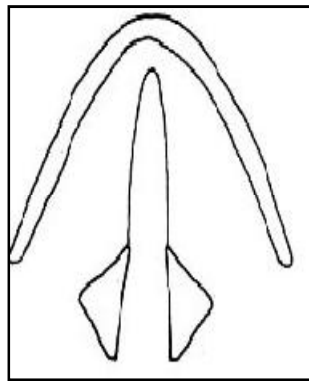


Fig.3: The Vocal Cords Wide Apart

(Roach, 2005, p. 30)

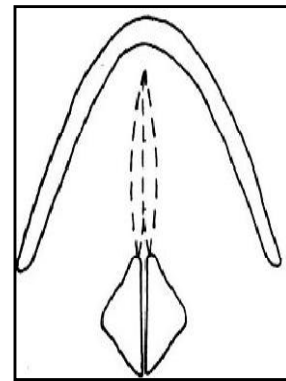


Fig. 4: The Vocal Cords Brought Together

(Roach, 2005, p. 30)

The Place of the Articulation			
Both lips(bilabial): p, b; m, w			
Lower lip and upper teeth (labiodentals): f, v			
Tip of the tongue and teeth (interdental): θ , ð			
Tip of the tongue and tooth ridge (alveolar):t,d,n, s, z, l, r			
Blade of the tongue and the hard palate (alveopalatal) : ʃ ,ʒ, dʒ, tʃ, j			
Blade of the tongue and the soft palate (velar) : k, ʒ, ŋ, w			
The Manner of the Articulation			
Stops:p, b, t, d, k, g			
Fricatives: f, v, θ , ð,s, z, ʃ ,ʒ			
Affricates: dʒ, tʃ			
Liquids:l, r			
Semi-vowels :w, j			
Voicing			
voiceless	example	voiced	example
p	put	b	boot
t	tin	d	drive
k	cape	g	gone
f	foot	v	vote
θ	think	z	them
s	sink	ʒ	zoo
ʃ	ship	dʒ	measure
tʃ	choose	m	gem
		v	move
		n	nose
		ŋ	sing
		l	lose
		r	race
		w	win
		j	yes

Table 1: The Classification of English Consonants (Avery & Eherlich, 1992, p.27)

Another major category of speech sounds is vowels

1.2.1.2 Vowels

The English pronouncing dictionary defines a vowel as a class of sound that makes the least constriction of the airflow (Jones, 2003)

Another definition of vowels is given by Small (2005, p.49): « *Vowels are phonemes that are produced without any appreciable constriction or blockage of the airflow in the vocal tract* ».

Alkhuli (2002) makes a distinction between vowels and consonants and highlights some significant disparities between the two, which are summarized as follows:

- Vowels are musical, whereas consonants are not.

- Vowels are produced without obstructing the airflow; in producing consonant, there is a complete or partial constriction of the airflow, except for the production of /h /.
- All vowels are voiced, whereas some consonants are not voiced.
- Vowels can be stressed, consonants can never be stressed.
- Vowels can stand alone as an independent syllable or word, but consonants cannot form a syllable or a word without a vowel.

The British English has 20 vowels which have three major divisions: pure vowels (12 vowels), diphthongs (8 diphthongs), and 5 triphthongs (a combination of diphthongs and the vowel sound /ə/)

1.2.1.2.1 The Classification of the Pure Vowel Sound

The term ‘pure’ is used to differentiate single vowel sounds from diphthongs (a sequence of two vowels). In describing single vowels the reference is made to three major features:

1. The tongue height in the mouth that can be high (close vowels), in the middle mid (mid vowels), or low (open vowels). the height of the tongue is represented in the fig. 7,8,9 with a dot
2. The part of the tongue that is raised (the front, the centre, the back)
3. The shape of the lips (rounded, spread, neutral) see Fig. 5, p. 12

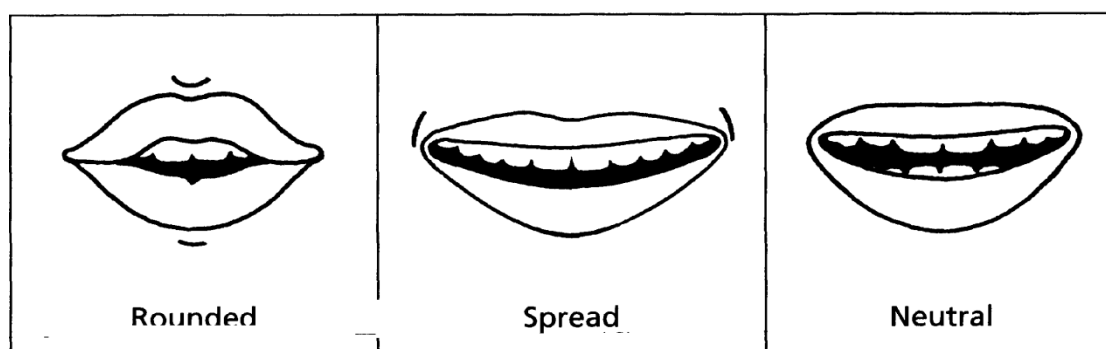


Fig. 5: The Positions of the Lips (Kelly, 2001, p. 30)

The tongue is the main point that is used in describing and differentiating between the pure vowel sounds, the following diagram (see Fig. 6 p.13) shows the different positions of tongue in the mouth when producing each of the English vowels;

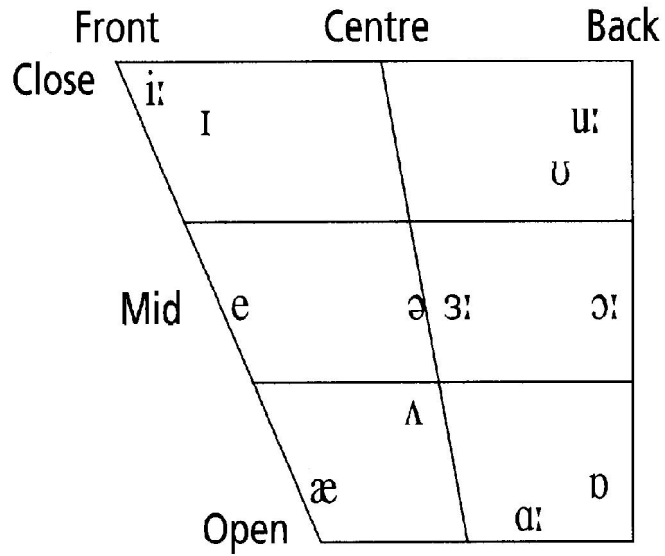


Fig. 6: Cardinal Vowels (Kelly, 2001, p. 5)

- Close, Mid, and Open refer to the distance between the tongue and the roof of the mouth.
- Front, Centre and back and their corresponding vertical lines refer to the part of the tongue that is raised.
- The position of each phoneme in the above diagram represents the highest part of the tongue.

Accordingly, the pure vowel sounds are classified into three sub- categories: close, mid, and open vowels.

1.2.1.2.1.1 Close Vowels:

Close vowels are produced with the tongue somehow raised in the mouth. Noting that the position of the tongue changes from front to back when moving from /i:/ to /u:/ (Kelly, 2001). See Fig. 7, p. 14

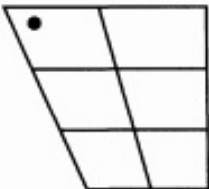
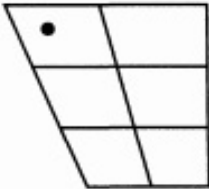
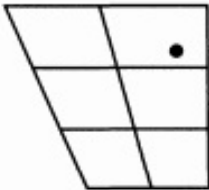
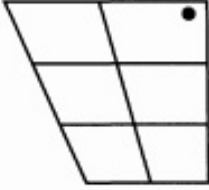
<p style="text-align: center;">i:</p> 	<p>Characteristics The front of the tongue is slightly behind and below the close front position. (The 'close' position is where the tongue is closest to the roof of the mouth.) Lips are spread. The tongue is tense, and the sides of the tongue touch the upper molars.</p> <p>As in . . . <i>bead, key, cheese, scene, police, people, quay</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: C, Gk, P, R, Tu</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">I</p> 	<p>Characteristics The part of the tongue slightly nearer the centre is raised to just above the half-close position (not as high as in /i:/). The lips are spread loosely, and the tongue is more relaxed. The sides of the tongue may just touch the upper molars.</p> <p>As in . . . <i>hit, sausage, biggest, rhythm, mountain, busy, women, sieve</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: A, C, F, Gk, It, J, P, Sc, Sp, Tu</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">U</p> 	<p>Characteristics The part of the tongue just behind the centre is raised, just above the half-close position. The lips are rounded, but loosely so. The tongue is relatively relaxed.</p> <p>As in . . . <i>book, good, woman, push, pull</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: F, Gk, It, P, Sp, Tu</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">u:</p> 	<p>Characteristics The back of the tongue is raised just below the close position. Lips are rounded. The tongue is tense.</p> <p>As in . . . <i>food, rude, true, who, fruit, soup</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: C, P</p>

Fig. 7: Close Vowels (Kelly, 2001, p. 31)

1.2.1.2.1.2 Mid Vowels

When articulating mid vowels the tongue is taking a middle position in the mouth neither high nor low. Noting that the tongue changes its position, in /e/ it is front, whereas in /ɔ:/ it is back (Kelly ,2001). See Fig 8, p. 15

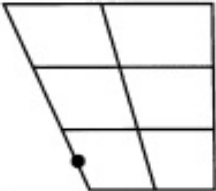
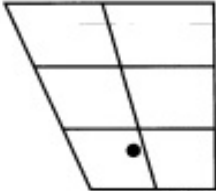
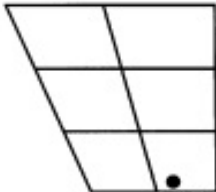
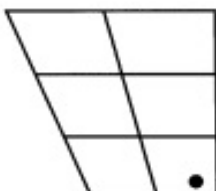
<p style="text-align: center;">æ</p> 	<p>Characteristics The front of the tongue is raised to just below the half-open position. Lips are neutrally open.</p> <hr/> <p>As in . . . <i>bat, attack, antique, plait</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: A, C, F, G, Gk, Ind, It, J, P, R, Sc, Sp, Tu</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ʌ</p> 	<p>Characteristics The centre of the tongue is raised to just above the fully open position. Lips are neutrally open.</p> <hr/> <p>As in . . . <i>run, uncle, front, nourish, does, come, flood</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: A, C, F, Gk, It, J, P, Sc, Sp, Tu</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ɑ:</p> 	<p>Characteristics The tongue, between the centre and the back, is in the fully open position. Lips are neutrally open.</p> <hr/> <p>As in . . . <i>far, part, half, class, command, clerk, memoir, aunty, hearth</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: A, C, F, G, Gk, Ind, It, J, P, R, Sp, Tu</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ɒ</p> 	<p>Characteristics The back of the tongue is in the fully open position. Lips are lightly rounded.</p> <hr/> <p>As in . . . <i>dog, often, cough, want, because, knowledge, Australia</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: Ind</p>

Fig. 8: Mid Vowels (Kelly, 2001, p. 32)

1.2.1.2.1.3 Open Vowels

The tongue in the production of open vowels is low in the mouth, and it changes its position from front to back when moving from /æ/ to /ɒ/ (Kelly, 2001). See Fig. 9, p.16

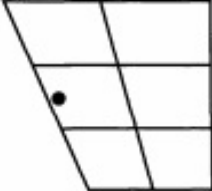
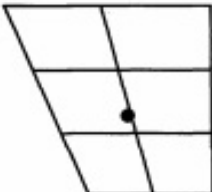
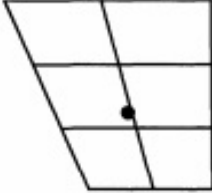
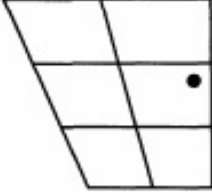
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">e</p> 	<p>Characteristics The front of the tongue is between the half-open and half-close positions. Lips are loosely spread. the tongue is tenser than for /ɪ/, and the sides of the tongue may touch the upper molars.</p> <p>As in . . . <i>egg, left, said, head, read (past), instead, any, leisure, leopard</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: A, Ind, Tu</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">ə</p> 	<p>Characteristics: The centre of the tongue is between the half-close and half-open positions. Lips are relaxed, and neutrally spread.</p> <p>As in . . . <i>about, paper, banana, nation, the</i> (before consonants)</p> <p>Commonest vowel sound in English. Never stressed, and many unstressed vowels tend towards this sound. Differs from other phonemes, in that its contrast with similarly articulated long sound /ɜ:/ does not involve a change of meaning. Gets its name from Hebrew /ʔawa:/, meaning 'emptiness', or 'nothing'.</p> <p>Difficulties for: A, C, F, G, Gk, Ind, It, J, P, R, Sc, Sp, Tu</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">ɜ:</p> 	<p>Characteristics The centre of the tongue is between the half-close and half-open positions. Lips are relaxed, and neutrally spread.</p> <p>As in . . . <i>shirt, her, word, further, pearl, serve, myrtle</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: J</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">ɔ:</p> 	<p>Characteristics The back of the tongue is raised to between the half-open and half-close positions. Lips are loosely rounded.</p> <p>As in . . . <i>fork, call, snore, taught, bought, board, saw, pour, broad, all, law, horse, hoarse</i></p> <p>Difficulties for: A, C, F, G, Gk, Ind, It, J, P, R, Sp, Tu</p>

Fig. 9: Open Vowels (Kelly, 2001, p. 33)

Another common division of vowels is: short vowels, long vowels and diphthongs, as it is shown in Table. 2, p.17

short vowels	long vowels	diphthongs
/ɪ/	/i:/	/eɪ/
/ʊ/	/u:/	/aɪ/
/e/	/ɜ:/	/ɔɪ/
/æ/	/ɔ:/	/aʊ/
/ʌ/	/ɑ:/	/əʊ/
/ɒ/		/ɪə/
		/eə/
		/ʊə/

Table 2: Vowels of the British English (Roach, 2002, p. 45)

The pure vowels constitute the main unit of the second type of vowels which is diphthongs

1.2.1.2.2 Diphthongs

Rogers (2000) defines diphthongs as a sequence of a simple vowel and glide ; for instance the diphthong /aʊ/ in the word “cow” is made of two segments, it starts with a low (open) vowel that sounds like /ɑ:/ and /æ/ then moves upwards or glides to high vowel (close) like /ʊ/ ; see Fig. 10, p.17

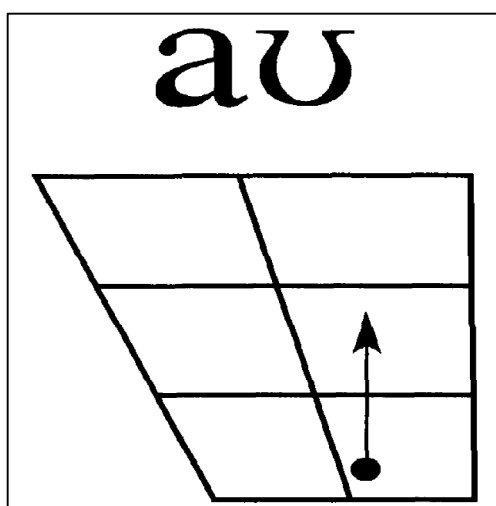


Fig. 10: The Diphthong /aʊ/ (Kelly, 2001, p. 36)

