



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Shendi University

Faculty of Post Graduate

Studies and Scientific Research



**An Investigation of EFL Learners’
Pronunciation Errors in Spoken English**

*(A Case Study of the Final Year Students of English -Faculties of Arts
and Education - Shandi University for Academic Year 2014-2015)*

**A Thesis submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctorate of Philosophy in English (Applied
Linguistics)**

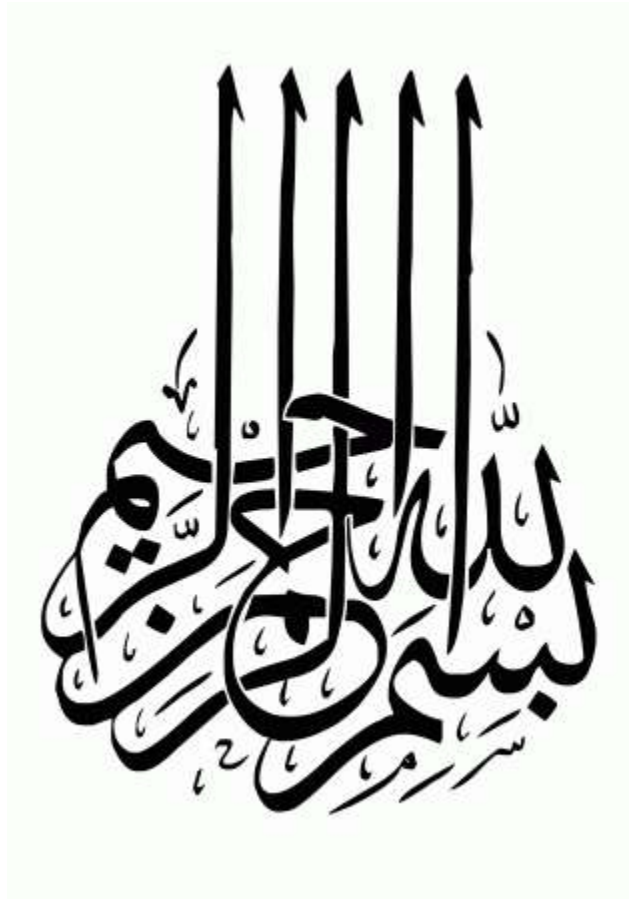
By

Somia Ali Mohamed Idris

Supervisor

Dr. Ali Ahmed Hussein

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قال تعالى:

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانٍ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ

لَهُمْ فَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ

الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ) صدق الله العظيم

سورة ابراهيم الاية رقم(4)

Dedication

To the soul of my beloved father.

To my beloved mother, the person who kept supporting me until all my education ambition became possible.

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List of Acronyms

| No | Acronym | Concept |
|----|---------|---|
| 1 | SUSE | Shandi University Students of English |
| 2 | RP | Received Pronunciation |
| 3 | EFL | English as Foreign Language |
| 4 | ESL | English as Second Language |
| 5 | L1 | First Language |
| 6 | L2 | Second Language |
| 7 | S/FLA | Second and Foreign Language Acquisition |
| 8 | IL | Interlanguage |
| 9 | NL | Native Language |
| 10 | MT | Mother-tongue |
| 11 | TL | Target Language |
| 12 | SLA | Second Language Acquisition |
| 13 | Ss Q | Students' Questionnaire |
| 14 | Ts Q | Teachers' Questionnaire |
| 15 | C | Consonant |
| 16 | V | Vowel |
| 17 | VPM | Voicing, Place and Manner |
| 18 | BBC | British Broadcasting Corporation |
| 19 | CC | Two consonant cluster |
| 20 | CCC | Three consonant cluster |
| 21 | CCCC | Four consonant cluster |
| 22 | OHP | Over Head Projector |
| 23 | MSA | Modern Standard Arabic |
| 24 | ELF | English as a Lingua Franca |
| 25 | ACS | Arabic Consonant Sounds. |

| No | Acronym | Concept |
|-----------|----------------|---|
| 26 | ECS | English Consonant Sounds |
| 27 | SSA | Sudanese Spoken Arabic |
| 28 | SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Sciences |
| 29 | CSA | Colloquial Sudanese Arabic |
| 30 | IPA | International Phonetic Alphabet |
| 31 | MTI | Mother Tongue Interference |

Abstract

The primary focus of this study is to investigate the common English pronunciation errors made by the final year students of English at Shendi University at two different faculties (Arts and Education) for the university year 2014- 2015. This study is based on the main assumption that, the final year university students of English were expected to have pronunciation difficulties in spoken English. The researcher used the analytical descriptive method. A questionnaire, interviews, and class observation devices were used as data-gathering tools.

The data were analyzed by using (SPSS) Statistical Package for Social Science by Chi-square Test programmes and Alpha coefficient to show the degree of statistical significance and the results of the research hypotheses. The study found out that, university students seemed to mispronounce certain phonemes, using ending and linking unnecessary sounds when pronouncing consonant clusters, used word stress incorrectly, and displaying improper intonation in speaking conversation. The Strongest factors contribute to these mispronunciations turned out to be the mother-tongue interference and the little amount of the target language exposure as well other causative factors.

With regard to the remedial suggestive techniques that might minimize the learners' errors, this study recommends that: English clubs in Sudanese universities should be encouraged to help students correct their pronunciation mistakes through debating and providing CDs and Videos by native speakers. It is hoped that from this study, teachers and students would be more aware of the problems to be addressed as indicated in this study and they should therefore develop teaching and learning methods based on the identified oral errors to enable the final year students improve their pronunciation and gain better communicative competence with confidence in speaking.

Abstract (Arabic Version)

مستخلص

ان الهدف الاساسي لهذه الدراسة هو تقصي اخطاء النطق اثناء التحدث باللغة الانجليزية لدى طلاب اللغة الانجليزية -السنة النهائية- بكلتي الاداب و التربية في جامعة شندى للعام الجامعي 2014-2015. استندت هذه الدراسة على الفرضية الرئيسية : ان طلاب اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة شندى لديهم اخطاء في النطق اثناء التحدث باللغة الانجليزية. كما اجريت هذه الدراسة لاكتشاف العوامل التي تقود لمثل هذه الاخطاء و طرق معالجتها. إستخدمت الباحثة المنهج التحليلي الوصفي باستخدام برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية لتحليل البيانات (SPSS) و اختبار مربع كاي لمعرفة الفروق ذات الدلالة الاحصائية لاختبار فرضيات الدراسة. تم جمع المعلومات عن طريق الاستبانات و المقابلة و بطاقة الملاحظة. د توصلت الدراسة الى أن طلاب اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة شندى للعام الجامعي 2014 -2015 يواجهون مشكلة في نطق الكلمات التي تحتوي على حروف متحركة و ساكنة - بعض الطلاب لديهم مشكلة في تحديد مكان علو الصوت في الكلمات في اللغة الانجليزية كما توجد لديهم ايضا مشكلة في استخدام نبرة الصوت الصحيحة من حيث العلو والانخفاض في الجملة أثناء المحادثة . توصلت الدراسة الي ان تدخل اللغة الام و عدم وجود فرص للتحدث باللغة الانجليزية من اهم العوامل التي تقود لمثل هذه الاخطاء . أوصلت الدراسة بتشجيع قيام اندية اللغة الانجليزية بالجامعات وذلك لتمكين الطلاب من وجود فرص اكبر لتحدث اللغة الانجليزية لتحسين قدراتهم للتحدث بثقة و ثبات.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Despite the fact that nowadays human beings have writing systems to record their languages and numerous digital machines to make saving them even easier, people still communicate through speaking more than they do through writing. Therefore much attention is to be paid to pronunciation, as it contributes to conveying the right message in oral discourse. If the message is not properly articulated, pronunciation might sometimes hinder communication or lead to apprehension.

As pronunciation is viewed as a sub-skill of speaking, it is better to change the way a learner pronounces some difficult utterances. Despite this situation, the teaching of pronunciation remains largely neglected. In this study, the researcher discussed the most common pronunciation errors made by university students of English with a particular reference to students of English at Shandi University. In addition, factors affecting the learning of pronunciation and the needs of learners, suggestions for teaching pronunciation were also reviewed.

The EFL learners need to be able to communicate successfully in the target language. Among the causes that generate unsuccessful communication is the inability to speak a language as close to a native speaker as possible. In any language, but especially in English, a faulty pronunciation leads to major message misunderstandings. The final year students of the bachelor's degree program "Department of English Language and Literature" of the Faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University encounter some difficulties in English in the area of pronunciation. The present study attempts to identify these difficulties and find out the causes generating this situation as well propose strategies and techniques to overcome it.

1.2 Introduction

This chapter demonstrates the statement of the study problem, and objectives of the study, the study questions and the hypotheses in addition to the significance of the study, the methodology, and the procedures of the study, population and sample of the study. Study limits are also presented. The pronunciation of any non-native speaker of any language is promoted or impeded by a number of factors including, among others, mother tongue influence and the amount of the (TL) exposure.

Many studies demonstrated that Arab students face problem in pronunciation noting that the errors of pronunciation that learners of English from different language backgrounds make are systematic and not accidental, for example (O'Connor 2003) has stated that: *“The error committed by speakers of other languages is something systematic rather than random. Arabic speakers according to their language background, face some difficulties in their English pronunciation. These difficulties lead to mispronunciation.”*

1.3 Statement of the Problem

A close observation of learners of English at Shandi University highlighted that some learners make certain pronunciation errors when communicating orally in English. They have problems either making themselves understood or understanding others. According to this observation the researcher thought of investigating the pronunciation errors and providing an explanation with regard to the possible source or cause of error to bring about an awareness of what could be the potential contributory factors. Then, offering suggested solutions to deal with these problems.

A number of students mispronounced some segments; separated words and words combined in a sentence. Others misused stress at word level and used intonation improperly. Therefore, investigating the problems and their linguistic causes, then looking for some facilitative plans to improve the situation would be useful for the pronunciation learning and teaching at the target faculties. Being motivated by this situation, the researcher would like to carry out a case study in order to figure out the pronunciation errors in spoken English made by the final year students majoring in English at Shandi University.

Pronunciation challenging has a positive effect on learning a (S/FL) and learners can gain the skills they need for effective communication in English. Therefore, the purpose of this study is not merely to identify the students' errors and look for the contributory factors, but also to provide suggestions on how to help students overcome their weaknesses and improve their pronunciation skills to express themselves in better English.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The importance of investigating pronunciation errors stems from the fact that pronunciation stands as an obstacle in communication especially when the meaning of a certain word or an expression is altered because of the incorrect pronunciation of an item as when one says ' I had *bee soub* for lunch' instead of '*pea soup*', or '*sink*' instead of '*think*'. However, it is necessary, to discover the factors that have a role to play in the acquisition of the phonological system of English as foreign language and to find out the suitable remedial plans.

The idea of investigating pronunciation errors to improve the communicative competence and confidence of (EFL) learners was clearly identified from the researcher's experience in pronunciation teaching at

university levels for more than 15 years. The fundamental purpose of speech is communication and English language is a vehicle for international communication. In order to meet the demands of modern society, English teachers need to pay more attention to the development of learners' competence and performance in the area of spoken English. It is the teachers' role to help learners gain more competence with confidence in speaking.

The researcher hopes that this study can help the teachers find ways to deal with students' errors more systematically and comprehensively. To achieve this goal, the researcher would like to shed light on an important issue, that, teachers of English should draw their students' attention to the fact that, the areas of pronunciation include the particular consonants and vowels of a language (individual segments) and aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual segments, such as stress, and intonation, (supra-segmental aspects).

All segmental and supra-segmental features of pronunciation work together in combination when in speaking, so that difficulties in one area may impact on another, and it is the combined result that makes someone's pronunciation easy or difficult to understand.

However, teaching should focus primarily on supra-segmental features (e.g., stress, rhythm, intonation), as mastery of supra-segmental is likely to make a greater contribution to mispronunciation than mastery of segmental features. Supra-segmental features, by virtue of their connection to discourse meaning and connected speech, are more likely than segmental to be directly relevant to speaking skills. Because features such as stress, rhythm, and intonation affect not just words but whole utterances, they contribute more directly to skill in using the spoken language.

The importance of this study comes from the fact that pronunciation is a crucial part in language learning. It is crucial because it does not matter how good a learner's vocabulary or grammar is if no one can understand them when they speak. Learners with good pronunciation will be understood even if they make errors in other areas, while those with unintelligible pronunciation will remain unintelligible, even if they have expressed themselves using an extensive vocabulary and perfect grammar. Therefore, a learner needs a practical mastery of the English pronunciation components which are: segmental aspects (vowels and consonants), and supra-segmental aspects (stress, rhythm and intonation) and how they fit together in connected speech.

This study is significant for all English learners because it focuses on discovering the problematic areas of pronunciation that students meet while speaking English, and identifying the exact items that learners of English at Shandi University mispronounced and the reasons of this. Learning from errors can be a good way to improve their pronunciation. (Edge 1989, p14) pointed out that: *“errors are in fact signals that our students are successfully learning the language, they are taking the necessary learning step”*.

This study is an outcome of teachers' and students' concerns and efforts to identify the pronunciation problematic areas and to understand the key issues to (EFL) pronunciation to suggest a remedial procedure that may help the learners overcome their weaknesses and express themselves in better English. For this reason, the researcher decides to continue doing research on this issue to have a deeper insight into the possible causes of common speaking errors made by final year students of English in Shandi University.

As a teacher, the researcher would like to say that, it is important for the teachers to have a full understanding of the theory of how pronunciation works (or doesn't work), and what kinds of teaching/learning activities are likely to lead to improvements. This study is also beneficial to students themselves because once they realize their own errors; they can adapt their ways of learning to reduce these errors. Besides, this research also lays the foundation for further studies on this important area of study.

I.5 Study objectives

This study addresses the following objectives to explicate the segmental and supra-segmental errors made by a selected sample of EFL learners majoring in English at Shandi University, their causes and possible suggested solutions.

1. To identify the most significant pronunciation errors in spoken English among the final year students of English at Shandi University.
2. To find out the reasons of the most significant pronunciation errors among university students while they speak English.
3. To offer possible solutions and plans to help students overcome their pronunciation difficulties in speaking English.

I.6 Study Questions

In order to fulfill the above aims, the research is designed to seek answer to the following questions:

1. What are the most common pronunciation errors that EFL learners at Shandi University make in speaking English? However, sub-question has been stated as follow:

2. To what extent factors such as mother-tongue interference and little amount of the target language (TL) lead to errors in the area of (L2) production?

3. What are the plans and techniques that considered the most effective when addressing pronunciation issues?

Besides these, this study is trying to find out some information relating to the general situation of teaching and learning pronunciation in the English Department, such as students' attitude towards pronunciation and the way their teachers deal with pronunciation lessons. These factors, to some extent, might also contribute to pronunciation weaknesses.

1.7 Study Hypotheses

The current study will test the following hypotheses:

1. The final year students of EFL at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken English.

2. Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and the little amount of target language exposure.

3. Teachers and learners might use some plans and techniques that help learners overcome the weaknesses and express themselves in better English.

The researcher assumed that, there were five main pronunciation difficulty areas among EFL university learners. These difficulties might be (i) phonemes recognition ;(ii) mispronunciation of final -ed of past form verbs and -es of 3rd person singular in present allomorphs and plurals; (iii) consonantal clusters ;(vi) word stress patterns; and (v) applying intonation rules.

1.8 Study Methodology and Instruments

The present research is conducted as a case study which employs multi methods including qualitative and quantitative methods. The former uses naturalistic observation, narrative diaries, and collection of existing information while the later makes use of such instruments as questionnaires and structured interviews.

In this study, the researcher adopted the descriptive statistical method, and using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), to analyze the data obtained to realize the goals of this study. To have satisfactory data for this research, three data-gathering tools were used. The first tool was two questionnaires which were designed according to the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

The reliability and validity of the questionnaires was checked by some language experts. The first questionnaire was distributed to the final year students majoring in English and the other one was administered to the teachers of English from different Sudanese universities. The purpose of these questionnaires was to get feedback about pronunciation problems in speaking English among students.

The second data gathering tool was an audio recorded-interview. The researcher interviewed (16) students of English from one level. The data was recorded and registered on sheets to be analyzed in order to achieve the goals of the study. The reliability and validity of the interview was checked by some language experts. In addition, a class observation was used as the third data-gathering tool to get practical and reliable data on common pronunciation errors made by students.

The population of this study was the final year university students of English besides the university teachers of English language for the academic year: 2014-2015. The sample was a purposive selection of

students all of whom have studied two courses of phonetics and phonology in two semesters. University teachers were selected for the questionnaire samples too.

1.9 Study Delimitation

This study is limited to the following factors:

1. The investigation focused on the pronunciation errors in spoken English among the final year students of English at Faculties of Arts and Education - Shandi University in (2014-2015) academic year
2. The participating subjects are as follows :
 - (A) Students: The sample examined was a purposive selection of (70) students from among approximately (500) students in the Department of English, Faculties of Arts and Education; they were final year students who have completed two English pronunciation courses.
 - (B) Teachers: (30) teachers of Linguistics with different qualifications and experiences participated in this study.
3. The study was conducted in Shandi University which is located in Shendi City in The River Nile State.

1.10 Terms Definition

1. Pronunciation: Segmental and Supra-segmental Features:

Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as intonation, stress, timing, rhythm (supra-segmental), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and, in its broadest definition, attention to expressions that are closely related to the way we speak a language.

(Swan, M and B Smith 1987:1)

2. Native speaker: “a human speaks English as his/her mother tongue.”

(Collins .B & Inger M. Mees, 2013:2)

3. Non-native speaker: “a human that using English as second language; or a learner of English as a foreign language.”

(Collins .B & Inger M. Mees, 2013:2)

4. Phonetics and Phonology: “Phonetics is the science of sounds and phonology is the study of how sounds function in a given language.”

(Collins .B & Inger M. Mees, 2013:2)

5. Received Pronunciation: “the accent that we use as our model is the one that is most often recommended for foreign learners studying British English. (Usually abbreviated to its initials, **RP**.”

(Roach, P, 2009:3)

1.11 Study Contents

This study is composed of six chapters. Chapter one contains the statement of the problem, the significance; objective of the researcher, the research questions, the hypotheses as well.

Chapter Two tackles the related literature Review. It gives a general overview of the theory of errors investigation, presents the common pronunciation problems that might face university students and introduces a list of selected previous studies in relation to this study.

Chapter Three involves the research methodology .It demonstrates a clear and detailed plan to collect adequate and reliable data for analysis including the selection of subjects, research instruments, procedures of data collection as well as procedures of data analysis.

Chapter Four mainly deals with the results from the survey questionnaires. It includes the presentation, analysis and discussion of results and contains tables and charts displaying the results, as well.

Chapter Five is the data presentation, analysis, and discussions of results from the audio-recorded interviews and class observations.

Chapter Six is the conclusion which summarizes the major findings of the study. It also gives some recommendations to improve students' pronunciation skill and reducing their errors in speaking. Suggestions for further studies are also included in this chapter.

In conclusion, this introductory chapter presents the study problem, significance, objectives, research questions and hypotheses, cope, methodology, and design of the study. The related literature review was demonstrated in the next chapter.

2.1 Introduction

This research sheds light on pronunciation error investigation. Attention is given to subtle differences between Arabic and English in segmental (vowels and consonants) and supra-segmental (clusters, stress, and intonation) domains. As a general demonstration, the study highlights techniques for teaching some of the most challenging pronunciation features phenomena in English.

This chapter focuses on the theoretical background of this thesis as well as the previous related studies. The main aim of this study is to identify the pronunciation challenges EFL learners typically encounter in speaking English. Specifically, the core of the study is error investigation of English segmental, but in addition, a major shift from an emphasis on individual sounds to an emphasis on supra-segmental features of speech (e.g. intonation, stress,) will be made.

Two other sections are devoted to explaining why these errors occurred and what are the possible techniques and plans for remedy. From there, the researcher will move on to a practical exploration of pronunciation teaching methods. An issue that cannot be overlooked when discussing English pronunciation teaching is the status of English as an international language. This chapter mostly illustrates fundamental background studies done in the field of investigating English pronunciation errors. There is the hope that the study helps EFL teachers to become more familiar with the most frequent errors made by their students and leading them to make more objective decisions about how to go about adopting appropriate teaching strategies and techniques to help EFL students learn better.

In addition, the researcher has presented the pronunciation problem areas and discussed the factors affecting pronunciation that assumed by

the researcher to be the strongest ones. These assumed factors were mothertongue interference (MTI) and lacking of the (TL) exposure. However, some other contributory factors are also considered such as inconsistency of English sounds; poor pronunciation knowledge; lack of motivation and the influence of spelling on pronunciation. Moreover, the suggested techniques to overcome these problems were discussed.

2.2 Language and Speech

How is English pronounced? The question is deceptively simple, and it cannot have a simple answer. According to (Charles W. Kreidler 2004.P. 4)

English today is the native language of nearly 400 million people and the second language of many others scattered all over the world. A language so widespread is bound to be different in different places. We are all aware that the Scots and the Australians, Londoners and New Yorkers, Irish, New Zealanders, South Africans, Jamaicans, Welsh, and Canadians do not sound the same when they speak.

(Charles.W 2004) has added that how can anyone describe the pronunciation of so many different people? The diversity is real and must be treated in an account of how English is pronounced, but the commonality is greater.

2.3 Historic Background of Speaking

Of all the four language skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing) as has claimed by (Sárosdy. J, et al,2006. P. 57) “*Speaking seems to be the most important as people who know a language are referred to as ‘speakers’ of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing a language*”. The importance of speaking has always been recognized but the various methods put different degrees of emphasis on

it. The function of reading aloud and learning by heart have very important role in developing speaking skills and language patterns. This section explains four rules which must be followed in order to learn a new spoken language. The emphasis is on spoken language and retraining the language learner's proprioceptive sense. There are four simple rules to follow when learning a second language as has been stated by (Lundquist.L. 2008).

1. To learn to speak the language correctly, you must speak it aloud.

It is important that you speak loudly and clearly when you are learning your target language. You must always use spoken exercises. One of the reasons that traditional language study methods require so much time to produce results is that silent study does nothing to train the proprioceptive sense.

2. To learn to speak fluently, you must think in that language.

You must force your mind to *think* in the target language by using your recall memory when you are studying spoken exercises. But when you are doing sentence responses using recorded exercises, you must force your mind to develop the syntax by doing the exercise without reading from a text. You are not *thinking* in your target language if you are reading a text. Making your mind work to create the answer is an important part of learning to speak a new language.

3. The more you speak the language aloud, the more quickly you will learn to speak fluently.

Proprioceptive retraining is not instantaneous. It will require much repetition to build the new patterns in your mind. As these new patterns develop, there will be progression from a laborious, conscious effort, to speech which is reproduced rapidly and unconsciously. When any of us

speak our first language, we do so with no conscious awareness of tongue or mouth position and the air flow through the vocal cords.

4. You must never make a mistake when you are speaking.

When you are learning a language, you are strongly reinforcing the learning process each time you speak. However, when you construct a sentence incorrectly, you have not only wasted the learning time used to construct your faulty sentence, but you must now invest even more time retraining your mind, mouth, and hearing so you can construct the sentence correctly.

2.4 English as an International Language

(Sharif .F,2009:1) has claimed that “*For better or worse, by choice or force, English has ‘traveled’ to many parts of the world and has been used to serve various purposes.*” This phenomenon has created positive interactions as well as tensions between global and local forces and has had serious linguistic, sociocultural, political and pedagogical implications. (Broughton. etal 2003) have stated that:

Of the 4,000 to 5,000 living languages, English is by far the most widely used. On the other hand the 300 million native speakers of English are to be found in every continent, and an equally widely distributed body of second language speakers, who use English for their day-to-day needs, totals over 250 million.

2.4.1 English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

Learning a language involves a lot of work and even the most talented language learners work hard at learning a language, so be prepared to work hard, and keep your motivation high by noting your successes in using the language and in increasing your knowledge. Set regular weekly goals for words to learn, pages to read, and minutes to

spend doing listening. Keep a record of what you do so you can see your progress. The two most important conditions supporting learning are:

- (i) Spaced repetition and,
- (ii) The quality of attention given to items. Quality is increased by recalling what you have met, making varied recalls, analyzing and elaborating on language items, and giving deliberate attention.

2.4.2 Principles of Learning a Foreign/Second Language

(Nation. P. 2014 p.8) has outlined four basic principles that learners should follow when they are learning another language.

- a. Work out what your needs are; learn what is useful for you.
- b. Balance your learning.
- c. Apply conditions that help learning.
- d. Keep motivated and work hard—Do what needs to be done.

A very useful principle to follow when learning most things is the time-on-task principle. This principle says if you want to learn something, do it a lot. If you want to learn to read, read a lot. If you want to learn to speak, speak a lot.

This is a rather crude quantity-based principle, but it works. The more time you spend doing something, usually the better you will become at doing it. (Nation.P. 2014, p.7)has stated that:

Common comment from people learning a foreign language is "I hate making a fool of myself." Your own feel level of needy dependence which can be hard to tolerate. How can you reduce some of your students' fear of looking foolish and build up their confidence and pleasure in using English? How can you give them the confidence to start taking control of themselves as speakers of English?

2.4.3 Second/ Foreign Language Acquisition (SLA)

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) as stated by(Troike .M.2006 p.3)“*refers both to the study of individuals and groups who are learning a language subsequent to learning their first one as young children, and to the process of learning that language.*” The additional language is called a second language(L2), even though it may actually be the third, fourth, or tenth to be acquired. It is also commonly called a target language (TL), which refers to “*any language that is the aim or goal of learning.*”(Troike.M.2006 p.3). The scope of (SLA) includes informal (L2) learning that takes place in naturalistic contexts, formal (L2) learningthat takes place in classrooms, and (L2) learning that involves a mixture of these settings and circumstances. For example, “informal learning” happens when a child from Japan is brought to the US and “picks up” English in the course of playing and attending school with native English-speaking children without any specialized language instruction. “Formal learning” occurs when a high school student in England takes a class in French, when an undergraduate student in Russia takes a course in Arabic.

2.4.4 Foreign and Second Language Learning

(Troike .M.2006.p.4) defined Second Language (SL) as:

Typically an official or societally dominant language needed for education, employment, and other basic purposes. It is often acquired by minority group members or immigrants who speak another language natively. In this more restricted sense, the term is contrasted with other terms in this list.

Moreover (Ibid 2006.p. 4) defineda Foreign Language (FL)as:”*one not widely used in the learners’ immediate social context which might be used for future travel or other cross cultural communication situations,*

or studied as a curricular requirement or elective in school, but with no immediate or necessary practical application.”

2.5Pronunciation

2.5.1 Introduction and Definitions

Pronunciation is an integral part of foreign language learning since it directly affects learners' communicative competence as well as performance. Oxford Dictionary states that “*pronunciation is the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is spoken.* Moreover(Swan, M and B Smith 1987.p.1) have defined pronunciation as:

Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing, rhythm (supra-segmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and, in its broadest definition, attention to gestures and expressions that are closely related to the way we speak a language.

2.5.2 The Importance of Pronunciation

Pronunciation is important because it does not matter how good a learner's vocabulary or grammar is if no one can understand them when they speak! And to be understood, a learner needs a practical mastery of the sounds, rhythms and cadences of English and how they fit together in connected speech. Learners with good pronunciation will be understood even if they make errors in other areas, while those with unintelligible pronunciation will remain unintelligible, even if they have expressed themselves using an extensive vocabulary and perfect grammar. The review of literature shows that with careful preparation and

integration, pronunciation can play a significant role in supporting the learners' overall communicative skill. Limited pronunciation skills can decrease learners' self-confidence, restrict social interactions, and negatively affect estimations of a speaker's abilities.

Learners with good pronunciation will be understood even if they make errors in other areas, while those with unintelligible pronunciation will remain unintelligible, even if they have expressed themselves using an extensive vocabulary and perfect grammar. However, many adult learners find that pronunciation is one of the most difficult aspects of English to master, and feel the benefit of explicit help right from the beginning of their language learning.

2.5.3 Pronunciation Principles Adopted in the Materials.

As claimed by Burns. A and Claire.S (2003:4):

Pronunciation can be something of a 'Cinderella' in language teaching - to be given low priority or even avoided. Some teachers indicated that they were unsure about all the various features of pronunciation. Some were also unclear about whether to teach it separately or as an overall part of teaching activities.

These materials adopt an integrated approach to teaching pronunciation. This means that pronunciation teaching is contextualized within overall program planning. According to (Burns. A and Claire.S2003)an integrated approach involves:

- Teaching pronunciation features from the beginning stages of learning.
- assessing learners' pronunciation needs in combination with their overall spoken language needs.
- Selecting contexts, content and topics for pronunciation teaching that are practical, familiar, interesting and motivating.

- embedding a focus on practicing various pronunciation features within a larger topic or task.
- raising learners' awareness about how pronunciation contributes to making certain kinds of meaning.
- encouraging learners to monitor their needs and to develop personal strategies for improving different aspects of their pronunciation.
- introducing learners to a met-language and notation system that will assist them to learn more about pronunciation independently, both inside and outside the classroom.

2.5.4Pronunciation and Communication

Pronunciation has significant values in oral communication and also in foreign language learning. Acquiring good pronunciation is what a learner needs to make effort to do on the way of mastering a foreign language. Levis (2005) noted that the treatment of intonation in textbooks was often devoid of context and lacked communicative value. He argued that although intonation had been touted as a purveyor of meaning in instructional materials, its full communicative value had not and would not be realized unless instructional activities went beyond their current focus on pattern practice and encouraged the communicative use of language. The challenge of integrating the targeted practice of a given feature of pronunciation with meaning in instructional materials and activities is not particular to intonation, nor indeed to pronunciation. Richards (1986) cited as artificial the separation of pronunciation from communication and from other components of language use and called for more integration. (Yates L and Zielinski B: 118),in a pronunciation-based materials developer for the classroom, maintainedthat, “*of all skill areas in ESL the gap between communicative principles and classroom practice remains the most apparent in the area of pronunciation*”

2.5.5Pronunciation Teaching andlearning

Teaching pronunciation involves a variety of challenges. To begin with, teachersoften find that they do not have enough time in class to give proper attention to this aspect of English instruction. When they do find the time to address pronunciation, the instruction often amounts to the presentation and practice of a series of tedious and seemingly unrelated topics. As stated by (Gilbert B.2008.1),“*drilling sounds over and over again (e.g., minimal pair work) often leads to discouraging results, and discouraged students and teachers end up wanting to avoid pronunciation altogether.*” There are also factors that affect the learning of pronunciation in ways that are not so true of studying grammar or vocabulary. For one thing, the most basic elements of speaking are deeply personal.

Our sense of self and community are bound up in the speech-sounds of our first language (L1). These sounds were learned in the first year of life and are deeply rooted in the minds of students. Therefore, it is common for students to feel uneasy when they hear themselves speak with the segments of a second language (L2). They find that they “sound foreign” to themselves, and this is troubling for them. Although the uneasiness is usually unconscious, it can be a major barrier to improved intelligibility in the L2.

A teacher can help overcome this difficulty and other challenges by thinking of the goal of pronunciation instruction not as helping students to sound like native speakers but as helping them to learn the core elements of spoken English so that they can be easily understood by others. In other words, teachers and students can overcome the

frustrations, difficulties, and boredom often associated with pronunciation by focusing their attention on the development of pronunciation that is “listener friendly.” After all, (Gilbert B.2008.1) has claimed that “*English pronunciation does not amount to mastery of a list of sounds or isolated words. Instead, it amounts to learning and practicing the specifically English way of making a speaker’s thoughts easy to follow.*”

2.5.6 Aspects of pronunciation teaching

Pronunciation refers to how we produce the sounds that we use to make meaning when we speak. It includes the particular consonants and vowels of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual segments, such as stress, timing, rhythm, intonation, phrasing, (supra-segmental aspects), and how the voice is projected (voice quality). Although we often talk about these as if they were separate, they all work together in combination when we speak, so that difficulties in one area may impact on another, and it is the combined result that makes someone’s pronunciation easy or difficult to understand. The way we say something can be very different from the way it is written down.

2.5.6L2 Pronunciation is so challenging for Learners

Many factors may impact on how learners learn spoken language. Regarding the previous works on Foreign and Second Language Learning (FS/LL) especially those concerning English pronunciation problems, as claimed by (O'Connor 2003, Yule, 2003) they all agreed that the error made by speakers of other languages is something systematic rather than random. Arabic speakers according to their language background, face some difficulties in their English pronunciation. These difficulties lead to mispronunciation.

2.6 Introduction to phonetics and phonology

Whereas syntax is about sentence formation, and semantics about sentence interpretation, phonetics and phonology cover the field of Phonetics and phonology are worth studying for several reasons. One is that as all study of language, the study of phonology gives us insight into how the human mind works. Two more reasons are that the study of the phonetics of a foreign language gives us a much better ability both to hear and to correct mistakes that we make, and also to teach pronunciation of the foreign language (in this case English) to others. Yule, G (2010:26) has defined phonetics and phonology as:

Phonetics is concerned with how sounds are produced; transmitted and perceived. Phonology is concerned with how sounds function in relation to each other in a language. In other words, phonetics is about sounds of language, phonology about sound systems of language. Phonetics is a descriptive tool necessary to the study of the phonological aspects of a language.

2.6.1 Phonemes

According to (Yule, G 2010:30): “*Each one of these meaning-distinguishing sounds in a language is described as a phoneme.*” When we learn to use alphabetic writing, we are actually using the concept of the phoneme as the single stable sound type which is represented by a single written symbol. It is in this sense that the phoneme /t/ is described as a sound type, of which all the different spoken versions of [t] are tokens. Note that slash marks are conventionally used to indicate a

phoneme, /t/, an abstract segment, as opposed to the square brackets, as in [t], used for each phonetic or physically produced segment.

An essential property of a phoneme is that it functions contrastively. There are two phonemes /f/ and /v/ in English because they are the only basis of the contrast in meaning between the words ‘*fat* and *vat*’. This contrastive property is the basic operational test for determining the phonemes that exist in a language. If we substitute one sound for another in a word and there is a change of meaning, then the two sounds represent different phonemes.

The technical terms used in creating those charts can be considered “features” that distinguish each phoneme from the next. If the feature is present, we mark it with a plus sign (+) and if it’s not present, we use a minus sign (-). Thus /p/ can be characterized as [-voice, +bilabial, stop] and /k/ as [-voice, +velar, stop). Because these two sounds share some features (i.e. both are voiceless stops), they are sometimes described as members of a natural class of sounds.

The prediction would be that sounds which have features in common would behave phonologically in some similar ways. A sound which does not share those features would be expected to behave differently. For example, /v/ has the features [+voice, +labiodental, fricative] and so cannot be in the same “natural” class of sounds as /p/ and /k/.

2.6.2 Phones and Allophones

While the phoneme is the abstract unit or sound-type, there are many different versions of that sound-type regularly produced in actual speech. Those different versions can be described as phones. (Yule, G 2010:26) has added that: “*Phones are phonetic units and appear in square brackets.*” For example, the [t] sound in the word *tar* is normally

pronounced with a stronger puff of air than is present in the [t] sound in the word star. If you put the back of your hand in front of your mouth as you say tar, then star, you should be able to feel some physical evidence of aspiration (the puff of air) accompanying the [t] sound at the beginning of tar (but not in star). [t^h].

2.7 Segmental and Supra-segmental Features

In any speech context, two types of information are conveyed. The first is the segmental information which is related to those features of the language which are recognized as separated segments, in other words, the vowels and consonants of a particular language. The second information conveyed to a listener is that which is related to properties extending over the range of a single segment or the range of vowels and consonants.

According to Brown, A (2014) cited in (Laver 1994.p152) that supra-segmental as “*factors which can potentially be prolonged beyond the domain of the segment*’, such as *pitch, rhythm, intonation, stress*.” The various features of English pronunciation are illustrated in figure (1):

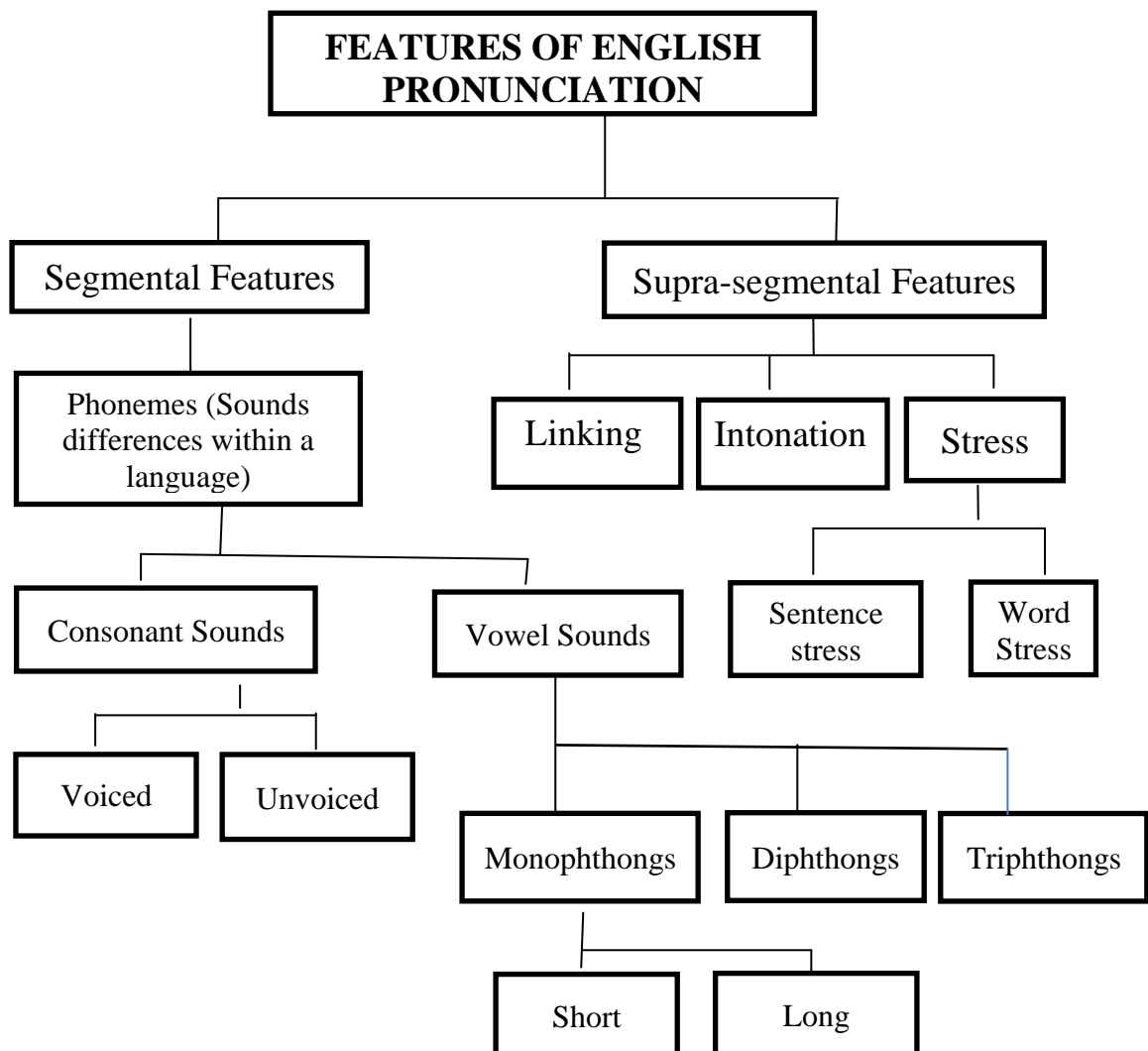


Figure (1): Features of English Pronunciation(Burns, A and Claire.S2003:20).

2.8 English and Arabic phonological system

2.8.1. Introduction

As claimed by Gimson (1980:117) “*The difference between Arabic and English phonological systems makes a great difference in the Arab students learning English pronunciation*”. In this context, Sudanese

university students are no exception. This difference is that the difference between two phonological systems involves: Segmental features (consonants, vowels, length) and supra-segmental features, (stress, intonation).

2.8.2 Segmental features of English Language

2.8.2.1 English Consonants

Edward Finnegan (2008, p.85) defined consonants as “*sounds produced by partially or completely blocking air in its passage from the lungs through the vocal tract.*” If you pronounce the first sound of the word *paper* you close your mouth completely and that is the most obstruction. Consonants are often classified by being given a so-called VPM-label. VPM stands for Voicing, Place and Manner:

All English consonants can be described in terms of three properties : (i) Voicing (whether the vocal cords are vibrating or not) (ii) Place of articulation (where the airstream is most obstructed) (iii) Manner of articulation (the particular way the airstream is obstructed)

1. Voicing

The larynx is in the neck, at a point commonly called Adam’s apple. It is like a box, inside which are the vocal folds, two thick flaps of muscle. In a normal position, the vocal folds are apart and we say that the glottis is open). When the edges of the vocal folds touch each other, air passing through the glottis will usually cause vibration. This opening and closing is repeated regularly and gives what is called voicing. (Roach 2009:23, 25).The only distinction between the first sounds of *sue* and *zoo* for example is that [s] is voiceless, [z] is voiced.

This distinction is quite important in English, as there are many pairs of sounds that differ only in voicing. Yule, G (2010:27), has explained the difference between voiced and voiceless sounds saying:

The distinction can be felt physically if you place a fingertip gently on the top of your Adam's apple (i.e. that part of your larynx you can feel in your neck below your chin), then produce sounds such as Z-Z-Z-Z or V-V-V-V. Because these are voiced sounds, you should be able to feel some vibration. Keeping your fingertip in the same position, now make the sounds S-S-S-S or F-F-F-F. Because these are voiceless sounds, there should be no vibration.

2. Places of Articulation

The sounds [p, t, k] are all voiceless, so there must be another way to distinguish between them. Apart from the behavior of the vocal folds, sounds can also be distinguished as to where in the oral cavity they are articulated.

Bilabial: sounds produced pressing the two lips together. Examples are [p], voiceless, as in *pay* or [b] and [m] voiced, as in *bay, may*.

Labiodental: are made when the lower lip is raised towards the upper front teeth. Examples are [f] *safe* (voiceless) and [v] *save* (voiced).

Dental: are produced by touching the upper front teeth with the tongue tip. Examples are [θ] *oath* (voiceless) and [ð] *clothe* (voiced).

Alveolar: sounds are made by raising the tongue tip towards the alveolar ridge. Examples are [t, s] *too, sue*, both voiceless, and [d, z, n, l, r] *do, zoo, noon, look, rook*, all voiced.

Palato-alveolar: sounds are made by raising the tongue blade towards the part of the palate just behind the alveolar ridge. Examples [ʃ, tʃ] *pressure, batch* (voiceless) and [ʒ, dʒ] *pleasure, badge* (voiced).

Palatal: are just produced further back towards the velum. The only palatal sound in English is [j] as in *yes, new* and it is voiced.

Velar: are made by raising the tongue back towards the soft palate, (velum). Examples [k] *back*, voiceless, and [g, ŋ] both voiced.

Glottal: sounds are produced when the air passes through the glottis as it is narrowed: [h] as in *high*. (Figure (14): Roach 1983:25).

3. Manners of Articulation

The manner of articulation has to do with the kind of obstruction the air meets on its way out, after it has passed the vocal folds. It may meet a complete closure (plosives), an almost complete closure (fricatives), or a smaller degree of closure (approximants), or the air might escape in more exceptional ways, around the sides of the tongue (laterals), or through the nasal cavity (nasals).

Plosives

Plosives are sounds in which there is a complete closure in the mouth, so that the air is blocked for a fraction of a second and then released with a small burst of sound, called a plosion. Plosives may be bilabial [p, b]; alveolar [t, d] or; velar [k, g]. In English a voiceless plosive that occurs at the beginning of a word and is followed by a vowel, is rather special in the sense that at the release of a plosion one can hear a slight puff of air (called aspiration) before the vowel is articulated. Hence in “pen “we hear [p^hen]. These aspirated voiceless plosives are not considered to be different sounds from unaspirated voiceless plosives from the point of view of how they function in the sound system. This difference, which can be clearly heard, is said to be phonetic.

Fricatives

Fricatives have not quite complete closure. This means that the air is not blocked at any point, and therefore there is no plosion. On the other

hand the obstruction is big enough for the air to make a noise when it passes through it. Fricatives may be labiodental [f, v]; dental [θ, ð]; alveolar [s, z]; palato-alveolar [ʃ, ʒ] or; glottal [h].

Affricates

Affricates are a combination of a plosive and a fricative. “Affricated plosives”. They begin like a plosive, with a complete closure, but instead of a plosion, they have a very slow release, moving backwards to a place where a friction can be heard (palato-alveolar). The two affricates are palato-alveolar, [tʃ] voiceless, and [dʒ] voiced.

Nasals

Nasals reproduced with a complete closure in the mouth, but as the velum is lowered the air can escape through the nasal cavity. The three nasals are all voiced, and [m] is bilabial; [n] is alveolar; and [ŋ] velar.

Laterals

Lateral in which the air escapes around the tongue sides. There is only one lateral in English, [l], it is voiced alveolar. It occurs in two versions, the so called “clear l” before vowels, “*light*”, “*long*” and the “dark l” in other cases, *milk*, and *ball*. Words like *little*, *lateral* have one of each type. “Dark l” may be written with the symbol [ɫ].

Approximants

Sounds where the tongue approaches the roof of the mouth, so that there is not enough obstruction to create any friction. Approximants are three, which are all voiced. [r], is post-alveolar, “*right*”. [j] is a palatal approximant, “*use*”, and [w] is a velar approximant, “*twin*”. [w] always has lip-rounding. [r] only occurs before vowels in BBC. Table (1) shows the classification of consonants.

| type of sound | sound |
|--|-------------------------------|
| PLOSIVE: Made by complete air flow blocking in the mouth followed by an explosion of air. | /p, t, k / / b, d, g/ |
| FRICATIVE: Made by pushing the air through a gap in the mouth, creating a friction sound. | /f, v/ /θ, ð/ /s, z//ʃ, ʒ/ |
| AFFRICATE: Plosive followed by fricative. | /tʃ/dʒ/ |
| NASAL: Made partly through the nose. | /m/ /n//ŋ/ |
| APPROXIMANT: Semi-vowel, as the air is not full blocked. | /w/, /r//j/ ,/l/ |
| GLOTTAL: Produced in the glottis. | /h/ /ʔ/ |

Table (1): English Consonants Classification:

Adapted from (All Material & Audio © Joseph Hudson 2010, 3)

The discussion on consonants above can be summarized in table (2) (Roach 2006:52). Consonants articulation is summarized in table (2).

| | Bilabial | | Labio-dental | | Dental | | Alveolar | | Post-alveolar | | Palatal | | velar | | Glottal | |
|-------------|----------|----|--------------|----|--------|----|----------|----|---------------|----|---------|----|-------|----|---------|----|
| | -v | +v | -v | +v | -v | +v | -v | +v | -v | +v | -v | +v | -v | +v | -v | +v |
| Plosive | p | b | | | | | t | d | | | | | k | g | h | |
| Fricative | | | f | v | θ | ð | s | z | ʃ | ʒ | | | | | | |
| Affricate | | | | | | | | | tʃ | dʒ | | | | | | |
| Nasal | | m | | | | | | n | | | | | | ŋ | | |
| Lateral | | | | | | | | l | | | | | | | | |
| Approximant | | w | | | | | | | | r | | j | | | | |

-v = voiceless, +v = voiced

Table (2): English consonants articulation: (Roach, P 2009 p.52)

2.8.2.2 English Vowel Sounds

(A) Monophthongs

1. A vowel sound shapes the flow of air in the mouth.
2. In spoken English there are 20 vowel sounds (shown below):
3. Sounds 1 - 12 are monophthongs: they require one mouth position.
4. Sounds 13 – 20 are diphthongs: they require two mouth positions.
5. Sounds with a colon /: / are long. Vowels are shown in table (3).

Table (3) explains vowels in English:

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 i: | 2 ɜ: | 3 ʊ | 4 e | 13 eɪ | 16 ɪə | 19 əʊ |
| 5 u: | 6 ɑ: | 7 ɒ | 8 æ | 14 aɪ | 17 eə | 20 aʊ |
| 9 ɔ: | 10 ə | 11 ʌ | 12 ɪ | 15 ɔɪ | 18 ʊə | |

/: / = long vowels

Adapted from (Joseph Hudson 2010, 4)

As said by Roach. P, (2009: 10), vowels are analyzed according to:

- Tongue position: how high in the mouth is the tongue, and which part of the tongue is the highest?
- Length: are the vowels long or short?
- Rounding: are the lips rounded or not?
- Diphthongs: are they steady, or do they change in character?

1. Tongue Position

Tongue position is described using two criteria: the height (how high is the tongue) and the part of the tongue involved in the production of the

sound. In English the tongue may either be high, i.e. when the speaker produces e.g. [i:, u:] in [bi:t, bu:t] *beat, boot*, mid, e.g. [e, ɔ:] in [bet, bɔ:t] *bet, bought*, or low, e.g. [æ, ɑ:] in [bæt, bɑ:t] *bat, bart*.

2. Length

As you may have seen, there are two types of [ɪ] sound in English placed in two different positions. However for the purpose of description, what is relevant is not the difference of position but that of the perceived length of the vowel. Thus it is said that [i:] is a long vowel and [ɪ] is a short one. The same is valid for [u:], [ʊ]. Symbols for long vowels all have a colon.

4. Rounding

Vowels may also be different from each other with respect to lip configuration. If you compare [i:] in [tʃi:z] *cheese* with [u:] in [tʃu:z] *choose*, you will see that not only is [i:] a front vowel and [u:] a back vowel, but [i:] is also unrounded where [u:] is rounded. When pronouncing [u:] your lips are rounded, but when pronouncing [i:] the corners of the mouth are much further apart.

The best way of noting the tongue position is by using the vowel diagram, including information about length and rounding in Figure (2)

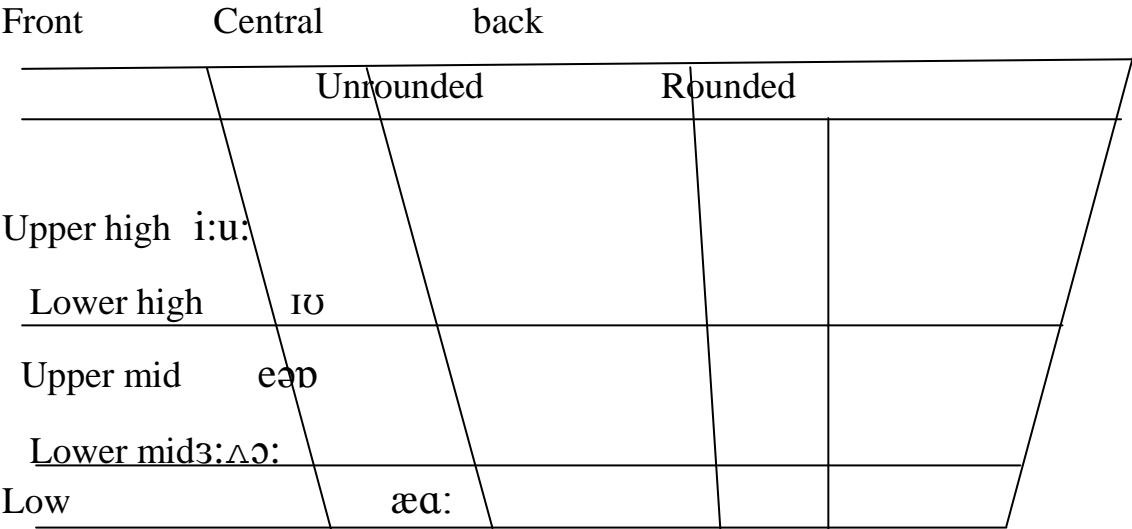


Figure (2): English monophthongs (Mike Palmquist 2010 .103)

The description of vowels production can be summarized as follow:

- [i:] long high front unrounded monophthong.
- [ɪ] short lower-high front unrounded monophthong.
- [e] short upper-mid front unrounded monophthong.
- [æ] Short low front unrounded monophthong.
- [ʌ] Short low central unrounded monophthong.
- [ɑ:] long low back unrounded monophthong.
- [ɒ] Short upper-mid back rounded monophthong.
- [ɔ:] long lower-mid back rounded monophthong.
- [ʊ] Short lower-high back rounded monophthong.
- [u:] long high back rounded monophthong.
- [ɜ:] long lower-mid central unrounded monophthong.
- [ə] Short upper-mid central unrounded monophthong.

(B) Diphthongs : Diphthongs involve a change in the configuration of the mouth. The vowel sounds in the word “*boy*” involves a change in the shape of the mouth. The vowel of “*boy*” begins with approximately the mid back vowel [ɔ] and finishes with approximately the high front lax vowel [ɪ]. The easiest way to remember them is in terms of three groups composed as in figure (3)

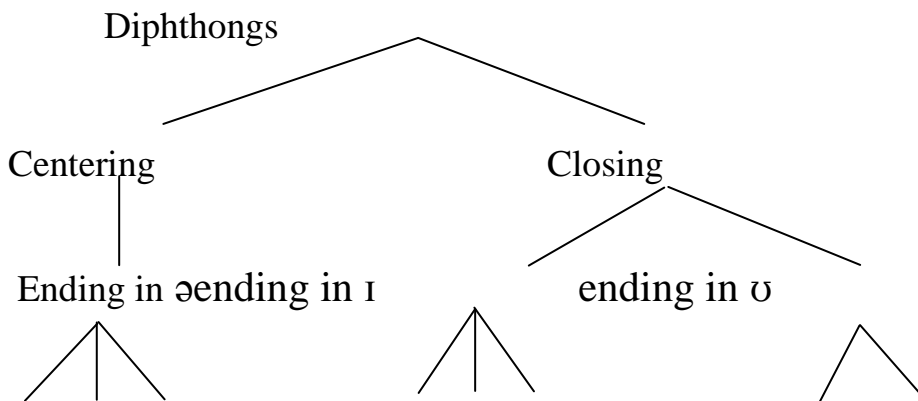


Figure (3):EnglishDiphthongs (Adapted from Roach, P. 2009 p.17)

The description of diphthongs production is summarized as follow:

[eɪ] from mid front unrounded to high front unrounded diphthong.

[aɪ]from low central unrounded to high front unrounded diphthong.

[ɔɪ]from low back rounded to high front unrounded diphthong.

[əʊ] from mid central unrounded to high back rounded diphthong.

[ɑʊ]from low central unrounded to high back rounded diphthong.

[ɪə] from high front unrounded to mid central unrounded diphthong.

[eə]from mid front unrounded to mid central unrounded diphthong.

[ʊə]from high back unrounded to mid central unrounded diphthong.

2.8.2.3 The English Syllable Structure

A syllable is defined by (Edward Finegan 2008 p.119) as:

*There is agreement that a **syllable** is a phonological unit consisting of one or more sounds and that syllables can be divided into two parts-a rhyme and an onset. The **rhyme** consists of a nucleus and any consonants following it. The **peak** is usually a vowel, although certain consonants called can also function as a nucleus.*

Figure (4) represents the structure of a syllable:

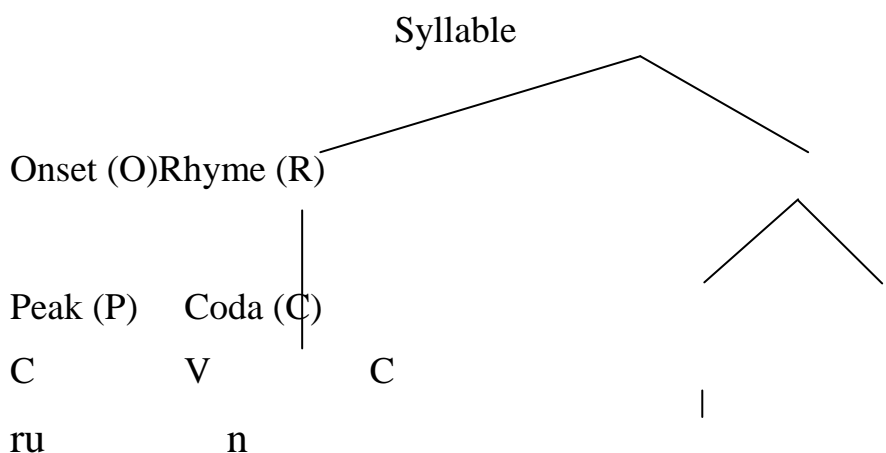


Figure (4) Explains Syllable Structure (Revel. P, 2012:119)

The only essential element of a syllable is the peak. Onset and coda are optional elements. That means that a single vowel can constitute a syllable, (minimum syllable).

However, the onset and coda can consist of more than phoneme, in which case there is a consonant cluster, e.g. guns /gʌnz /.Revel.P(2012: 120)

2.8.3 Segmental features of Arabic Language

2.8.3.1 Arabic Consonants

According to (Roach .P . 58) “A *consonant is a speech sound that represents a sound produced by a partial or complete obstruction of the air stream by a constriction of the speech organs .*”However, consonants are classified according to:

- (i) The organs articulating them.(ii) The manner of their articulation.
- (ii)The movement of the vocal cords with the articulation of any consonant, i.e., consonants can be either voiced or voiceless.

As stated above, Arabic has 28 consonants and six vowels (three short vowels and three long vowels); they appear as different allophones, depending on the preceding consonant.

Most of these have equivalent consonants in English and other languages, although a few do not.

Table (4) represents a list of phonetic symbols of Arabic consonants as transliterated in the study:

| No | Phonetic symbol | Arabic letter | Three-term label |
|----|-----------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | b | ب | Voiced bilabial plosive |
| 2 | t | ت | Voiceless denti-alveolar plosive |
| 3 | d | د | Voiced denti-alveolar plosive |
| 4 | k | ك | Voiceless velar plosive |
| 5 | ʒ | ج | Voiced palate-alveolar affricate |
| 6 | q | ق | Voiceless uvular plosive |
| 7 | l | ل | Voiced alveolar lateral |
| 8 | m | م | Voiced bilabial nasal |
| 9 | n | ن | Voiced alveolar nasal |
| 10 | f | ف | Voiceless labio-dental fricative |
| 11 | θ | ث | Voiceless inter-dental fricative |
| 12 | ð | ذ | Voiced inter-dental fricative |
| 13 | s | س | Voiceless alveolar fricative |
| 14 | ʃ | ص | Voiceless velarized alveolar fricative |
| 15 | z | ز | Voiced alveolar fricative |
| 16 | ʃ | ش | Voiceless palate-alveolar fricative |
| 17 | x | خ | Semi-Voiced uvular fricative |
| 18 | ɣ | غ | Voiced uvular fricative |
| 19 | ħ | ح | Voiceless pharyngeal fricative |
| 20 | h | ه | Voiceless glottal fricative |
| 21 | r | ر | Voiced alveolar trill |
| 22 | ç | ع | Voiced pharyngeal frictionless continuant |
| 23 | w | و | Voiced palatal semi-vowel |
| 24 | j | ي | Voiced labio-velar semi-vowel |
| 25 | t̪ | ط | Voiceless velarized denti alveolar plosive |
| 26 | d̪ | ض | Voiced velarized denti-alveolar plosive |
| 27 | ð̪ | ظ | Voiced velarized alveolar fricative |
| 28 | ʔ | أ | Voiceless epiglottal plosive |

**Table (4): list of Arabic consonants phonetic symbols
Thelwall and Sa'addedin (2003: 51-54)**

There are many varieties of Arabic, both within and between countries and some of these are not mutually intelligible. However, most speakers are familiar with the pronunciation of the standard dialect, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) as shown in table (5)

Table (5) displays consonants as stated by (Ravel, P 2012:270):

| | Bilabial | Labio-dental | Dental | Alveolar | Post-alveolar | Palatal | Velar | Uvular | Pharyngeal | glottal |
|---------------------|----------|--------------|--------|----------|---------------|---------|-------|--------|------------|---------|
| Plosive | b | | t d | | | | k g | ق q | | ʔ |
| Nasal | m | | N | | | | | | | |
| Trill | | | R | | | | | | | |
| Tap | | | R | | | | | | | |
| Fricative | | f | θ ð | s z | ʃ | | | خ ح ڡ | ħ ʕ ʕ | h |
| Affricate | | | | | | | | | | |
| Approximant | w | | | | | j | | | | |
| Lateral approximant | | | L | | | | | | | |

Table (5): Arabic Consonant chart (Ravel,P,2012:270)

(A) [p] vs. [b] –Arabic speakers tend to produce [p] with no aspiration so it may sound [b],for example “bebsi” for “pepsi”

(B) No affricates [dʒ, tʃ] in Arabic language- [ʃ] maybe substituted for [tʃ] for example (“ships” rather than “chips”) and[ʒ] as in “pleasure”, may be substituted for [dʒ], “joke”.

(C) No dental fricatives [θ, ð] – students may use either [t] or [s] for [θ] and [d] or [z] for [ð].

(D) [r] – Arabic learners will tend to use their native trilled or rolled [r] when speaking English.

(E) [l] -in Arabic is very “clear” and made with the tip of the tongue.

2.8.3.2 Arabic Vowels

Comparing with Arabic vowel inventory, the Received Pronunciation (RP) English vowel system is complex. It consists of twenty vowel phonemes: twelve monophthongs and eight diphthongs. The RP vowel system becomes more complicated with durational variation, especially due to a tense vs. lax opposition in the monophthongs.

As (Revel,P2012. 270) has stated, *“There are more vowels in English than in Arabic so learners will tend to substitute their own smaller number of vowels for English vowels”*.

Figure (5) illustrates the Arabic vowel chart.

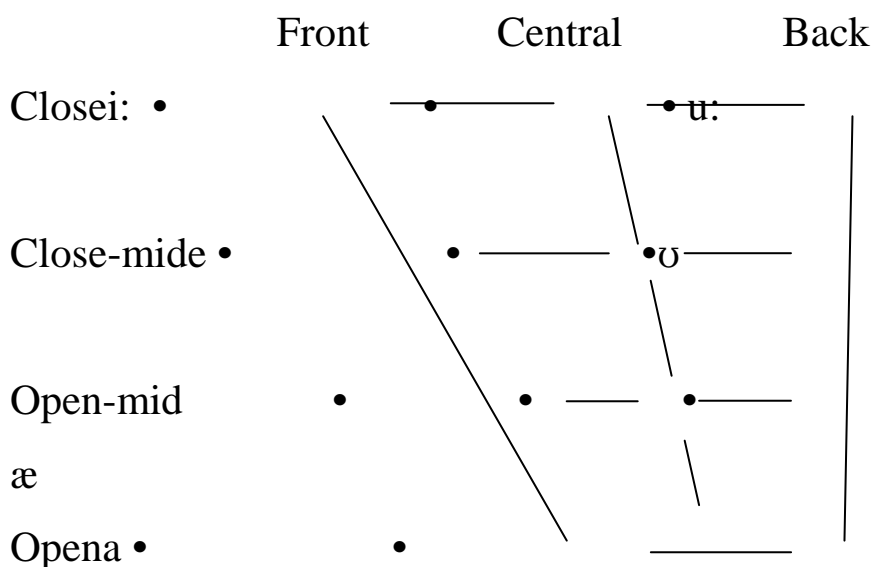


Figure (5)(Adapted from Maddieson 1984 by Pamela 2012: 271)

There are two diphthongs in Arabic language. In addition, schwa does occur (e.g. in “Mohammed”) but is not so frequent or varied as in English.