It is worth to note that the first part of diphthongs is much longer and stronger, whereas the last part is very short and can be rather noticed or heard; accordingly, foreign learners,

should be paid attention, so they do not pronounce the second part strongly. There are eight diphthongs in English which are divided into three groups as it is shown in Fig.11, p. 18

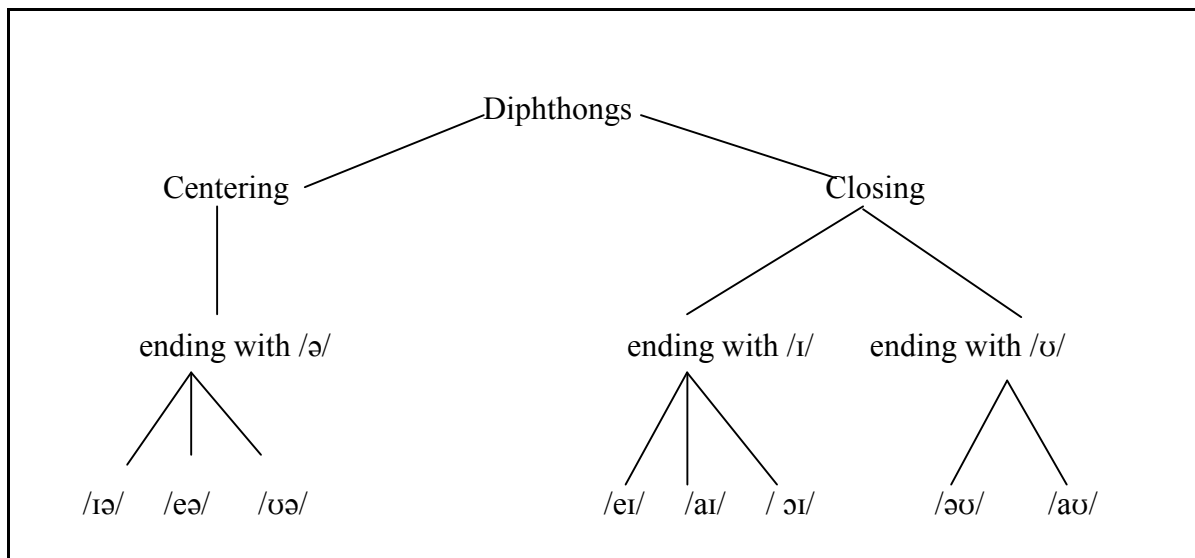


Fig. 11: The British English Diphthongs (Roach, 2005, p. 21)

The third vowel type is triphthongs that are a sequence of three vowel sounds;

1.2.1.2.3 Triphthongs

The term triphthong originates from the Greek word « triphthongs » which means a « triple sounds ». In the English language there are 5 triphthongs : /eɪə/ as in ‘player’, /aɪə/ as in ‘fire’, /ɔɪə/ as in ‘royal’, /əʊə/ as in lower, and /aʊə/ as in flower. Unlike diphthongs which are treated or examined as single vowel sounds triphthongs are considered to be a closing diphthongs followed by a schwa /ə/ (Skandera & Burleigh, 2005)

As mentioned earlier, vowels and consonants are the building blocks of words, phrases, and sentences; the smallest unit or combination of vowels and consonants in English is called ‘syllable’

1.2.1.3 Syllables

Small (2005, p. 20) defines a syllable as : « a basic building block of language that may be composed of either one or more vowels alone or vowel in combination with one or more consonants.»

Hewings (2007) indicates that the main structure of English syllables is:

consonant(s)+ vowel + consonant(s) .

There are also other possible combinations of vowels and consonants;

- vowel only (e.g. the article 'a')
- consonant+ vowel (e.g. me)
- vowel + consonant (e.g. eat)
- consonant+ vowel + consonant (e.g. in bag)

Words can be made by one single syllable or by a sequence of two or more syllables. In multisyllabic words, there is only one stressed syllable.

1.2.2 The Suprasegmental Features of Pronunciation

Suprasegmentals are aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound; the main components of suprasegmentals are stress, sentence stress, and intonation.

1.2.2.1 Stress

Is the act of making one syllable more prominent than the others, this prominence is due to three interrelated factors of loudness, pitch and duration ; a stressed syllable can have all these aspects working in combination to create prominence or just one factor ; generally in English the high pitch can be used alone to make a syllable prominent. (Rogers, 2000)

Small (2005, p.180) states that : « *a stressed syllable in a word is generally spoken with more articulatory force, resulting in a syllable that is louder, longer in duration, and higher in pitch than unstressed syllable.*»

1.2.2.2 Stress Placement

Alkhuli (2002) suggests that some languages such as French, Polish and Finnish have a fixed stress system, that is, the primary stress is placed on a fixed position within words, whereas the English language has not such fixed system; stress can be put on the first, the second, the third, or the final syllable, respectively. Differently stated English is a free-stress language.

In the other hand, he provides some word- stress rules that can guide students to place stress on the right position (Alkhuli, 2008) :

1. Monosyllabic words like: 'sit, 'come', 'go', 'get', 'car' are apparently stressed on the first syllable.
2. Verbs with two syllables are usually stressed on the second syllable if one of these three conditions are met: the second syllable contains a long vowel, diphthong or ends with at least two consonants. For example: **an**nonce, sub**tr**act, in**s**ist, **all**ow, **bel**ieve.
3. If the second syllable of the verb has a short vowel and ends with one or no consonant, the first syllable will take the stress. For example : **o**pen, **e**nter.
4. Two-syllable adjectives have the same rule of two- syllable verbs (rule 1 and 2). For ex ample : correct, **a**live, **a**sleep, **l**ovely, **r**ainy.
5. Two-syllable adverbs, conjunctions, and prepositions take the stress as two-syllable verbs. For example: behind, **a**long, **b**elow, **o**ver, **q**uickly.
6. Two-syllable nouns receive the primary stress on the first syllable if the second syllable contains a short vowel as in 'lorry', 'larynx', 'dozen', unless the stress will be put on the second syllable as in: 'ballon', 'taboo', design'.
7. All words that have these suffixes: -ous, -graphy, -ial, -ic, -ion, -ty or -tive carry the primary stress on the second syllable before these suffixes. For example : **c**ourageous, phot**o**graphy, **a**dverbial, **h**istoric, **o**pinion, **n**ovelty, **c**reative.
8. Words that have the suffix -ate receive stress on the third syllable before the last as in: **i**llustrate, **h**esitate, **a**nticipate.
9. In compound adjectives, it is the first syllable that carries the primary stress and the second has some tertiary stress. For example: **bl**ackboard, **s**unset, **cl**assroom.
10. If the second part of a compound adjective has the suffix -ed, it will take the primary stress as in: ill-**t**empered, half-**f**inished, kind-**h**earted.
11. Compounds that behave as adverbs carry stress on the second part as in: world-**w**ise, clock**w**ise, south-**w**est.
12. Most of two-syllable words that acts both as nouns and verbs receive the primary stress on the first syllable if they function as nouns, as an example : **i**mport, **i**nsult, **d**esert, if they function as verbs they will be stressed on the second syllable as in : **i**mport, **i**nsult, **d**esert.
13. Words that are made of more than three syllables generally have the primary stress on the third syllable from the end; for example: prob**a**bility, un**iv**ersity, punct**u**ality.

All these rules are referred to as isolated-word stress, the second type of stress is known as 'sentence stress' which controls and influences word stress within a sentence.

1.2.2.3 Sentence Stress

In the English language, stress is not just the property of single words; sentences also receive a typical stress. Generally the primary stress or the emphasis is placed on the last word of the sentence. If someone is carefully to listen to the sentence: « Cheryl drove to 'school », he would be able to notice that the final word is produced more strongly and loudly.

Here are some other examples where the emphasis is on the last word:

I like his 'style.

Bill and Jone went 'home.

If I get 'caught, I will be on ' trouble.

It is true that phrases and sentences are usually stressed at the end, but sometimes certain words in a sentence may receive stress due to the importance they have within the sentence and the speakers' intent on the message being conveyed. Content words such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are more likely to be emphasized, whereas functional words like pronouns, articles, conjunctions and preposition are usually not stressed. This means that each content word in a sentence has the possibility to be stressed according to the speaker's intent, though in the usual manner, stress would be placed at the end (Small, 2005).

Another suprasegmental aspect of connected speech that is related to stress is intonation, which involves modifying the frequency of the voice to stress a particular word in an utterance. This tied relationship is proved by Ur (2012) who points out that English speakers highlight a stressed word not by the high pitch, but actually by rising intonation.

1.2.2.4. Intonation

A comprehensible and detailed definition of intonation is given by Kreidler (2004, p.163): « *Intonation is part of language system. We produce melodies by changing the frequency of the vocal cords, mostly at the accented syllable. We recognize falling and*

rising tunes of different length- long fall and short fall, long rise –and short rise and a combination of these tunes. »

A simpler definition of intonation can be the rises and falls of pitch as a result of changing the rate of vibration in the vocal cords (Lodge, 2009).

Pitch is a key word that is worth to define because it plays the most important part in making intonation; in fact, pitch is changing the fundamental frequency of the vibration in the vocal cords, from 'low' (slow vibration) to 'high' (rapid vibration) (Kreidler, 2004).

Falling and Rising Patterns of Intonation (Gruttenden, 1986 cited in Rogers, 2000):

Falling Intonation

1. Neutral Statement:

My parents won't arrive until Monday.

2. Wh-Questions

Where are you going now?

3. Command:

Be nice to teach others!

Rising Intonation

1. Tentative statement:

She's leaving today.

2. Yes-no questions:

Did your dog bite your leg?

3. Request

Would you please accompany us?

1.2.3 Aspects of Connected Speech

When words are pronounced in isolation are said to be on their citation form. However, when they are used in rapid connected speech, they undergo substantial changes due to the speed of speaking and in order to produce the sequences of sounds in a more soft and easier manner. First, at word boundaries certain neighboring sounds change as a result of being in contact with each other, this is called assimilation. Second, some sounds can be completely disappear, this referred to as elision. Third, other sounds like the /r/ are inserted

between two words which is known as intrusive /r/; in addition to other aspects of connected speech like linking and contractions (Hewings, 2007).

1.2.3.1 Assimilation

Is the modification of sounds as a result of being close to one another, most of the times across boundaries of words, but sometimes within words too. For example the word « that » is pronounced /ðæt/ in isolation, but if it is put within a sentence and pronounced in rapid speech (e.g. Could you pass that book, please?) the final /t/ of the word «that» will be influenced by the sound /b/ that is following it, and consequently it changes to /b/ (Kelly, 2001).

Types of assimilation

Anticipatory Assimilation

Kelly (2001) states that anticipatory assimilation occurs when a phoneme is modified due to a phoneme following it. These are the common cases of anticipatory assimilation:

1. The phoneme /t/, /d/ and /n/ generally become bilabial before bilabial consonants /p/, /b/ and /m/ (p.109):
He's rather fatboy. (/t/ becomes /b/)
She's got an apartment in Manhattan. (/t/ becomes /p/)
He's a very good boy. (/d/ becomes /b/)
There are nen in the class, and two women. (/n/ becomes /m/)
2. /t/ assimilates to /k/ before /k/ or /g/ , and /d/ assimilates to /k/ before /k/ or /g/ :
Where has that cat been all night? (/t/ assimilates to /k/)
Can you see that girl over there? (/t/ assimilates to /k/)
It was very good concert. (/d/ assimilates to /g/)
She's a very good girl. (/d/ assimilâtes to /g/)
3. /n/ can be modified to / ŋ / before /k/ and /g/
I've been going out too much lately.
He's bribing his own car.
4. /s/ changes to /ʃ/ before /ʃ/ :
I really love this shiny one over here.
5. /z/ turns to / ʒ / before /ʃ/ :
We found this lovely little cheese shop in Paris.

Coalescent Assimilation

It occurs when two neighboring consonants combine to make a different one. These are the two cases of coalescent assimilation (Kelly, 2001):

1. /t/ and /j/ combine to form /tʃ/ :
You went France last year, didn't you?
2. /d/ and /j/ combine to form /dʒ/

1.2.3.2 Elision:

Another aspect of connected speech is elision, which is the process of dropping out one or more sounds in everyday rapid connected speech, which would actually pronounced when the words are in isolation. There is remarkable reduction of sounds if a comparison is made between rapid speech and slow careful one, for example the sentence « she looked particularly interesting » would contain 27 phonemes /ʃi lʊkt pətɪkjələli ɪntərɪstɪŋ/ ; in slow, careful speech; conversely in rapid speech it will be reduced to 20 phonemes /ʃi lʊk pətɪkli ɪntrɪstɪŋ/. The omission of the voiceless plosive /t/ in /lʊkt/ is due to being situated between two other voiceless plosives / lʊkt pətɪkjələli / which makes their pronunciation quite difficult (Roach, 2002).

Roach (2005) points out that foreign learners are not necessarily obliged to use elision in their everyday language, but most importantly they should be aware of it. This particularly true, when they listen to a natural conversation between native speakers; they should not be surprised that certain sounds that they are expecting to hear are left out.

Some common examples of elision:

1. The loss of weak vowels after /p/, /t/, and /k/ : the weak vowel /ə/ that follows / p t k / in the words ‘potato, tomato, canari, today’ is not pronounced ; the aspiration takes its position, giving this pronunciation :
/p^h 'teɪtəʊ t^h'mɑ:təʊ k^h'neəri p^h'haeps t^hdeɪ /
2. The omission of weak vowels before /n, l, r/ , as in : ‘tonight’/ tnaɪt/ , ‘police’ /pli:s/, ‘correct’ /krekt/
3. Avoidance of complex consonant clusters: native speakers never pronounce a cluster of three plosives or two plosives plus a fricative; the middle plosive is likely to be elided as in this example ‘George the Sixth’s throne’ /dʒɔ:dʒ ðə

sɪksθs θrəʊn/ . The pronunciation of /sɪksθs θrəʊn/ is hard, so it will be reduced to / sɪksθ rəʊn/

4. Loss of final /v/ in ‘of’ before consonants; as an example :

‘lots of them’/ lɒts ə ðəm/, ‘waste of money’ /weɪst ə mʌni/

1.2.3.3 Linking and Intrusion

The Received pronunciation of the British English is considered to be as a non-rhotic accent, that is, the /r/ sound is never pronounced in the word-final position as in the word ‘car’-/kɑ: /; however when the final /r/ is followed by a vowel, then it is explicitly pronounced as in this phrase ‘car owner’-/kɑ:r əʊnə/. This is the so called linking /r/. (Jones, 2003)

Another aspect of the British English is the intrusive/r/. The British people tend to add or to insert a /r/ sound between two vowels at word boundaries where it does not actually exist in order to link words. For example:

China and Japan-/ tʃaɪnə r ən dʒəpæn/

Law and order-/ lɔ: r ən ɔ:də /

It is worth to note that the intrusive/r/does not occur after close vowels / i: /, /u:/ and closing diphthongs /eɪ/ /aɪ/ /ɔɪ/ /əʊ/ /aʊ/ (Jones, 2003)

1.2.3.4 Contractions

In the English language, some grammatical words tend to combine to the extent they seem as one word or one syllable. These forms become almost agreed upon in written language. Common examples of contractions are (Kelly, 2001) :

I’m, you’re, he’s, she’s, we’re...

You aren’t, you aren’t, can’t, won’t...

Would’ve, could’ve, would’nt, could’nt....

1.2.3.5 Weak forms and strong forms

As within isolated words, there are prominent syllables and less prominent syllables as in connected speech there are prominent words and less prominent words. It is mentioned

previously that in sentence stress content words tend to be stressed while function words are generally unstressed, they can be even reduced. Function words occur within sentence in two forms: weak form and strong form.

Strong forms: function words that include a strong vowel and which are pronounced on the full form (no sound is omitted) are said to be on their strong form like ‘had’/hæd/, ‘a’ / eɪ/, ‘of’ /ɒv /. Function words that occur in strong form can be as content words stressed or unstressed

Weak forms: refer to function words that contain a weak, or that have been reduced (one or more sounds are omitted) like ‘had’/ əd/, ‘a’/ ə/, ‘of’ /əv/. These weak forms are always unstressed, notin that some of them can have more than one weak form. Here are some examples of weak forms and strong forms in Table 3, p.26 (Burleigh, 2005).

word	strong forms	weak forms	word	strong forms	weak forms
and	/ænd/	/ənd/, /ən/, /n/	from	/frɒm/	/fərm/
but	/bʌt/	/bət/	of	/ɒv /	/ əv /
not	/nɒt/	/nt/	to	/tu:/	/tə/
could	/kʊd/	/kəd/,/kd/	him	/hɪm/	/ɪm/

Table 3: Weak forms and strong forms of English grammatical words (Hewings, 2007, p. 7)

Conclusion

The phonology of English is complex in its nature, so it can be as challenging and as difficult for EFL learners, especially for those whose native language’ sound system differs largely from the one of English like Arabic. Despite of all the complications that pronunciation learning is characterized with, it should be neither abandoned nor be afraid of; the ability to achieve something can never be linked to the extent of its complexity, it is the reverse, persons’ determination and ambition to persist and challenge the task indeed can predict his success as Vietnamese say: *“The road is difficult, not because of the deep river and the high mountains that bar the way, but because we lose heart when we think of river and the mountain”*(Laroy, 2008, p.5). In other words, the mastery of the English

pronunciation is not impossible as far as teachers present and practise efficiently the English phonological aspects, including not only the isolated sounds, but also the melody of speech and the aspects of connected speech, this in one hand. In the other hand, the burden falls on students too who should not cross their hands and sit passively; what they really should do is to work hard in practicing constantly the learnt rules inside and outside the classroom in a variety of means.

Chapter Two: Teaching Pronunciation

2. Introduction

The second chapter tackles five main elements. Firstly, the review of the most common methods of language teaching including the Grammar Translation method, the Audiolingual method, the Direct method, Suggestopedia, and Communicative Language Teaching method. Secondly, the scope of pronunciation teaching and its development over different teaching methods, from the direct method till pronunciation teaching nowadays; thirdly, introducing a cluster of affective factors that are associated with pronunciation learning, namely, the biological factors, socio-cultural factors, and linguistic factors; In addition to an overview of the most problematic areas in learning pronunciation for Arabic learners; then at the end, highlighting the teachers and students' roles in overcoming all the learning difficulties and the affective factors' barriers to achieve better pronunciation learning outcomes.

2.1. The English Language Teaching Methods

There are several language teaching methods that have been raised over the last decades; one of most widely used among these methods are the Grammar Translation Method, Audiolingualism, the Direct Method, Suggestopedia, and Communicative Language Teaching.

2.1. 1. Grammar Translation Method (GMT)

The Grammar Translation Method was first founded in the United States by the German scholarship and was known by the name of 'the Prussian Method'. In the period between the 1884 and 1940, it gained great popularity and was widely used in schools. Three principals are at the core of this method: learning grammar, reading the written texts of classical languages, and the use of translation to the mother tongue as the main instructional tool. Despite of the criticism that was directed to the GMT, it is still adopted in some parts of the world (Richards &Rogers, 2001).

The major Features of GMT (Richards &Rogers, 2001):

1. The use of the sentence as the main unit in teaching and language practice.
2. Learning a Foreign language is mainly intended to serve intellectual proposes.

3. Reading and writing are prioritized at the expense of listening and speaking.
4. Grammar is taught deductively.
5. Vocabulary is taught through reading texts and memorizing lists of translated words.
6. The use of translation and the mother tongue in the classroom.
7. Accuracy is the main focus.

2.1.2. Audiolingal Method (ALM)

In the first of the twentieth century Audiolingualism was the dominant method in USA. It was highly accepted and gained credibility by advocating the American structural linguistics and psychological theories into its foundation. The essence of the Audiolingualism considers that learning is like any type of behavior, it is through stimulus - response and repetition, the learning habit is formed. (Steinberg & Sciarini, 2006)

Aspects of the ALM (Celce- Murcia, 2001)

1. Initiating the lesson with dialogues.
2. Errors are avoided at any cost.
3. Grammar is taught inductively.
4. The use of memorization and mimicry on the principle that language is a habit formation.
5. Language skills are taught in a sequence: listening, speaking, then reading, while writing is delayed.
6. Pronunciation is emphasized from the very start.
7. Teachers must be competent, and materials are carefully controlled.
8. Language is taught by giving no regard to the meaning and the context.

2.1.3. The Direct Method

The Direct Method originated in the late of the nineteenth and early of the twentieth century. It was highly inspired by the Natural approach premise which was mainly focused on speech production, learning a language in a natural context, and teaching grammar inductively; unlike the Natural approach, the Direct Method has left any room for the use of the native language in the classroom. The proponents of this method incorporate the psychological, linguistic theories and language learning insights claiming that such

application would contribute to the betterment of the language teaching (Steinberg & Sciarini, 2006).

The basic principles of the Direct Method (Steinberg & Sciarini, 2006):

1. A considerable emphasis on oral communication.
2. Teaching the target language should go hand in hand with the first language acquisition order.
3. Teaching frequent social dialogues and the use of patterned drills and memorization.
4. Teachers should be proficient and fluent.
5. Grammar is taught inductively.

2.1.4. Suggestopedia

It is a language teaching method that has developed by Georgy Lazonov. The premise of Suggestopedia holds that the physical surrounding and the atmosphere in the classroom are of paramount importance. In other words, by creating positive atmosphere and non-threatening environment, the affective filter is lowered and the learners will be more relaxed, comfortable and self-confident; as a result of this, learning will be improved. The relationship between the teacher and the learners is characterized by 'infantilisation', that is, a parental relationship by which the laws are broken; as an example, the teacher calls on his learners with their nick names, sympathetic treatment of the learners, subjects of violence and horror are prevented (Harmer, 2005).

Some Features of Suggestopedia (Harmer, 2005):

1. The use of dialogues which are translated to the native language.
2. Devoting a 'concert session' for student to listen to a relaxing music.
3. The major focus is on lowering the affective filter.
4. Pronunciation is taught by reading out loud (Celce- Murcia, 2001).
5. Learning vocabulary is stressed.
6. The development of communicative ability is targeted.

2.1.5. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching is a teaching method that was developed by Charles A. Curran (Richards & Rogers, 2001) which was largely accepted and supported from the 1970's onwards (Widdowson, 1987 cited in Ur, 2012); the rationale of CLT is based on the idea that 'language is used to fulfill communicative purposes', so the most efficient way to teach it is through a naturalistic acquisition. CLT adopts the learner-centered approach; that is, learners' ability to communicate (fluency) is of primary focus (Ur, 2012).

Principles of CLT (Richards & Rogers, 2001):

1. Communicative competence is the ultimate goal.
2. The aim for intelligible pronunciation.
3. Language is learnt for the sake of communication.
4. Linguistic items are taught through communicative problem activities.
5. Judicious use of the native language.
6. Reading and writing are taught from the beginning.
7. Emphasis is put on fluency more than accuracy.

2.2 History and Scope of Pronunciation Teaching

Pronunciation has been depicted as the "Cinderilla" of foreign language teaching because the Western philosophers have been long centering their attention on studying grammar and vocabulary marginalizing pronunciation. This explains why Grammar and vocabulary have been much more understood than pronunciation by most of English language teachers. It was until the beginning of the twentieth century that pronunciation started to be studied systematically (Kelly 1969 cited in Celce-Murcia et al., 2009).

Two approaches to teaching pronunciation have been founded in the field of modern language teaching, namely, the intuitive-imitative approach and the analytic-linguistic approach, but in fact the only approach that was used and supplemented by the teacher's textbook is the imitative approach which was not applied just until the late of the twentieth century (Celce-Murcia et al., 2009).

The Intuitive-Imitative approach

As the name indicates, the major focus of this approach is to develop learners' ability to listen and imitate the rhythms and sounds of the target language. It enhances learners' possibilities of listening to good models of English by providing materials that are gradually used in different phases; earlier there was the use of the phonograph recorder, then the tape recorder, and the language laboratories in the mid of the twentieth, and later there were the use of the audio- and video cassettes and compact discs (Celce-Murcia et al., 2009).

The Analytic-Linguistic Approach

This approach came as a supplement for the intuitive-imitative approach; it also focuses on listening, but it depends more on phonological insights and uses different tools such as: the phonetic alphabet, articulatory descriptions, charts of the vocal tract, contractive information, and production; in addition to other listening aids to teach listening. Lessons are explicitly transmitted to students with a great emphasis placed on target language's sounds and rhythm (Celce-Murcia et al., 2009).

2.2.1 Methods and Approaches of Pronunciation Teaching

There are different language teaching methods that have considered the role of pronunciation from different viewpoints; these methods are as follows;

2.2.1.1 The Direct Method and More Recent Naturalistic approaches

Teaching pronunciation in the direct method took the form of imitation and intuition. Students are supposed to listen to the model (the teacher, or a recording) and try as best as they can to sound like him/it through repetitive imitation. The threshold of this instructional method was drawn from an observation and a comparison made between children learning their first language, and children and adults learning foreign languages in naturalistic settings. The proponents of this approach are called the naturalistic methods (e.g., Ashar's Total Physical approach Krashen and Terrel's Natural approach); they encourage allowing students to have a silent period to internalize the L2 sound system before speaking; as soon as they are ready to speak, their pronunciation is expected to be quite good even though they have not received any direct instruction (Celce-Murcia et al., 2009).

2.2.1.2 The reform Movement

For many years of neglect pronunciation has seen the light in the late of the ninetieth century and stood as a principled, theoretically, founded discipline of second language teaching methodology as a result of the emergence of reform Movement. Besides to the establishment of the International Phonetics Association which has developed the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), which is the universally agreed transcription system for the accurate representation of the sound system of any language. The API is largely used in dictionaries and textbooks; the foundation of the API has drawn new direction in the modern era where oral ability becomes of primary concern, and phonetics training is seen to be necessary for students and teachers alike (Seidhofer, 2005).

A number of historians think that the reform movement had a significant role in the emergence of Audiolingualism in USA and the Oral Approach in Britain during the 1940s an 1950s.

2.2.1.3 The 1940s and 1950s (The Audiolingualism and the Oral Approach)

In the Audiolingualism and the Oral Approach, pronunciation is placed at the forefront of instruction; it is taught explicitly from the beginning. Pronunciation teaching is the same as in the direct method, it is taught by imitation and repetition; the teacher (or recording) models a sound, a word, or an utterance and the students are going to imitate or repeat. However, the teacher relies tremendously on the use of phonetic information; For instance, the use of visual transcription system (e.g., IPA) or charts of sound articulation (Celce-Murcia et al. 2009). Besides the teacher from time to time employs techniques derived from the structural linguistics such as minimal pair drill; this technique depends on the use of words that differ in one phoneme to teach distinctive sounds (Bloomfield, 1933 cited in Celce-Murcia et al. 2009); minimal pairs are used in listening practice and controlled oral production.

The following activities are a sample of the techniques used in The Audiolingualism and the Oral Approach (Celce-Murcia al.2009):

1. Minimal Pair Drills

A	B
/i:/	/ɪ/
sheep	ship
green	grin
least	list
meet	mitt
deed	did

Table 4: Minimal Pair Drills (Celce-Murcia et al.2009, p, 4)

2. Systematic Drills (contrast within a sentence)

Don't sit on the seat.

Did you at least get the list.

3. Pragmatic Drills (contrast across two sentences)

Don't slip on the floor.

Don't sleep on the floor.

2.2.1.4 The 1970s (The Silent Way and Communicative Language Teaching)

The Silent Way

Similar to the Audiolingual method, the silent way has much stressed both the correctness of the speech production and linguistic structures. In this method, learners should, from the first day, pay attention to all pronunciation aspects including: the individual sounds, the word' combination mechanism, stress, intonation and all what concerns the production of an utterance. The supporters of this method propose that this helps the Silent Way learners to strengthen their potential for accurate pronunciation.

The special feature about this method is the teacher who keeps silent for most of the time; he uses gestures to indicate what his learners are supposed to do and this involves elaborate system of signals. Furthermore, he uses numerous available tools like the sound-color chart, the field chart, word chart, and colored rods (Celce-Murcia et al.2009).

Communicative Language Teaching

A pronunciation lesson in Communicative Language teaching classroom proceeds as the following: the students sit in a circle around the table with a tape recorder which is the main tool used in this method. The teacher who acts the role of a counselor stands behind one of the students and asks them to provide him with a sentence in their native language, that they want to say it in English; the teacher translates it adequately to English, then he says again- divided to individual words- to help students to get it, and asks them to repeat with him several times; when they become able to pronounce the utterance accurately and fluently, it is then recorded (Celce-Murcia et al.2009).

Next, the students listen to the recorded utterances and try to link the new English words in accordance with the teacher's word for word translation. Right after, the teacher asks the students if they want more pronunciation practice on the newly learnt utterances, if no, the teacher proceeds with another technique which is called 'the human computer'; in this technique the teacher functions as a computer that is turned on or switched off by the students who ask for the correct pronunciation of a particular utterance. This technique is intended to provide students with a speech model that they imitate and repeat until they reach a high level of proficiency (Celce-Murcia et al. 2009).

2.2.1.5 Pronunciation Teaching Today

The leading approach in nowadays is the communicative approach that has placed pronunciation with a higher concern, in the sense that, it constitutes an essential component of communicative competence.