Table (6) represents the list of phonetic symbols of the Arabic vowels:

| No | Phonetic symbol | Label |
|----|-----------------|--|
| 1 | ɪ | Front unrounded vowel between close and half-close (short) |
| 2 | i: | Front close unrounded vowel (long) |
| 3 | ə | Front open unrounded vowel (short) |
| 4 | a | Front open unrounded vowel (long) |
| 5 | ʊ | Back rounded vowel between close and half close (short) |
| 6 | u: | Back close rounded vowel (long) |
| 7 | aw | Combination of [æ] and [ʊ] (Diphthong) |
| 8 | ay | Combination of [æ] and [ɪ] (Diphthong) |

Table (6): Phonetic symbols of the Arabic vowels

Thelwall and Sa'addedin (2003: 51)

The Arabic vowels with examples:

[ɪ] / min/ 'from' من

[i:] / fiil/ 'elephant' فيل

[A] / Šabb/ 'youngman' شاب

[aa] / baab/ 'door' باب

[ʊ] / kun/ 'be' كن

[u:] / hu:t/ 'whale' حوت

ay / kay/ 'in order to' كي

aw / ?aw/ 'or' او

2.8.3.3 Arabic Syllable Structures

A comparison of Arabic and English syllable structures might facilitate the task of finding out why Arabic speakers sometimes have stress shift or vowel insertion as repair strategies. “English and Arabic are two languages that differ greatly in the range of syllable structure patterns they make use of”, (Odisho, 1979, p. 205). He also adds “Thus great interference is expected when English assumes the status of the target language for the native speakers of Arabic”.

In their cross-sectional study of 3 Arabic dialects (Moroccan, Tunisian and Lebanese) Hamdi, Ghazali and Barkat (2005, 22-46) conclude that “*In MSA, consonant clusters are not permitted in syllable initial position*”. Moreover, they claimed that “*There are three underlying syllables in MSA: CV, CVC and CVV and two syllables CVVC and CVCC that appear only in surface phonetic forms such as at pause or following other phonological processes*”. From that we notice that initial clusters do not exist in (MSA).

| Syllable | Orthographical | Phonemic |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <u>Pattern</u> | <u>Transcription</u> | <u>Transcription</u> |
| CVV | في | fii |
| CVC | سن | sin |
| CVVCVC | راهب | ræhɪb |
| CVVC | باب | bæb |
| CVCC | نهر | nəhr |

In English CCVC and CCCVC syllable structures exist as in “*stand*” and “*splendid*”. Watson (2002, :56) supports the above stating that “Most eastern Arabic dialects exhibit a fairly limited range of syllable types. Three basic syllables are attested in Arabic CV, CVV, and

CVC”. What Watson mentions about the basic syllables is in accordance with Hamdi, Ghazali and Barkat’s study. This might explain why some native speakers of Arabic may have problems with final consonant clusters, while others may not.

Most English syllables consist of more than one vowel. Consonant clusters refers to as defined by Revell, P (2012, 121) “a *sequence of consonants at the beginning or end of a syllable.*” The construction of a syllable is always organized around a vowel which is the **peak**, i.e. the indispensable element of the syllable. What comes before the peak is called **onset** and what follows it is called **coda**. Neither onset nor coda is necessary. They occur separately, or together with the peak. The possible sequences of sounds in a syllable differ from language to language and are limited within each language. If you examine the phrase below, you’ll notice that English syllables allow several patterns of consonants (C) and vowels (V). (Dots are used to separate syllables within a word.) English consonant clusters are two, three, or more consonants. Consonant clusters may occur at the beginning of a word (an initial consonant cluster), at the end of a word (a final consonant cluster). For example, in English: initial cluster /spl-/in/splə/ “splash”; final cluster /-st/ in /test/. English permits consonant clusters at the beginning and end of syllables. (Roach, 2004:71-76). However, in Arabic, consonant clusters can occur only at the end of syllables and that Arabic does not permit consonant clusters at the beginning of syllables. In a previous; caption /in ə prɪvɪəs kæpʃən /Hence, Arabic has three consonant clusters while English has ten (See Al-Khawali, 1993:60-61). But Balasurbarmain,(2000:117) stressed that initial consonant cluster in English can be made up of either two or three consonants (as in “spleen” and “steam”) and final consonant clusters can be made up of either two ,three , or four consonants (as in “texts”).

Actually, there are two types of clusters in initial and final consonant clusters. The former refers to the sequence of two or three consonants that occur at the beginning of a word. While the latter refers to the sequence of two or more consonants that occur at the end of a word. VC, V, CCV, CV, VC, and CVC. You can see that English permits several syllable types: VC, V, CCV, CV, and CVC. Some other permissible types can be seen in words of one syllable like these: past /pæst/ CVCC queen /kwɪn/ CCVC turned /tɜ:nd/ CVCCC splints /splɪnts/ CCCVCCC. Within a multisyllabic English word (e.g., at the end of a syllable that is not word final), not so many coda types are permitted. Nor does every language allow so wide a variety of syllable types. Edward Finegan (2008, p.120) has stated that *“The preferred syllable type among the world’s languages is a single consonant followed by a single vowel: CV. Other common types are CVC and a simple V.”*

Moreover, Revell.P (2012: 120) added that *“In English, clusters of three consonants /str/, /spl/, /kts/, /lps/ are common. Four consonants clusters for example /ksts/ in texts and /mpts/ in attempts are possible in the in the coda but rare.”*The maximum phonological structure of the English syllable is illustrated in table (7)

| Pre-initial | Initial | Post-initial | | Per-final | Final | Post- final 1 | Post-final 2 |
|-------------|---------|--------------|------|-----------|-------|---------------|--------------|
| C | C | C | V | C | C | C | C |
| Onset | | | Peak | Coda | | | |

Table (7): Maximum syllable structure in English: (Revell, P. 2012.p.120)

However, the complexity of English clusters can pose considerable pronunciation problem L2 learners and typically they deal with them in one of two ways as pointed out by (Ibid):

- (i) Vowel insertion: involves adding an additional vowel to ease a difficult articulation. It can either be between two consonants (known as ‘epenthesis’ / e'penθəsis/) or after a final consonant (known as ‘paragoge’/pærə'gəʊdʒɪ/).
- (ii) Consonant deletion: involves deleting a final consonant in the final clusters, e.g. ‘hold’; becomes / həʊl /.

2.8.3 Supra-segmental features of English Language

2.8.3.1 English Stress

Stress is important in individual words, in phrases and in sentences. By shifting it around in a phrase or a sentence, the emphasis or meaning can change. (Yule, G 2010:30) has defined stress as:

The prominence of a stressed syllable over an unstressed one may be due to a number of factors. These may include (a) loudness (stressed syllables are louder than unstressed syllables), (b) duration (stressed syllables are longer than unstressed syllables), and (c) pitch (stressed syllables are produced with higher pitch than unstressed syllables).

(Konzorcium, B. 2006) has added that word stress can be taught when presenting a new word and at the practice stage, clapping, tapping can be used or students can be asked to underline the stressed syllable.

English speakers tend to store vocabulary items according to their stress patterns. Therefore a stress error is particularly damaging to communication. Brown (1990, 51) puts it this way:

The stress pattern of a polysyllabic word is a very important identifying feature of the word. We store words under stress patterns and we find it difficult to interpret an utterance in which a word is pronounced with the wrong stress pattern – we begin to “look up” possible words under this wrong stress pattern.

Gilbert, Judy B. (2008, 3) has stated that only a little imagination is needed to realize that the failure to hear and produce stress patterns accurately could cause confusion between words such as those in the following pairs: dessert/desert foreign/for rain his story/history. It might seem that context would clarify any confusion over words like these, but in fact stress errors rarely exist in isolation from other pronunciation or grammatical problems. The combination of stress errors with other types of errors can seriously disrupt communication. For example, the following instance of confusion actually occurred during an English language learning class in the workplace, when a student took the teacher aside and asked for private advice.

Although good will and patient attempts to clarify may often help speakers and listeners overcome this sort of disruption, wrong stress is an added burden for listeners and can, in many cases, lead to conversational breakdown. Unfortunately, learners tend to ignore stress patterns when they learn vocabulary. Not only can this lead to pronunciation problems, as in the example above, but it can also lead to problems with comprehension. After all, if learners have failed to learn the stress pattern for a new word, they may also fail to recognize that word when it occurs in spoken form.

Brown (1977, 52) makes this observation: *“From the point of view of the comprehension of spoken English, the ability to identify stressed syllables and make intelligent guesses about the content of the message*

from this information is absolutely essential.” If there is only time to teach awareness of the core system and practice these vital rhythmic and melodic cues, as well as certain critical sounds (e.g., the grammar cues at the end of words), students will have achieved a great deal of communicative competence. But if these prosodic cues are not taught, then efforts at achieving communicative competence by drilling individual sounds will prove frustrating. After all, practicing pronunciation by focusing only on individual sounds is like using only part of the language. As one teacher trainee put it after training course, “Practicing pronunciation without prosody is like teaching ballroom dancing, only the students must stand still, practice without a partner, and without music.”

Stress in English is unpredictable .There is no way of foretelling where the different stress levels will occur in English speech .There is some disagreement among linguists as to the number of relative stress phonemes in English . Some contend that there are three stress levels according to (Roach, P.2009:86) .(In order of loudness) : (i) Primary stress (ii) Secondary stress (iii)Tertiary stress (iv) Weak stress (norecognizable prominence)

2.8.3.2 English Intonation

It is important for the teachers to draw their students’ attention to the way native speakers use changes in pitch to convey meaning, to reflect the thematic structure of what they are saying and how to convey mood.According to, (Gimson's, 2004, p: 89) "*Intonation is the variations which take place in the pitch of the voice in connecting speech, i.e., the variation in pitch of the musical note produced by the variation of the vocal cords*" Elnaji, eltayeb (2007: 131) has stated in his study that, in English, four relative but significant levels (pitch phonemes) can be

found which serve as level as the basic building blocks for intonation contours. There four levels may, for convenience , be labeled *extra high*, *high* , *mid*, and *low*, respectively , and may be numbered from one to four beginning with the one which is [low] ; a fall from high to low would be a change from pitch level [three] to pitch level [one] . Whereas both English and Arabic have almost the same contours, there are normally more primary contours in an Arabic utterance than in an English utterance.

This feature of Arabic stress and intonation makes Arab students tend to pronounce English with a staccato beat. In the second place, whereas word order and grammatical words are the major signal for questions in English, intonation is the major signal for questions in Colloquial Arabic, although this is not true of Literary Arabic. This distributional feature of Arabic intonation makes Arab students tend to over-use rising international contours in English, particularly in questions.

A very good practice can be for students to be asked to utter the word ‘yes’ in many different ways. Students are expected to draw arrows under the utterances in English so that they can recognize the various intonation patterns.

There are several ways to teach intonation: students are expected to make dialogues without words or many teachers use arrows on the board and arm movements which draw patterns in the air to demonstrate intonation. Exaggeration can also be amusing.

2.8.4 Supra-segmental features of Arabic Language

2.8.4.1 Arabic Stress

In Arabic there are three word stress levels:(in order of loudness)

a. Primary stress b. Secondary stress

c. Weak stress (no recognizable prominence)

The occurrence of these three stress levels is predictable; that is, one can foretell where the different stress levels will occur in Arabic words. The predictability of stress levels is patterned as follows:

(A) Short Syllables

1. If a word consists of one short syllable, it takes a primary stress.

Example: [min] 'from'

2. If a word consists of two or three short syllables, the first syllable takes a primary stress and the rest take weak stresses.

Example: two syllables: [ʔ ænæ] 'I'

Three syllables: [[ʔ æbædæn] 'not at all'

(B) Long Syllables:

3. If a word contains one long syllable, it takes a primary stress.

4. If a word contains two or three long syllables, the last syllable takes a primary stress and the rest take secondary stresses .

Example: Two syllables:[Tawuus] 'peacock'

Three syllables:[siʒʒædææt] 'carpets'

(C) Combinations of Long and short Syllables

5. If a word contains two or three syllables, the last long syllable takes a primary stress. Any other long syllable takes a secondary stress and all short syllables take weak stresses.

Example: [khæætib] 'writer'; [hææwæIæ] 'he tried'

[Khitææb] 'book';[bæqææyæ] 'remains'

6. If a word contains four syllables, the primary stress falls on the second syllable, unless the third or fourth syllable is long. Any other longer syllables take weak stresses.

Example: [mædræsætun] 'school'

[ʔ ækæluuhæ] 'They ate it'

7. If a word contains five syllables, the primary stress falls on the third syllable, unless the fourth or fifth syllable is long . Any other long syllable in the word takes secondary stress, and any other short syllable takes a weak stress.

Example: [ʔ ihtimææmuhu] ‘ his interest’

[mædræsætunæ] ‘Ourschool’

2.8.4.2 Arabic Intonation

According to (Revell. P .p.271):

Accentuation works in a similar way in Arabic English with the content word being stressed and function word unstressed. However, emphasis is usually done through the word order than the contrastive stress. Pitch movement may be within a smaller range but is not generally problematic for language learners.

Arabic has four relative phonemic pitch levels. Here, as in English, it is the combination of these levels into glides (contours) that adds meaning to an utterance. A glide occurs when, in the stream of speech, the speaker moves from one pitch level to another. This pitch glide is always accompanied by a primary stress and is called a ' primary contour'. One would normally expect to find more primary contours in an Arabic utterance than in an English utterance of comparable length because of the greater abundance of primary stresses in Arabic utterances.

2.9RP and BBC pronunciation

According to Roach, P (2009:3), Received Pronunciation is defined as “*the accent that we concentrate on and use as our model is the one that is most often recommended for foreign learners studying British English. It has for a long time been identified by the name **Received***

Pronunciation (usually abbreviated to its initials, **RP**),” Moreover, Roach (2009) has added that this name is old-fashioned and misleading: the use of the word "received" to mean "accepted" or "approved" is nowadays very rare, and the word if used in that sense seems to imply that other accents would *not* be acceptable or approved of. Since it is most familiar as the accent used by most announcers and newsreaders on BBC and British independent television broadcasting channels, a preferable name is **BBC pronunciation**. This should not be taken to mean that the BBC itself imposes an "official" accent - individual broadcasters all have their own personal characteristics, and an increasing number of broadcasters with Scottish, Welsh and Irish accents are employed. However, the accent described here is typical of broadcasters with an English accent, and there is a useful degree of consistency in the broadcast speech of these speakers.

2.9.1 Phonetic Transcription

Phonetic transcriptions are especially useful for language like English because of the inconsistent spelling. For instance, in English, the sound /i:/ can be represented as e (be), ea (dream), ee (seen), ie (believe), ei (receive), etc (Collins & Mees, 2009: 15). In order to understand how to do a phonetic transcription, one also needs to understand the difference between phonetic and phonemic transcription. We can distinguish between the two by remembering that :*A phonetic transcription can indicate minute details of the articulation of any particular sound by the use of differently shaped symbols, or by adding little marks* (known as diacritics) to a symbol (Collins & Mees, 2009: 16). Whereas, a phonemic transcription shows only the phoneme contrasts and does not tell us precisely what the realizations of the phoneme are. (Collins & Mees, 2009: 16). We can see through these definitions, that to apply a phonemic

transcription the reader must have a good deal of knowledge of the language concerned, since phonemic transcription eliminates the redundant detail and retains only the information essential to meaning. Phonemic transcription is likely to be very beneficial for learners who are accustomed to a close phoneme-grapheme correspondence (or shallow orthography) in their native language when they want to learn a language with more complicated grapheme-to phoneme rules (or deep orthography). Thus a good example can be provided by Arab learning English. Arabic language orthography follows quite closely the phonemic principle with some minor exceptions. For more support for the complicity of the phonetic transcription, (Zsiga, E.2010 p.17) added that “*English is a language uses an alphabet in which the correspondence between sounds and letter may be less straightforward or to be a large extent arbitrary.*” Therefore the relationship between the spelling and pronunciation of English is not straightforward for Arab learners of English.

2.10 Pronunciation ProblemsAreas

There are four major areas of pronunciation: the area of individual sounds; word stress; intonation and connected speech. If intelligibility is the goal of teaching pronunciation, speakers are to get their message across. For example, [f] and [v] may not cause a lack of intelligibility if they are confused, but being very difficult sounds for Sudanese learners they are often mixed with [s], and [θ], so mixing the words ‘thank’ and ‘sank’ can lead to misunderstanding. Stressing words and phrases correctly is vital if emphasis is to be given to the important parts of messages and if words are to be understood correctly. Intonation – the ability to vary the pitch and tune of speech – is also an important meaning carrier. Connected speech will make the speech act fluent and intelligible as a whole. In the following parts of this chapter the problems of each

area will be defined and certain recipes of how to teach pronunciation in the given area will be provided.

2.10.1 Segmental Problems

Students of English have great difficulty hearing pronunciation features which we want them to reproduce. Speakers of different first languages have problems with different sounds, for example, they cannot distinguish between two sounds or they do not have certain sounds in their mother tongue. There are two ways of dealing with this problem: we can show students how sounds are made through demonstration, diagrams or explanation.

The other way of presenting its pronunciation is to draw the sounds to their attention every time they appear on a cassette or in the conversation. This is the way how we can train the students' ears. Moreover, teachers can use the minimal pair system through which students can recognize the difference between two similar sounds. Contrasting two sounds which are very similar and often confused is a popular way of getting students to concentrate on specific aspects of pronunciation. It is possible to work on sounds of English without using any phonetic symbols. He continued that, for many students – by problems of sound and spelling correspondence -it may make sense to be aware of the different phonemes, and the clearest way of promoting this awareness is to introduce the various symbols. There are other reasons for using phonetic symbols too. Dictionaries give the pronunciation of words in phonetic symbols. Students are usually only asked to recognize rather than produce the different symbols and these symbols are introduced gradually rather than all at once. So, according to most experts on methodology, the knowledge of phonetic symbols is of benefit to students.

Teachers are expected to present phonetic symbols simultaneously with presenting the meaning of the new word. So as to identify these symbols, students are expected to listen to cassette recordings and they are expected to practice pronunciation in choral repetition first and then individually. (Yates, L & Zielinski, B 2009. p.112) have outlined in their study that, when they considered the particular pronunciation difficulties experienced by learners from five different languages backgrounds: Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, Thai and Korean. Based on the findings from their study, these difficulties are (i) *consonants and vowels difficulty*, (ii) *Challenging consonant clusters* (iii) *stress pattern*.

2. 10.2.Supra-segmental Problems

Good pronunciation does not just mean saying individual words or individual sounds correctly. The sounds of words change when they come into contact with each other. We have to draw students' attention to it while teaching pronunciation. Fluency is helped by having students say phrases and sentences as quickly as possible, starting slowly and then speeding up. Getting students to perform dialogues and extracts taken from a drama or a short story will also make them aware of speaking customs and help them to improve their fluency. (Harmer 2003: 198) When students are reading a text they can recognize certain words linking phrases in the text (e.g. cover it up – Rita).

2.11 Investigating L2 Errors

There are two main causes of errors. The first is Interlingual, i.e. interference from L1, the second is Intralingual i.e. the difficulty comes from the second language itself . (Corder 1974.) claims that:

By analyzing errors made by language learners makes it possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching. Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors made in the target language. He further contends that these errors can be regarded as a device the learner uses in order to learn.

(Gass and Selinker 2008.p.37) define errors as “*red flags* “*that provide evidence of the learner’s knowledge of the foreign language.*” According to (Ancker 2000.p.21), errors occur for many reasons, for example, interference from the native language; overgeneralization; incomplete knowledge of the target language and the complexity of the target language itself.

The term “interlanguage” (IL) was introduced by the American linguist (Selinker 1972.p.212) to refer to the (SL) learner’s grammatical system. He described “interlanguage” as a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner’s attempted production of a (TL) (Selinker, 1972.p. 214

(IL) theory is important for some reasons which are stated here: **First**, it looks at the (L2) learner as an active participant because s/he has the ability to form rules from the data he/she might encounter. This leads to saying that the study of (IL) is universal and systematic by nature, which makes it similar to the innateness theory. **Second**, (IL) theory study might help in determining what a (FL) learner knows at a particular point in time and what s/he should be taught. **Third**, (IL) theory helps in understanding the (L2) learners' problems better and in providing timely help to such learners; hence, they can achieve competence in their (TL). **Fourth**, (IL) theory has also brought about significant changes in the teaching methodology, with communicative teaching making its way into the teaching system.

As learners' errors are not always considered undesirable, they can be devices foreign language (FL) learners use to test their hypotheses. Selinker's Interlanguage (1972:35) proposes the existence of "*a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner's attempted production of a target language norm*".

More so, L2 learning involves a gradual development or progression from the learners' L1/ mother tongue (MT)/native language (NT) towards the FL/ target language (TL). During the language learning process, the learner naturally builds up a new language which does not refer either to his/her L1 or L2. It is a separate language having its own linguistic system. This new separate linguistic system is known as "*Interlanguage (IL)*".

The term 'Interlanguage' was first introduced by Selinker (1972 & 1974) who referred it to as (L2) systematic knowledge independent of both L1 and L2. Selinker (1972:40) considers (IL) as "*a dialect whose rules share characteristics of two social dialects of languages, whether these languages themselves share rules or not*" (Selinker, 1972 cited in Corder, 1981:17), the notion of (IL) is illustrated in Figure (6)

Inter-Language

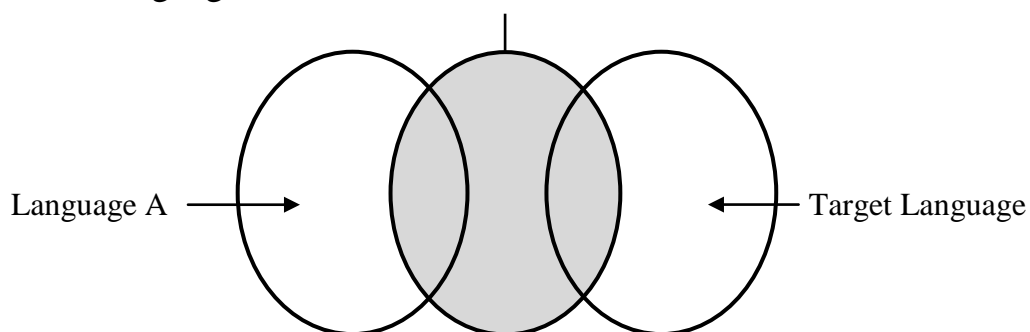


Figure (6): The notion of the IL. (Corder, 1981:17). In this diagram, Language A represents the learner's L1.

Learner errors are “*windows into the language learner’s mind*” (Saville-Troike 2006: 39), since they provide evidence for the system of language which a learner is using at any particular point in the course of L2 development and the strategies or procedures the learner is using in his “discovery of the language”. Errors “*tell the teacher what needs to be taught, tell the researcher how learning proceeds, and are a means whereby learners test their hypotheses about the second language*” (James 1998: 12).

2.11.1 Causes of Errors

There are many factors affecting the learners’ pronunciation. According to Kenworthy (1987:4-9), “*factors such as the native language, the age, amount of exposure, phonetic ability, attitude and identity, motivation and concern for good pronunciation have great influence on pronunciation learning.*”

Perhaps, one of the first and most important studies conducted in the field of Error Analysis (EA) was the one done by (Richards 1971). He distinguished three sources of errors:

1. Interference errors: errors resulting from the use of elements from one language while speaking/writing another,
2. Intralingual errors: errors reflecting general characteristics of the rule learning such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply, and
3. Developmental errors: errors occurring when learners attempt to build up hypothesis about the target language on the basis of limited experiences.

2.11.2 Errors and Mistakes

In order to investigate learners’ errors from a proper scope, it is crucial to make a distinction between “mistake” and “error”. Errors are

made when learners of L2 produce incorrect language because they do not know the correct form, while mistakes are made when learners produce incorrect language although they know the correct form. Learners can correct their own mistakes, but by definition, they cannot correct errors. According to (Brown 2000.p 133), a “mistake” refers to a performance error in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. While an “error” is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker and that reflects the interlanguage competence of the learner. The terms ‘errors’ and ‘mistakes’ according to the most dictionaries are synonymous, but in error analysis, it is convenient to reserve the term ‘mistake’ for something rather different. (Corder 1967:25) says:

It will be useful to refer to errors of performance ‘mistakes’ which is not significant to the language learning process, and reverse the term ‘error’ for systematic errors of the learner from which his knowledge of the language to date can be reconstructed.

2.12Pronunciation Problem Areas in Arabic

Pronunciation issues encountered by speakers from Arabic language background are presented in an order that reflects the frequency with which different pronunciation difficulties were associated with communication breakdown for these learners. These issues are pointed out by (Yates, L and Zielinski, B 2009.p, 115):

- (i) Consonants and consonant clusters at the ends of words.
- (ii) Challenging consonants.
- (iii) Vowels.
- (iv) Stress patterns.

2.12.1 Consonants Challenging

According to (Yates L and Zielinski, B 2009 .p.116), Arabic speakers might find consonants difficulties include:

- The pronunciation of /θ/ and /ð/: although some speakers of Arabic might be able to pronounce these consonants, others will find them challenging because they do not exist in some dialects. So they might say /s/ or /t/ instead of /θ/, and /z/ or /d/ instead of /ð/. This means the word ‘*thing*’ might sound like ‘*sing*’ or ‘*ting*’, and the word ‘*this*’ might sound like ‘*ziss*’ or ‘*diss*’.

- The distinction between /p/ and /b/, Arabic speakers can actually pronounce both /p/ and /b/ but do not hear them as different consonants because in Arabic /p/ is a variation of /b/. So although /p/ might occur in some places (e.g., before a voiceless consonant), it does not occur at the beginnings of words. This means that when speaking English their use of /p/ and /b/ might seem inconsistent, and for example, the word ‘*pubs*’ might sound like ‘*bups*’.

- The pronunciation of /r/: The phoneme /r/ is pronounced differently in Arabic and English. The Arabic /r/ is pronounced by vibrating the tongue against the roof of the mouth and is commonly called a ‘rolled R’. In contrast, when pronouncing /r/ in English it is important to have the tongue near to the roof of the mouth but not touching it.

2.12.2 Vowels Challenging

(Yates L and Zielinski, B 2009 p. 117) have stated that the mechanics accurate vowel sounds are harder to learn than consonants probably because the tongue has no touching points to anchor them. According to (Roach. 2009. P.13) “*Vowels are pronounced with the various parts of the tongue moving in open space, so to speak. On the*

other hand, with consonants, parts of the tongue do consistently touch somewhere.”

Saying English vowels consistently can be difficult for Arabic speakers, and the same vowel might be pronounced differently in different words by the same speaker. Also, dialect differences might mean that two different Arabic speakers might have different ways of pronouncing a particular English vowel. Both long vowels, such as [ɜ:] (as in *bird*) and short vowels, such as [e] (as in *pen*) can be challenging, and diphthongs might also be difficult. Arabic speakers might also have difficulty making the distinction between [æ] and [e], so *man* and *men* would sound the same. The distinction between [i:] (as in *sheep*) and [ɪ] (as in *ship*) might also be difficult. Why? In English there are 20 distinct vowels (12 single vowels and 8 diphthongs) while in Standard Arabic there are only three, *Kassra*, [i], *Damma*, [u], and *Fattha*, [a]. These vowels can combine with each other to form different two-vowel combinations. The combination can be of two identical vowels (resulting in a long version of each of the vowels), or of two different vowels (resulting in a range of diphthongs). English vowels are therefore very challenging for Arabic speakers. Corder (1973) mentioned that a learner's errors of phonemes are significant because they provide evidence of how phonemes of the language study are learned by foreign speakers, and speakers of different dialects might have different difficulties. Very few Arabic vowels or diphthongs have English equivalents.

In addition, short vowels are not important to meaning in spoken Arabic (and, in fact, are not consistently noted in writing), so Arabic speakers might find it difficult to give them the importance they require in English and may use them interchangeably.

2.12.3 Consonants clustering challenge

When pronouncing the ends of words, Arabic speakers might:

- Add an extra vowel after a final consonant or between consonants in a cluster. This changes the stress pattern which can be very confusing. For example, the word *book* might sound like *booker*, and the word *involved* might sound like *involve it*.
- Use a consonant that is easier to pronounce. For example, /s/ might be substituted for /θ/ at the end of the word *faith*, which would result in a word, which sounds like *face*.
- Reduce a consonant cluster: For example, the word *license* might be pronounced with /n/ rather than /ns/ at the end.
- Devoice or not pronounce the final consonant:

Some Arabic speakers might have this feature in their pronunciation. For example, the word “*deadline*” might sound as if it ends with a vowel. Why? As reviewed by (Yates. L and Zielinski. B 2009, 115), “*In Arabic a range of different consonants occur at the ends of words, and although consonant clusters can occur in this position, they consist of only two consonants.*” There are therefore many consonant clusters in English that do not occur in Arabic, and if they occur at the end of a word, across a word boundary in connected speech, a vowel will be pronounced between them. This analysis focused on the extent to which different features were associated with communication breakdown, and therefore is not an exhaustive list of pronunciation issues. For all Arabic speakers of more than two consonants can never occur at the end of a word or across a word boundary, so where this occurs in English, an Arabic speaker may insert a vowel between the second and third consonant to break up the cluster.

2.12.4 Word Stress challenging

(Yates L and Zielinski, B 2009.p.120) explained that:

Arabic speakers find English stress patterns challenging. They might stress the wrong syllable in an individual word or the wrong word in a group of words. They might also delete a syllable from a group of words in connected speech. Why? Arabic words have stress patterns, and syllables that are stressed are similar to stressed syllables in English, that is, they are longer, louder, and have a higher pitch. However, the rules that determine which syllable is stressed are different to those in English. In Arabic, only one of the last three syllables in a word can be stressed. Which syllable depends on the overall pattern of the syllables in the word, and whether they contain long or short vowels, or end in a consonant. In addition, different dialects of Arabic have different stress patterns in words, so there might be some variation among Arabic speakers in their stress patterns in English words. In connected speech in Arabic more words are stressed, and unstressed syllables are not reduced to the same extent as they are in English. So Arabic speakers might sound as if they are stressing the wrong words or giving too much stress to function words. In Arabic there are also rules that govern what patterns of vowels and consonants may occur together which sometimes mean that particular vowels are not pronounced at all in individual words or in connected speech, depending on where they occur in a string of sounds. For example, a short vowel (V) would not be pronounced at all if it was surrounded by any vowels (V) and consonants (C) in a pattern like VCVCV. Similarly, if a word ending with a vowel is followed by a word beginning with the same vowel, one of the vowels will be deleted. In both of these examples, it would sound to English ears as if a syllable had been deleted and could be quite confusing. What is more, because these rules

govern patterns not only within one word but across word boundaries in connected speech; these vowels might be deleted in some combinations of words and not in others.

2.12.5 Intonation Challenging

According to (Revell.P.2012 p. 270), Intonation works in the same way in Arabic and English with the content words being stressed and the function words unstressed. However, emphasis is usually done through word order rather than contrastive stress. Pitch movement may be within a smaller range but it is not generally problematic for language learners.

2.13 Factors that Influence Learning English Pronunciation

Many linguists and researchers on (S/FLA) concluded that the English pronunciation problems among speakers of other languages are the same but it is according to each language background. Arabic language is among them, so here we are going to see some of the factors that affect learning second/foreign language learning (S/FL) in general and English pronunciation in particular.

Many studies in the field of (S/FLA) discussed the factors that hinder achieving native-like pronunciation among foreign languages learners in general and among Arab learners in particular (O'Connor, 2003; Yule, 2003). Researchers and linguists have pointed some factors such as the differences of the sound system between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2), the inconsistency of some sounds in English language, the mother tongue interference and the influence of spelling on pronunciation. These factors were discussed separately as follows:

2.13.1 Mother Tongue Interference

Several works have been conducted on the influence of L1 in learning English language. (Wilkins 1972.p.199) observes that:

When learning a foreign language an individual already knows his mother tongue, and it is this which he attempts to transfer. The transfer may prove to be justified because the structure of the two languages is similar- in that case we get 'positive transfer' or 'facilitation' - or it may prove unjustified because the structure of the two languages are different in that case we get 'negative transfer' - or interference.

Second language learners appear to accumulate structural entities of the target language but demonstrate difficulty in organizing this knowledge into appropriate, coherent structures. There appears to be a significant gap between the accumulation and the organization of the knowledge. This then raises a critical question - what kinds of language do second language learners produce in speaking and writing? When writing or speaking the target language (L2), second language learners tend to rely on their native language (L1) structures to produce a response. If the structures of the two languages are distinctly different, then one could expect a relatively high frequency of errors to occur in L2, thus indicating an interference of L1 on L2. Dulay et al (1982.p 25) define interference as *"the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language"*

Moreover, it was claimed that the sound pattern of the learner's first language is transferred into that the second language and is likely to cause foreign accents. The mispronunciations of words by nonnative speakers reflect the influence of the sounds, rules, stress, and intonation of their native language. The researchers concluded that the transfer from

the learners' native language influenced their production of English-like stress alternation across a phrase. In this respect, observations have pointed out that the sound system of the native language can influence the learners' pronunciation of a target language in at least three ways. First, when there is a sound in the target language which is absent from the learners' native sound inventory, or vice versa, learners may not be able to produce or even perceive the sound(s).

Second, when the rules of combining sounds into words (i.e. phonotactic constraints/rules) are different in the learners' mother tongue from those of the target language, they cause problems for learners because these rules are language specific as they vary from one language to another. Thirdly, since the rhythm and melody of a language determine its patterns of stress and intonation, learners may transfer these patterns into the target language.

2.13.2 Little Amount of Exposure to the Target Language

According to language learning theories such as Krashen's (1982), learners acquire language mainly from the input they receive and they require large amounts of 'comprehensible input' before being expected to speak. On this basis, exposure to the (TL) would be a critical factor in pronunciation acquisition. However, Revell, P (2012 p.9) states that:

Nowadays, this claim is more likely to be modified to include 'proficient', rather than 'native-speakers of the F/SL, including the non-native class teacher. It could also include 'comprehensible input' via a variety of multimedia channels such as TV, radio, DVD or synchronous on line chat rather than simply face-to face conversation.

According to Ancker (2000:21), errors occur for many reasons, for example, interference from the native language; incomplete

knowledge of the target language and the complexity of the target language itself. Kenworthy (1988:4-9) stated that: “*Factors such as the native language, the age, amount of exposure, phonetic ability, attitude and identity, motivation and concern for good pronunciation have great influence on pronunciation learning*”.

2.13.3 Sound System Differences between LI and L2

As it has been mentioned by many linguists and researchers, there is a conflict between the sound systems of LI and L2. These studies have shown that the main problem in teaching and learning English pronunciation result from the differences in the sound system of English and the native language, so a speaker of Sudanese Spoken Arabic is not accustomed to pronounce for instance θ -sound and δ -sound, because they do not found in his native language. This means that the organs of speech of the learner are not trained to produce such sound systems because they are unfamiliar to him; that is why he uses the nearest sounds such as /s/ and /z/. In Arabic, each letter represents only one sound, so it's easy to read any word from a written text. Also there is no sound which is not pronounced (silent), as it happens a lot in English. When there is a difference in the sound system in the LI and L2 showed that errors are expected to be committed because the learners transfer their mother tongue sound system into the target language.

(Goglova 2001) offered a study on the reasons why Russian learners of Spanish commit errors while using Spanish language. One of these errors was that the phoneme [b] which is changed to [v] in articulation. Learners also changed the phoneme [θ] into [s]. It was also reported that it is essential to understand which sounds in a language are phonemes because they express the differences in meaning and the learner should be able to pronounce them, otherwise he commits errors.

In English language there are twenty-four consonants and twenty vowels; that mean there are forty-four phonemes in English language the learner should be able to produce them while he is learning English. “*Learners of different language backgrounds will of course face some difficulties to pronounce them because of their language background*” (O’Connor, 2003.p 22). In Arabic language the whole number of the sounds is less than the one in English language, so the total sounds of

Arabic language is twenty-eight letters each of them represents only one sound. So there are only twenty-eight sounds in Arabic language. As we know a sound is made by definite movement of the organs of speech, so to produce any sound that means to perform the exact organs movement of the sound.

2.13.4 Inconsistency of English Vowels

One of the important problems faced by the students of English is that, each English vowel has more than one pronunciation. So this causes many difficulties to the learners and leads them to a mispronunciation. Instead of using the exact quality and quantity of a special sound, the learner erroneously changes either the quality or the quantity of the sound; so in a certain word the learner tends to use the variant sounds e.g. son/s ʌ n/, come /k ʌ m/, among /ə m ʌ ŋ/, blood /b l ʌ d/; in all these words /o/ and /oo/ stand for the same sound of /ʌ /, but most of the learners, unless they have a mastery of the pronunciation of such vowels, they pronounce /ɔ/ or /u:/ in the place of /ʌ / .

This is because of their first background about each sound, so they picture this thought in their minds as if each vowel has only one type of pronunciation and if that is true the learner can easily know and expect how to pronounce each word even if he is seeing it for the first time. That

is if each letter represents only one phoneme, but in fact the situation is not like this, and that is one of the basic problems of English.

The learner, who doesn't have sufficient knowledge of different pronunciations of the vowels above, meets some difficulty, since he uses different variants of their pronunciations.

(Kharma and Hajjaj 2011.p.14) summarized this as: The spelling of Arabic is overwhelmingly regular. In contrast, the spelling of English is seemingly very irregular. Moreover, to the learner, written English is not always a reliable guide to pronunciation, and they are often misled by the graphic representation of sounds. (Swan and Smith's 2002: 196) have stated that "English has 22 vowels and diphthongs to 24 consonants", while "Arabic has only six vowels and no diphthongs ... to 32 consonants."

2.13.5 Influence of Spelling on Pronunciation

Even when students are equipped with both ability to hear sounds in sequence and grasp English rhythm, there remains the fact that English spelling is so complicated that it is hard even for native speakers to learn. Speakers of many other languages in which the sounds and the letters are more closely connected have a much easier time learning to spell in their L1 than native speakers of English have learning to spell in theirs. Both phonetics and phonology deal with sounds. As claimed by (Forel, C. A., & Puskás, G. 2005.p.3). that:

English spelling and English pronunciation are two very different things. For instance, English has not 5 or 6 but 20 different vowels, even if these vowels are all written by different combinations of 6 different letters, "a, e, i, o, u, y". e.g. please, [pli:z]. Thus the word please consists of three consonants, [p, l, z], and one vowel, [i:].

Arabic language students can easily pronounce a word from a written text just by looking at it; so each letter represents one sound, so the relationship between the orthography and the phonology is very easy to distinguish, in addition to that there is no silent letter in Arabic language as it is found in English. Many words in English have letters, which are not pronounced. As stated by (Yule, G 2010.p.26):

The sounds of spoken English do not match up, a lot of the time, with letters of written English. If we cannot use the letters of the alphabet in a consistent way to represent the sounds we make, how do we go about describing the sounds of a language like English?

In English, there are twenty-four consonants and twenty vowels; if each of these forty- four is given units a special letter, in that way undoubtedly;student can be shown what they should say. If the learner knows that each letter represents a certain sound (e.g. equal number of sounds to the letters), he can simply avoid the difficulty of spelling on pronunciation.

Some words which are ordinarily spelt in the same way are different in their pronunciation. Also there are some words spelt differently, but sound the same e.g. rain, rein, reign, all of them are pronounced /rein/. The learner who still doesn't have the mastery of pronunciation of such words, pronounces each of them by looking at its spelling, and he is expected to mispronounce them (O'Connor, 2003). So if the learner doesn't know such relationship between sound and spelling, he mispronounce words by just looking at their spellings e.g. before the n the k is silent; knee, know, knot, knight a student who didn't learn their pronunciation correctly, pronounces them with the /k/ sound. Any time

the student meets such words he will be confused to pronounce them correctly he just guesses the pronunciation by looking at the spelling of the word unless he has previous background.

So it is very important to consult the dictionary from time to time to check the pronunciation of such words until he possesses a good mastery of pronunciation. English Language and Literature Studies one of the problems other languages learners of English face is the (r) which is weak in its pronunciation in English.

All the above notes show that in many cases the spelling of English words lead the learners to guess the wrong pronunciation from the spelling of the words unless they have a good knowledge of English sounds and letters relationships and the way they are pronounced.

2.13.6Lack of Language Knowledge

The knowledge that an (L2) learner begins with includes everything that they have previously acquired as part of their general cognitive development and prior social experience, as well as in their acquisition of (L1). This knowledge partly explains the advantages that older (L2) learners such as college students typically have over children in expressing and understanding the information content of (L2) writing and speech, in perceiving writer/speaker intent, and in fulfilling interactional and instrumental goals of communication.

More important, as claimed by Charles W. Kreidler (2004, 5):

Speech is an activity which is carried on in numerous events; language is knowledge, a code which is known and shared by people who use their knowledge for transmitting and interpreting messages in these events. When someone is speaking, anyone who is close enough can hear – the sound waves set up in the air by the speaker reach the eardrums of the hearer.

2.13.7 Lacking of Motivation

Motivation has been widely accepted by both teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second/foreign language (L2) learning. Motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in L2 acquisition presuppose motivation to some extent.

According to Zoltan Dornyei (2009, 217): *“Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement.”* On the other hand, high motivation can make up for considerable deficiencies both in one's language aptitude and learning conditions.

Although 'motivation' is a term frequently used in both educational and research contexts, it is rather surprising how little agreement there is in the literature with regard to the exact meaning of this concept? As has claimed by Zoltan Dornyei (2009, 217): *“Researchers seem to agree that motivation is responsible for determining human behavior by energizing it and giving it direction, but the great variety of accounts put forward in the literature of how this happens may surprise even the seasoned researcher.”*

2.14 Approaches to Pronunciation Teaching

Approaches to pronunciation teaching is not just about providing opportunity but teaching them how to speak and embedding that whole process into what we do each day. So it is not a pronunciation class but the points are covered every day as we teach in an integrated way. This part explained, why S/FL learners might find the learning of

pronunciation particularly challenging. Patchara Varasarin (2007) cited in (Morley, 1998.p.66) in his study that, the pronunciation instruction that promotes learner strategy awareness more basic knowledge about the relationship between learning strategies and pronunciation is needed. In order to learn the pronunciation of English, learners need:

(i) *Focused support and instruction*: We cannot assume that learners will be able to learn an intelligible pronunciation easily without explicit teaching.

(ii) *Time and patience*:Learners can and do respond well to pronunciation teaching and practice, but improvements do not happen overnight. Learning pronunciation is not like learning a new vocabulary item: it needs a lot of practice, and changes are likely to be gradual and may be variable.

(iii) *Continuity*:Good pronunciation is essential whenever we speak but it takes time to learn. This means that we should pay attention to pronunciation continuously both inside and outside the classroom.

(iv) *Awareness*:Because of the influence of their first language, learners may not realize the extent to which people find their pronunciation difficult to understand. They therefore need plenty of opportunity to listen to English, focus on reliable models and notice how their pronunciation might differ. An intuitive-imitative approach assumes that students can develop acceptable pronunciation and speaking skills when exposed to the target language through accurate models. This approach relies heavily upon imitation and repetition, without any explicit information provided by teachers. Techniques used to teach pronunciation included listening and imitating, phonetic training, minimal pairs drilling in context, visual aids, reading aloud, recording the students' production with more focus on supra-segmental aspects of pronunciation. It can be seen that

communicative approach seems to be more balanced approach with the focus on both accuracy and fluency.

In light of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), learners are expected to achieve “intelligible pronunciation” of the (TL), which is, according to Kenworthy, (1987), understood by a listener at a given time in a given situation. That is, students are able to understand, accept and declare to be recognized meaningfully in their oral communication.

2.14.1 Pronunciation Teaching

Teaching pronunciation involves a variety of challenges. To begin with, teachers often find that they do not have enough time in class to give proper attention to this aspect of English instruction. When they do find the time to address pronunciation, the instruction often amounts to the presentation and practice of a series of tedious and seemingly unrelated topics. Drilling sounds over and over again (e.g., minimal pair work) often leads to discouraging results, and discouraged students and teachers end up wanting to avoid pronunciation altogether. As claimed by Konzorcium, B (2006:78) “*Most English teachers make students study grammar and vocabulary, practice functional dialogues but they make little attempt to teach pronunciation in any overt way.*” Pronunciation teaching not only makes students aware of different sounds and sound features, but can also improve their speaking. Pronunciation allows students to get over serious intelligibility problems. The question of what aim to achieve may arise in connection with teaching pronunciation. Many students do not want to sound like native speakers, they wish to be speakers of English as an international language and it does not imply trying to sound exactly like someone from Britain or Canada. (Harmer 2003: 184) has emphasized that:

It has become customary for English teachers to consider intelligibility as the prime goal of pronunciation teaching. It means that students should be able to use pronunciation which is good enough for them to be understood. If their pronunciation is not up to this standard, there is a serious danger that they will fail to communicate effectively.

So the aim of teaching pronunciation is to require students to work towards an intelligible pronunciation.

2.14.2 Pronunciation Aspects should be taught

Priorities for Pronunciation Teaching in the ESL Classroom as stated by (Fraser, 2002, p. 33):

1. Word and sentence stress
2. Syllable structure (final consonants, consonant clusters)
3. Vowel length distinctions
4. Major consonant distinctions, eg. [s, ʃ , f ,p]
5. vowel quality distinctions
6. Minor consonant distinctions, eg. [θ] [ð]

To sum up, trends of teaching pronunciation have been changing a lot during different periods. Nowadays, teaching pronunciation plays a very important part in the language teaching. It is the main target connected with other skills to get the highest purpose of learning a foreign language, which is communication. The importance of pronunciation is considered from teaching point of view, but this needs to be conveyed to the learner as well. , (Revell .P. 2012.p.211) has stated that:” *the techniques and activities which can facilitate the pronunciation learning process in this part.*”

2.14.3 Pronunciation Improvement Techniques:

According to (Konzorcium, B. 2006.p.81) *“Songs and rhymes, poems, tongue twisters are very useful materials which can be planned for the initial period of lesson as a warm-up activity or for the middle of the lesson as an ice-breaker, or for the end of the lesson as a cooler.”* In modern teaching packages CDs and multimedia CD-ROMs can be of benefit for learners as they usually contain authentic material and with the help of these students’ pronunciation can be developed easily. Here are many basic principles of using tools in foreign language classes. One can consider tools, resources and didactic materials as “anything that can be used to facilitate the learning of a language.”

One can distinguish resources facilitating language learning according to criteria related to perception, too. Thus one has the categories of visuals and techniques of visualization; audio resources and ways of audio-production; audio-visual means of education and approaches to video-production. The fourth category covers the contemporary tools based on information and communication technologies (ICT) that integrate perceptions and language production. Visuals and techniques of visualization. (Konzorcium, B. 2006.p.90) outlined that *“One can identify techniques based on using visuals and aiming at student initiated visualization where the stimulus for utterances and the main source for learning is provided by a visual impact.”*

Further means of education of visual characteristics can be the various sorts of boards (blackboard, white board, flannel board, flip chart) that can be used in a static and an interactive way at the same time. One can place various forms of texts, tables and images on them in advance and/or use it the way so that the final amount of information intended to share is the result of the co-operation of learners and the teacher at the

same time. Large pieces of paper (posters) or any even and smooth surface placed even on the floor in the middle of the classroom can be used the same way.

Another traditional means of visual presentation are the print resources including course-books, activity or workbooks, dictionaries published for language educational purposes. This category can be complemented by books, magazines, newspapers, brochures and other print materials published for members of the particular target language communities or selected extracts from them. Flashcards with words, phrases, sentences and particular target language culture specific data (like dates, names of important people, places, events, etc.) charts, tables of grammatical rules, posters with various pictures and maps can provide a visual impact for language learning and linguistic performance at the same time. The projection of PowerPoint images – texts and pictures - (i.e. slides) is taking over the role of projected images that used to be provided by outdated technologies of the 1950s, 60s and 70s like slide-projectors. The reason why the role and function of the OHPs have not been taken over by digital technologies is that OHP offers a more flexible opportunity for involving students in placing traces of their linguistic performance on the projecting surface spontaneously and you do not need extremely expensive and sophisticated equipment. A further advantage of the good old OHP is that there is no other technology that would let you exploit the educational potential of the so called shading technique when the silhouettes of various objects placed on the projecting surface can encourage students guess, predict, describe the vision, i.e. verbalize their thoughts. Regalia can be classified in further categories. One can distinguish objects that are typical for the target language culture or

packages, boxes, containers of goods; and objects of universal use, like shopping baskets, toy-telephones, etc.

Thus activities when students have to mime stories or react to an input in a non-verbal way, or when a story is illustrated by them in drawings are the productive aspects of visualization. Thus visualization is a kind of test of students' achievement and it can provide a further input for others. Audio resources and ways of audio-production. Hearing is a perception that one receives in the passive way, i.e. one is the receptor of sequences of sounds. When learning and teaching foreign languages, the role of live human presentation by teachers, peers (i.e. fellow-learners) and visitors who speak the target language as a native one has always been extremely important. Konzorcium, B (2006:95). Their contribution to language education can be complemented by supportive audio technologies. Radio, record-players, reel-to-reel tape- and cassette-recorders have been used as authentic resources for language learning. Their importance has not changed though they are being replaced by Internet- or web-radio and various kinds of digital recordings (e.g. CDs and MP3s). Audio resources can be distinguished depending on the target audience. One can use materials recorded or broadcast for language learning purposes and authentic media that have been targeted at native speakers or people living in the target language country. Whatever type of audio-recording one uses, there is a great number of techniques to apply in order to make an active use of them. Konzorcium, B (2006:96). Building awareness and concern for pronunciation, Teachers need to help their students recognize poor pronunciation and motivate them to improve. Furthermore, it is important to clarify the emotional and attitudinal aspects of pronunciation learning in order to set clear,

achievable and appropriate goals. Explaining the pronunciation components and how they fit together.

To make pronunciation learning more meaningful, teachers have to explain that pronunciation is constituted by inter-related different components work together. These components are summarized under the following areas: (i) Phonemic distinction. (ii) Syllable structure. (iii) Word stress. (iv) Features of connected speech and, (v) Intonation patterns. Outlining the pronunciation sub-skills learners need to develop. The skills that the learners need to acquire in order to master the various elements of pronunciation are described as follow:

- (i) Notice-pronunciation elements in speech, similarities and differences between L1 and L2 pronunciation.
- (ii) Discriminating- between L1 and L2 elements, between correct and incorrect elements.
- (iii) Imitating-sounds and other elements of pronunciation accurately.
- (iv) Producing elements without promotion.
- (v) Contextualizing – individual elements within a stream of speech.
- (vi) Generating- pronunciation in new contexts.
- (vii) Correcting- their own incorrect sounds and patterns. Imitation is probably the most widely used technique to facilitate the productive skills. Revell. P, (2012p.217) has stated that “*Presenting an utterance for imitation by learners back-chaining has been found to a useful technique.*” Moreover, there are other variables at work in pronunciation such as confidence, motivation, muscular movements and control. In addition, using sounds to make meaning involves models, time, practice, encouragement, revision and more time.

1. Audio and Visual Aids: relevant teaching strategies and activities that can be used to help speakers with these difficulties. According to what

was cited by (Revell .P. 2012,p.218) from (Hardison 2002) that:“*Research suggests that are advantages in combining visual with audio input for pronunciation training and that this combined modality is superior to audio input only.*”

2.Minimal -pairs: Techniques designed to help learners hear and then produce individual sounds generally make extensive use of minimal pairs. Here are pairs of words which differ in only one phoneme :(ship and sheep; pill and bill; cut and shut)

3.Drills: Drills went out of fashion with audio-lingualism because they became associated with mindless and repetitive approaches to teaching. However, drills definitely do not have to be mindless, and they can offer a welcome opportunity for learners to get their tongues around new language without the extra strain of trying to communicate. Most learners love them, as long as they are done confidently and are not used as a substitute for communicative speaking practice. Choral drills, in which the whole class repeats a clear model from the teacher, are useful for anonymous practice. Individual drills, in which the teacher selects a student to repeat the item individually after it has been practiced in unison, allows the teacher to assess individual progress. *Remember that new learners need the opportunity to say new items of vocabulary!*

4.BackChaining:A useful way of helping learners understand how sounds work together in connected speech is the technique of back chaining. This is a way of encouraging learners to really listen to the way we run words together when we speak rather than focusing on individual words said as if in isolation. To do this, a teacher can conduct a mini drill, but starting at the end or in the middle of the utterance rather than at the beginning so that the learners concentrate on how it sounds rather than on the individual words that it is made up of.

2.14.4 Suggestions for Teaching Pronunciation

In looking at recommendations for teaching pronunciation, the researchers describe them within the context of the communicative method of teaching English that is employed in most ESL classrooms.

Curriculum Design

Referring to curriculum and syllabus designs, Morley (1998) submits that ESL programs should start by “establishing long range oral communication goals and objectives” that help identify pronunciation needs as well as speech functions and the contexts in which they might occur. These goals and objectives should be realistic, aiming for “functional intelligibility (ability to make oneself relatively easily understood), functional communicability (ability to meet the communication needs one faces), and enhanced confidence in use” and they should be the result of a careful analysis and description of the learners’ needs.

1. Focus on the Supra-segmental

Although many theorists began to make a case for the role of supra-segmental phonology in communication on paper, “many teachers continue with a limited conception of the role of explicit phonological instruction in the language classroom.” We can say that curriculum and syllabus designers need to focus on the supra-segmental features of pronunciation.

2. Improved Training for Teachers

Existing teachers should be able to receive professional development in pronunciation teaching, and trainee teachers should receive such tuition as part of their teaching courses. Teachers should receive a range of different stories from different pronunciation specialists. There is a need

for a more coordinated approach. It is recommended that there should be a conference of people interested in the area of ESL pronunciation to discuss a range of issues. It seems likely that it would be possible to integrate a range of existing practices into a coordinated approach to pronunciation teaching.

3. Increased Research on Pronunciation Teaching Methodology

It will be clear that there is a burning need for an increase in the amount of serious research at all levels into a wide range of issues to do with ESL pronunciation teaching. The first priority is development of a range of assessment tools to allow methods and policies to be assessed for their effectiveness. An early opportunity should be taken to investigate empirically a range of questions which are the topic of debate among teachers, but have never been properly tested, such as: is it better to focus on teaching stressed syllables before teaching unstressed syllables; is it better to represent pronunciation for learners with symbols of the international phonetic alphabet, or with ordinary English spelling conventions. Similarly, experiments to investigate the relative effects of common pronunciation errors on ESL English listeners would allow proper planning of pronunciation curricula.

4. Methods and Materials Development

Teachers need a greater appreciation of the pronunciation difficulties faced by learners of ESL and the reasons for these difficulties, and a simple framework for understanding the situation of the second language learner. Lambacher (1999, p. 138) notes that research in pronunciation has revealed that “difficult L2 contrasts (not just supra-segmental) can interfere with intelligibility and a need therefore exists within the pronunciation curriculum to address the problems of L2 learners in identifying and producing difficult L2

speech contrasts.” Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) for pronunciation can be an effective tool as it “provides electronic visual feedback (EVF), which can help meet this essential need by showing the exact sound features that learners produce and thereby drawing attention to changes that they need to make”.(Lauren Osowski. 2012) reported that when asked which area of English they would most like to improve, the majority of students answered “pronunciation”. While it is nearly impossible to completely eliminate an accent, it is possible to reduce it and increase understandability. Doing so takes practice, practice, and more practice. Moreover, studies reported that imitation and repetition are useful techniques provided by teachers to help their students to master pronunciation.

(Murcia et al, 1996.p 46) pointed out that: *“In this method, students would listen and imitate a model of the target language that was spoken by the teacher (and later by recordings.”* However, other studies showed evidence that there actually is a difference in results when it comes to the repetition and imitation being presented in context of teaching techniques as stated by (Cohen, Larson-Freeman, & Tarone, 1991) *“Students who showed accuracy in controlled practice might fail to transfer what they learned to actual communicative language use”*.

2.15 Summary

The above reviewed studies shed light on pronunciation problematic areas. It tried to identify the errors made by students of English in Shandi University (SESU); find the reasons and discuss the techniques associated with teaching pronunciation as a foreign language. Most of the writers have offered suggestions and recommendations aimed at improving pronunciation elements. From the previous review, one can see that there have been many studies that have investigated the causes of

EFL/ESL pronunciation weakness. However, none of these studies specifically aimed to investigate the causes of EFL/ESL pronunciation weakness in Shandi University. This study fills this gap in knowledge by investigating EFL pronunciation errors among (SESU).

All the above-mentioned studies are in one way or another, relevant to this study. However, the missing gap that this study tries to address is to determine what error types exist in the English pronunciation of L2 learners in the majoring in English in Shandi University. The next chapter describes the research methodology.

2.16 Related Previous Studies

There are many studies in different countries that have been done in the field of pronunciation especially in errors investigation. The problem of English pronunciation has become as phenomena to second and foreign language, (EFL) learners. Here are some international and local studies about pronunciation problems to (EFL) Learners.

The first study submitted by

Sanna Hassan, (2007), *Pronunciation Problems of Sudanese learners of English*. Sudan University of Science and technology,

In her research she used a descriptive Statistic Method and arrived to the following results:

1. Sudanese learners have problems in the pronunciation of the voiceless bilabial / p/ and the voiced bilabial / b /. According to the results, many Sudanese learners substitute / p/ with / b/ in words such as “pen” “map”.
2. Sudanese learners mispronounce dental fricative / θ/ and the alveolar fricative / s /, so in words such as “think”, “math”, the Sudanese learners of English replace / θ/ with /s/.
3. Sudanese learners have problem with the voiced dental fricatives / ð/, /z /, many of the Sudanese learners pronounce/ θ/in the place of /z/.

4. Sudanese learners mispronounced contrast consonants like / f/ /v /.
5. Sudanese learners mispronounced some English sounds like the soft “C” /s/ and hard “C”/k/. In some words like “concern” some Sudanese learners pronounce /k/ instead of / s /.
7. The interference of the mother tongue and sound systems between Arabic (generally) and Sudanese Spoken Arabic (particularly) are behind many pronunciation errors spelling of some English words lead many Sudanese learners to wrongly guess the pronunciation.
8. On the other hand, many Sudanese learners mispronounce vowels because each English vowel has more than one way of pronunciation, so many Sudanese learners confused the different pronunciations of each of the vowels (a, e, i, o, and u).
9. Finally, he concluded that such pronunciation errors are related to factors such as the inconsistency of many English sounds. On the other hand the sound system differences, which have phonological basis depend, on variation in speech organ positions or breath control.

The second study submitted by

Gilakjani, Abbas (2012).*The study title: A Study of Factors Affecting EFL Learners’ English Pronunciation Learning and the Strategies for Instruction.* Islamic Azad University, Iran.

He used a Descriptive Method and arrived to the following conclusion:

- 1- Pronunciation can be one of the most difficult parts of a language for EFL learners to master and one of the least favorite topics for teachers to address in the EFL classroom.
- 2- All learners can do well in L2 pronunciation learning if the teacher and learner participate together in the total learning process.
- 3- Success can be achieved if each has set individual teaching and learning goals. Pronunciation must be viewed as more than correct

production of phonemes: it must be viewed in the same light as grammar and syntax that is an important part of communication.

4- Pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence. With this in mind, the teacher must then set obtainable aims that are applicable and suitable for learner's communication needs.

5- The learner must also become part of the learning process, actively involved in their own learning.

6- The content of the course should be integrated into the communication class, with the content emphasizing the teaching of supra-segmental, linking pronunciation with listening comprehension, and allowing for meaningful pronunciation practice.

The third study submitted by:

Ibrahim Abdalla Ahmed Abker (2016), *Investigating Pronunciation Problems among Sudanese University Students: A case Study of Three Sudanese Universities in Khartoum State*. The researcher used the descriptive statistical method.

The main findings of the research are as follow:

1. University curricula do not have enough pronunciation exercises and teachers need to bring more exercises, to help university students.
2. One hundred fifty university students need more pronunciation exercises in words which contain long and short vowel sounds.
3. University students face pronunciation problems of some consonants.
4. Third year students face problems in pronouncing correct word, phrase and sentence stress.
5. They also face problems in displaying the correct intonation in speaking conversation.

The researcher recommends that:

1. University curricula do not include sufficient pronunciation exercises in long and short vowels. Also, consonant sounds, stress and intonation. So curricula designers need to review these curricula and put more concentration on pronunciation exercises.
2. University teachers should produce more pronunciation exercises, to help university students to improve their speaking skills.
3. Speaking tests are very important in university's levels, to encourage university students to practice their language and pronounce correctly.
4. English forums and clubs in Sudanese universities should be encouraged to help students to correct their pronunciation mistakes through debating and cultural activities.

The fourth study submitted by:

Jalal Ahmed, (2011), Saudi Arabia. The study title: *Pronunciation Problems among Saudi Learners*. (Ph.D. dissertation) .Najran University. The researcher used An Experimental Method (Microphone and Recorder) to achieve the goals of his study. Eight students had been chosen randomly from Najran University. The researcher arrived to conclusion that:

1. Certain English consonant sounds are difficult to pronounce for Saudi learners. Most of the participants faced problems while pronouncing the consonant sounds, /p/, /d/, /v/, /tʃ/, /ʒ/, and /ŋ/.
2. They pronounce /p/ as /b/ when it appears in the initial and final positions of a word. They pronounce /p/ as /b / when it appears in the medial or final positions.
3. According to his data /v/ is replaced by /f/ when it appears in the medial and final positions.

4. Most of the participants pronounce /tʃ/ as /f/ when it appears in all three positions.
5. The /ʒ/ sound is sometimes replaced by /ʃ/, /s/ or /z/, when it is in medial position, and when it is in final position it is pronounced as /g/.
6. The /ŋ/ sound is sometimes replaced by /n-k/, and sometimes by the /n-g/ sound when it appears in the final position of a word.

The fifth study submitted by:

Abbas Na'ama (2011):*An Analysis of Errors Made by Yemeni, University Students in English Consonant clusters System*, (PhD Dissertation),Hodeida. University. Yemen.

The researcher followed the descriptive and statistic method in his study. The main findings of the research are as follow:

The participants made a variety of errors in pronouncing English consonant clusters for different factors:

1. The first factor is that the effect of mother tongue, Arabic, because of negative transfer in a way that there are major differences between Arabic and English as far as the consonant-clusters are concerned.
2. The second factor is that the lack of practicing of listening aids by the Yemeni university students. They do not usually utilize the various kinds of audio and video aids to improve the standard of their pronunciation.
3. The third factor is that the inadequate pronunciation of the university instructors. The researcher recommended that :
 1. Having informed the university students of some of the main areas of contrast between native language (Arabic) and target language (English) and what difficulties they have, it then remains for the university tutor to build this information into a variety of meaningful classroom activities.
 2. University students can be exposed to English consonant clusters through demonstrations, diagrams, and explanations.