2.2.1.5.1 The Communicative Approach

The fact that the efficiency of communication is at the core of this approach, has tremendously served pronunciation instruction; this is empirically and anecdotally proved because there is close connection between good pronunciation and successful communication, or as in Celce-Murcia, Goodwin and Brinton's words:

This focus on language communication brings renewed urgency to the teaching of pronunciation, since both empirical and anecdotal evidence indicates that there is a threshold level of pronunciation for nonnative speakers; if they fall below this threshold level. They will have oral communication problems no matter how excellent and extensive their control of English grammar and vocabulary might be. (2009, p.7)

In the Communicative Approach, intelligible pronunciation should be the goal of all learners who wish to make themselves understood by others and to avoid communication breakdowns that result from such poor pronunciation. To achieve this goal, a diversity of practice materials and techniques are used, the following activities are a sample of them (Celce-Murcia et al. 2009);

1. Listen and repeat activities, phonetic training, minimal pair drills, and contextualized minimal pair.
2. Visual aids.
3. Tongue twisters
4. Developmental approximation drills.
5. Practice of vowel shifts related by affixation.
6. Reading aloud/ Recitation.
7. Recording of the learner's production.

2.3. Factors Influencing Pronunciation Learning

There are a number of factors that affect the acquisition of the sound system of a second language. The following are the common ones.

2.3.1 The Age Factor

Young children are said to be the best second language learners; this is particularly true, when observing the ease with which they pick up languages, especially those who were exposed to the target language at an early age (Zafar, 2012). Scholars explained children's success in language learning by the CPH (critical period hypothesis) which refers to the time limits during which normal acquisition is possible, after this period successful acquisition cannot take place due to physiological changes; in addition to other psychological factors that affect language learning when the people get older like self-consciousness which impede them to perform well in language tasks, especially the speaking one (Kim et al., 1997 cited in Zafar, 2012). Kenworthy (1987, p.4) points out that some adult learners show a full competence in grammar and syntax, but they can never achieve native-like proficiency as she states in this passage:

We commonly assume that if someone pronounces a second language like a native, they probably started learning it as a child. Conversely, if a person does not begin to learn a second language until adulthood, they will never have a

native-like accent even though other aspects such as syntax or vocabulary may be indistinguishable from those of native speakers.

An example that has proved adults' failure to master the pronunciation aspects was cited by Thomas Scovel (1988 cited Steinberg & Sciarini, 2006), a psychologist who described the case of Joseph Conrad the famous polish novelist and a master of English prose who masters the grammatical and communicative complexities but he still speaks with a polish accent.

2.3.2 Aptitude

Douglas (2007) reports that there is anecdotal evidence suggesting that some learners are endowed with a natural talent or a special ability that makes them better language learners. In his turn too, and for some causal factors, admits that there are some learners who have the capacity to acquire languages more efficiently and rapidly than others. He proposes that there is a cluster of characteristics that identify person's aptitude like: risk taking behavior, memory efficiency, intelligent guessing, and ambiguity tolerance. Saville-Troike (2006) and Carroll (1965, 1981 cited in Celce- Murcia, 2009) cite another kind of traits that constitute language aptitude:

1. Phonemic coding ability: the ability to differentiate, code and recall foreign sounds
2. Grammatical sensitivity: the capacity to analyze language and to discover rules
3. Inductive language learning ability: the ability to acquire a language through exposure
4. Memory : the ability to memorize language aspects

2.3.3 Attitude

Language learning can be associated with negative attitudes towards the target language culture or its members; this may seriously impact learners' involvement in the classroom and its activities, their determination to progress and continue in the language learning process (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Oller et al. , 1977, 1978 ; Chihara & Oller, 1987 ; Gardner, 1985 cited in Steinberg & Sciarini, 2006). Steinberg and Sciarini (2006) claim that this negative attitude may even impair memory from functioning and detract the learners from focusing on the target language. Conversely, such positive attitude towards the target culture group could prompt language proficiency as stated by Douglas (2007,

p.193): « *It seems clear that second language learners benefit from positive attitudes and that negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and in all likelihood, because of decreased input and interaction, to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency* ».

As far as pronunciation is concerned, Kenworthy (1987) asserts that learners' sense of identity and feelings of 'group affiliation' are strong predictors of successful acquisition of the target language accent. Therefore, learners who have the tendency to identify themselves with the target culture group are more liable to attain native- like accent; whereas learners who are highly attached to their identity and culture seem to be reluctant to leave out their native accent because it symbolizes their identity. In the same line, Laroy (2008, p. 6) explains in the following quotation how learners' native languages and origins contribute in developing negative attitudes towards the English language and influences their own pronunciation:

Our affective links with our mother tongue are normally positive and strong, but when we learn a foreign language we have a history and prejudices to contend with, and the older we get, the more intrusive this history is likely to become...such negative feelings can produce a strong desire to set oneself apart from the language and its native speakers. After all, even within the English-speaking world people keep themselves apart regionally and socially through the way they pronounce language.

2.3.4 Amount and Type of Prior Pronunciation Instruction

In one classroom, teachers may have learners with different amount and type of pronunciation backgrounds because they have been taught in different schools and by different teachers. In some EFL settings, pronunciation is taught through drills and repetition by teachers whose pronunciation is very poor; whereas in others, pronunciation is not taught in any overt way. Some learners are even unaware of their pronunciation problems; therefore, the teacher should diagnose his learner's errors and choose the activities and techniques that better fit his learner's levels and types of errors (Celce-Murcia et al., 2009).

2.3.5 Exposure to the English Language

The exposure to the English language is of paramount importance in the improvement of the learners' pronunciation. The fact that some learners have little chance to get exposed to the English language involves teachers to maximize their opportunities of exposure by incorporating appropriate authentic models of English into the classroom context. Teachers should also make sure that their learners have enough chance for exposure outside the classroom (e.g., in language laboratory or learning center environment, the use of English in every day interaction), so they get closer image about the authentic English discourse. Again, teachers should always encourage learners to be exposed to the English language, not only to enhance their pronunciation but also to develop the other language aspects such as grammar, and vocabulary (Celce-Murcia al.2009).

2.3.6 The Role of the Native Language

The native language has a considerable effect in learning the pronunciation of English; this influence can be marked on learners speech which contains some of the native language' sound characteristics (Kenworthy, 1988). Avery and Eherlich (2010) state that when hearing foreign language learners speaking English, it is easy to determine their mother tongue; simply because they are transferring the sound patterns of their first language in speaking English. There is a wide variety of languages over the world, and each language has a distinguished sound system, sound' combination rules, and different stress and intonation patterns. Therefore the errors that FEL learners commit are the result of these differences as suggested by Kenworthy (1987, p.4) : « *To put it very crudely, the more the differences there are, the more difficulties the learner will have in pronouncing English* ».

The sound system of the native language can influence the pronunciation of the learners at least in three ways: First, the inability to produce English sounds which do not exist in the learners' first language. Second, learners also face difficulties when the English sound' combination rules are different from their L1. Third, FEL learners tend to use their L1 patterns of stress and intonation in speaking English because they cannot get rid of them. In addition, they argue that the effect of L1 extends to the inability to hear the English sounds (Avery& Ehrlich, 2010)

2.3.7 Personality Factor

Avery and Ehrlich (2010) points out that one of the powerful factors that affect the improvement of the learners' pronunciation is their own personality. Learners who are more confident, out- going, and willing to experiment and take risks have better chance to practice the language and to improve their pronunciation, in the sense that, they are not afraid to take apart in social interactions using English; whereas learners who are introverted , inhibited, and afraid to take risks have less opportunities to develop their pronunciation. It is also the same idea that Brown (2010, p. 6 cited in Djebbari, 2014) expressed in this quotation: *"It is reasonable to suppose that outgoing, sociable learners should have an advantage over introverted, shy learners in acquiring oral-aural skills, including pronunciation. Outgoing students are more likely to participate in conversations with native speakers and will therefore have more opportunities to practice and to hear English."* From another angle Laroy (2008, p. 9) views the effect of personality and describes how it is interlinked with pronunciation and learning in general:

Pronunciation cannot be separated from the people who speak the language, nor cut off from the rest of language and learning in general. It follows that deeper contact with the language and opportunities to think and feel in it are probably of most help to students in improving their pronunciation. This means that many aspects of learners' personalities are involved, for example, the need to be aware of, and to deal with, any grudges they have.

Saville-Troike summarizes some personality traits and highlights six personality traits that have more positive effects with language learning which are shown in a boldface blue print in Table 5, p. 41

Personality Traits		
Anxious	—	Self-Confident
Risk-avoiding	—	Risk-taking
Shy	—	Adventuresome
Introverted	—	Extroverted
Inner-directed	—	Other-directed
Reflective	—	Impulsive
Imaginative	—	Uninquisitive
Creative	—	Uncreative
Empathetic	—	Insensitive
Tolerant of ambiguity	—	Closure-oriented to others

Table 5: Personality traits Saville-Troike (2006, p. 89)

2.4 Problematic areas in learning pronunciation

The clear difference that exists between English and Arabic' sound systems can be one of the main reasons behind the errors of Arabic learners who struggle with problem in the following areas:

2.4.1 Consonants:

The standard Arabic language has 16 equivalent consonant sounds compared to the English ones (p, t, d, k, f, s, z, ʃ, h, m, n, l, j, w), so these will have no effect on Arabic Learners' intelligibility. The non- equivalent consonants that may cause difficulties for Arabic Learners are as follows:

- /p/ Many Arabic learners tend to substitute /p/ for /b/; to help learners, they should be informed that the variant of /b/ occurs in Arabic words as in the word 'kabʃ' [kapʃ] (lamp) which is similar to /p/; it also occurs in loan speech as words like 'pasta'.

- /g/ This sound can be problematic too because it does not occur in the Arabic language.
- /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ These sounds are not part of the standard Arabic sound system, due to this, Arabic learners encounter problems with them, but this sounds can be found in loan words like ‘champion’, or when they are adjacent as in ‘tʃæmær’ or ‘majar’ / madʒar /, they exist even in local varieties.
- /v/ It is the same with /v/ which does not exist in the standard Arabic, so it can be problematic, but it can be found in loan words like ‘villa’.
- /ŋ/ This consonant is not a part of Arabic sound system, but it can be found in dialects as variant of /n/ especially when it comes after /k/as in ‘iŋka:na’ (if he was) and ‘fiŋkam’(where is it/he) (Walker, 2010).

2.4.2 Consonant cluster

In Arabic, clusters contain no more than two consonants, and they can be found only in initial position; while in word final position, clusters can never be found; due to this, Arabic learners tend to add a short vowel between consonants; for instance, ‘split’ is pronounced /səplit/ (Avery& Ehrlich, 2010).

2.4.3 Vowel sounds:

Many EFL learners struggle with problems in articulating and distinguishing between the English vowels since English is one of the languages that have the largest number of vowels; whereas most of the world’s languages have only five vowels. The following are the most problematic vowels for Arabic learners (Avery& Ehrlich, 2010).

Problems with: /i:/ vs. /ɪ/, /eɪ/ vs. /e/, /u:/ vs. /ʊ/

These are the English tense vowels that Arabic learners confuse.

Problems with: /e/ vs. /æ/, /ʌ/ and /ɒ/

Arabic learners face difficulties in differentiating between these distinctive vowels because the standard Arabic has just one low vowel which is /ɒ/.

Problem with: /e/ vs. /ɪ/

These vowels cause a difficulty for Arabic learners as they cannot differentiate between them producing a vowel between the two.

2.4.4 Stress:

In Arabic, word stress is quite regular, contrary to the English one which has a free-word stress, and this can be problematic for Arabic learners who may expect the English word stress to be as the same as Arabic (Avery& Ehrlich, 2010).

2.4.5 Rhythm

Even though Arabic is a stress-timed language as English, there is a difference in the force of pronunciation. In English unstressed syllables can be weakened or even not pronounced at all; while stressed syllables can be produced strongly and clearly, whereas in Arabic there is no clear cut in difference of the force of pronunciation concerning the two, the unstressed syllables can be produced in clear full form (Kenworthy, p. 1987).

2.4.6 Intonation

Harmer (2005) believes that the most problematic component in English pronunciation for the majority of learners is intonation. As non-native speakers, teachers and learners, alike are not able to hear the different “tunes” and identifying “the rising and falling patterns of tones”; therefore it would be ridiculous to teach them. Similarly Brazil (1999, p.4) proves that: *“intonation is not, on the whole popular among language teachers or learners. By giving it so central a place in the course, we may seem to be making things harder rather than easier”*. However this does not indeed mean to abandon teaching intonation, rather, teachers need to provide learners with opportunities to recognize moods and intentions like: enthusiasm, boredom, surprise, questioning and so forth. This could be done by a tape or modeling the tape and asking learners to imitate the moods that are being produced, without going deep in details explaining technicalities of different intonation patterns (Harmer, 2005).

2.5 The role of the Teacher

There is a range of roles that teachers of phonetics need to perform for a successful pronunciation teaching. Kenworthy (1987) lists 07 types of teachers’ roles in pronunciation class which are as follows:

1. **Helping learners to hear:** English learners tend to unconsciously hear the English sounds using the sound system of their L1, and they may go along with this

misperception until they will be corrected. Therefore, teachers should make sure that their students hear the sounds accurately.

2. **Helping learners to make sounds:** the fact that some learners are not able to pronounce the English sounds that are different from their L1, involves teachers to show the best techniques that enable them to properly produce the difficult sounds.
3. **Providing feedback:** teachers should frequently judge their learners' performance and correct them because they may be unaware of their pronunciation problems.
4. **Pointing what is going on:** when speaking, teachers need to highlight the important ideas because sometimes learners lose attention and they may miss what the teacher wants them to get.
5. **Establishing priorities:** teachers also need to decide which pronunciation features that their learners struggle with and which truly impacts their intelligibility; thus to put emphasis on, and which ones that do not cause misconception so to be neglected.
6. **Devising activities:** the complex nature of pronunciation requires teachers to carefully choose the activities that are adequate and supportive for different learners' styles and which offer them the opportunity to practice, experiment and explore pronunciation.
7. **Assessing progress:** Learners cannot evaluate their own performance, so if the teacher informed them about how much they have progressed, this would be very motivating for them.