3. The key to successful pronunciation, however, is not so much getting students to produce correct consonant cluster sounds, but rather to have them listen and observe how English is spoken-either on audio or video tape or from the tutors themselves.

The sixth study entitled as:

Pronunciation Problems: A Case Study of English Language Students at Sudan University of Science and Technology submitted by Elkhair Muhammad Idriss Hassan,(PhD Dissertation) Sudan (2014).

The researcher followed the descriptive and statistic method in his study and arrived to the following conclusion.

1. Many Sudanese students of English (SSEs) have problems in the pronunciation of the voiceless bilabial /p/ and the voiced bilabial /b/. According to the results, many SSEs substitute /p/ with /b/ in words such as ‘pen’ ‘map’, ‘happy’ and rarely replace /b/ with /p/.

2. Other consonant sound contrasts which SSEs mispronounce are the dental fricative /θ/ and the alveolar fricative /s/, so in words such as ‘think’, ‘math’, the SSEs replace /θ/ with /s/.

3. SSEs also have problem with the voiced dental fricatives /d/ and /z/, so many of the SSEs pronounce /θ/ in the place of /z/ for instance in words like ‘then’, ‘weather’ more consonant contrast sounds like /f/ and /v/, /j/ and /tʃ/ are mispronounced by most of the SSEs, e.g., in words like ‘van’, ‘seven’, ‘have’, they pronounce /f/ instead of /v/.

4. Also the substitution of /j/ and /tʃ/ is noticeable in the pronunciations of many SSEs in words such as ‘much’.

5. Other cases of mispronunciation of English sounds by the SSEs are the soft ‘C’ /s/ and hard ‘C’ /k/. In some words like ‘concern’ some SSEs pronounce /k/ instead of /s/.

6. Also soft 'g' /dʒ/ and hard 'g' /g/ are problematic for the students, so they sometimes pronounce /g/ instead of / dʒ / as in 'engagement'.
7. Pronunciation problems such as the ones mentioned above are linked to factors such as interference of the mother tongue on the second language, also differences in the sound systems between Arabic (generally) and Sudanese Spoken Arabic (particularly) are behind many pronunciation errors.
8. Also the spelling of some English words leads many SSEs to wrongly guess the pronunciation just by looking at the word and its letters and produce incorrect pronunciation.
9. Finally, the inconsistency of some English consonants makes the students unable to decide what the exact sound they should pronounce.
10. Many SSEs mispronounce vowels because each English vowel has more than one way of pronunciation.
11. Many SSEs confuse the different pronunciations of each of the vowels (a, e, i, o, and u). In a word like 'obstacle' many students pronounce /eɪ / or / i / or /æ/ instead of /ə/.

The researcher recommended that:

1. Teaching should focus on both recognition and production i.e. teachers should recognize the pronunciation errors and correct them and teach the students how to pronounce these sounds correctly.
2. The study suggests that there should be pronunciation lessons ranking the same as lessons in other skills e.g. Grammar, and vocabulary and sentence structure to draw the attention of the SSEs to the importance of pronunciation in learning English.
3. Difficulty of production should not be too great because the above consonant sounds are produced at the front of the mouth; this motor skill is not too difficult to learn. For practicing, correcting and developing the

pronunciation error we strongly suggest for the SSEs to listen regularly to English sounds and words using audio aids like cassettes, CDs and e-dictionaries. These tools are very useful for practicing pronunciation.

4. I think it is also worth looking at the dictionary for checking the correct pronunciation of words.

5. It is advised that the teachers in pre-university stages have good knowledge of phonetics and phonology because this will provide a basis for teachers to pronounce a word correctly and identify the physical reasons for inaccurate approximations of foreign language sounds, enabling them to give precise instructions which help SSEs correct, faulty pronunciation.

The seventh study titled as:

Analysis of Pronunciation Errors of Saudi ESL Learners by: Turki A. Binturki (2008). (Unpublished Master Dissertation),

The study was conducted as a qualitative investigation to identify what word environments were most difficult for Saudi speakers. Subjects were specifically selected to represent Najdi dialect. Five native speakers of Saudi Arabian Najdi dialect studying in the U.S. were chosen to participate in his study.

The findings of that study revealed that:

1. Saudi ESL speakers do have difficulty with the voiced interdental fricative /v/ and to lesser extent, with /p/ and /r/.

2. The study also found that difficulty was closely related to certain word positions.

1. Saudi ESL learners of English struggle with the sounds /p v ɪ/.

2. In addition, the study demonstrated the difficulty of the voiced labiodentals fricative /v/ in all environments and the difficulty of producing /ɪ/ word finally in context.

Recommendations

Recognizing sources of difficulties in speaking may help students to be more cautious about their pronunciation.

1. Careful pronunciations of problematic sounds can help communication and also aid non-native speakers to be better understood.
2. ESL teachers should be aware of the different first languages and their contrastive characteristics in the classroom.
3. Understanding the phonetic inventory of students' L1 can provide a better tool in predicting the source of mispronunciations by identifying the difficult sounds as this study revealed regarding the sounds /p v r/.

The findings of this study are important to teachers of English as a second language especially those who deal with Saudi speakers.

The eighth study entitled as:

An Analysis of Phonetic, Morphological and Syntactic Errors in English: A Case Study of Saudi BA Students at King Khalid University (PhD Dissertation), by Khalid Al-Badawi (2012).

The objective of his study was to identify common phonetic, morphological and syntactic errors committed by native Arabic speaking learners of English during speaking.

The descriptive approach was towards error analysis. The most common phonetic, morphological and syntactic errors, respectively, identified among a selected sample of 20 Saudi English were substitution of the consonants /f/ for /v/ and /p/ for /b/ , the vowels /ə/ for /ɔ:/, /ə/ for /u/ and /e / for /i/; failure to use the plural and third-person singular (-s/es), the comparative (-er), and the progressive (-ing); and lack of subject–verb agreement, erroneous use of prepositions, and erroneous addition and deletion of certain auxiliaries.

The ninth study titled in: Investigating Students' Attitudes towards Pedagogical Dictionaries: A Study of Sudanese English Majors by: Nauman Al Amin Ali Al Sayed(2015), Al-Zaeem Al-Azhari University- The study purports to highlight the overall perceptions and actual dictionary practices among a sample of 160 Sudanese English majors. The main objective of the study is to explore the myriad aspects of the attitudes and perceptions of monolingual pedagogical English dictionaries by a representative sample of Sudanese English majors. The main finding of the study was that the students are more interested in denotation meaning, almost excluding other aspects like connotation meaning, level of use and pronunciation techniques.

The researcher recommended that:

1. Learners should exert themselves to correct the dominant notion they hold of the dictionary as yet one more passive book on the library shelf to be resorted to in time of need.
2. Also, lexicography should be taught thoroughly and consciously as an integral part of the English language syllabus and not a mere addendum.
3. Moreover, such coverage should include interactive lexicography that goes beyond paper-based versions to encompass accompanying electronic versions on internet online dictionaries to provide learners with the versatility and stimulation of these up-to-date sources.
4. Equally, there must be an inclusion of task-based activities in General English lessons to provide the learners with the means to handle the facets of monolingual dictionaries such as definitions and pronunciation.

2.16.1 Summary of the Previous Studies

To some up, in these previous studies the researcher finds out that most of the studies arrive to the following findings:

- There is a problem in different English consonant sounds e.g. Bilabial /b/ and /p/. Dental fricative, Affricate, Labiodental Fricative, /f/ and /v/ and Alveolar /ʃ/ and /ʒ/.
- There is a problem in English and Arabic vowels and consonantal cluster that relates to the differences between English and Arabic.
- There is a problem in English stress patterns that links to the differences between English and Arabic.
- There are differences between L1 and L2 in all these previous studies.
- There is interference between students' mother tongue and the sound systems between English and Arabic.
- The students are more interested in denotation meaning, almost excluding other aspects like connotation meaning, level of use and pronunciation techniques.

2.17 Conclusion

In this chapter provided some descriptions of different topics vowel, consonant sounds, stress and intonation which are related to the topic of the study. Moreover, in this part the researcher discussed English and Arabic segmental (phonemes) and supra-segmental features, (stress and intonation), and how they are important in speaking English.

Lastly, it included summaries of the previous studies, and summary of the chapter itself. In conclusion All the above-mentioned studies are in one way or another, relevant to this study. However, the missing gap that this study tries to address is to determine what error types exist in the English pronunciation of L2 learners in the majoring in English in Shandi University. The next chapter describes the research methodology.

3.1 Introduction:

This chapter is essentially a plan that maps the road through which the research process will be developed in the course of the different stages and guides the steps of the researcher to attain the objectives of this research in a logical way. In order to conduct and evaluate any research, it is therefore important to know what these assumptions are. This chapter discusses the philosophical assumptions which were reviewed and presented in chapter one; the interpretive paradigm was identified for the framework of the study.

This chapter discusses the study methodologies, and design used including instruments, data-gathering tools and procedures, as well the analysis methods. Ultimately, using these methods will help to achieve the goal of carrying out high-quality research with credible findings. To achieve this goal, the participants were chosen carefully and selectively as will be explained later. The data collection instruments including various methods such as survey questionnaires, interviews, and observation checklist were designed. The procedures of data collection were thoroughly considered. All these matters will be discussed in details in this chapter.

3.2 Research Methodology:

Essentially, research methodology is a systematic way to solve a problem. It is a science of studying how research is to be carried out. Moreover, the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology. This part of the study gives information about the population, the sample, the data-gathering instruments, as well the statistical procedures that were used in the study. Specifically, having reviewed the literature concerning

the investigation of pronunciation errors at both segmental and suprasegmental levels; the researcher will later discuss the results of the analyses with the purpose of answering the research questions and verifying the hypotheses. For this study, the investigator has followed the descriptive research method. A descriptive research seeks to provide an accurate description of observations of phenomena. The object of the collection of census data is to accurately describe basic information about a national population at a particular point in time.

The objective of the descriptive research is to map the terrain of a specific phenomenon. A study of this type could start with stating the problem of the study. Next, suitable hypotheses are stated as tenancy solution for the problem. Afterward, the sample of the study and the research instruments, which are standardized by calculating their validity and reliability, are chosen. Then the collecting of data is carried out and organized. The last step is to analyze and interpret the results to arrive at generalization concerning the problem.

3.3 Reliability and Validity of Instruments:

3.3.1 Introduction:

The fundamental purpose of standardizing any psychological tool is to establish its reliability and validity at as high a level as possible. In this chapter the statistical measurement for establishment of the reliability and validity are discussed. According to Anastasia, A, and Urbina, A. (2002; 38): "*Reliability refers to the consistency of scores obtained by the same persons when they are reexamined with the same test on different occasions, or with different sets of equivalent items, or under other variable examining conditions.*"

3.3.2 The Validity and Reliability Coefficients:

The reliability coefficient is the correlation between two or more variables which measure the same thing. Typical methods to estimate test reliability in behavioral research are: test-retest reliability, alternative forms, split-halves, inter-rater reliability, and internal consistency. There are three main concerns in reliability testing: equivalence, stability over time, and internal consistency. These concerns and approaches to reliability testing are depicted in Figure (7).

Validity and reliability in social science research

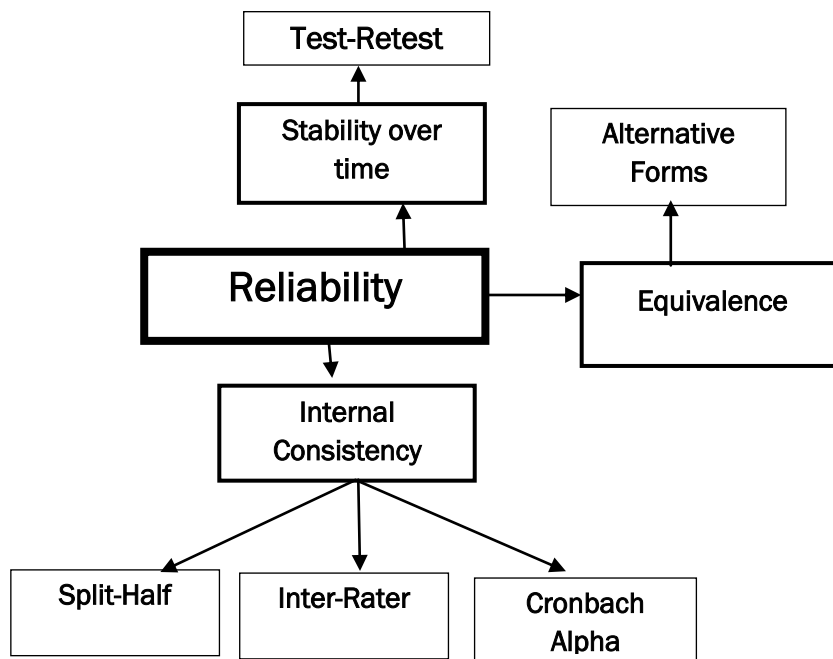


Figure (7) Reliability of Measurement Tests

Education Research and Perspectives, Vol.38, No.1. p.109

3.3.3. Split Half Reliability Coefficient:

In the Split-Half reliability method, the inventory was first divided into two equivalent halves and the correlation coefficient between scores of these half-test was found. This correlation coefficient denotes the reliability of the half test. A questionnaire is said reliable if we get similar answers repeatedly and it can be measured by estimating correlation coefficients. The correlation coefficient of the whole test is estimated by different formulas. The measuring instrument can be divided into two halves in a number of ways. But the best way to divide the measuring instrument into two halves is to find the correlation coefficient between scores of odd numbered.

3.3.4 Reliability and Validity of teachers' questionnaire:

To get a better estimate of the reliability of the full test, the researcher applied the Spearman correlation coefficient 0.75, to compute the reliability coefficient using the following formula:

Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formulary : (Mahdi, Mohamed 2007:332)

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2r}{1+r} : r = \text{correlation coefficient}$$

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2 \times 0.75}{1 + 0.75} = 0.86$$

$$\text{Validity coefficient} = \sqrt{\text{Reliability}}$$

$$= \sqrt{0.86} = 0.93$$

The reliability of that form was quite high. Hence, it can be said that the test is valid and reliable.

3.3.5 Reliability and Validity of students' questionnaire:

As has been mentioned above, the researcher followed Spearman and Brown Equation to estimate the reliability correlation coefficient of students' questionnaire. The researcher used the Spearman correlation

coefficient 0.79, to calculate the reliability coefficient using the following formula by: (Mahdi, Mohamed (2007:332)

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2 \times 0.79}{1 + 0.79} = 0.88$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Validity coefficient} &= \sqrt{\text{Reliability}} \\ &= \sqrt{0.88} \\ &= 0.94 \end{aligned}$$

According to those results both the reliability and the validity coefficients are high which indicates that the instruments were valid and reliable.

3.3.6 Statistical Calculation:

A five-point Likert scale, which is commonly used in questionnaires, was used in the present study, in which respondents specify their level of agreement to a number of statements regarding various issues related to their L2 pronunciation problems that they face and their causes and ways of reducing them. The data has been computerized and analyzed by a popularly used Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) programme and Chi-square test programmes.

The questionnaires have been analyzed in terms of frequencies and percentages. On the other hand, the pronunciation tests have been analyzed in terms of frequencies, percentages, means and alpha-coefficient. The results from the questionnaires, the interview and the class observation have finally been tabulated and discussed. These procedures are replicable and they produce the same results if the same experiment is done another time or what is known as reliability.

The responses of the two questionnaires have been recorded on a list according to (Likert Scale).

According to Conoley, J.C., & Kramer, J.J. (1989, p, 113) “*Likert scales are a common ratings format for surveys. Respondents rank quality from high to low or best to worst using five or seven levels.*”

3.4 Study design:

Social research needs a design or a structure before data collection or analysis can commence. A research design is a work plan that details what has to be done to complete the project. Its function is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible. Obtaining relevant evidence entails specifying the type of evidence needed to answer the research question, to test a theory, to accurately describe some phenomenon. The following figure shows the logic of the research process in the descriptive research method.

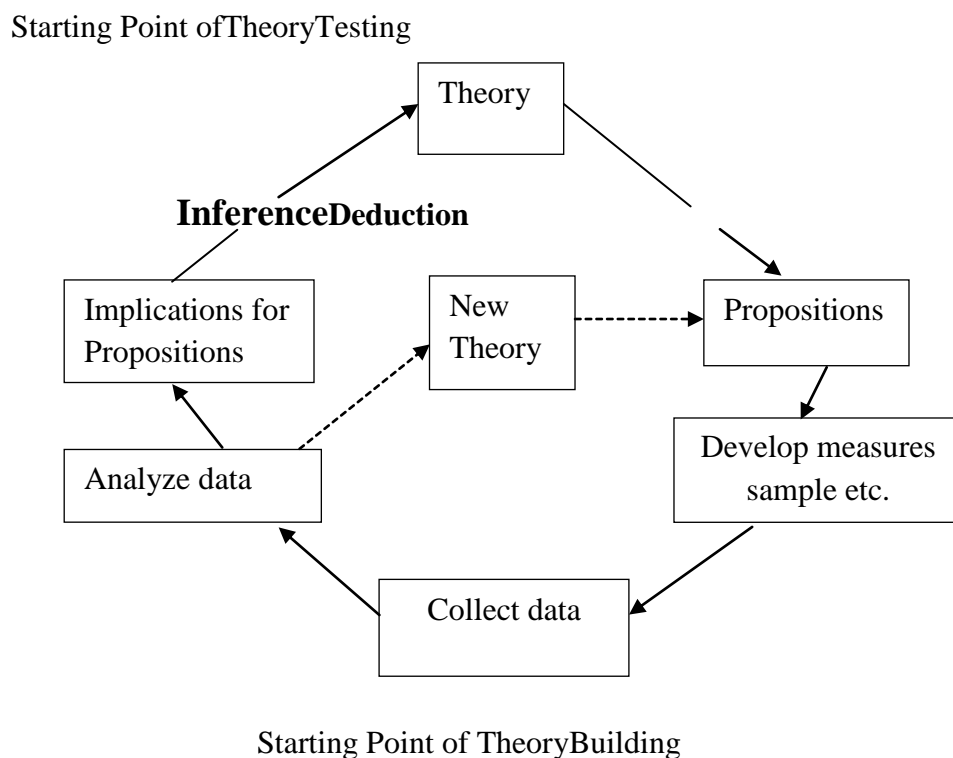


Figure (8): The research process logic in the descriptive research method

<https://www.nyu.edu/classes/bkg/methods/005847ch1> 27Nov.2015 (p. 8) 7:35pm

3.4.1 Study Methods:

Is there any difference between research methods and research methodology? Research methods help in collecting sample data and finding a solution to a problem. Particularly, scientific research methods call for explanations based on collected facts, measurements and observations and not on reasoning alone. They accept only those explanations which can be verified by experiments. On the other hand, the scope of research methodology is wider than that of research methods. Thus, when we talk of research methodology we do not only talk of the research methods but also consider the logic behind the methods we use in the context of our research study and explain why we are using a particular method or technique and why we are not using others so that research results are capable of being evaluated either by the researcher himself or by others.

Descriptive research methods are used when the researcher wants to describe specific behavior as it occurs in the environment. The present researcher used the descriptive analytical method in an attempt to describe the research problem as it is. According to (Kothari, 2004)

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem in which we study the various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying his research problem along with the logic behind them. It is necessary for the researcher to know not only the research methods/techniques but also the methodology.

3.4.2 Data - Gathering Instruments and Procedures:

Data-gathering instruments are the tool used to collect data. Essentially the researcher must ensure that the instrument used is valid and reliable. (Margaret C. et al 2009) claim that:

Data collection is an important piece of many research projects. Using proper techniques ensures that data is collected in a scientific and consistent manner. Improving data collection techniques will enhance the accuracy, validity, and reliability of research findings.

3.4.3 Methods of Data Collection:

To obtain reliable and valid data for the study, a variety of data collection instruments were used including (i) survey questionnaires;(ii) audio-structured interviews and;(iii) class observations.Each instrument has a part to play in the survey work as each instrument is suitable for obtaining a specific type of data. Figure (9) below demonstrates the three data collecting techniques used in this study:

The three data-collecting tools used in this study

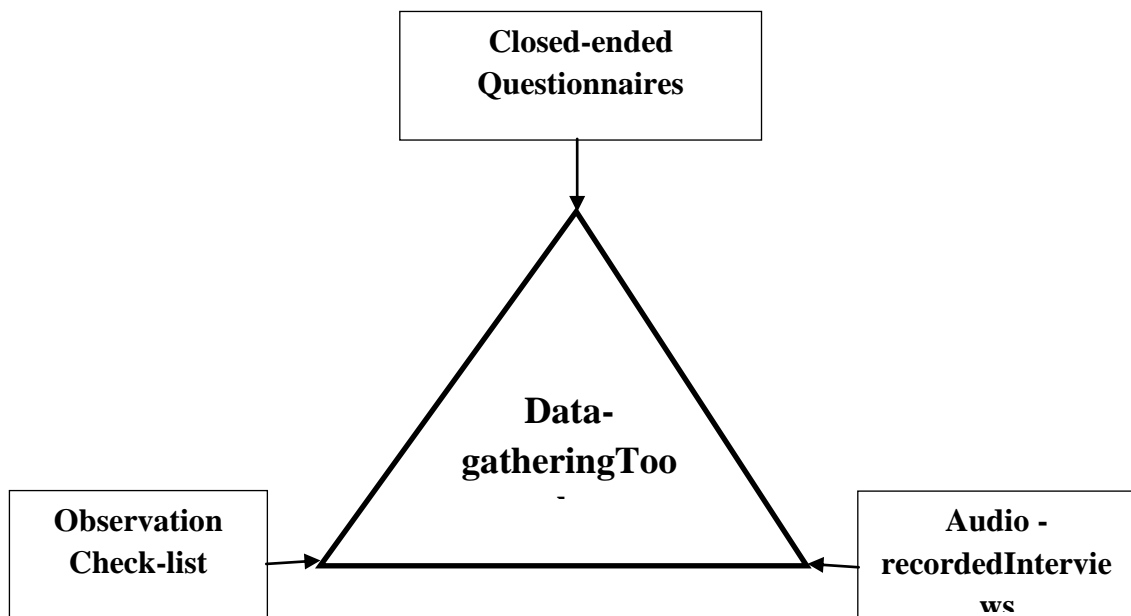


Figure (9): Explains the study data - gathering tools

Designed by the researcher

3.5 Procedures of Data Collection:

To carry out all these three instruments mentioned above, the process of data collection had to be put in four phases as follows:

(A) Phase (1): The preparation for data collection process:

This phase is very important because it lays the foundation for the whole process of data collection. In the first place, the data collection instruments were thoroughly considered by the researcher and finally three instruments were chosen to achieve the goal of this research:

- (i) Survey questionnaires,
- (ii) Audio-recorded interviews, and
- (iii) Class observation check list.

Also in this phase, two survey questionnaires and one interview schedule as well as the recording plan for the students were designed. Moreover, the observation checklist was also carefully prepared for class observation scheme. During this process, the researcher received a lot of advice from the supervisor and a lot of improvements were made. Furthermore, pilot questionnaires and interviews were conducted within a group of six male and female students majoring in English. These students were very enthusiastic because they had been familiar with the researcher for quite a long time of experience in the same university.

The results from these pilot interviews and questionnaires were very useful to formulate the satisfactory final draft. For examples, some technical terms were a bit difficult to understand, they were changed into simple English with specific examples to illustrate them. Besides all these things, a sampling procedure was also carried out in this phase to select the most representative sample for studying. At the end, a purposive sample was chosen, this was the all final students of English at the

faculties of Education and Arts .Appointments with the participants for interview and class observation was also made at this phase.

(B) Phase (2): Carrying out the instruments for the participants:

Concerning the students' questionnaires, the participants were asked to fill in,with the company of the researcher. The questionnaire items were frequently exchanged between the students and the researcher ensure the accurate comprehension of the questions, which would lead to the accuracy of the data obtained. After students finishing the questionnaire, the researcher continued with an informal conversation with them to check their comprehension of the research topic and to establish good rapport between the students and the researcher, which helped the questionnaire goes along. After selecting some students to participate in the interview, an advance notice was made to each interviewee to briefly be introduced with the interviewer, the research topic, the purpose and the nature of the research that the researcher was carrying out and invite their participation. After permission was given, an appointment was made at the students' convenience. Permission was also asked to tape record the interview. If the students allowed, the tape recording would be used and the researcher asked for any questions they had before actually recording the interview.

During the interview, all the main questions in the interview question paper were covered and they were asked one at a time. Besides, some extra questions were added frequently to exploit in-depth information relating to the research from the interviewees. Sometimes, some techniques like clarification or reflection were also used to clarify the interviewees' answers. During the interviews, the researcher took some notes on a piece of paper to help remember the process of the interview and to summarize the interviewees' main points.

(C)Phase (3): Observing classes and carrying out the questionnaires and interviews to the student: In the third phase, the class observations were conducted. After asking for permission from the faculty dean and the teachers of the classes observed, the researcher tried to get to know these classes and tried to become familiar to them so that the production process in speaking periods could take place in a natural way and in a comfortable atmosphere. In fact the researcher could observe only four different classes taught by different teachers and they were taught different lessons (conversation and pronunciation lesson). Therefore, the data collected was believed to be reliable and helpful enough to detect and disqualify any irrational findings collected from the questionnaires and interviews. During these lessons the observation checklist was fulfilled and some other observation notes were taken by the researcher, for instance, some students ‘and also teachers themselves’ mispronounced the fricative dental consonants /θ/,/ð/ while they were speaking or reading. After the lessons finished, the survey questionnaires were also distributed to the same students. Before asking them to fulfill the questionnaire, the researcher explained clearly to them the research topic and told them that if they had anything unclear about these questionnaire items, they could ask questions and the researcher would be willing to explain to them. By doing this, the researcher could limit the students’ misunderstanding of the questions which lead to the inaccuracy of the data obtained. Then the researcher arranged time with the interview participants. All the personal information was promised to be kept confidentially so that they could express their ideas freely and comfortably. The researcher recorded the voices of a group of sixteen students in a comfortable atmosphere.

(D)Phase (4):after collecting data from questionnaires, interviews, recordings and class observations, a plan for synthesizing and analyzing these data was quickly and thoroughly designed by the researcher to get the results.

3.5.1The Questionnaires:

Questionnaire is generally known as a systematically prepared form with a set of questions deliberately designed to elicit responses from the research informants for the purpose of obtaining information. Questionnaires are certainly an important means by which responses from people are captured, and they can be administered face to face; or as a web-site link. Dornyi, Z. (2002:6) defines questionnaires as: “*A questionnaire is an instrument for collection of data, usually in written form, consisting of open and /or closed questions and other problems requiring a response from subjects,*”. With their proved advantageous points, questionnaires have been used for such a long time in a number of studies in different fields.

In this research, two questionnaires were designed for students and teachers to explore the difficulties of English pronunciation among the final year major English students at faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University. One type of survey questionnaires namely closed-ended questions was employed in which the participants were asked to tick one option that was the most appropriate to them. Although the questionnaires were for students majoring in English, they were set in English and Arabic versions regarding the supervisor recommendation, as the aim was not to measure students proficiency rather than encouraging them to give as much information as they can, and students usually give better information in their L1. Yet language used is quite simple and familiar so that students can feel free and be at their best to express their thoughts.

3.5.1.1 Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires:

Survey questionnaire was used as the most important instrument because it is widely accepted that “*it can be sent fairly easily to a large number of people*”(Robinson, 1991, p12). Therefore, we can gather a large amount of information over a short time .In this research, the survey questionnaires were designed and distributed to both teachers and students. They were written in simple English with specific examples to illustrate the difficult terms to avoid possible misunderstanding, which could affect the accuracy of the outcomes.

The objective of the two questionnaires was to collect the factual data relating to this research. There are many reasons to believe that the use of various types of questionnaires is a very popular data collection technique. The advantages of questionnaires are: questionnaires are cheaper to administer than interviews; they are self-administered and can be sent out in one batch; the questionnaires can be sent through the mail or distributed to large groups of people at the same time.

In particular, closed questions, in which the respondent is asked to, select an answer from among a list provided by the researcher. Closed-ended questionnaire are very popular because they provide a greater uniformity of responses and are more easily processed for statistical analysis than open ended questions. Although many researchers believe that questionnaires are especially valuable because they are efficient, they also examine the major drawbacks of questionnaires. It may cause some difficulties for data collection and analysis such as, there is no guarantee that the questionnaires which have been sent out will be returned.

Security and reliability may be hard to ensure and additional data cannot be collected as the case in interviews. The researcher cannot prompt, probe or ask more questions in relation to the respondents’

individuals' beliefs. The effect of fatigue caused by a too long questionnaire may affect the research results.

3.5.1.2 The questionnaire design:

In this study, the first instrument of data collection is the closed-form questionnaire which was designed to elicit the difficulties that L2 pronunciation learners encountered during spoken English and their probable causes as well the plans and techniques to overcome these problems. To ensure validity and reliability of the questionnaires, the following steps have been taken:

1. The questionnaires were sent for judgment to some of the university teachers who have long experience in the field of English language teaching who specifically teach pronunciation courses.

2. The questionnaires have been modified according to the remarks made by these experts.

3. The students' questionnaire has been translated in to Arabic language as well as adding some expressions of tranquilization

4. A pilot study has been conducted in which the teachers' questionnaire has been given to four respondents. The participants' average experience is not less than ten years in teaching English language. The students' questionnaire consists of two domains which are the exploring errors made by Sudanese EFL learners at university level while the use of spoken English, the plans are adopted by students to overcome the L2 pronunciation problems and what are the suitable plans and strategies used for eliminating and improvement. The researcher used the five points Likert scale where the respondents can choose from (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree) to ensure validity and reliability. Questionnaires were conducted as follows:

(A) Distribution of Questionnaires:

The researcher distributed the final questionnaire's forms to the respondents during three weeks' time. The time of administering and returning of students' questionnaire is three weeks, whereas teachers' questionnaires took two months to be administered, completed and returned back. Both students' interviews and participants' observation had been conducted within two weeks' time.

(B) Collection of the Questionnaires:-

A reasonable range of time was given to the respondents to fill the forms offered to them. Then the researcher started to collect the questionnaire forms. The returns of students' questionnaire were successful. The number of the questionnaires distributed among the students were (86), fortunately the researcher succeeded to collect (70) questionnaires. Concerning the teachers' questionnaire the researcher was faced by some distribution and returning obstacles. (43) Questionnaire forms were distributed to the teachers, some of them were sent through the e-mail, unfortunately only (30) forms were received back. The research instrument distribution and data gathering process took more than two months specifically teachers' questionnaire due to the researchers work circumstances outside Sudan.

3.5.2 The Interview Identification:

According to (Margaret et.al, 2009, p.68)

Interviews are used for a variety of purposes. They can be used as a primary data gathering method to collect information from individuals about their own practices, beliefs, opinions, perceptions, attitudes and background information.

The interview is a method of collecting data by answering some questions asked by the researcher to the interviewees face to face, as a personal exam, as well as it's a technical relation between the researcher and the research sample prevails in exchanging confidence and relaxation aims at obtaining data that can help in solving problems.

The interview was conducted with a group of sixteen final year students in English Language Department. This interview aimed at finding out their perception of error making, their own errors in pronunciation that they usually made as well as the causes of error making. This interview was intended to take place in a very informal and comfortable atmosphere so that the students could share their opinion openly and freely. The interviews were designed for the students to have an insight into the answers collected in the questionnaires. The interviews comprised of closed- ended and open-ended questions.