According to Morley (1991), the teacher should act as a coach who transmits knowledge, frequently provides models, gives hints, offers suggestions, and devises diverse opportunities for practice; Furthermore, he suggests that the coach of speech or pronunciation has crucial role in checking and controlling the spoken English at two levels: a. micro-level (speech production) and b. macro-level (speech performance). Also, he points out that the teacher as pronunciation coach has challenging responsibilities which are listed on Fig. 12, p. 45

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1. Conducting pronunciation/speech diagnostic analyses, and choosing and prioritizing those features that will make the most noticeable impact on modifying the speech of each learner toward increased intelligibility
 2. Helping students set both long-range and short-term goals
 3. Designing program scope and sequence for an entire group of learners; designing personalized programming for each individual learner in the group
 4. Developing a variety of instructional formats, modes, and modules (e.g., whole-class instruction, small-group work, individual one-on-one tutorial sessions; prerecorded audio and/or video self-study materials; both in-class and out-of-class self-study rehearsal recordings in audio and/or video formats; work with new computer program speech analysis systems, and more). Overall, providing genuine speech task activities for practice situated in real contexts and carefully chosen simulated contexts
 5. Planning out-of-class field-trip assignments in pairs or small groups for real-world extemporaneous speaking practice, with panel discussions as follow-up
 6. Structuring in-class speaking (and listening) activities with invited NS and NNS guests participating
 7. Providing models, cues, and suggestions for modifications of elements in the speech patterning for each student
 8. Monitoring learners' speech production and speech performance at all times, and assessing pattern changes, as an ongoing part of the program
 9. Encouraging student speech awareness and realistic self-monitoring
 10. Always supporting each learner in his or her efforts, be they wildly successful or not so successful
- The Challenge of Fulfilling the Practice/Performance Objective
-

Fig. 12: Teacher-as-Coach Responsibilities (Morley, 1991, p.508)

2.6 The learner's role

Kenworthy (1987) assumes that success in mastering the L2 pronunciation is linked to the extent to which learners respond, invest efforts, and take the responsibility of their learning; nevertheless, learners are passive, unwilling to work hard to progress in their learning, then even teachers' level of proficiency and their care about their accuracy will have no significant effect in the improvement of their pronunciation.

Harmer (2001) summarizes the roles and features of good language learners as follows:

Have the willingness to listen: learners should listen not just for the sake of listening, but more importantly, for paying attention to what has been said and examining the language that has been used.

Have the willingness to experiment: learners need to have the urge to use the language by being always ready to take risks, eager to try out new things to see how well they are doing.

Have the willingness to ask difficult questions: Teachers need to encourage their learners to ask questions because it is a part of their learning, but they should do so when it is appropriate.

Have the willingness to think about how to learn: learners need to be creative in developing their own learning strategies.

Have the willingness to accept correction: learners need to welcome teachers' remarks and criticism, be excited to have a feedback and be positively responsive to it.

In sum, for achieving fruitful pronunciation learning outcomes, a coordination between teachers and students' roles, responsibilities, as well as goals is needed; Parade (2010, p.2) highlights that:

Mastering a foreign language pronunciation is not something impossible as far as the students and the teacher participate together in the total learning process. Thus, to succeed in a pronunciation program, the teacher must then set achievable goals that are applicable and suitable for the communication needs of the student. The student must also become part of the learning process, actively involved in their own learning. The content of the course should be integrated into the communication class, with the content emphasizing the teaching of suprasegmentals, linking, intonation, with listening comprehension, and allowing for meaningful pronunciation practice.

Conclusion

In nutshell, for many years of neglect, pronunciation teaching has finally seen the light with the emergence of the reform movement and the foundation of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA); this also contributed to the development of pronunciation teaching within the subsequent language teaching methods which has approached it from multiple perspectives, but they all owed it with a major concern. Furthermore, the 'Cinderilla' of yesterday became 'the princess' of today due to the growing emphasis on communicative skills that is placed within the communicative approach-the leading approach in nowadays-. However, the fact that pronunciation learning can be as overly difficult and interferes with a range of negative factors and problems resulting from learners L1 backgrounds, makes it as far-reaching for EFL learners. Therefore, pronunciation raises a challenging tasks for phonetics teachers who should be highly experienced and pedagogically trained in teaching phonetics, so they can involve their

learners in a meaningful and communicative pronunciation practice activities that efficiently suit their needs and serve their goals; learners too should be active practitioners in the development of their pronunciation seeking always for further improvement.

Chapter Three: Field Study

3. Introduction

The two previous chapters represent the review of related literature to pronunciation teaching and learning. The third chapter is devoted to the analysis of the research findings. As long as the aim of this research is to reflect teachers and students' attitudes towards the role of pronunciation practice in the enhancement of the learners' oral proficiency, the suitable method seems to be the descriptive one. In order to answer the research questions and confirm the hypothesis of the current investigation, a questionnaire was addressed to both teachers and second year English LMD students at Mohammed Kheider Biskra University.

3.1 The Sample and Administration of the Questionnaire

This research has dealt with second year English LMD students and two phonetics' teachers at Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra, in the first half of the second semester during the academic year 2014-2015. The sample consists of 43 students who are randomly selected to represent 400 students who form the whole population of the second year students. The questionnaire was administered in two different places; the first portion of the questionnaires was distributed in the start of the phonetics class with the presence of the teacher, whereas, the second portion was handed out in the Amph theatre; the number of the questionnaires that were answered and returned back was just 38 questionnaires. The choice to work with second year students was deliberate because they have been studying phonetics for roughly one year and a half; which means that they have enough background about the English phonology; while first year students have recently started studying phonetics, and have few insights about it, so it would be more reliable to deal with the second year students. Also the questionnaire was administered to two teachers of phonetics who are the only teachers at the level of the second year. The administration was at the beginning of the phonetics session; the two teachers asked for time to answer the questionnaire, so they returned it back a day after; their answers were very fruitful and serious, contrary to students who mostly missed to answer some questions, especially open ones.

3.2 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.2.1 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' questionnaire was administered to the phonetics teachers of second year classes, this questionnaire is composed of 20 questions including both open and close-ended question. Moreover, it provides a free space for their personal suggestions. It is divided into two main sections:

Section One: consists of 03 questions aimed at determining general information about Teachers' qualifications, training, and their experience.

Section Two: it consists of 17 questions. This section is about the teachers' opinions about the actual state of teaching, highlighting the different problems they encounter while teaching, and how they affect their ability to conduct pronunciation practice; furthermore, it seeks to report their suggestions for the improvement of phonetics teaching.

Section One: Background Information Questions

Item 1: Teachers' qualifications

This question was asked because teachers' qualification has an important role in the efficiency of teaching phonetics. Teachers' answers reveal that one has a doctorate degree while the other has a magister degree; this means that they are qualified enough to teach phonetics.

Item 2: The possibility of having training in teaching phonetics.

The fact that pronunciation is a difficult and complex language aspect to teach, teachers need some kind of training before going to the classroom and presenting lessons to students on a module that they have no experience in. A training in phonetics would help teachers to be knowledgeable about the efficient teaching phonetics' strategies, methods, technique, and materials; this also would show how to be flexible and adaptive with the learners problem and needs, but both teachers said that they received no training in teaching phonetics; this means that it is up to the teacher to work hard to develop his background about teaching phonetics or to start teaching with zero experience.

Item 3: Experience in teaching phonetics.

This question intends to examine whether teachers' experience affects pronunciation learning. One teacher has been teaching phonetics for 13 years, and the other for 5 years; this implies that they have enough experience in teaching this module, so the experience has no effect on student' failure in learning pronunciation.

Section Two: Teacher' Attitudes towards Teaching Phonetics Questions

Item 1: Teachers' opinions about the importance of training and experience in teaching phonetics.

The reason why this question was asked is to see how teachers are aware about the importance of training and experience in teaching phonetics. Teachers' answers were positive and proved their awareness about the role of these two crucial elements in developing successful phonetics classroom.

Item 2: Investigating if teachers follow any specific program in teaching phonetics.

One teacher answered no, and said that it is his own program that is modified every year according to the working circumstances; whereas the second teacher answered yes, but stated that this program is just a list of items to be included in the phonetics session, and said that he always makes some modification to adjust with learning context.

Item 3: Questioning if this program involve the use of any pedagogical materials.

Both teachers answered yes; and stated that the pedagogical materials that are supposed to be used in teaching phonetics are: the language laboratories and the data show.

Item 4: The availability of these materials.

The two teachers answered that the only material that is available for use is the data show.

Item 5: The absence of pedagogical materials and the possible impact on students' pronunciation.

Both teachers answered yes, asserting that teaching phonetics relies on both theory and practice, and practice mainly requires to be done in the language laboratories to allow students to listen to the authentic English models and to experiment their pronunciation through listening activities and drills.

Item 6: Students' motivation to learn phonetics.

The reason behind asking this question is to determine if motivation has an effect on second year student' pronunciation. The two teachers answered yes, which means that their students has the willingness to attend the phonetics session and learn pronunciation, so they have no problems with motivation.

Item 7: The frequency of correcting students' pronunciation errors.

This question intends to know how teachers are concerned with the correctness of their student's pronunciation. The first teacher answered that he always corrects his student's errors, whereas the second answered sometimes. This proves that both of them -even though in different extents- have the tendency to correct their students' errors and they are concerned with the accurateness and the enhancement of their students' pronunciation.

Item 8: Teachers' opinions about the reasons of students' pronunciation errors.

The aim of this question is to determine which factors that teachers see to be contributing in learns' pronunciation difficulties and problems. One teacher answered both of them, referring the pronunciation errors of his students not only to the lack of practice, but also considering the effect of the interference with the mother tongue and students inability to understand the phonological which are to some extent complex; the other teacher see that the lack of practice to be the major reason behind his students' pronunciation problems.

Item 9: Students' number.

The number of students plays a crucial role in facilitating or hindering making enough and fruitful practice; in other words, successful pronunciation practice depends tremendously on the students' number. One teacher said that he has more than 40 students per class, and the other stated that he has more than 50 students; therefore such overcrowded classes will have a negative effect in the improvement of students' pronunciation.

Item 10: The effect of students' number in teaching phonetics.

This question was asked to see how such overcrowded classes bother teachers and impede the process of practicing the phonological aspects. Teachers' answers showed how they are irritated from the bad working circumstances which result mainly from the

overcrowded classes, besides the lack of materials which both contribute largely in hindering the pronunciation practice; also this led teachers to focus on the theoretical aspect rather than the practical one.

Item 11: The number of hours per week for phonetics at the level of the second year.

The point from asking this question is to see if the time factor serves or hinders practice. English language learners in the English division study phonetics for only two years and since the phonology of English is very detailed and complex, the time that is allocated to the phonetics session should be enough to finish the program without pressure as well as to make enough practice. The teachers answered that just 01:30 hour per a week is devoted to the phonetics session which makes working with pronunciation really hard.

Item 12: Teachers' opinions about the effect of the time factor on pronunciation practice.

The point from asking this question is to see if the time factor serves the benefits of pronunciation teaching. Teachers' answers were absolutely no; this implies that the work for finishing the program will be at the expense of pronunciation practice.

Item 13: The frequency of pronunciation practice.

This question seeks to see to what extent the teachers consider the importance of practicing pronunciation in enhancing their students' oral ability; also how they are able to show flexibility in overcoming the working circumstances difficulties. The two teachers answered often, this indicates their awareness about their students' need for practice

Item 14: The kind of activities used by teachers for practice.

For a successful and meaningful practice to take place, teachers should choose the effective and the appropriate type of activities that better fit learners' level and needs. Drills and listening comprehension are the activities that are used by the first teacher; whereas the ones that are used by the second teacher are: pronunciation drills using BBC learning English videos, transcription and stress placement tasks, problem solving activities in English accents (BBC, GA). The activities used by the second teacher seem to be quite good if frequently and effectively used; whereas the activities used by the first teacher are not enough to achieve the targeted pronunciation.

Item 15: The kind of the tests used.

The two teachers answered that they rely only on the written tests, this reflects that they are not so interested in practically assessing how their students have improved orally rather than they are assessing the phonological knowledge that their students have learned theoretically.

Item 16: Teachers' opinions about the appropriateness of teaching phonetics without language laboratories.

Not surprisingly the two teachers' answers were 'no' because pronunciation practice is largely linked with the use of ICT tools that are only available in language laboratories. Despite of the teachers' efforts in managing the difficulties of the working circumstances and offering some activities for practice, it is still not that real and adequate practice.

Item 17: Teachers' suggestions for the improvement of the phonetics session.

The teachers' suggestions were almost the same and they are summarized in the following tips:

1. Allocating more time for the phonetics session by devoting three sessions per week for it as follows:

- One session for theoretical notions on phonetics and phonology (in Anphi theatre for 90 min)
- One session for each single class (in TDs for 90 min)
- One session for practice (in labs for 90 min)

2. Using small groups of students.

3. Collaboration among teachers of phonetics.

4. The Use of cooperative and peer learning to maximize understanding.

3.2.2 Summary of the Findings from Teachers' Questionnaire

On the basis of the analysis of teachers' questionnaire, these facts have revealed:

- ✚ Phonetics Teachers have the qualification and enough experience to teach phonetics with the required proficiency.

- ✚ There is no fixed program to be followed in teaching phonetics, there are just guidelines.
- ✚ Phonetics teachers pointed that their students are motivated to learn phonetics.
- ✚ Phonetics teachers showed a great concern about the correctness of their students' pronunciation through error correction.
- ✚ The main reason for students' errors is the lack of practice.
- ✚ They are aware of the importance of pronunciation practice by including some activities, but the type of activities used does not seem to be highly effective.
- ✚ Oral performance assessment is not the main interest of phonetics teachers because students are just tested on the theoretical background they have about phonetics.
- ✚ The most important fact discovered through the analysis of teachers' questionnaire is that pronunciation is not appropriately taught, teachers are forced to rely on theory more than practice because of a cluster of reasons, mainly: The lack of pedagogical materials, especially language laboratories, Insufficient time, overcrowded classes, the serious problem of lacking competent teachers to teach phonetics.

3.3. Students' Questionnaire

3.3.1. Description of Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was administered to 43 second year students, only 38 students that have answered the questionnaire. Students' questionnaire consists of 19 questions including both open and close-ended question. Moreover, it provides a free space for their personal suggestions. The questionnaire is made of two main sections:

Section One: consists of six questions aimed at gathering general information about students' age, sex, type of baccalaureate they hold, and their choice to study English is personal or imposed, and the reasons for studying English.

Section Two: It consists of 13 questions. The whole section is about teaching and learning phonetics; it seeks to reflect students' opinions and attitudes towards pronunciation learning.

Section One: Background Information Questions

Item 1: Age

Age	Number of students	Percentage
19	3	7.90 %
20-21	22	57.89 %
22-27	13	34.21%
Total	38	100%

Table 6: Students' Age

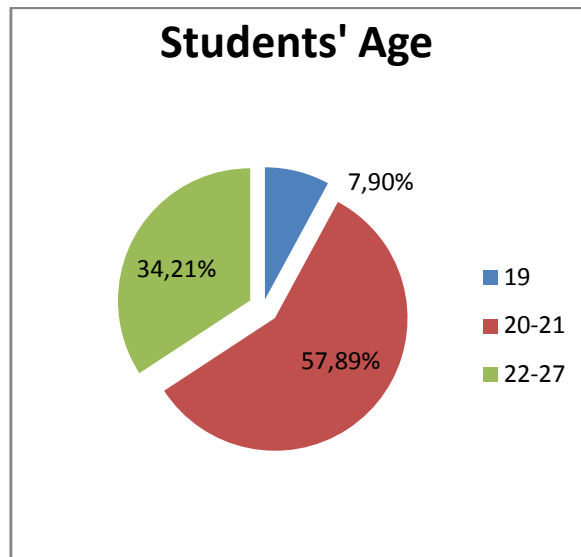


Fig. 13: Students' Age

From these results, one can notice that many learners (57.89 %) are at the same age which is between 20-21, this shows that these students have entered the school at a normal age (6 years) and did not fail in their study years; students who has 19 years (7.90 %) are those who went to school at the age of five; whereas students who are between the age 22-27 (34.21 %) have apparently repeated the year once at least.