To be more specific, the main objective of the interview was to obtain more reliable and practical information about final year students' errors and their probable causes. Based on their answers, the interviewer went further to ask them to give some more examples of specific errors of regarding segmental and supra-segmental features. The information collected helped a lot in answering the research questions and other sub-questions relating to this research.

Finally the last question in the interview was about their plans on how to reduce these errors in spoken English and that would help a lot in the final chapter of this research in suggesting better teaching and learning techniques and strategies of English segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation of English. So, as well as the questionnaire, the researcher used the audio structured- interview with students of English language department at the faculties of Arts and

Education in Shandi University. The learners' interview consists of four main questions.

3.5.2.1 Interviews Procedures:

Audio-recorded field structured interviews lasting approximately 15 minutes were conducted with each subject of the study to elicit information about the students attitudes towards learning English pronunciation and teaching techniques their teachers use to explain pronunciation lessons.

Later, this information will be reviewed for identification of common pronunciation errors made by EFL learners in spoken English. Interview questions were designed for (16) students of the final year majoring in English at the faculties of Arts and Education who are more experienced and much better in presenting their viewpoints than their peers. These(16) students were selected purposively from a population of eighty-six final-year students of the departments. Each participant was assigned a number during the data analysis procedure because of ethical considerations and they were reminded that this research would not be used for any assessment purposes and that personal details would be confidential. Participants were instructed to speak at a comfortable rate; *not* to stop, pause, or self-correct while they were speaking. The goal of these instructions was to maximize speech fluency as well as the number of errors produced. The entire session will be recorded for later perceptual analysis. The questions in the interview mainly aimed at investigating students' difficulties in learning English pronunciation.

Moreover, important information about main causes of these difficulties and teachers' possible solutions were hoped to be found after the interviews. However, for the difficulties they had in producing some

segmental English phonemes and some suprasegmental features although they had adequate phonetic knowledge for two semesters.

3.5.3 Participants Observation

To gather more practical evidence from real situation of teaching and learning English of the final year students in English language department, a participant observation was also employed in this research as a data collection instrument, but what is participant observation? Participant observation is a qualitative method with roots in traditional ethnographic research, whose objective is to help researchers learn the perspectives held by study populations.

Hopkins (1993, *cited in McDonough.1997: 101*) described observation as a *“pivotal activity” which played crucial role in classroom research, teachers’ personal professional growth and university development as a whole.*”

In this study, observation check list was employed after the two main research instruments above (questionnaires and interviews). This observation checklist was carefully compiled to collect more practical data from students’ behaviors that may occur within a given class. It was used as guide to making observations, not as a list of required characteristics. The observer responded to each statement using the following scale and the comment space below each section to provide more feedback or suggestions. The responses have been recorded on a list according to the following scale.

Accomplished very well =2,

More emphasis recommended =1,

Not observed = 0

The observation checklist included the two main problematic areas of pronunciation.

(i) Segmental errors

(ii)Supra-segmental errors. These are shown in details in table (8):

Table (8):Segmental and Supra-segmental Errors:

| Segmental Errors | Supra-segmental Errors |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sound-recognition problem areas | Word stress. |
| Consonantal cluster | Intonation rules |
| -ed verb and -e s plural endings | |

The data collected will be divided into different categories and analyzed based on different research questions and hypotheses relating to this study. In other words, observation checklist gave the researcher reasons for doing this research and then it helped in supporting the validity of the data obtained from the questionnaires and interview. To make students feel comfortable during the observation, the researcher just sat at the back row and took part in four different lessons as a non-participant observer.

3.6 Study Population

In this study, the population includes:

1. Final year students majoring in English at Faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University in 2014- 2015 academic Year. They are male and female students aging 21 and over.
2. The Teachers of English language in different Sudanese Universities with different qualifications and experiences for the academic year (2014-2015).
- 3.

3.6.1 StudySample

To gather comprehensive information about the common pronunciation errors made by the final year students in English Language department, and their possible causes, the process of data collection in this research involved the participation of the teachers of pronunciation who were teaching and who are now teaching in university.

Purposive sampling is recommended by many scholars. For example, (Barreiro and Albandoz. 2001.P.13) have claimed that“*Purposive sampling is one of the most common sampling strategies, groups participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question.*” Purposive sample sizes are often determined on the basis of the point in data collection when new data no longer bring additional insights to the research questions. In conducting the present study, a few limits are set as follow:

(i) Students:

The sample examined was a purposive sample of approximately (86) EFL undergraduate university students from among approximately 500 students in the Department of English, Faculties of Arts and Education; both male and female, majoring in English language participated in this study. They were all final year students who met the criteria of:

- (a) Having completed two semesters of English pronunciation courses;
- (b) Being currently enrolled in level eight courses, categorized as advanced-level courses in the English Department;
- (c) Having motivation to improve their language skills; and
- (d) Being sufficiently proficient in English to participate in the interview related to the research objectives.

Forty-two students from Faculty of Arts besides, twenty-eight from the Faculty of Education participated in the study. These students were

selected purposively from the final level in each faculty. The participating faculties and the number of students from each faculty are shown in table (9) below:

Table (9): The Participating Faculties and Students' Number:

| No | The Faculty | Number of students |
|----|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Faculty of Arts | 42 |
| 2 | Faculty of Education | 28 |
| | total | 70 |

(ii) Teachers:

The participating teachers are teachers of linguistics in general and teachers of phonetics and phonology, who had deep understanding of their students' pronunciation errors. Therefore, only thirty teachers were involved in data collection process to report the common errors their students usually make in pronunciation and to share their valuable experiences on this topic. Because of time-constraint, the researcher could not consult as many teachers as expected. That is the reason why the number of teachers participating in this study was unarguably limited. However, they were carefully selected so that their contribution would be reliable and best represent the opinions of most of the other teachers in English language department.

The selection of the teachers of pronunciation was on purpose so that their reflection on students' pronunciation errors would be reliable enough. Some of them were not teaching the final year students at the time of experimentation, but they had a lot of experiences working with

them while some others were teaching these students and so the information collected would be up to date. Besides, these teachers were teaching as many different classes as possible on the purpose to enhance the diversity of data collected. Because there were few English language teachers of pronunciation in the University of Shandi.

Thirty teachers of English language from different universities in Sudan were chosen purposively and requested to contribute to the current study. The data was collected in a quite frank way to facilitate the participants' task. Those selected teachers had different qualifications and experiences in (2014-2015) academic year.

(iii) University:

Shandi is a big city which has a big university called (University of Shandi), that the researcher chose for carrying out this study.

Moreover, this study is limited to other factors such as:

- ❖ The study was conducted at a university level; hence, results cannot be generalized to other levels of general schools or higher educational institutions.
- ❖ The study was conducted with EFL students whose mother tongue is Arabic.
- ❖ The study focused on both male and female university students.

The researcher selected the samples for the research:

- ❖ A non-random sample of (43) English language university teachers with different qualifications and experiences. (30) of them answered the questionnaires.

A non-random sample of (86) final year learners of English in Shandi University, Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education participated in this study, but only (70) of them answered the questionnaires.

3.7 Procedures of Data Analysis and Interpretation:

In this research study, the responses were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), to obtain accurate results. The present research combines both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. A word list including all problematic English vowel and consonant phonemes in various positions in words; consonant clusters examples; and a list of utterances of one and more syllables including some problematic suprasegmental aspects of phonology were used to elicit the pronunciation of the subjects in relation to problematic English at both segmental and suprasegmental levels. During this process, a voice recorder was utilized to record the subjects' voice. In order to obtain rich information; the study employed questionnaires as a main tool, observation check list and structured interview as research instruments to confirm the data obtained from the questionnaire.

The questionnaires which were used to test the hypotheses of the research were teachers' and students' questionnaires. This instrument was modified and adjusted by referees, and finally was improved and refined as the final versions of the questionnaire. The hypotheses have been tested to ensure that the statistics have been taken from the study participants to take the decision about the statistical characteristics.

3.8 Summary

This chapter demonstrates a clear and detailed plan to collect adequate and reliable data for analysis including the selection of subjects, research instruments, and procedures of data collection data analysis.

Moreover, this chapter highlights the methodology and the framework of the present study which mainly concentrates on the identification of the pronunciation difficulties that face EFL university students and the factors responsible for these obstacles.

In addition, it describes the subjects, the techniques, the materials and the instruments to be used. It also highlighted the basic issues of validity and reliability and showed how they would be observed in the research. The next chapter is devoted to presentation of the data results, analysis and discussion.

4.1 Introduction:

Data analysis is not a simple description of the data collected, but a process by which the researcher can carry out interpretation of the results to this data. Victor J. Schoenbach (2004 p.451) stated that, “*analyzing the data and interpreting the results are the “reward” for the work of collecting the data.*” Accordingly, in the following part, the researcher attempts an analysis and interpretation of the results collected by the various data-gathering tools.

The study was carried out with the purpose of investigating the English pronunciation errors that faced the final year university students majoring in English. It was mainly aimed at investigating English pronunciation errors that made by students at university level. However, there were other secondary objectives. The first one was to identify the errors through literature and their probable causes. The second aim was to conduct an investigation into errors committed by learners and experienced by teachers.

The main data-gathering tools were the questionnaires administered to the learners and teachers of English as foreign language. By using the questionnaires the researcher intended to identify the pronunciation errors and the factors such as mother tongue interference; lack of knowledge; insufficient time for practice; and low motivation, and other factors that might affect learning pronunciation. In addition, the study aimed at offering possible solutions for treatment and improvements. Specifically, this chapter was devoted to present the statistical responses from main data gathering- tools which are (teachers’ and students’ questionnaires), in addition to discuss the results revealed by these statistics. Furthermore, the study includes other two data gathering-tools: audio-structured interview to obtain information

from students and class observation check-list for both students and teachers. Their results were presented and interpreted in the following chapter.

1. The results of the two questionnaires were described and discussed separately in this chapter, and then the researcher discussed the relationship between the results of the different tools for the purpose of testing the three hypotheses which assumed that (i) The final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and read English; (ii) Pronunciation errors made by the students might significantly relate to mother-tongue interference little amount of the target language TL exposure.; (iii) Teachers and students have some remedial techniques that may help overcome learners' weaknesses and express themselves in better English.

In discussing the verification of the hypotheses for the questionnaires, the popular statistical package for social sciences program (SPSS) was used to analyze the collected data. The researcher used the Chi-square test and arithmetic mean to test the hypotheses. Chi-square test as defined by) is "*a statistical method assessing the goodness of fit between a set of observed values and those expected theoretically.*" The first tool used in this study was a close-ended questionnaire, which was prepared and checked in collaboration with some English language teachers. The questionnaire was designed to collect the data that support the study and confirm the findings from the other tools used in collecting the data for this study. With regard to the validity of the questionnaire, a number of five questionnaires were given to (5) of the participants as pilot group. To calculate the reliability coefficient; the researcher followed the Spearman Brown Equation. The value of the reliability and the validity lies in the range between (0-5) and the value of the reliability

coefficient was (86%), and the validity coefficient value was (93%) for the teachers' questionnaire. On the other hand, the value of the reliability coefficient was (88%), and the validity coefficient value was (94%) for the students' questionnaire. These values show that the questionnaire was valid and reliable.

4.2 Questionnaires Analysis Results:

This study composed of two questionnaires: (1) a students' questionnaire and (2) a teachers' questionnaire. The aim of these questionnaires was to obtain data to ascertain information regarding the pronunciation errors made by university students of English in Shandi University as well as finding the causes of these errors; and strategies or techniques for elimination. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analytical purposes. The results were presented in form of tables and charts as shown below.

4.2.1 Statistic Results of the Teachers' Questionnaire:

The teachers' questionnaire was distributed to (43) lecturers and assistant professors of English language in Shandi and other Sudanese Universities in Khartoum State. The teachers were selected purposively, regardless of their academic degrees or experience years. Thirty of the questionnaires were returned back to the researcher. The questionnaire consists of twenty-eight items which were structured into three categories as follows:

Category one:

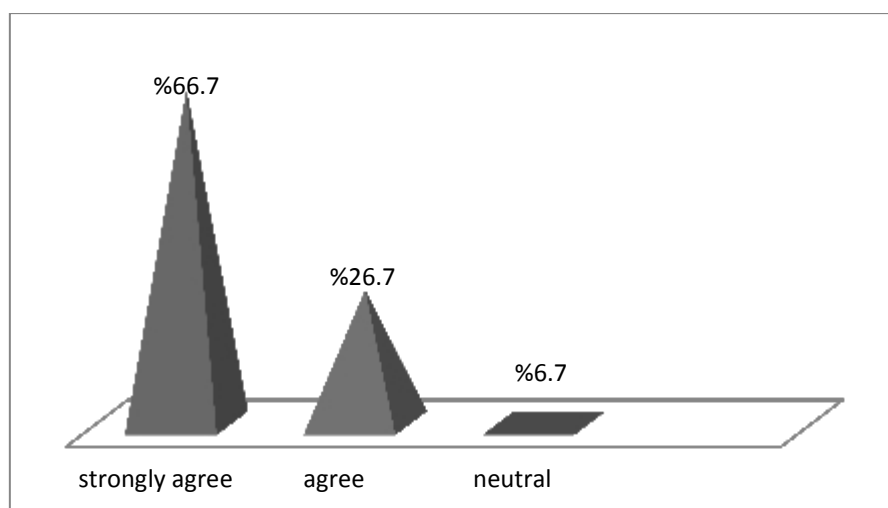
This part was devoted to seek information about the pronunciation errors that observed by the teachers while they administering pronunciation lessons. It contains nine items intended to identify the pronunciation errors made by the final year students of English at Shandi University. The teachers were kindly requested to indicate their answers by ticking (√)

one of the five options: “Strongly agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree”, and “Strongly disagree. The following charts and tables show the responses of teachers.

Table (10) explains the mispronunciation of sounds such as /ð,θ/, /p,v/.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 20 | 8 | 2 | - | - |
| Percentage | 66.7 | 26.7 | 6.7 | - | - |

Chart (1) explains the mispronunciation of sounds such as /ð,θ/, /p,v/.

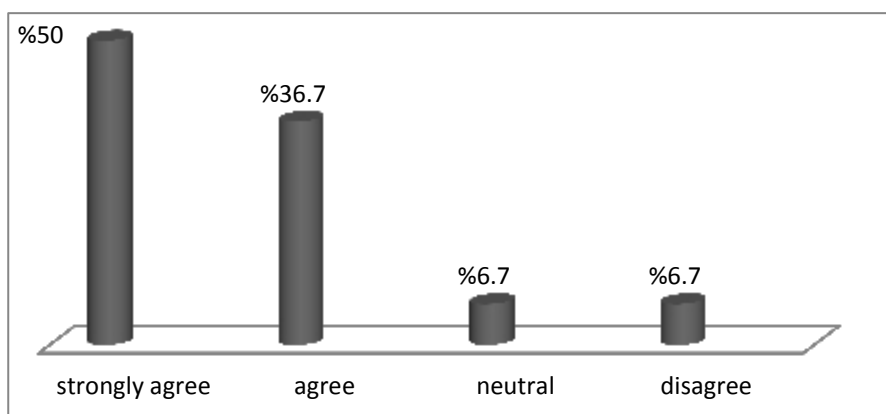


As can be seen in table (10) and chart (1), most of the teachers (93.4%) strongly agreed and agreed that they noticed some difficulties in pronouncing certain sounds in English among some of their students i.e. students made some errors when pronouncing some consonants that do not exist in Sudanese Spoken Arabic e.g. /θ,ð, p, v, / so they replace them with /s, z, b, f, /.(6.6%)of the teachers were not sure. This reflects that learners seemed to have trouble pronouncing particular sounds.

Table (11) explains the word stress position difficulty.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 15 | 11 | 2 | 2 | - |
| Percentage | 50 | 36.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 | - |

Chart (2) explains the word stress position difficulty.



From table (11) and chart (2), it is clear that a great majority of the teachers (86.7%) strongly agreed and agreed that students misplaced stress at word level, e.g. “liBRARY” instead of “LIbrary”. On the other hand, (6.7%) disagreed and (6.7%) were not sure.

Table (12) shows the syllabification difficulty.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 7 | 14 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| Percentage | 23.3 | 46.7 | 16.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 |

Table (12) shows that 70% of the teachers strongly agreed and agreed that their students face difficulty with the syllables division, while the same percentage (6.7%) displays the result of neutrality and disagreement.

Table (13) explains the phonetic transcription problematic area.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 7 | 17 | 5 | 1 | - |
| Percentage | 23.3 | 56.7 | 16.7 | 3.3 | - |

Table (13) revealed that a great percentage 80% of the participants strongly agreed and agreed that their students had problems with the phonetic transcription, 16.7% neutral, and 3.3% disagreed.

Table (14) explains the vowel length contrast difficulty.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 4 | 21 | 4 | 1 | - |
| Percentage | 13.3 | 70 | 13.3 | 3.3 | - |

Chart (3) explains the vowel length contrast difficulty.

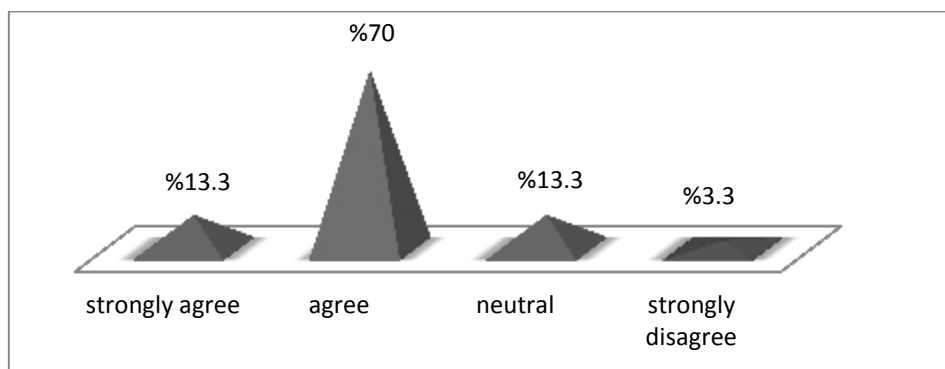


Table (14) and chart (3) provide an answer that from 83.3% of the study subjects had difficulty in the vowel length contrast such as /æ /and/ɑ:/. 3.3% of the participants disagreed and 13.3 were not sure.

Table (15) shows the final -e d and -e s difficulty.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 1 | 18 | 9 | 2 | - |
| Percentage | 3.3 | 60 | 30 | 6.7 | - |

Chart (4) shows the final -e d and -e s difficulty.

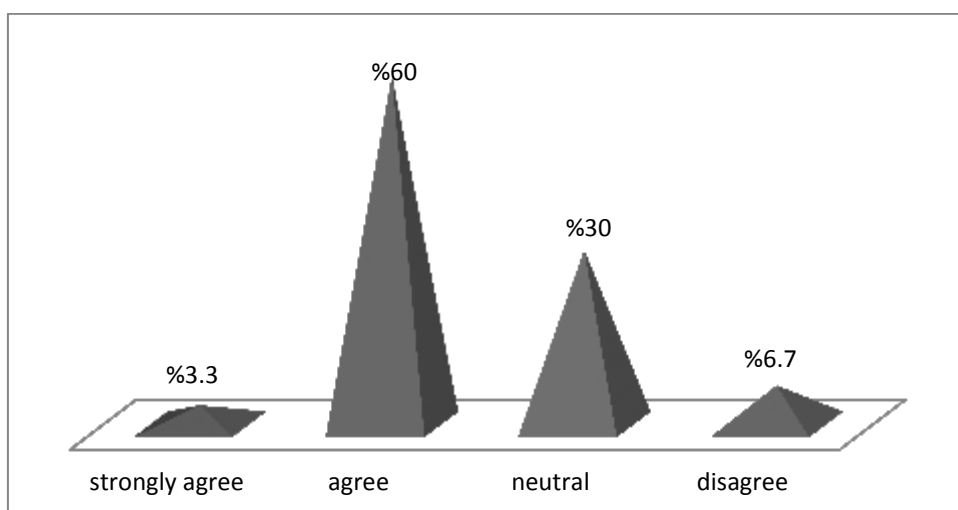


Table (15) and chart (4) indicate that 63.3% of the participants strongly agreed that their students mispronounced the final *-ed and -es* as in the words “*looked* and *bags*”, 6.7% disagreed and 30% were not sure.

Table (16) explains consonantal cluster difficulty.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 9 | 12 | 4 | 5 | - |
| Percentage | 30 | 40 | 13.3 | 16.7 | - |

Chart (5) explains consonantal cluster difficulty.

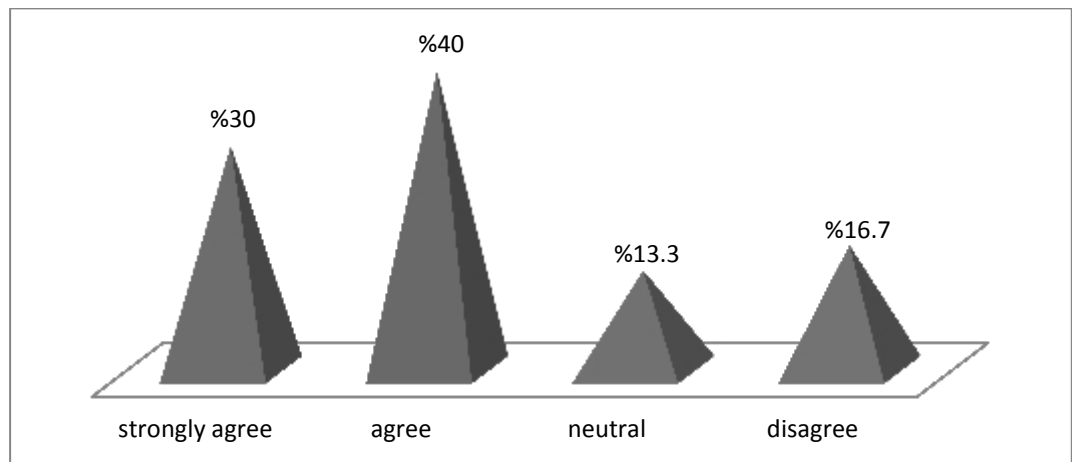


Table (16) and chart (5) show responses on students' difficulties with consonantal cluster. 70% of the teachers strongly agreed and agreed that their students faced difficulty with pronunciation of consonant clusters as in "spread" and "next". 16.7% disagreed and 13.3% were not sure.

Table (17) explains the insertion of unnecessary vowels at word boundaries and medial.

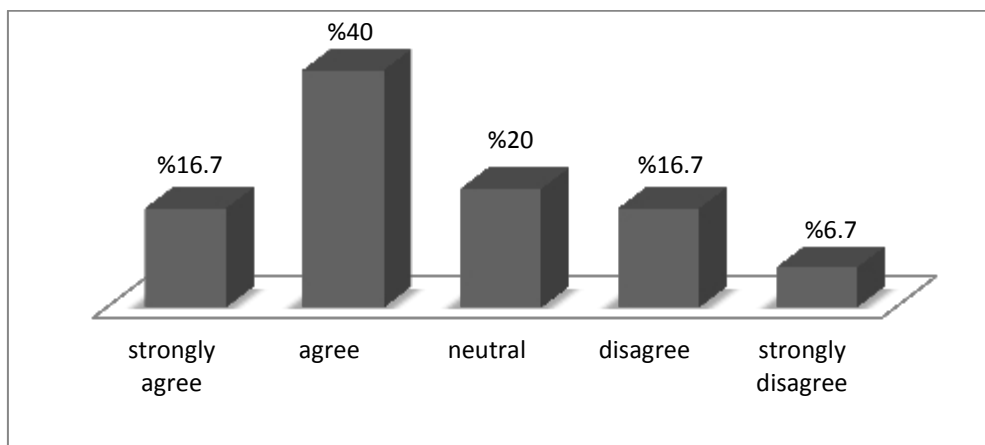
| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 7 | 14 | 6 | 3 | - |
| Percentage | 23.3 | 46.7 | 20 | 10 | - |

The statistic result of adding unnecessary sound at word boundaries is shown in table (17). 70% of the subjects strongly agreed and agreed that their students inserted unnecessary sound at word boundaries, such as /I/ in “spring” becomes /sprɪŋ / in order to facilitate its pronunciation. Only 20% of the subjects were not sure and, 10. % disagreed.

Table (18) explains the use of intonation

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 5 | 12 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| Percentage | 16.7 | 40 | 20 | 16.7 | 6.7 |

Chart (6) explains the use of intonation



Table(18)and chart (6) intend to establish students’awareness of intonation rules. From56.7% the teachers strongly agreed and agreed that learners had problems with intonation e.g. they tend to produce wh-questions and tag-question with wrong tune, 20% were not sure and 16.7% disagreed. Comparing with other problems, intonation seemed to be less problematic area.

Category Two:

The second category contains six items intended to elicit the teachers' opinions about the factors that might contribute to pronunciation errors that made by students. These factors are assumed to be mother-tongue interference; low motivation; insufficient time for practice; and lack of knowledge. The statistics are shown in tables and charts.

Table (19) displays the impact of the *lack of knowledge on pronunciation*.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 5 | 11 | 7 | 7 | - |
| Percentage | 16.7 | 36.7 | 23.3 | 23.3 | - |

Table (19) shows the statistical analysis on pronunciation errors caused by poor pronunciation knowledge. More than half of the participants 53.4% strongly agreed and agreed that students had poor pronunciation because of the lack of knowledge. 23.3% were not sure, and 23.3% disagreed.

Table (20) explains the mother-tongue interference impact.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 13 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| Percentage | 43.3 | 30 | 16.7 | 6.7 | 3.3 |

Chart (7) explains the mother-tongue interference impact.

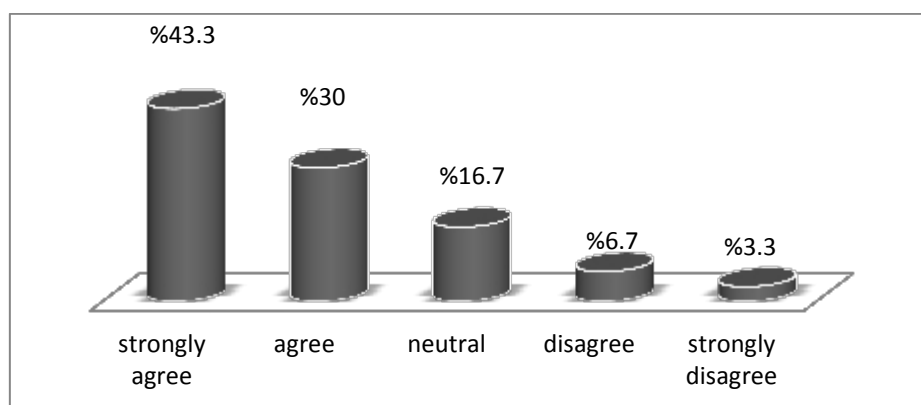


Table (20) and chart (7) display that 73.3% of the teachers' responses agreed that mother tongue contributes largely to learners' pronunciation errors. From 6.7% to 3.3% strongly disagreed and disagreed.

Table (21) shows the lack of rules practice impact on pronunciation.

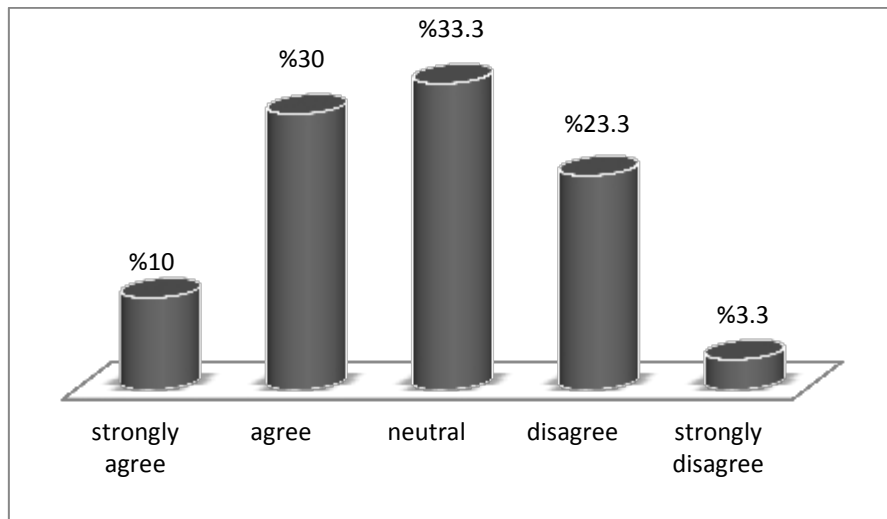
| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 17 | 8 | 4 | 1 | - |
| Percentage | 56.7 | 26.7 | 13.3 | 3.3 | - |

Table(21) reflects the results of pronunciation errors due to the lack of rules practice. It is apparent that the learners have difficulties in pronunciation as a result of rules ignorance. A vast majority of the teachers' %83.4 strongly agreed and agreed, only 3.3% of them disagreed and 13.35 were not sure.

Table (22) explains that whether or not lacking of motivation affects pronunciation learning.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 3 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 1 |
| Percentage | 10 | 30 | 33.3 | 23.3 | 3.3 |

Chart (8) explains the motivation affects pronunciation learning.



According to table (22) and chart (8), it would appear that there might be a general lack of awareness towards the importance of motivation effect on pronunciation learning, because 33.3% of the teachers were not sure whether they could keep their students motivated or not. 40% of them strongly agreed and agreed and 36.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed.

Table (23) shows the opinions on the time to teach pronunciation basics.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 4 | 10 | 8 | 8 | - |
| Percentage | 13.3 | 33.3 | 26.7 | 26.7 | - |

The result in table (23) reveals that less than half of the subjects, 46.6% strongly agreed and agreed that time devoted to teach aspects of pronunciation is insufficient. However, 26.7% of the subjects were not sure and, 26.7% disagreed. This indicates that learning pronunciation is affected by time inadequacy.

Table (24) explains the time taken to introduce the pronunciation basics.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 15 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Percentage | 50 | 23.4 | 10 | 13.3 | 3.3 |

Table(24) reflects the result on the time amount that taken to introduce and practice the pronunciation basics. The majority of the teachers, 73.3% agreed that time was insufficient. From 13.3% to 3.3% were disagreed and strongly disagreed. The remaining was not sure.

Category Three:

The third category consists of thirteen items designed to elicit the techniques and plans of pronunciation improvement.

Table (25) displays the importance of repetition technique.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 12 | 17 | 1 | - | - |
| Percentage | 40 | 57 | 3 | - | - |

Table (25) displays the responses on pronunciation treatment techniques. The vast majority of teachers, 97% strongly agreed and agreed that repetition helps students to become more familiar with the correct pronunciation. None of them disagreed and only 3% were not sure. This indicates the teachers' had general awareness about the use of repetition as pronunciation improvement techniques.

Table (26) explains the use of the audio & visual aids.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 23 | 7 | - | - | - |
| Percentage | 77 | 23 | - | - | - |

Chart (9) explains the use of the audio & visual aids .