Item 2: Gender

Gender	Number of students	Percentage
Male	12	31.58 %
Female	26	68.42 %
Total	38	100%

Table 7: Students' Sex

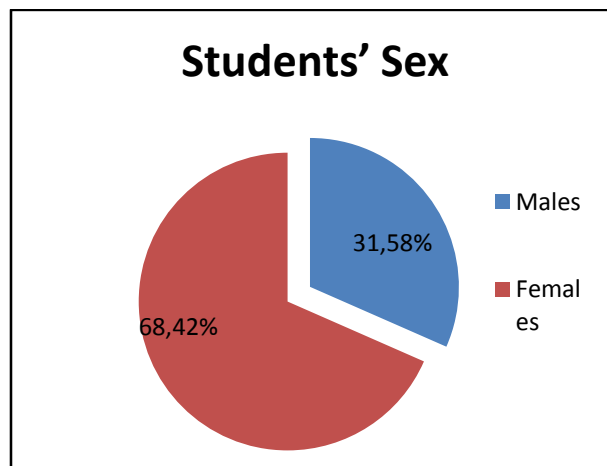


Fig. 14: Students' Sex

A quick glance at this table will reveal that female students outnumber than male. Nearly 70 % of the respondents are females whereas only 30% are males. So one can deduce two things: first: that female in Algeria is more committed and successful than male in learning achievement; second, females have more tendencies to study foreign languages than males. This can be anecdotally proved; it is a common belief among people to believe that females like to speak foreign languages for the sake of showing off; while male avoid the risk of learning a foreign language because they are afraid of looking foolish in front of their classmates.

Item 3: Educational streaming.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Literary	23	60.52 %
Scientific	11	28.95 %
Technical	1	2.63 %
No answer	3	7.90 %
Total	38	100 %

Table: 8 Students' Educational Streaming

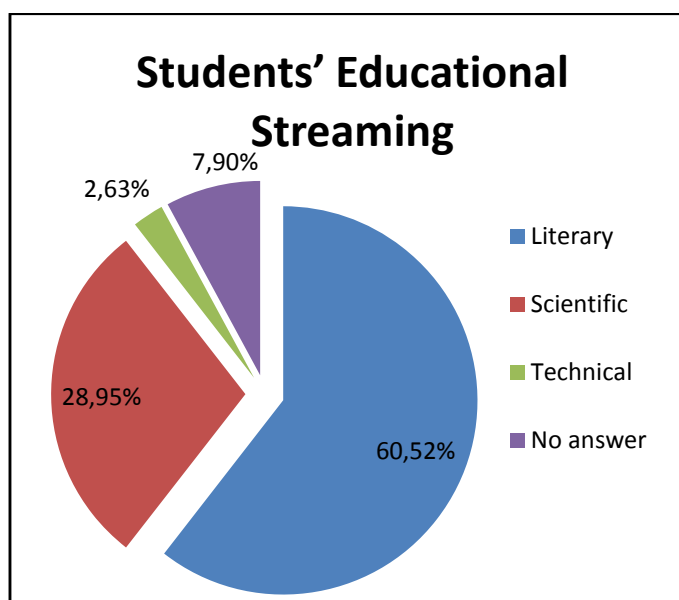


Fig. 15: Students' Educational Streaming

This question intends to know the amount of the students' English background. Most of students (60.52%) had a literary stream, 28.95% of students come from a scientific one, and 2.63% had a technical stream, while 7.90 % did not answer the question. The type of the stream reveals information about the course density or number of hours that students have had per week. It tells about the rate of English learning. It may mean that the student from literary stream have much knowledge about English than students from other streams.

Item 4: Students choice for studying English.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Personal	33	86.84 %
Imposed	2	5.26 %
No answer	3	7.90 %
Total	38	100%

Table: 9 Students' Choices for Studying English

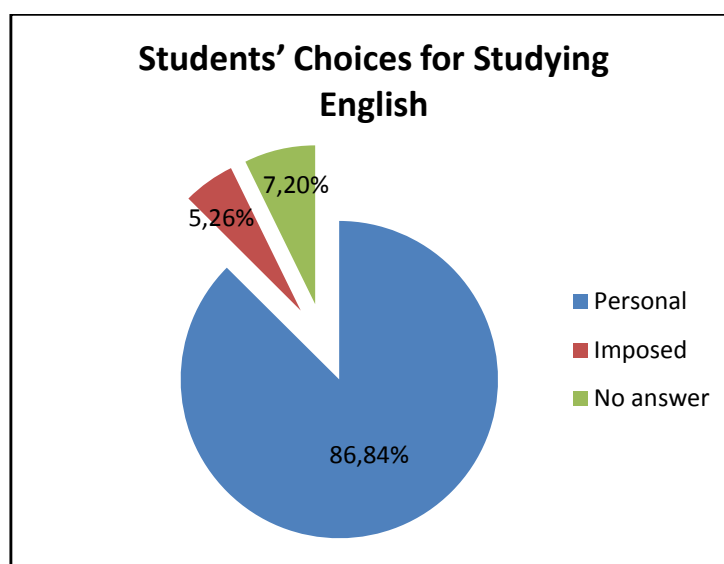


Fig. 16: Students' Choices for Studying English

Respondents' answers reveal that the greatest majority of students (86.84 %) have chosen to study English by their own, and just two respondents (5.26 %) were obliged to study English, while 3 respondents (7.90 %) did not answer the question. These results show that most of the students have personally opted for the study of English; which means that they can be highly motivated to learn the English language aspects including pronunciation.

Item 6: Students' Reasons for Studying English.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
To have fun because I love it	9	23.68%
To get a job	10	26.32%
To speak with native speaker and travel abroad	16	42.10%
Others	3	7.90%
Total	38	100%

Table 10: Learners Reasons for Studying English

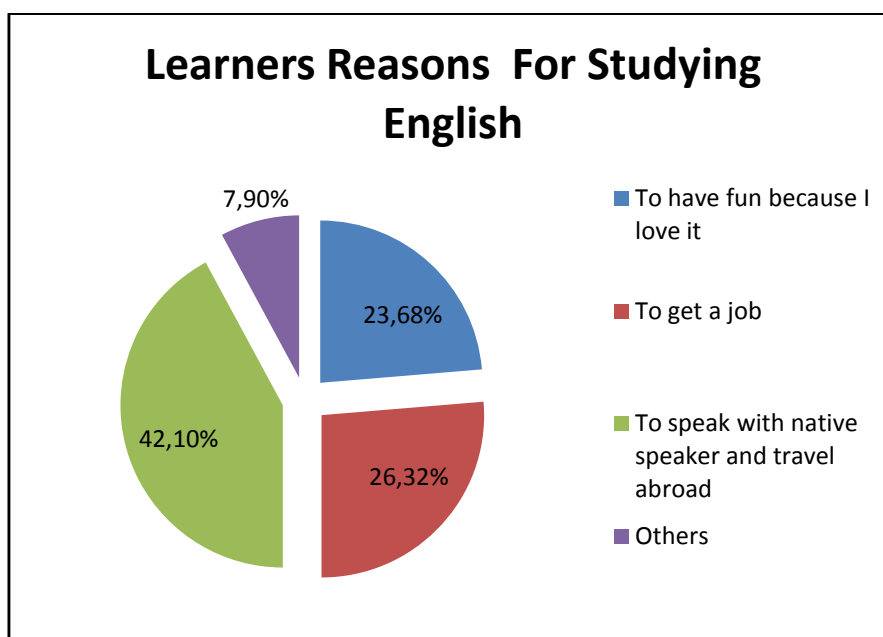


Fig. 17: Learners Reasons for Studying English

There are different views for the reason why second year students have chosen to study English. 42.10% of learners have chosen English for integrative purposes, namely, to have the chance for interacting with English native speakers and to travel abroad, may be for professional reasons or for tourism, this can be positive for them because they are likely to improve their pronunciation and communicative skills. Whereas 26.32 % of them studied English to get a job, this may reveal that they are not much concerned about their

pronunciation accuracy; 23.68 % students have chosen English because they like it, this also can be very motivating for them to learn pronunciation.

Students who answered others: studied English because they see it as an open window for the world, the language of technology, also they learnt English to explore its culture and read its literature.

Section Two: Attitude Questions

Item 1: Students’ Awareness about the Importance of the Phonetics Session.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Very important	21	55.26%
Important	15	39.48%
Not important	1	2.63%
No answer	1	2.63%
Total	38	100%

Table11: Students’ Awareness about the Importance of the Phonetics Session

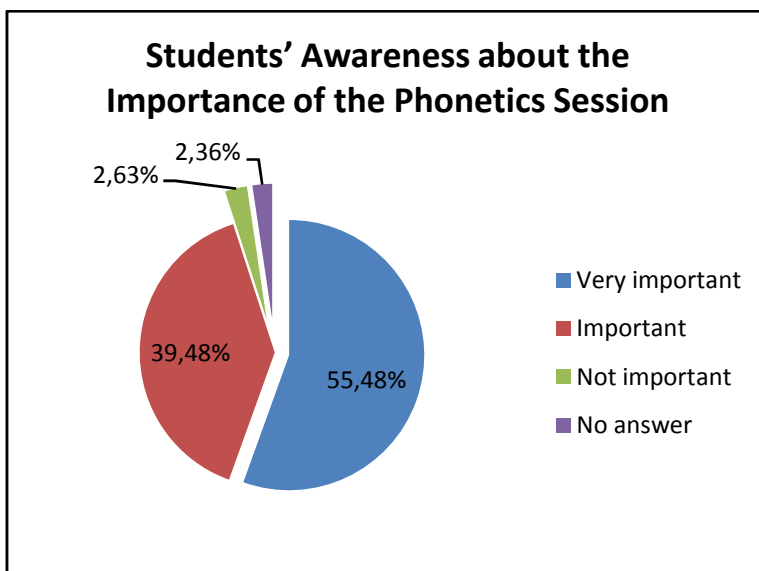


Fig. 18: Students’ Awareness about the Importance of the Phonetics Session

This item of information sheds light on subjects' awareness about the importance of the phonetics session in the enhancement of their English. 55.26 % respondents have indicated that the phonetics module is very important in improving their performance in English; 39.48% of the subjects answered that it is important; whereas just one respondent (2.63) who does not believe that it has any direct help in the improvement of his English; while one respondent (2.63) provided no answer.

Item 2: Students' Attitudes towards phonetics session.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Interesting	10	26.32 %
Normal	12	31.58 %
Boring	14	36.84 %
No answer	2	5.26%
Total	38	100%

Table12: Students' Attitudes towards the Phonetics Session

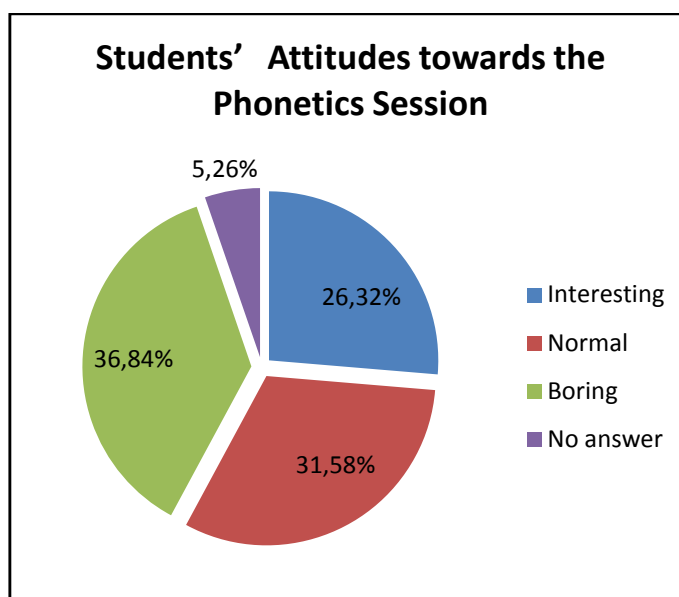


Fig. 19: Students' Attitudes towards the Phonetics Session

The aim of this question is to determine subjects' attitudes towards the phonetics session and to see whether the students really enjoy learning phonetics. 26.32 % of students see phonetics as an interesting module; 31.58 % of them indicated neutral attitudes towards it; whereas the highest percentage (36.84 %) of the respondents opted for boring; when they are asked for justification, they answered that they hate it because all what about it is just transcription, and nothing else except for transcription which they perceive as difficult and as boring too. Two respondents (5,26%) have not answered the question.

These answers revealed that many of second year students are not much excited about learning phonetics; this can be referred to the way that pronunciation is approached; it is dealt with as abstract rules rather than real features of speech that should be taught through practice using authentic models of English discourse.

Item 3: Students' problems in learning phonetics.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	27	71.05%
No	11	28.95%
Total	38	100%

Table13: Students 'Problems in Learning Phonetics

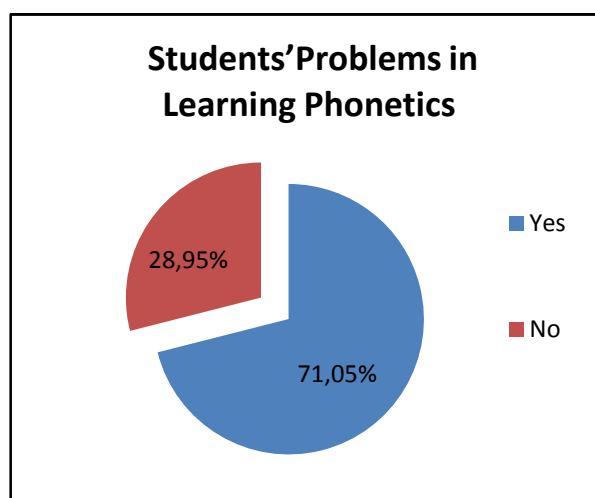


Fig. 20: Students 'Problems in Learning Phonetics

This question intends to determine if second year students encounter difficulties in learning phonetics. The subjects' answers show that approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ (71%) of the respondents find problems in learning phonetics; and just about $\frac{1}{4}$ (28.95%) denied having any pronunciation learning difficulties.