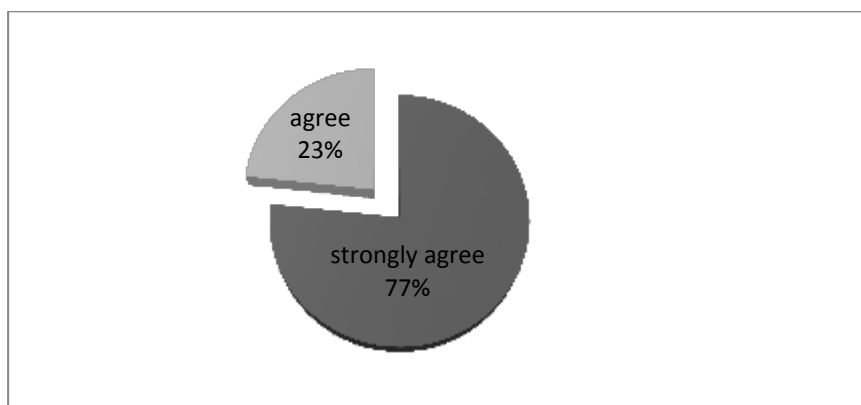


Table (26) and chart (9) established the importance of audio and visual aids in teaching pronunciation. According to these responses, all of the teachers, 100% strongly agreed and agreed on the importance of audio and visual aids in teaching pronunciation. This might indicate a general awareness about the importance of the wall charts, videos and CDs Rom. *Table (27) explains the importance of dictionary.*

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 14 | 12 | 4 | - | - |
| Percentage | 46.7 | 40 | 13.3 | - | - |

Table (27) shows the statistics of the importance of the dictionaries in teaching pronunciation. The result revealed that from 46.6% to 40% of the teachers preferred to use dictionaries. This high percentage indicates a general awareness about the importance of dictionaries.

Table (28) explains the importance of time to practice transcription.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 12 | 13 | 2 | 3 | - |
| Percentage | 40 | 43 | 7 | 10 | - |

The result of the importance of devoting sufficient time to practice phonetic transcription is shown in table (28). 83% strongly agreed and agreed that dealing with the phonetic transcription requires enough time for practice. Only 10 % of the subjects disagreed and 7% were not sure.

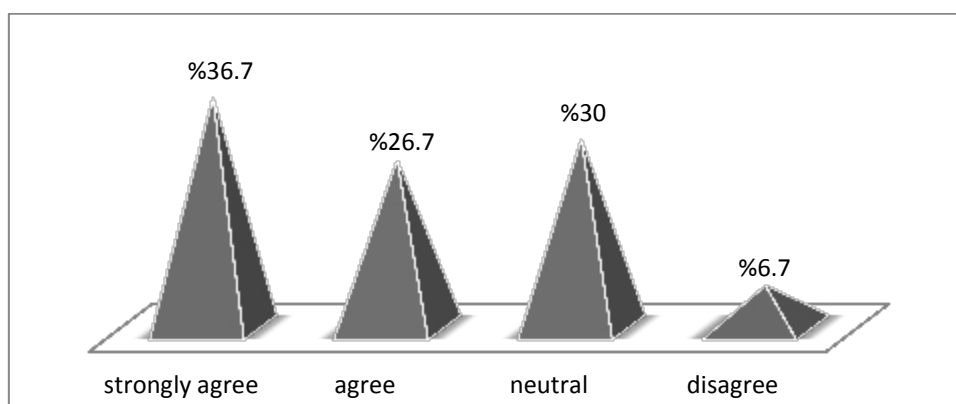
Table (29) explains the use of e-dictionaries in teaching pronunciation.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 6 | 17 | 3 | 4 | - |
| Percentage | 20 | 57 | 10 | 13 | - |

According to table (29), 77% of the teachers strongly agreed and agreed e-dictionaries were important, 10% were not sure, 13% disagreed. This might indicate that teachers were aware of e-dictionaries importance. *Table (30) explains the impact of the amount of target language exposure on learning pronunciation*

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 11 | 8 | 9 | 2 | - |
| Percentage | 36.7 | 26.7 | 30 | 6.7 | - |

Chart (10) explains the impact of the target language exposure.



Table(30) and chart (10)show that the amount of exposure to the target language largely contributes to improving pronunciation. The result revealed that 63.4% of the teachers strongly agreed and agreed .Only 6.7% disagreed.

Table(31) explains the useof recording students’ voice in tests.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 5 | 16 | 8 | 1 | - |
| Percentage | 16.7 | 53.3 | 26.7 | 3.3 | - |

Table (31)demonstrates that the majority of the respondents, 70% strongly agreed and agreed that, recording students' voices was a good technique to test pronunciation knowledge. 26.7% were not sure and 3.3% disagreed.

Table (32) explains the use of mimickingin teaching pronunciation.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutra | Disagr | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|--------|--------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 13 | 14 | 2 | 1 | - |
| Percentage | 43.3 | 46.7 | 6.7 | 3.3 | - |

As can be seen in table (32),the findings revealed that 90% of the sample strongly agreed and agreed that they use of mimicking to explain some pronunciation elements. Only 3.3% disagreed and the remaining .6.7% were not sure. This result might give a good impression towards the importance of mimicking technique in teaching pronunciation.

Table (33) explains the use of segment discrimination technique.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 11 | 18 | 1 | - | - |
| Percentage | 36.7 | 60 | 3.3 | - | - |

Table (33) reflected that the great majority of the respondents, 96.7% strongly agreed and agreed that segment discrimination was a good technique. On the other hand, only 3.3% of the sample disagreed.

Table (34) explains the use of listening texts on CDs or video.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 16 | 12 | 2 | - | - |
| Percentage | 53 | 40 | 7 | - | - |

Table (34) shows that, the great majority, 93% of teachers used listening texts on CDs or video. None of them disagreed. This might indicate a general awareness of the importance of listening texts and videos. The remaining was not sure.

Table (35) explains the use of *speech rhythm*.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 11 | 12 | 4 | 3 | - |
| Percentage | 37 | 40 | 13 | 10 | - |

The result in table(35)showsthat 77% of the teachers used speech rhythm drills. Only 10% of the teacher disagreed and 13% were not sure.

Table (36) explains the use of imitation in teaching pronunciation.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 16 | 12 | 2 | - | - |
| Percentage | 53 | 40 | 7 | - | - |

As can be seen in table (36),the teachers represented a high percentage %93 of agreement towards the use of imitation in teaching pronunciation. Only7% of the participantswere not sure.

Table (37) explains collaboration with other teachers.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 12 | 10 | 3 | 5 | - |
| Percentage | 40 | 33 | 10 | 17 | - |

The teachers were asked to respond to an item designed to ascertain their opinions about the collaboration with the teachers of phonetics and phonology. The result in table (37) reflected the teachers'positive attitudes toward sharing new ideas with other teachers because the statistics indicate that the majority of the teachers, 73%strongly, agreed and agreed that they collaborate with otherteachers. On the other hand, the lowest percentage, 17%, showed that the teachers disagreed.

Table (38): The Range of the Responses Due to the Arithmetic Mean

| Range | Acceptation |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| From 1 to 1.79 | Strongly disagree |
| From 1.80 to 2.59 | Disagree |
| From 2.60 to 3.39 | Neutral |
| From 3.40 to 4.19 | Agree |
| From 4.20 to 5 | Strongly agree |

4.2.2 Verification of the hypotheses of Teachers'

Questionnaire:

1 The First hypothesis

Results and analyses of the first hypothesis, which assumes that “*The final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken English.*”, are illustrated in Table (39):

Table (39) explains Chi-square tests results for respondents' answers about the items of the first category that concerned with the errors identification:

| First Category Items | Chi-square | DF(*) | Alpha coefficient | Result | Attitude |
|---|------------|-------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. I have noticed some difficulties in pronouncing certain sounds in English among my students. | 16.800 | 2 | 0.000 | Significant | Strongly agree |
| 2. It is difficult for my students to apply the rules of stress. | 17.200 | 3 | 0.001 | Significant | Strongly agree |
| 3. My students encounter difficulties with the syllabification. | 5.467 | | 0.141 | Insignificant | Agree |
| 4. The majority of students have major problems with phonetic transcription. | 18.533 | | 0.000 | Significant | Agree |
| 5. My students have a problem with vowel length contrast. | 2.533 | | 0.46 | insignificant | Agree |
| 6. Final (e) d & (e) s pronunciation is difficult for my students. | 24.667 | | 0.000 | Significant | Agree |
| 7. Students encounter difficulties with the initial and final consonantal cluster. | 5.567 | | 0.141 | insignificant | Strongly agree |
| 8. My students add unnecessary sound at word boundaries | 8.667 | | 0.034 | Significant | Agree |
| 9. My students use rising tone in wh-questions and all tag-questions. | 9.000 | | 4 | 0.06 | insignificant |

Note: DF = Degree of freedom

The teachers answered nine 5-point Likert-style items intended to measure their opinions and ideas of pronunciation difficulties that might face their students in speaking English. According to the above table, the researcher can interpret the results as follow:

1. The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' answers in the 1st item was (0.000) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the

* (Number of Lickert's levels-1)

teachers, which support the teachers who believed that some of the final year students of English in Shandi University mispronounced words that contain voiced and voiceless dental fricatives /θ/ as in thank and /ð/ as in they; voiced labio-dental fricative /v/ as in van; and the voiceless bilabial plosive /p/ as in park. the SSEs in Shandi University had some difficulties in pronouncing certain sounds in English such as /ð/, /θ/, and /p/, and /v/. This result confirmed the first item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that “*some students of English in in Shandi University have some pronunciation difficulties with certain sounds in English such as /ð/, and /θ/, /p/ and /v/.*”

2. The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ answers in the second item was (0.001) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). According to table (39), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that word stress position was a problematic area that final year students of English in Shandi University might face. This result confirmed the second item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that it is difficult for students to apply the rules of stress.

3. The calculated value of the differences for the teachers’ answers in the third item was (0.141) which is greater than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that students of English in Shandi University faced by difficulties with dividing words into syllables. The researcher believes that, this might give an impression that the participants seemed to consider that division of words into syllables was not a pronunciation

obstacle because less than half of the teachers (46.7%) agreed that syllabification was problematic area among their students.

4. The calculated value of the differences for the teachers' answers in the fourth item was (0.000) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that phonetic transcription was a major problem among SUSE. This result confirmed the fourth item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that the majority of students had major problems with phonetic transcription.

5. The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' answers in the fifth item was (0.46) which is greater than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that SSEs in Shandi University faced by difficulties with vowel recognition.

6. The calculated value of the differences for the teachers' answers in the sixth item was (0.000) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that their students mispronounced the final -ed and -es. This result indicates that, students have lack of knowledge or less attention to the limited rules of pronouncing the final -ed and -es in words such as /ɑ:skɪd/ and /bægz/ instead of /ɑ:skt/ and /bægz/ in *asked* and *bags*. This result confirmed the sixth item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that the final -ed and -es pronunciation is difficult for students.

7. The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' answers in the third item was (0.141) which

is greater than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that consonant clusters seemed to be the most difficult aspects in pronunciation that SUSE faced. The researcher would like to note that, less than half of the teachers (40%) agreed that a consonantal cluster was a problematic area among their students. However, this finding was not accordance with the previous studies mentioned earlier in the literature review that, as has been claimed by (Revell. P, 2012) that three element consonant clusters may be problematic, at the beginning and end of words, for example: “street”, “play”, “next”, “tests”, “looked”...etc.

8. The calculated value of the differences for the teachers’ answers in the eighth item was (0.034) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that SUSE added unnecessary sound at word boundary. This result confirmed the eighth item of testing the first hypothesis.

9. The calculated value of Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ answers in the fifth item was (0.06) which is greater than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that SUSE faced by difficulties with intonation rules.

The researcher would like to conclude that table (39), indicates that, most of the statements in this axis are significant, because the value of the Alpha coefficient level is less than 0.05%. If we look on this hypothesis, “*Final year students of English at Shandi University have*

pronunciation errors profiles in spoken English,”we will find that students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and English.

Taking the results of the first category responses as a whole, the initial hypothesis was proven right. It is worth noting that the findings of this study are in accordance with the previous studies mentioned in the literature review earlier. For example, O'Connor (2003, p: 198) states that learning English language is often a great challenge to Arab learners when they practice speaking *“Arabic speakers according to their language background, face some difficulties in their English pronunciation. These difficulties lead to mispronunciation.”*

Furthermore, it could then be said that the most of the English major students in Shandi University did not have poor segmental and suprasegmental knowledge. The results of the questionnaire in table (10) shows that (66.7%) of the subjects strongly agreed that the students failed to pronounce certain target sounds such as /θ, ð, p, v, / correctly. They substituted them with / s, z, b, f /.

Revell's (2012) study findings were consistent with the current study, in which she pointed out that [p] vs. [b] –Arabic speakers tend to produce [p] with no aspiration so it might sound [b], for example “bebsi” for “pepsi”.No affricates [dʒ, tʃ] in Arabic language- [ʃ] maybe substituted for [tʃ] for example (“ships” rather than “chips”) and[ʒ] as in “pleasure”, may be substituted for [dʒ], “joke”. No dental fricatives [θ, ð] – students may use either [t] or [s] for [θ] and [d] or [z] for [ð]. However, the results of (Pamela,R.2012p.270) studies showed a great deal of inconsistency with the result of this study when she explained that there are more vowel in English than Arabic so learners will tend to substitute their smaller number of vowels for the English vowel. For

example: / ɪ/ /e/ confusion as in ‘bit’; ‘bet’; /ɔ:/ / /əʊ/ confusion as in bought; boat and /æ/ /e/ confusion in man; men. Regarding the sounds mispronunciation; consonant clusters and stress patterns.

Yates.L and Zielinski, B (2009) have supported this result in their study when they consider the particular pronunciation difficulties experienced by learners from five different languages backgrounds: Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, Thai and Korean. Based on the findings from their study, these difficulties are (i) *consonants and vowels difficulty*, (ii) *Challenging consonant clusters* (iii) *stress pattern*. However, in testing this hypothesis, the results revealed that consonant clusters were not a problematic area. This result might give an impression that, from the respondents’ point of view that a consonant cluster was not an obstacle that affects pronunciation efficiency.

However, this result was not in the line of Na'ama's, (2011) study on Yemeni/Hodeidah University students in the area of English consonant clusters system. This causes a major problem for Yemeni university students. The researcher however believes that such problems still considered as big ones for a person who wants to speak with correct or intelligible pronunciation, and for someone whose career in the future is related to the field of English language. This finding seemed to be in the line with the finding reported by (Revel, P 2012 p.271) who has claimed that, the rules of English word stress placement differ from that of Arabic language which can cause problems because stress system in Arabic is more regular. She has continued that, Arabic speakers will tend to stress the final syllables if ends in a vowel followed by two consonants, as in the word “comfort”.

However, this result was inconsistent with the previous studies. For example, (Roach, P. 2009 p. 60) when he has pointed out that there

were still problems with the division of words into syllables, he continued that an unanswered question is how to decide on the division between syllables when we find a connected sequence of them syllables as we usually do in normal speech. Indeed, these results seemed to confirm the findings of previous studies as claimed by (Roach .etal 2009) that, because of the notoriously confusing nature of English spelling it is particularly important to learn to think of English pronunciation in terms of phonemes rather than letter of the alphabet.

For more support for the complicity of the phonetic transcription, (Zsiga, E.2013 p.17) added that: “*English is a language uses an alphabet in which the correspondence between sounds and letter may be less straightforward or to be a large extent arbitrary.*” Moreover, the results revealed that students failed to differentiate between long and short vowels such as /æ/and/a: /. However this result was not in accordance with the Chi-square tests results shown in table (39). The researcher refers this contradiction the study subjects themselves. They seemed to believe that vowel length contrast was not a serious problem that might give rise to misunderstanding.

Furthermore, the result reflects that SSEs failed to pronounce words which contain final -ed or -es, they intend to insert unnecessary sound in word boundary to facilitate their pronunciation. It is worth noting that, this result showed a great deal of accordance with (Revell, P 2012:272) when she explained that accentuation works in a similar way in Arabic and English. There is no doubt that intonation plays an important role in communication. The use of an inappropriate intonation pattern may give rise to misunderstandings. Such misunderstanding can be major or minor depending on the context in which the intonation pattern is used.

2 The Second Hypothesis:

Results and analyses related to the second hypothesis, which assumes that “*Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and the little amount of TL exposure.*” were discussed in this part. To test this hypothesis, six items were prepared to elicit the teachers’ opinions about the factors that might contribute to segmental and suprasegmental errors made by the 3rd and 4th year students of English in Shandi University. These factors were assumed to be *mother-tongue interference and little amount of TL exposure*. Table (40) below shows the participants’ responses towards hypothesis two:

Table (40) explains the Chi-square tests results for respondents’ answers about the items of the second category which concerned the factors affect pronunciation:

| Statement of the second category | Chi-square | DF | Alpha coefficient | Result | Attitude |
|---|------------|----|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. My students make pronunciation errors due to the lack of knowledge. | 2.533 | 3 | 0.46 | In significant | Agree |
| 2. Most of the pronunciation errors are made due to the influence of mother-tongue | 16.667 | | 0.000 | Significant | agree |
| 3. My students make pronunciation errors because of the lack of rules practice | 19.333 | | | | Strongly agree |
| 4. It is hard to keep students motivated. | 10.000 | 4 | 0.000 | Significant | agree |
| 5. Time is insufficient to cover all the pronunciation aspects | 2.533 | 3 | 0.47 | In Significant | agree |
| 6. Introducing pronunciation basics takes much time since the students ignore them. | 20.000 | 4 | 0.000 | Significant | agree |

Note DF=degree of freedom

With regard to the results of testing the second hypothesis, which assumes that “*Pronunciation errors made by the university students are*

significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of TL exposure.” the interpretation was stated as follow:

The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ answers in the second item was (0.46) which is greater than the value of significance at the level (.05%). According to table (40), this indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that, pronunciation errors made by 3rd and 4th year students of English in Shandi University, due to the lack of knowledge. This result did not confirm the first item of testing the second hypothesis which claims that “*Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and the little amount of the TL exposure.*”

The researcher would like to note that, basing on table (19), (36.7%) of the teachers agreed that lack of knowledge leads to mispronunciation. This might give an impression that the teachers believe that lack of knowledge does not affect intelligible pronunciation, and that is why these two results are contradiction in terms. The researcher however believes that a S/FL learner meets some difficulties, because his/her lack of pronunciation knowledge affects his/her foreign language and this effect is a result of insufficient practice so it is significant source of making errors for second and foreign language learners.

The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ answers in the sixth item was (0.000) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that the mother tongue interference has an impact on pronunciation learning. This result

confirmed thesecond item of testing the second hypothesis which claims that“*Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of TL exposure.*”

Similar studies concurred with these results. For example,Coridor (1967); Richard (1971) and Selinker (1992) have claimed that native language interference is the most important factor in the target language learning and acquisition and errors made by L2 learners can be attributed to their native language. Errors can be considered to be evidence of strategies that the learner uses in order to learn. Moreover both Anker (2000) and Kenworthy (1987 believed that mother- tongue interference affects the pronunciation and leads to some errors. Moreover, Ezzeldin Mahmoud Tajeldin Ali (2013) has reported that the main linguistic causes of these production errors were mother-tongue interference and lack of English knowledge. So his study finding is in accordance with the findings of this research.

The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ answers in the third item was (0.000) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed thatstudents make pronunciation errors because of the lack of rules practice. This result confirmed the third item of testing the second hypothesis which claims that“*Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of TL exposure*”.

The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ answers in the fourth item was (0.000) which

is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that motivation has a significant role in improving F/SLL but it is difficult for them to keep their students motivated. This result confirmed the fourth item of testing the second hypothesis which claims that “*Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of TL exposure*”. In relation to previous studies, this result might be in accordance with the previous studies. Rivers (1983) argued that developing stimulating students’ motivation in the classroom should be the responsibility of the teacher, in order to increase the students’ learning capabilities. He suggested that “*using interesting activities could enhance students’ motivation.*”

Many studies have been undertaken to explore the role of motivation in improving foreign or second language learning. For instance, according to Zoltan Dornyei (2009, 217): “*Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement.*”

When the teachers were asked whether or not the time devoted to cover all basic elements of pronunciation aspects was insufficient, the calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the responses differences was (0.47) which is greater than the value of significance at the level (.05%). According to table (40), this indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that, time is insufficient to cover all the pronunciation aspects. This result did not confirm the second item of testing the second hypothesis which claims that “*Pronunciation errors*

made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of TL exposure". The researcher would like to note that, based on table (24), (40%) of the teachers agreed that insufficient time leads to pronunciation weakness.

1. The calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' answers in the sixth item was (0.000) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that teachers take much time to introduce the pronunciation basics since the students have no idea about them. This result confirmed the sixth item of testing the second hypothesis which claims that "*Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of TL exposure*".

Elliot (1995) has supported this result mentioning that teachers tend to view pronunciation as the least useful of the basic language skills and therefore they generally sacrifice teaching pronunciation in order to spend valuable class time on other areas of language. Possibly, teachers just do not have the background or tools to properly teach introduce all basic pronunciation elements.

On the whole, the findings with regard to the items from 10 to 15 which assumed that pronunciation difficulties faced by the students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and the little amount of exposure and other contributory factors. These contributed factors might be insufficient time for practice; letter and sounds inconsistency and incomplete pronunciation knowledge. Many studies are in agreement with the finding of this study. For example, Gass and Selinker (2008, p.102) have supported this noting that: "*Errors can be taken as red flags;*

they provide windows onto a system - that is, evidence of the state of a learner's knowledge of the L2."

To conclude, table (40) reflected that pronunciation errors made by the students of English in Shandi University seemed to be significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of exposure, in addition to time insufficiency for introducing and practicing pronunciation basics, and poor pronunciation knowledge. Taking the results of the second category responses as a whole, the second hypothesis was proven right.

3. The Third Hypothesis:

This part of the study briefly covers some of techniques that teachers might be useful in order to understand the needs of learners and how they can be helped to improve their pronunciation. Recognizing their important roles in guiding and helping students to face such difficulties, all thirty teachers were eager to share their ideas about teaching techniques they may use in their lessons. Some recommendations are provided in the teachers' answers in table (41).

Table (41) explains the Chi-square tests results for respondents' answers about the items of the third hypothesis which concerns the plans and techniques of pronunciation errors treatments:

| Statements of the third category | Mean | Chi-square | DF | Alpha coefficient | Result | Attitude |
|---|------|------------|------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1.Repetition facilitates the acquisition of English pronunciation | 4.37 | 13.400 | 2 | 0.001 | Significant | Strongly agree |
| 2.Using of audio & visual aids is important in teaching pronunciation | 4.76 | 8.533 | | 0.003 | | Strongly agree |
| 3. Teachers should make use of e- dictionaries as well. | 4.33 | 5.600 | | 0.06 | Insignificant | Strongly agree |
| 4.There should be enough time to practice phonetic transcription | 4.13 | 13.467 | 3 | 0.004 | Significant | Agree |
| 5. Using dictionaries is highly recommended in teaching pronunciation | 3.83 | 16.667 | | 0.001 | | Agree |
| 6.Being in contact with the target language helps learners to correct their pronunciation errors | 4.57 | 15.800 | 2 | 0.000 | | Strongly agree |
| 7.A good technique to test pronunciation is to record students' dialogues or readings | 3.93 | 6.000 | 3 | 0.112 | Insignificant | Agree |
| 8.I consider the use of mimicking to explain some features of pronunciation | 4.30 | 16.333 | | 0.000 | Significant | Agree |
| 9.Segment discrimination is a technique that helps students to learn the pronunciation of words easily | 4.33 | 14.600 | | 0.001 | | Strongly agree |
| 10. I allow the class to listen to words or texts on CDs, Tape recorders or videos | 4.46 | 14.600 | | 0.000 | | Strongly agree |
| 11.Speech rhythm exercises help students to be fluent and give them the chance to practice stress and intonation. | 4.03 | 10.400 | | | | |
| 12.I ask my students to imitate what I say | 4.47 | 8.667 | | 0.034 | Strongly agree | |
| 13. I collaborate with the teachers of phonetics | 3.97 | 7.067 | 0.07 | Insignificant | agree | |

Note DF=degree of freedom

As can be seen in table (41) that, there was a high level of agreement about the significant role of repetition and imitation techniques in facilitating pronunciation learning and acquisition. The calculated value of the differences for the teachers' answers in the first item was (0.001) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that repetition and imitation play an important role in learning of English pronunciation.

According to the statistical analysis, all of the teachers, (100%) strongly agreed and agreed that audio and visual mostly contribute to facilitating pronunciation teaching process. This was supported by the result of Chi-square tests results for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' answers in the second item (0.001), which claims that, audio / visual aids are important in teaching pronunciation.

In comments about an e-dictionary as an important tool in teaching and learning pronunciation, the calculated value of the differences for the teachers' answers in the fourth item was (0.06) which is greater than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that teachers should make use of e- dictionaries as well.

When teachers were asked about the impact of dictionary usage on improvement, the result of Chi-square test indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that using dictionaries is highly recommended in teaching pronunciation. Teachers confirmed the usefulness of the dictionary as a reference to correct and confirm the reading even though those unknown words were difficult to read. Their

ability to read more words with correct pronunciation was improved by using the dictionary.

Furthermore, many of the teachers believed that the students should be provided by enough opportunities to practice phonetic transcription. This finding was reflected by the calculated value of the differences for the teachers' answers in the fourth item with (0.004) which is less than value of significance at the level (0.05).

Moreover, the calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' answers in the sixth item was (0.000) which is less than value of significance at the level (0.05). This result indicates that the majority of the teachers had positive attitudes towards the importance of exposure to the target language and its significant role in helping learners to minimize their pronunciation difficulties and enhance pronunciation improvement.

In addition, the calculated value of Chi-square for the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' answers in the seventh item was (0.112) which is greater than the value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that, recording students' dialogues is a good technique to test pronunciation.

In addition, the items from number (9) to (11), have statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, because the calculated value of their significant was less than the value of significance at the level (.05%) which support the teachers who believed that: (i) segment discrimination helps in learning pronunciation of words; (ii) allowing the class listens to words or texts on CDs or videos;

and;(iii) Speech rhythm drills help in fluency, stress and intonation practice.

Based on table (41), the calculated value of Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' answers in the last item was (0.07) which is greater than the value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are not statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which support the teachers who believed that, collaboration with teachers of phonetics and phonology.

2. Through the analysis, results and discussion demonstrated above, this study has provided an overview of some of the pronunciation problems that occur in FL classrooms and the factors behind them. This part interprets the statistics related to the third hypothesis, which assumes that *“Teachers and students use some remedial techniques that may help overcome learners' weaknesses and express themselves in better English.”* To test this hypothesis, certain items were prepared to elicit the teachers' suggestive techniques of possible solutions for students to overcome their difficulties in English pronunciation. So what are some of the possible ways of helping students overcome these challenges in pronunciation?

As noted above, these results show the statistical analysis concerning the teachers' results in deciding on the suggested solutions regarding the pronunciation difficulties. On the whole, these results might be evidenced in the teachers' positive attitudes on pronunciation teaching techniques as well as in the teachers' awareness of their students' weaknesses and the effective teaching techniques that should be employed to help them to overcome their pronunciation problems and at the same time help in improving pronunciation basic aspects. Based on the above results in table (41), the researcher could conclude that the

participants have suggested a positive facilitative role of the use of the techniques in teaching pronunciation for EF/SL learners. Their responses revealed that, repetition and imitation are mostly contributed to help students facing their pronunciation difficulties. Moreover, the researcher believes that this result showed a good signal that all teachers were aware of the importance of the audio and visual aids to pronunciation teaching. For example, auditory channel use tapes, videos, storytelling, memorization or drills in terms of audio aids and wall displays, posters, realia, flash cards, graphic organizers, in terms of visual aids. Using of the dictionaries was also recommended to attain a deeper understanding of the use of a new language situation which can enable them to have accurate production and comprehension. Furthermore, providing enough opportunities to practice phonetic transcription and being in contact with the target language help learners to eliminate their pronunciation errors. Other suggestive techniques were used such as segment discrimination; speech rhythm drills for helping in fluency, stress and intonation practice.

To conclude based on the above discussion, the researcher could accept the third hypothesis and pointed out that, the teachers used some techniques to overcome the L2 pronunciation problems and to improve students' pronunciation. It is worth mentioning that the review of the literature on the investigations of pronunciation teaching given in the previous chapter was in the line of the result of this study. Techniques used to teach pronunciation included listening and imitating, phonetic training, minimal pairs drilling in context, or discriminating- between L1 and L2 elements, visual aids, reading aloud, recording the students' production with more focus on suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation. It can be seen that communicative approach seems to be more balanced approach with the focus on both accuracy and fluency. However,

imitation is probably the most widely used technique to facilitate the productive skills. Revell, P (2012: 217) has stated that: “*Presenting an utterance for imitation by learners’ back-chaining has been found to a useful technique.* She has pointed out that back chaining is a useful way of helping learners understand how sounds work together in connected speech is the technique of back chaining. This is a way of encouraging learners to really listen to the way we run words together when we speak rather than focusing on individual words said as if in isolation.

Moreover, the researcher believes that the result of this study shows a good signal that all teachers were aware of the importance of the audio and visual aids to pronunciation teaching. For example, auditory channel use tapes, videos, storytelling, memorization or drills in terms of audio aids and wall displays, posters, realia, flash cards, graphic organizers, in terms of visual aids. This finding was in accordance with previous studies in the same area. For example, Revell, P (2012, 218) claims that audio and visual aids are relevant teaching strategies and activities that can be used to help speakers with these difficulties. Moreover, she cited from (Hardison 2002) that: “*Research suggests that are advantages in combining visual with audio input for pronunciation training and that this combined modality is superior to audio input only*”. It is worth mentioning that this result was confirmed by Revell, P (2012) as she has put forward that, according to language learning theories such as Krashen’s (1982), learners acquire language mainly from the input they receive and they require large amounts of ‘comprehensible input’ before being expected to speak. On this basis, exposure to the target language would be a critical factor in pronunciation acquisition. Suter (1976) claimed that conversation with native speakers was the third most

important factor in pronunciation achievement. Moreover, Revell, P (2012: 9) has continued that:

Nowadays, this claim is more likely to be modified to include 'proficient', rather than 'native speakers of the F/SL, including the non-native class teacher. It could also include 'comprehensible input' via a variety of multimedia channels such as TV, radio, DVD or synchronous on line chat rather than simply face-to face conversation.

However, the result of this study reflects a general lack of awareness towards recording student's voices and its important role in eliminating pronunciation difficulties. This is an indication of the respondents' negative attitude towards this item. It is worth noting that this finding was not in accordance with previous studies.

These results reflected that, there seemed to be growing recognition of the gap between phonological research and pronunciation teaching techniques. It was recommended that it better for learners to use camera and not just a sound recorder because it's important to see how they speak, not only hear it. Students don't need to download any special software to record themselves; most computers and mobile devices have built-in video recorders. Ask a friend or watch a video to check.

4.2.3Statistic Resultsof students' questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was administered to (86) students majoring inEnglish. These students were selected purposively from two levels in the Faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University as respondents for this investigation. There were, seventy-eight questionnaires distributed to them, which included fifteen statements. Questions were designed to investigate the pronunciation errorthat students made whilespeaking English; to find their causes and the treatment techniques that might help in eliminating these difficulties.

(78) Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, and (70) were filled in, and returned back on time. The student's questionnaire consisted of 15 items which were divided into three categories. Descriptions of the students' responses were given in tables charts.

Table (42) explains *difficulties faced by students in pronouncing certain sounds such as /θ ,ð ,p, v, /*

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 20 | 20 | 11 | 6 | 13 |
| Percentage | 28.6 | 28.6 | 15.7 | 8.6 | 18.6 |

Chart (11) explains *difficulties faced by students in pronouncing certain sounds such as /θ ,ð ,p, v, /*.