If yes, these problems are related to: understanding the rules introduced during the lesson or the ability to use these rules, or both of them.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Understanding the rules introduced during the lesson.	5	19.23 %
The ability to use these rules	14	53.85 %
Both of them.	7	26.92 %
Total	26	100%

Table 14: The Reasons behind Students' Problems in Learning Phonetics

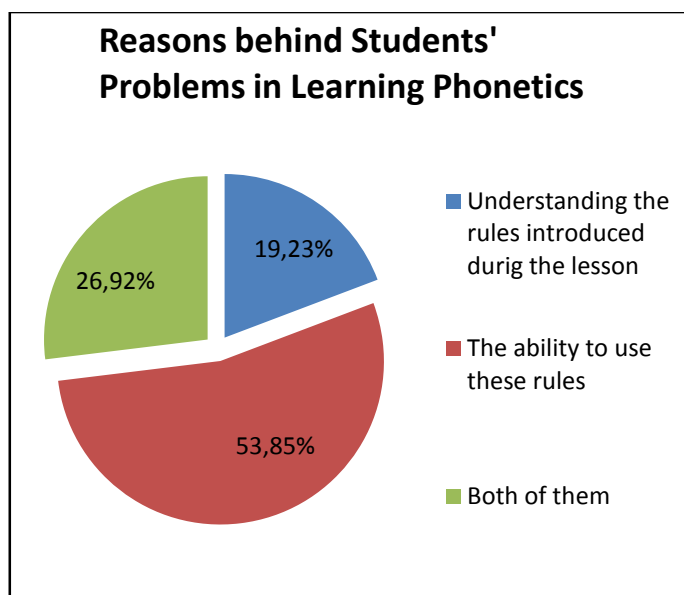


Fig. 21: Reasons behind Students' Problems in Learning Phonetics

The results revealed that: the first reason (53, 85 %) behind students' problems in learning phonetics is their ability to practice what they learn; whereas the second reason (53.85 %) is their inability to understand the phonological rules of English, the rest (26.92 %) referred to both of them. The assumption that can be drawn from these two last questions is that there is a certain problem that can be referred back the way of pronunciation is taught.

Item 4: The frequency of students' pronunciation errors.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Always	5	13.16 %
Often	6	15.79 %
Sometimes	21	55.26 %
Rarely	6	15.79 %
Total	38	100%

Table 15: Students' Error Frequency

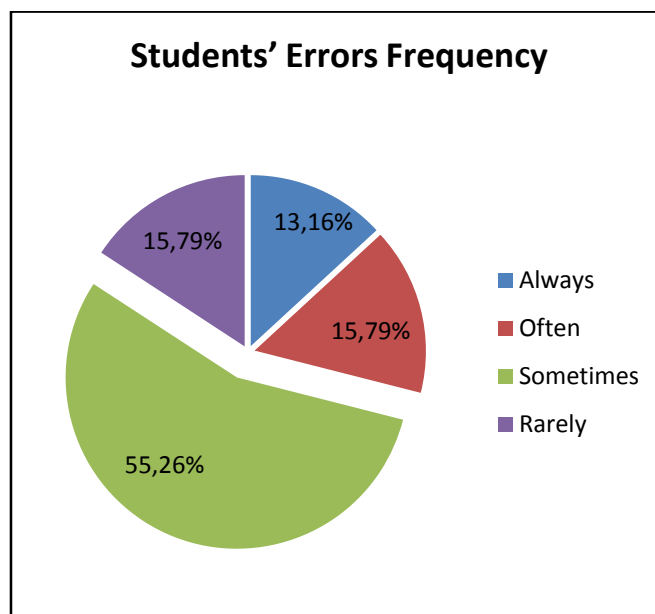


Fig. 22: Students' Error Frequency

This question intends to know how second year students evaluate the frequency of their errors. 13.16 % of the respondents admitted that they always commit errors, 15.79 % of them answered often; whereas the majority answered that they just sometimes make errors; in the other side, 15.79 % asserted that they rarely commit errors.

Item 5: Teachers' Correction of Students' pronunciation' errors.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	30	78.95 %
No	8	21.05 %
Total	38	100%

Table 16: Teachers' Correction of Students' Errors

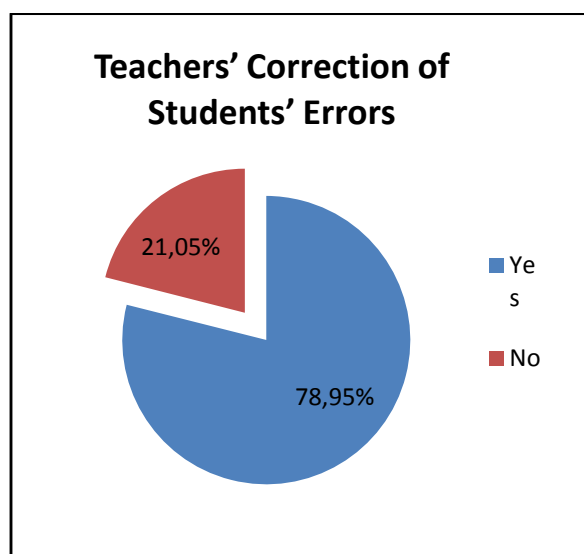


Fig. 23: Teachers' Correction of Students' Errors

The greatest majority 78.95 % of the subjects admitted that their teachers correct their pronunciation errors, which is very good for them, and 21.05 % said that they do not receive any correction from the part of their teachers.

Item 6: Students' degree of agreement about the role of pronunciation practice in decreasing the rate of their errors.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Strongly agree	14	36.85 %
Agree	20	52.63 %
Neither agree nor disagree	2	5.26 %
disagree	2	5.26 %
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	38	100%

Table 17: Students' Degree of Agreement about the Role of Pronunciation Practice in decreasing the rate of their Errors

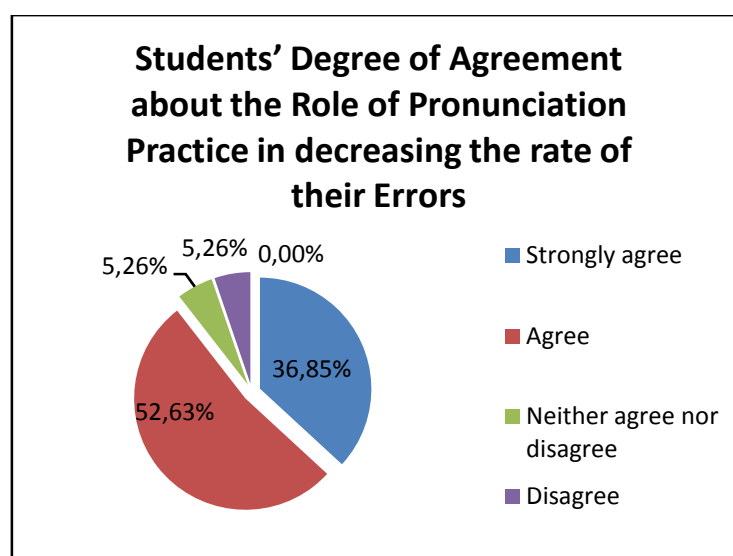


Fig. 24: Students' Degree of Agreement about the Role of Pronunciation Practice in decreasing the rate of their Errors

According to the aforementioned results, 36.85 % of the respondents have strongly agreed that a good training in pronunciation can fix their errors, also 52.63 % of them agreed about that, while 5.26 % showed neutral attitudes. In the other hand 5.26 % disagreed that their errors can be fixed with constant practice, there is no one strongly disagreed about that.

Item 7: Teachers' use of pronunciation activities.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	33	86.84 %
No	5	13.16 %
Total	38	100%

Table 18: the Use or the Absence of Pronunciation Activities

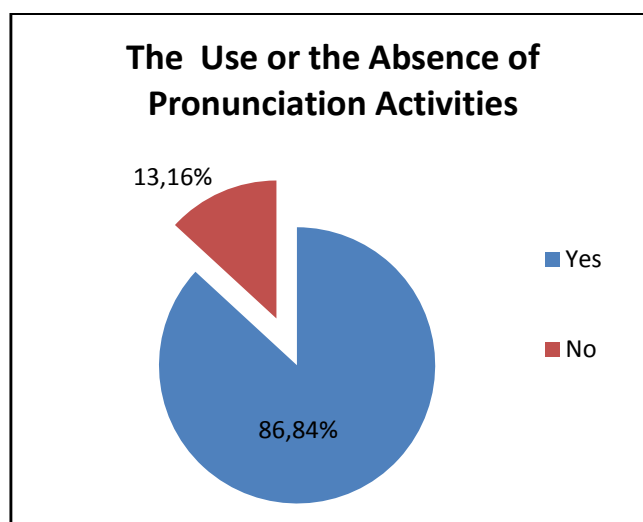


Fig. 25: The Use or the Absence of Pronunciation Activities

The majority of subjects' answers (86, 84 %) reveal that teachers indeed design practice activities for each lesson; others (13, 16 %) denied that all the lessons are accompanied with practice.

Item 8: The kind of practice activities used.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Reading lists of words or sentences	9	23.68 %
Listening and repeating activities	19	50 %
Written exercises	6	15.79 %
Practice with the use of the audio-visual means	4	10.53 %
Total	38	100%

Table19: The Kind of Used Pronunciation Activities

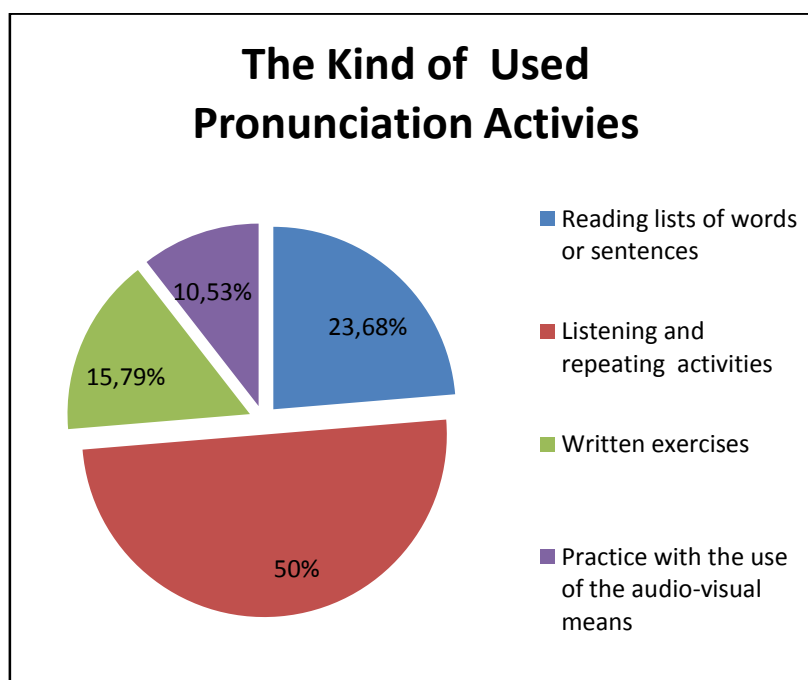


Fig. 26: The Kind of Used Pronunciation Activities

Concerning the type of the activities used for practice, students' answers were varied: 50 % of the students answered that their teacher uses Listening and repeating activities, and 23.68 % said that they practice by reading lists of words or sentences; whereas 15.79% stated that their practice takes the form of written exercises, and just 10.53 % of them said that their teacher practice with the use of audio-visual means.

Item 9: The frequency of students' involvement in practice.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Always	10	26.32 %
Often	08	21.05 %
Sometimes	16	42.10 %
Rarely	3	7.90 %
Never	1	2.63 %
Total	38	100%

Table 20: The Frequency of Students' Involvement in Practice

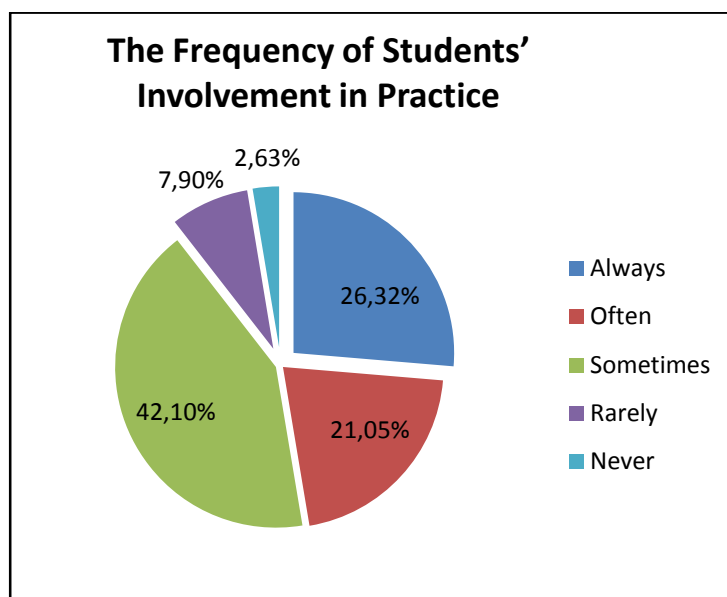


Fig. 27: the Frequency of Students' Involvement in Practice

This question aims at determining the degree of teachers' awareness about the importance of involving the students in practice as an effective way in the improvement of their pronunciation accuracy. Students' answers indicate that 26.32 % of the students are always involved in practice, 21.05 % of them are often involved; whereas the majority (42.10 %) said that they are just sometimes involved, and 7.90 % answered rarely while one student (2.63 %) said that he never been involved. The result that can be drawn from

these answers is that teachers, to some extent, have the tendency to invite their students for practice.

Item10: Students’ Practice of the New Learnt Rules

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	7	18.42 %
No	30	78.95%
No answer	1	2.63 %
Total	38	100%

Table 21: Students’ Practice of the New Learnt Rules

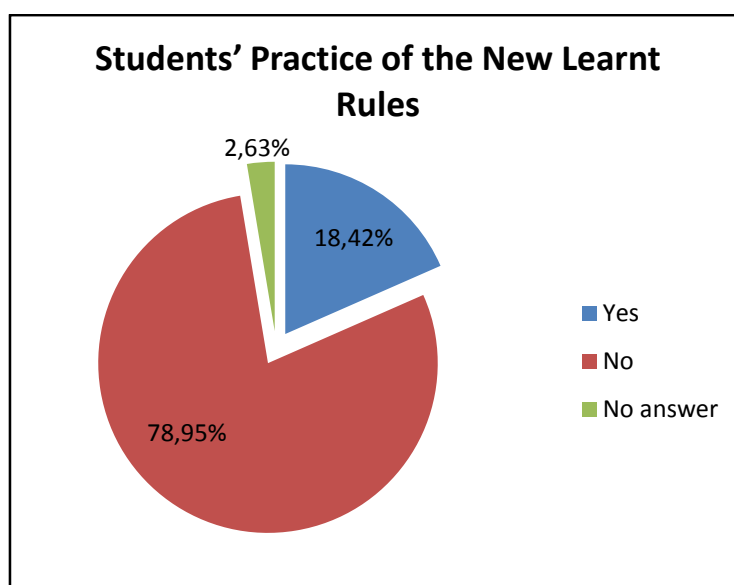


Fig. 28: Students’ Practice of the New Learnt Rules

The reason behind asking this question is to see if students are aware about the importance of outside classroom practice and if they take responsibility in the development of their pronunciation. Most of the respondents’ answers (78.95%) reveal that they do not practice the learnt rules outside the classroom; whereas only (18.42 %) said that they do practice, while one student (2.63 %) did not answer the question. This can mean that most of second year students lack the sense of responsibility for the improvement of their pronunciation; they just rely on teacher’s feedback.

Item 11: Students' degree of agreement about the necessary to teach phonetics in language laboratories.

Answers	Number of students	Percentage
Strongly agree	19	50 %
Agree	11	28.95 %
Neither agree nor disagree	6	15.79 %
disagree	2	5.26 %
Strongly disagree	0	0 %
Total	38	100%

Table 22: Students' Opinions about the Necessity to Teach phonetics in Language Laboratories

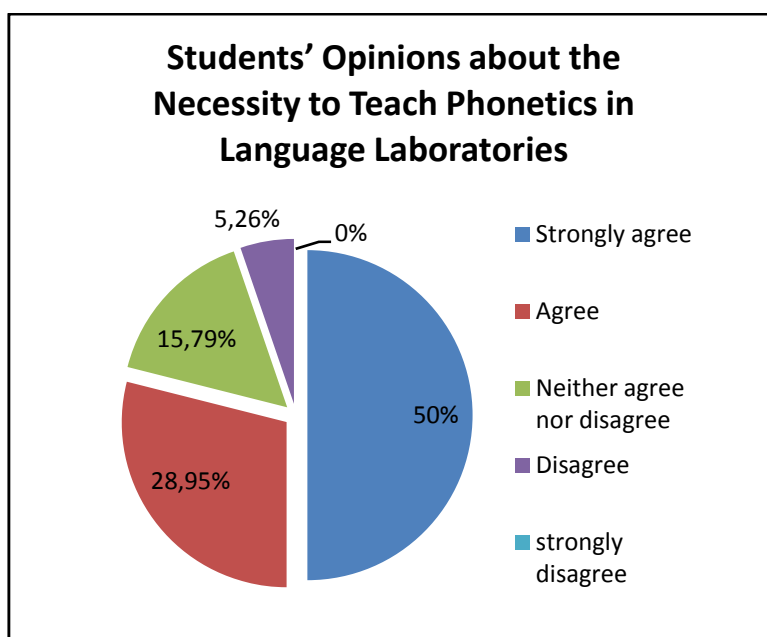


Fig. 29: Students' Opinions about the Necessity to Teach Phonetics in Language Laboratories

The majority of students (50%) are strongly agree with the necessity to use language laboratories in teaching phonetics, also many of them 28.25% are agree about that; 15.79% are neither agree nor disagree; whereas 5.26 % said that they disagree with necessity to teach pronunciation in language laboratories; while no one has strongly disagreed about

this. These results show that most of second year students need to study in language laboratories; which can provide them with an appropriate and efficient practice that serves their pronunciation targets.

3.3.2 Summary of the Findings from Students Questionnaire

The analysis of students' questionnaire allowed drawing these conclusions:

- ✚ Second year students seem to be motivated to learn English in general and phonetics in particular.
- ✚ They are highly aware about the importance of phonetics in the development of their oral proficiency, but they demonstrated negative attitudes towards learning phonetics because they feel bored of studying theoretical notions.
- ✚ Many of second year students have many pronunciation errors and face problems in learning phonetics because they are neither able to understand the phonological rules being introduced, nor to make use of them in actual speech.
- ✚ The majority of second year students do not practice the phonological rules that they learn at the classroom, which would not help in the development of their pronunciation.
- ✚ The majority of students supported that with intensive, effective practice, their pronunciation errors could disappear.
- ✚ Furthermore, they largely agreed with the necessity to teach phonetics in language laboratories because they know this would offer them a good quality of practice, and allow them much chance to be exposed to the authentic English accent; also they could have more training in pronunciation.

3.4 General Discussion of the Findings:

The analysis of the findings from both teachers and students' questionnaires demonstrated the following:

Second year students consider the importance of the phonetics session and they seem to be motivated enough to learn it; however, many of them see it as boring as it is mainly focused on theoretical explanation of the phonological rules while the practice takes the form of transcription; this what created a kind of negative attitude towards learning phonetics and hindered greatly the improvement of students pronunciation.

The ability to practice pronunciation in a meaningful way is out of teachers' hands, who are met with several obstacles like the absence of language laboratories and any other audio-visual aids, the lack of time, crowded classes. For these reasons, teachers automatically tend to rely more on theoretical descriptions of English phonology, marginalizing the practice.

In sum, It is proved that pronunciation is taught in a mere theoretical way, students do not have much chance to practice and monitor their pronunciation, that is why most of them have problems in learning phonetics and they even showed dissatisfaction and negative attitudes towards the way pronunciation is taught. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is confirmed.

Conclusion

This study has investigated the actual state of teaching phonetics at Mohammed Kheider University. the investigation revealed many realities; teachers of phonetics are very bothered because of the difficult working circumstances, the lack of time and pedagogical materials; this what led phonetics to be taught in a rather theoretically way, this is in one a hand; in the other hand, because of the lack of practice many second year students struggle with pronunciation errors and problems in both the ability to understand the phonological rules, and to make use of them; furthermore, they also demonstrated dissatisfaction about the way pronunciation is taught. It is worth to highlight that pronunciation has very significant effect on EFL speakers; good pronunciation shows the high level of the speaker's proficiency, competence, self confidence, as well as it gives a good self image and a nice impression for the hearers and the vice versa; hence pronunciation should be given more attention by all the responsible people in the department of arts and languages, teachers, and even students.

General Conclusion

In sum, pronunciation is key component in intelligibility and in the efficiency of communication. Accordingly, it should be owed a special care and attention, so that it can be meaningfully and adequately practiced; which in turn would have fruitful outcomes in pronunciation learning.

Through the first chapter, a description of the main aspects of the English phonology is provided; it represents the sound system of the RP, namely, consonants, vowels and determines the place and the manner of their articulation, then it describes the prosodic features of speech like stress and intonation; In addition to the definitions of the aspects of connected speech (assimilation, elision, contractions) accompanied with some rules and examples.

The second chapter is devoted to pronunciation teaching. It initially represents the popular language teaching methods over history, and then it examines some of the methods within which pronunciation was a major concern as in the ALM, Suggestopedia, and the CLT. This chapter is largely focused on pronunciation teaching issues including factors that affect pronunciation learning like the age, negative attitudes, and the interference with the mother tongue; it examines also the main phonological problems that Arabic learners encounter; finally, it highlights the teachers and students' roles in English pronunciation classroom.

The last chapter represents the analysis of the findings provided from the questionnaires of phonetics' teachers and second year English LMD students; the results that are drawn from the analysis revealed that both teachers and students have a sense of awareness about the significant role that pronunciation practice plays in the development of the targeted oral proficiency. However, teachers are not able to provide their students with enough and adequate practice due to several obstacles that they encounter in teaching phonetics such as the lack of pedagogical materials, essentially, language laboratories and the audio-visual aids, the lack of teachers, overcrowded classes, long curriculum and time pressure. In the other side, students expressed their hatred and dissatisfaction about the way the phonetics module is taught; differently stated, the phonetics session is under their expectations, students need to get involved in real communicative activities in which they practise, experiment and feel the increasing improvement of their pronunciation, rather than

studying theoretical rules which they learn just for exams; hence, the hypothesis of this research is confirmed.

In light of this situation, a strong call is directed to all the authority people to give consideration to phonetics teaching by making the language laboratories available for use in teaching phonetics, training the required number of competent teachers, devoting more time for the phonetics module, and divide second year students to small groups; this could prompt pronunciation learning.

Pedagogical Recommendations

- Teaching pronunciation aspects should be based on both theory and practice, bearing in mind that practice should be always the focus of the phonetics session.
- Training more teachers in the pedagogy of phonetics; in fact, most of teachers tend to teach modules like grammar, written expression, and oral expression, but they avoid teaching phonetics because they cannot start teaching such difficult module without initial training and solid background about it.
- The English phonology is very detailed and complicated, it requires to be taught along three or four years, so that, teachers work without pressure and students can take their time in understanding, and practicing, then internalizing the pronunciation aspects that they learn.
- Phonetics cannot be taught appropriately in normal classrooms, rather it should be taught in laboratories with the use of the different ICT tools.
- Phonetics is supposed to be taught in groups of no more than 25 students, so each student can get a special attention from the teacher and much chance for practice.
- Devoting one session for theoretical aspects of phonology, and another for practice in language laboratories.
- Maximizing exposure to the target language and encouraging students to practise their pronunciation inside and outside the classroom.
- Pronunciation activities should be carefully chosen, they need to be communicative, enjoying, interactive and serve the students' needs and levels.
- Collaboration between the teachers of phonetics, first of all, in terms of making decisions concerning the content and the type of activities to be used in

the phonetics course, second of all, reacting to the needs and the problems met in teaching phonetics by asking for higher authority' intervention.

- Assessing both students' oral and written performance, this will encourage them to be more concerned with their pronunciation accuracy, rather than focused only on learning by heart abstract rules.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

We are conducting a master degree research that aims at demonstrating the importance of pronunciation practice in the phonetics session to improve students' oral proficiency . We will be very grateful for your precious help and contribution which will hopefully provide our research with valid and relevant data. We appreciate your help.

Section one: Background Information Questions

1. What are your qualifications?

a. License:

b. Master:

c. Magister:

d. Doctorate:

2. Have you ever received any training in teaching phonetics?

a. Yes

b. No

3. For how long have you been teaching phonetics?

.....
.....

Section Two: Teachers' Attitudes towards Teaching Pronunciation

1. Do you think that teaching phonetics requires pre-training and enough experience?

a. Yes

b. No

2. Do you follow any specific program in teaching phonetics?

a. Yes

b. No

3. Does this program involve the use of any pedagogic materials?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, what are they?

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.....

.....

.....

4. Are these materials available for use?

a. Yes

b. No

If no, state the ones that are not available for use?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. Does the absence of these materials impact the improvement of students' pronunciation?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, explain how?

.....

.....

.....

6. Do you think that your students are motivated to learn phonetics?

a. Yes

b. No

7. How often do you correct your students 'pronunciation errors'?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

8. In our opinion, what are the reasons of your students 'pronunciation errors'?

a. The lack of practice

b. The interference with the mother tongue

c. A problem of understanding the phonological rules

d. Both of them

9. How many students do you have per group?

.....

10. Does this number help you to work in good conditions?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, state how?

.....
.....
.....
.....

11. How many hours per week are allotted for phonetics at the level of the second year?

.....

12. Do you think that this time is sufficient to cover the program and to provide students with enough practice?

a. Yes

b. No

13. How often do you make practice?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

e. Never

14. What kind of activities do you use as practice?

.....
.....
.....
.....

15. What kind of tests do you use?

a. Oral tests

b. Written tests

c. Both

16. Do you think that phonetics could be taught appropriately without language laboratories?

a. Yes

b. No

17. Do you have any suggestions concerning the improvement of the phonetics session?

.....
.....

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.....

I am genuinely appreciative

Appendix 2

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

We are conducting a master degree research that aims at demonstrating the importance of pronunciation practice in the phonetics session to improve students' oral proficiency.

We will be very grateful for your precious help and contribution which will hopefully provide our research with valid and relevant data. We appreciate your help.

Section one: background Information Questions

1. Age:

2. Gender:

a. Male

b. Female

3. Your educational Streaming was:

a. Literary

b. Scientific

c. Technical

4. How was your choice for studying English?

a. Personal choice

b. Imposed

5. Why did you choose studying English?

a. To have fun because I love it

b. To get a job

c. To speak with native speaker and travel abroad

Others, specify

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section two :Students' Attitudes towards the Phonetics Module

1. How learning phonetics is important for improving your English?

a. Very important

b. Important

d. Not important

2. How do you see you the phonetics session?

a. Interesting

b. Normal

c. Boring

If your answer is boring explain why?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Do you have any problems in learning phonetics?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, are these problems related to?

a. Understanding the rules introduced during the lesson

b. The ability to use these rules

c. Both of them

4. How often do you make pronunciation errors?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

5. Does your teacher correct your pronunciation errors?

a. Yes

b. No

6. Do you agree that an intensive practice in phonetics would fix these errors?

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neither agree/ nor disagree

d. Disagree

e. Strongly disagree

7. Does your teacher accompany each new lesson with pronunciation practice activities?

a. Yes

b. No

8. What kind of practice does your teacher offer?

a. Reading lists of words or sentences

b. Listen and repeat' activities

c. Written exercises

d. Practice with the use of the audio-visual means.

9. How often does your teacher involve you in practice?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometime

d. Rarely

e. Never

12. Do you frequently practise the new learnt rules?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, State in what ways?

.....

.....

.....

.....

13. Do you agree that it is necessary to teach phonetics in language laboratories?

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neither agree/ nor disagree

d. Disagree

e. Strongly disagree

I am genuinely appreciative

ملخص الرسالة

الدراسة الحالية تبحث في أهمية التمرين على النطق و أثرها في تحسين القدرات الشفهية للطلبة. حقيقة أن الكثير من طلبة الانجليزية في جامعة محمد خيضر ببسكرة يقومون بدراسة مقياس علم الأصوات لمدة عامين، لكنهم بالرغم من ذلك يعانون من مشاكل في النطق و التي تؤدي بدورها إلى صعوبات في القدرة على التحاور، تستوجب إنجاز هذا البحث لإيجاد الأسباب التي أدت إلى فشل طلاب الانجليزية في اكتساب النطق الصحيح للانجليزية . على ضوء هذا الإشكال يهدف البحث إلى إبراز أهمية استخدام أنشطة نطق تواصلية متنوعة للتغلب على هذه الصعوبات و اكتساب لغة انجليزية سليمة. ولتحقيق هذا الهدف و إثبات نظريه البحث القائلة بأن " إن لم تكن هناك ممارسة جيدة لقواعد النطق المدروسة سيواجه طلبة الانجليزية مشاكل في النطق و سيولد ذلك نظرة سلبية عن مقياس النطق " ، لقد تم توزيع استمارة لكل من أساتذة مقياس علم الأصوات وطلبة الإنجليزية للسنة الثانية في نظام ل.م.د، هذه الاستمارة تصبو إلى توعية أساتذة مقياس علم الأصوات وطلبة الإنجليزية بأهمية التمرين علي النطق و رصد انطباعهم حول الواقع الحالي الذي يدرس فيه مقياس علم الأصوات. إنها تهدف أيضا إلى التحقق من الأسباب والمشاكل التي تعطل عملية التطبيق في تدريس مقياس علم الأصوات. المعطيات المتحصل عليها أظهرت أن كل من الأساتذة والطلبة لديهم حس عالي بضرورة التمرين على النطق، و لكن بسبب العديد من العراقيل المتعلقة بظروف العمل، قواعد النطق لا تطبق بفعالية و بالقدر الكافي، و ربما يكون هذا العامل الرئيسي الذي تعود إليه أخطاء النطق الكثيرة التي يعاني منها الطلبة والذي خلق أيضا نظرة سيئة عن مقياس علم الأصوات. إذن من اللازم تدريس هذا المقياس في أفواج صغيرة بمخابر اللغات وعلى يد أساتذة مؤهلين مع توفير الوقت والعتاد اللازمين.