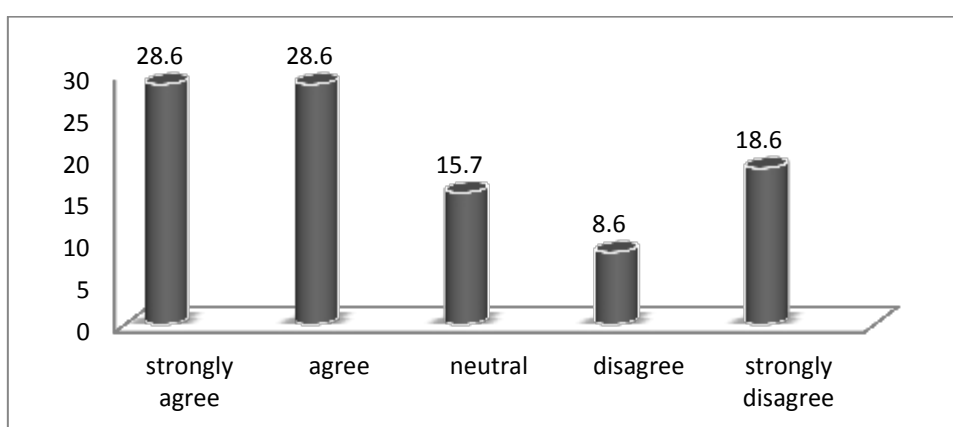


Table (42) and Chart (11) display the results of the first item which was designed to elicit the pronunciation difficulties that students' face when they pronounce English sounds such as /θ ,ð ,p, v, tʃ / . More than half of respondents, 57.2% strongly agreed that they have difficulties in pronouncing certain sounds. Whereas, 27.2% of the students strongly disagreed or disagreed that they have difficulties. 15.7% were not sure.

Table (43) explains the *-ed verbs and -e s verb and noun endings difficulties*.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 24 | 15 | 15 | 7 | 9 |
| Percentage | 34.3 | 21.4 | 21.4 | 10 | 12.9 |

Chart (12) explains the *-ed verbs and -e s verb and noun endings difficulties*.

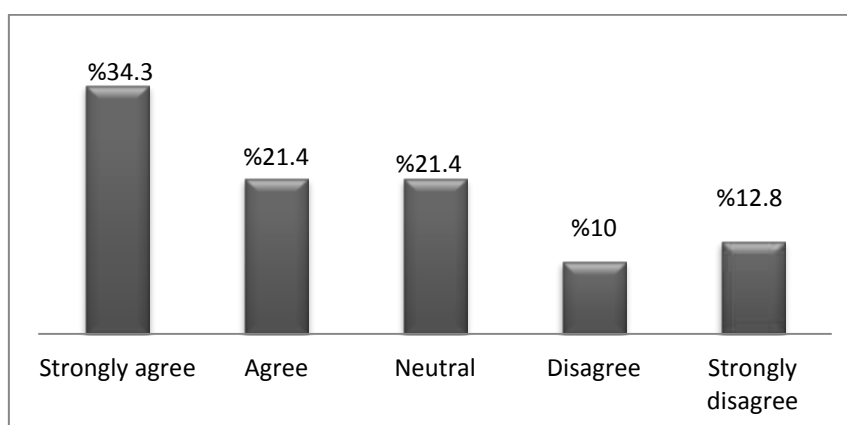


Table (43) and chart (12) indicate the results of the pronunciation of the final (e) d and (e) s in “*looked*” and “*asks*”. The response shows that %65.7 of the subjects strongly agreed that they mispronounced final (e) d and (e) s. %21.4 were not sure and %12.8 strongly disagreed or disagreed. The reason of this weakness related to the shortage of practicing the rules.

Table (44) explains students’ difficulties with consonantal clusters..

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 32 | 25 | 5 | 6 | 2 |
| Percentage | 45.7 | 35.7 | 7.1 | 8.6 | 2.9 |

Chart (13) explains students' difficulties with consonantal clusters.

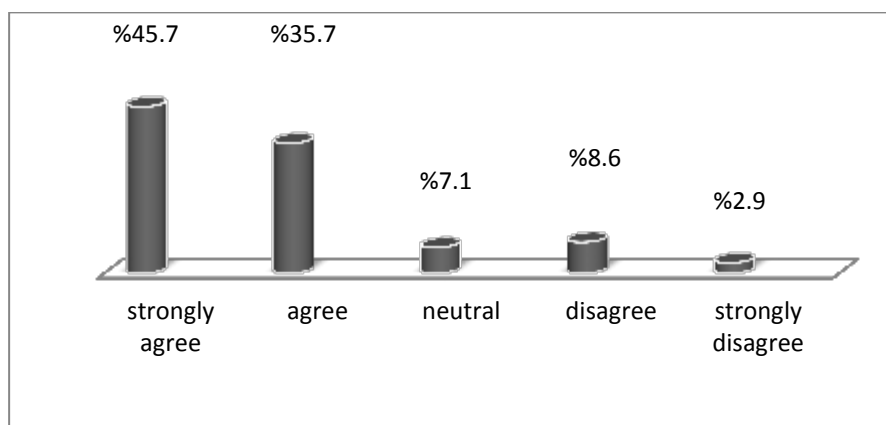


Table (44) and chart (13) shows the responses on consonantal clusters difficulties in words such as “*spring*” and “*next*”. %81.4 of students faced problem with consonant clusters. The respondents who strongly disagreed or disagreed were represented by the low percentage 11.5%. 7.1% were not sure. What is learnt from this distribution is that the pronunciation of consonants cluster seemed to be a major pronunciation problematic area.

Table (45) explains syllabification difficulties.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 20 | 26 | 11 | 8 | 5 |
| Percentage | 28.6 | 37 | 16 | 11 | 7 |

As shown in this detailed table (45), %66 of the subjects, strongly agreed or agreed that they faced difficulties with words syllable division. This was an indication that students were aware of their weaknesses regarding pronunciation elements. %18 strongly disagreed or disagreed. The remaining was not sure.

Chart (14) explains *whether or not the transcription is a major problem*.

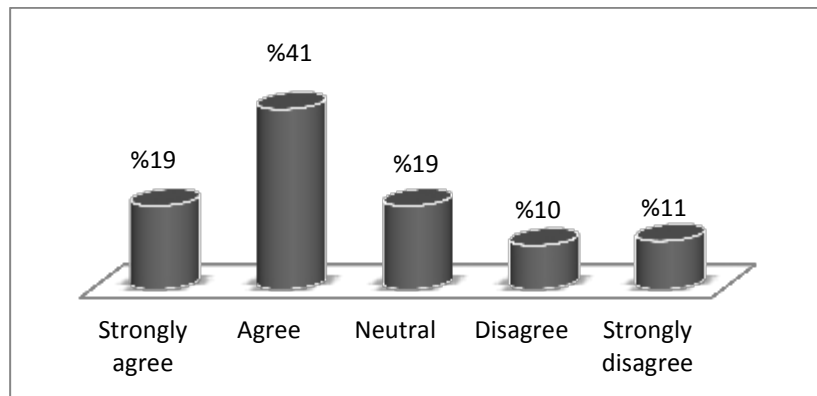
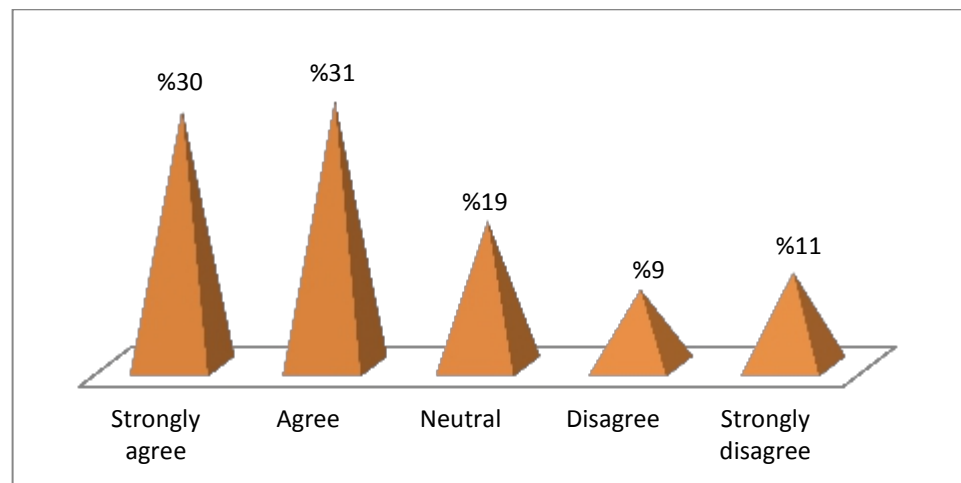


Chart (14) shows that the majority of students (60%) faced the major problem with the phonetic transcription. From 10% to 11% were disagreed. The remaining was not sure. The phonetic transcription seemed to be the most problematic pronunciation area students had.

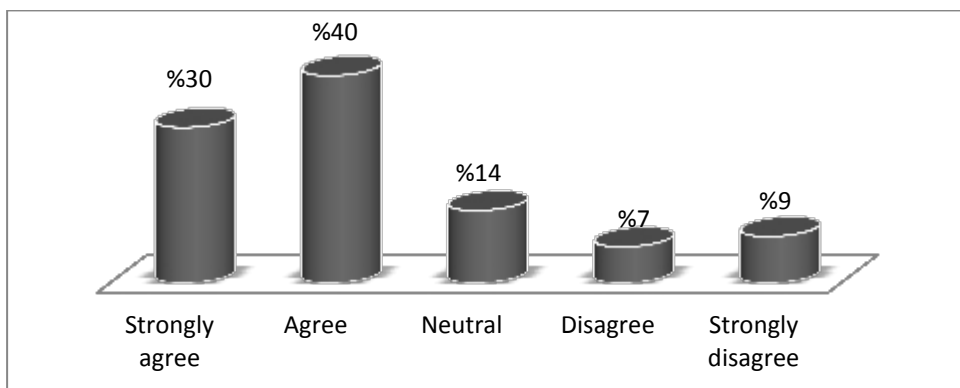
Chart (15) *explains the word stress placement difficulty*.



The statistics in chart (15) revealed that the majority of the respondents 61% decided that they failed in placing stress on the correct syllable within a word. 20% of the students disagreed and agreed. The remaining 19% was not sure. Hence, word stress placement is one of the main pronunciation difficulties. The researcher relates the reasons

behind this weakness to that student don't check the correct stress position in a dictionary.

Chart (16) explains whether or not students *face a huge problem with intonation*.



According to chart (16), the results revealed that intonation rules are considered as obstacles face students. 70% of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that the English intonation is the major problem they face; %16 strongly disagreed or disagreed. The remaining was not sure. Hence intonation is one of the common difficulties of EFL pronunciation.

Table (46) *explains whether or not students are aware of pronunciation basics*.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 3 | 25 | 21 | 13 | 8 |
| Percentage | 4.3 | 35.7 | 30 | 18.6 | 11.4 |

According to the results in table (46), the same percentage, 30% of the respondents were not sure and disagreed that they ignore the pronunciation rules. However, less than half 40% of the students decided

that they don't know the pronunciation basic elements rules. It seems that the participants were not aware of the pronunciation elements themselves. Table(47) *explains whether or not students practice pronunciation rules.*

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 23 | 12 | 17 | 13 | 5 |
| Percentage | 33 | 17 | 24 | 19 | 7 |

Table (47) shows the statistical analysis of whether or not students practice the pronunciation rules. Half of the students %50 strongly agreed and agreed that they don't practice the pronunciation rules. On the other hand, only %26 of agreed that they practice the pronunciation rules. The remaining was not sure. One can deduce that, students were not aware of the importance of the rules practice.

Chart (17)*explains the pronunciation difficulties due to spelling system and sounds inconsistency.*

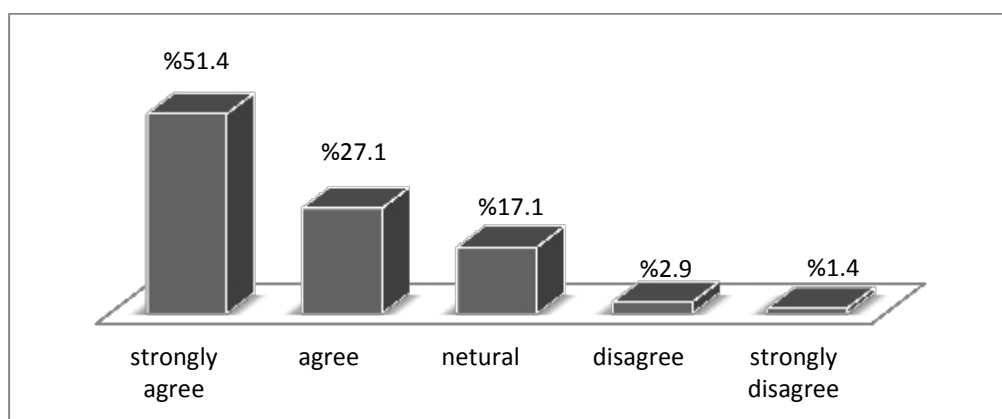
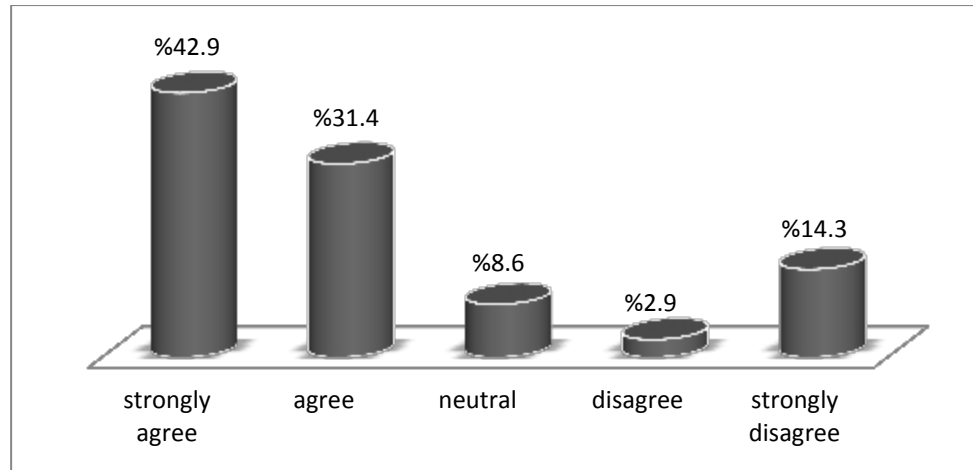


Chart (17) reflects that 78.5% of the students made pronunciation problems due to spelling and pronunciation lack correlation. Only 4.3% of the students strongly disagreed and disagreed. 27.1% were not sure.

This result revealed that spelling and pronunciation lack of correspondence seems to be a problematic area that students may face.

Chart (18) explains whether or not *lack of exposure to language contributes to pronunciation difficulties*.



As shown in chart (18), the great percentage (74.3%) of students strongly agreed or agreed that there the lack of exposure to language affects the pronunciation efficiency. However, the lowest percentage 17.2%, of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed .This means that students seem to be aware of the reasons behind the difficulties that faced them.

Chart (19) explains students' opinions on whether or not time devoted to pronunciation practice is insufficient.

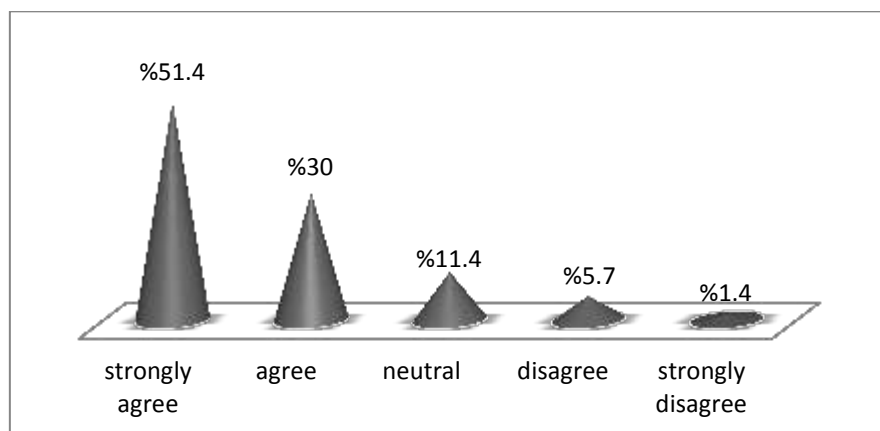


Chart (19) shows responses on students' opinions about the factors that may contribute to English pronunciation weakness. The analysis shows that the majority of the students %81.4 strongly agreed and agreed that time is insufficient for practice pronunciation rules. %7.1 disagreed or agreed and the remaining was not sure. Hence, English contact hours (periods) are not sufficient to practice pronunciation basic features.

Table (48) *explains the mother-tongue impact on pronunciation.*

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 24 | 21 | 17 | 5 | 3 |
| Percentage | 34.3 | 30 | 24.3 | 7.1 | 4.3 |

Chart (20) *explains the mother-tongue impact on pronunciation.*

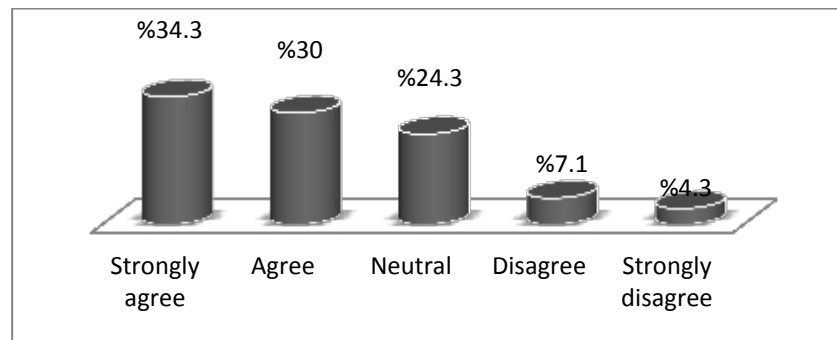


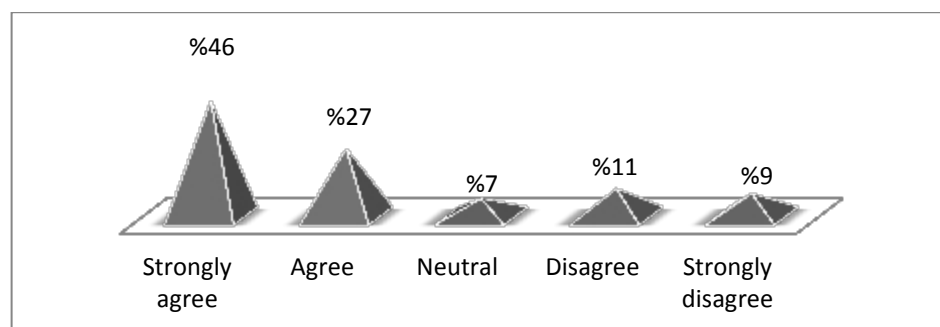
Table (48) and chart (20) reflect that 64.3% of the students decided that the difference between Arabic and English seems to cause pronunciation obstacles. 11.4% of the students were satisfied with their English speaking abilities and 24.3% stated that they were not sure.

Table (49) explains the use of a dictionary to find the phonetic transcription of words.

| Measurement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Frequency | 50 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Percentage | 71.4 | 11.4 | 7.1 | 5.7 | 4.3 |

The statistics shown in Table (49) revealed that %82.8% the participant used the dictionary to find the correct transcription. Only 10% did not use the dictionary and 7.1% were not sure. According to this result, it is apparently that the students had a positive attitude towards this item.

Chart (21) the teacher pronounces the word and I imitate.



Percentages shown in chart (21) show the responses on the use of imitation as improvement pronunciation technique. The total percentage of the respondents who strongly agreed and agreed was 73%, and the percentage of strongly disagreement decision or disagreement was only 20%. The remaining 7% of the participants were not sure. Based on this result, it is apparent that the majority of the respondents had a positive attitude towards this item.

4.2.4 Verification of the hypotheses of Students'

Questionnaire:

1 The first Hypothesis:

This section will provide a discussion of the participants' pronunciation errors with reference to the theoretical and empirical literature noted in chapter two. Table (50) reflects the status and the manner according to which the students responded to seven statements regarding the first hypothesis which assumes that "*The final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and English,*" as they appeared in their questionnaires.

Table (50). Chi-square tests results for respondents' answers about the items of the first hypothesis:

| Statement of the first category | Chi-square | D F | Alpha coefficient | Result | Attitude |
|--|------------|-----|-------------------|-------------|----------|
| 1. I mispronounce certain sounds in English. | 10.429 | 4 | 0.034 | Significant | Agree |
| 2. I have difficulties with the division of syllables. | 21.857 | | 0.000 | | |
| 3. I have major problems with phonetic transcription. | 22.286 | | 0.000 | | |
| 4. I have difficulties with the pronunciation of -e d and -e s verb endings. | 12.571 | | 0.004 | | |
| 5. I ignore stress placement. | 29.000 | | 0.000 | | |
| 6. I face a huge problem with intonation. | 15.286 | | 0.014 | | |
| 7. I have difficulties with consonantal cluster. | 52.429 | | 0.000 | | |

Note: DF= Degree of freedom

Table No (50) contains 7 statements regarding the English pronunciation problems encountered by students of English in Shandi University. The interpretation was stated as follow:

The calculated value of the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' responses in the first item was (0.34) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). According to table (50), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which confirm the teachers who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University mispronounce certain sounds in English. This result support the first item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that "*Final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and English,*" This revealed that most of the study subjects seem to have difficulties in the pronouncing certain English sounds. For example: The erroneous pronunciation let [p] be changed from the voiceless articulation to the voiced articulation [b]; [θ] be changed from dental place of articulation to the alveolar place of articulation [s] ; [ð] be changed from dental place of articulation to the alveolar place of articulation [z] and [v] from the voicing articulation to voiceless articulation [f].

The second statement deals with students' difficulties with regard to the process of dividing words into syllables. The calculated value of the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers' responses in the first item was (0.000) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (50), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which confirm the teachers who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students seemed to face problems with

words syllable division. This result support the second item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that “*Final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken English,*”

The calculated value of the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ responses in the third item was (0.000) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (50), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which confirm the teachers who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students seemed to face problems with phonetic transcription. This result support the third item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that “*Final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken English,*”

Moreover, the results can disclose the fact that the other confusing problems in pronunciation of the Final year university students in general is probably in the distinction of /s/ and /z/ after plural nouns and the third singular verbs ; the final -ed of the past form of verbs. The calculated value of the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ responses in the fourth item was (0.004) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (50), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the study subjects, which support the teachers who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students failed in pronouncing the final -ed and -es in word such as “*looked*” and “*bags*”. They tend to pronounce these words as /lʊkɪd/ and /bægz/ instead of /lʊkt/ and /bægz/. This result support the fourth item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that “*Final*

year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and English,”. From this analysis result, it is obvious that the correct pronunciation of the final -ed and -e s is a difficulty encountered by the learners in Shandi University. According to the researcher’s own point of view, the main reason behind this weakness related to the shortage of practicing the language.

However, more subtypes of pronunciation errors discovered from these data are the inappropriate use of stress on word or syllable. The calculated value of the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ responses in the fifth item was (0.000) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (50), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which confirm the teachers who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students ignored the proper way of word, stress in their speaking. This result support the fifth item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that “*Final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and English,*”. The researcher related that to students’ neglected speaking skill. Another reason might be because of the absence of speaking exams in Sudanese university.

The calculated value of the Alpha coefficients of the differences for the teachers’ responses in the sixth item was (0.014) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (50), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which confirm the teachers who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students have difficulties with adequate knowledge of intonation. They do not use the proper way of falling tone, rising tone in their speaking. This

result support the fifth item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that “*Final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and English,*”.

So far, consonantclustering has also caused challenges to the students. The calculated value of the differences for the teachers’ responses in the seventh item was (0.000) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (50), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the teachers, which confirm the teachers who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students have consonantal clusters difficulties. They tend to insert a short vowel to facilitate the pronunciation. For example they pronounce these words as; /tekɪst/ instead of /tekst/, and /ɪsprɪŋ / instead of /sprɪŋ /. This result support the fifth item of testing the first hypothesis which claims that “*Final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and English,*”.

On the whole, the researcher can conclude that table (50) contains statementsconcerned with the English pronunciation problems encountered by Sudanese University Students. The findings show that most of the respondents have positive attitudes towards the existence of L2 pronunciation difficulties. These results clearly indicate that there seemed to be real pronunciation problems encountered by Sudanese University students. It is clear that all of the statements in this axis are significant. Accordingly, this outcome actually supports the researcher's hypothesis No. 1 which reads, “*The final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken English.*” It is worth noting that this finding was in line with the similar previous studies. For example, Farah Otoum’s (2010) study on

Jordanian learners who study Spanish as a foreign language. Her results revealed that there were consonantal errors which were categorized on the basis of the manner and place of articulations. Some of the errors maintained their place and/or lost their manner of articulation; others lost their place of articulation and/or gained new manner of articulation.

Turki A. Binturki (2008) has supported this study demonstrating that Saudi ESL speakers had difficulty with the voiced interdental fricative /v/ and to lesser extent, with /p/ and /r/. In short, the participants of this study applied the segments of L1 on L2 which lead to error.

When the researcher compared this finding with the empirical literature, it was also seen as a problematic matter for Bruce Hayes's (2009 p.315) study, for example, he has noted that syllabification is complicated by the fact that the rules of the phonology often rearrange the sequence of consonants and vowels, through deletion, insertion, and other processes. This was an indication that students were aware of their weaknesses concerning certain elements of pronunciation.

According to the researcher's point of view, the reason behind this problem is the difference between the Arabic and English syllable phonological structure which was explained earlier in the literature review that the study of syllables in Arabic involves the analysis of lexical stress. No syllable may start with a vowel; no syllable may start with a consonant cluster (two or more); all Arabic syllables start with CV such as (mæ) (ما) and syllables must nowhere contain a cluster of three or more consonants. On the other hand English syllables may begin with a vowel, VC such as /æɪt/.

Furthermore, this finding was in accordance with the previous studies as noted by (O'Connor, 2006:85), in his study "phonetics and

pronunciation” that, in order to learn any language, a person must be aware of its different skills; because this helps in understanding the language mastering phonetics is great importance for a person who is seeking success in learning English language or any other language. The learner should be able to differentiate between the vowels in *pen* and *ben* and the consonants at the beginning of the words like *pet* and *bet* because this is something confusing, it is very important for the learner to think of English pronunciation in terms of phoneme rather than letters. The Learner, who is aware of phonetics transcription, transcribes it and pronounces it correctly. Many of the students suffer from this problem, because of their lack of knowledge of phonetics and phonology”.

(O’Connor, 2006:79) pointed out that, in the learning of pronunciation there are two stages, which the learner must know to be unworried when dealing with English sounds. The first one is that the learner should be able to pronounce different (44) vowels and consonant, so that the words and other longer utterances do not sound the same, so *feel* /fi:l/ is different from *fill* /fil/ and *heat* /hi:t/ is different from *eat* /i:t/, in the second stage, the learner must be able to use as many different sound so as to represent particular phoneme. If the learner has good mastery of phonetics, then he will be able to transcribe word and pronounces them or check their pronunciation on the dictionary. However, most of these problems can be attributed to the differences in pronunciation between English and Arabic" (Wahba (1998: 36). Therefore, this claim confirms the statement No (4) which claims that some students in Shandi University seemed to completely ignore stress placement and never pay attention to it. Accordingly, students didn’t use the word stress properly in speaking.

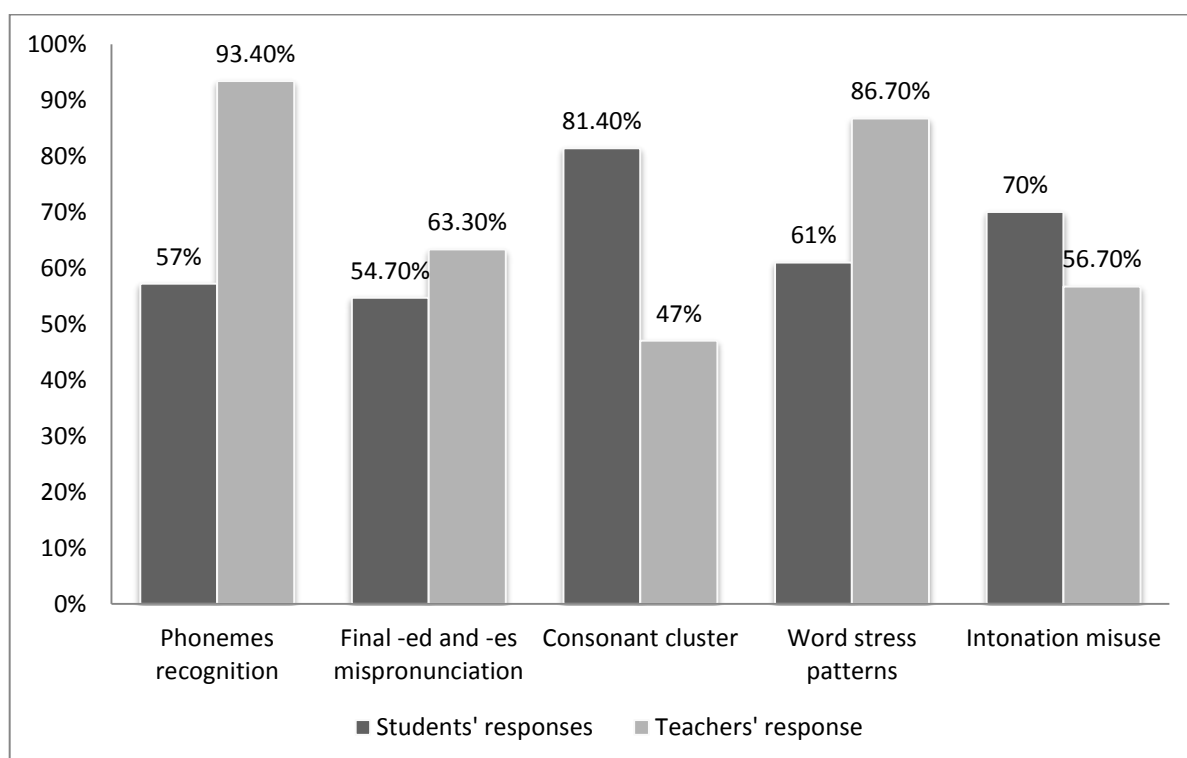
In compare by other research in the same field in Sudan and other countries, the researcher discovered that some university students of final year in Shandi University seemed to ignore the English word stress in their speaking and even didn't pay attention to its rules. To the researcher, this result of, the shortage of practicing language. This result was also confirms that the research hypothesis No (1) which claims that some students in shandi University had a huge problem with intonation. They did not use the intonation in properly in conversation. This result was supported by Abker Ibrahim (2016) in his study on university students in Khartoum State .He claimed that his participants don't use intonation in sentence correctly. When the researcher compared this difficulty with the empirical literature, it was also seen as a problematic matter for Abker Ibrahim's (2016) study on university learners in Khartoum State. His participants also didn't use the proper way of word, phrase and sentence stress speaking. As explained in the literature review earlier, it was found the researcher's findings of this study agreed with Na'ama Abbas (2011) who conducted a study on Hodeida University students in the area of English consonant clusters system as phonological (segmental) structures. He concluded that pronunciation of words which contain three initial or three and four-final-consonant clusters. According to Abbas's (2011) findings, the main cause beyond making such errors in English consonant clusters is that these types are usually nil in Arabic segmental features.

Moreover, in a study conducted by *Abdullmanan (2005:1)*, and cited by Abbas (2011), it is found that Arab learners put a short vowel before and after the first consonant in the initial-consonant clusters made up of three consonants. He attributed this insertion of a vowel to

students' endeavors to facilitating the difficult pronunciation of initial-consonant clusters made up of three consonants.

Based on the interpretation of the result revealed by the teachers' responses, it was clear that it was in accordance with the results of students' responses regarding the pronunciation errors made by students. Accordingly, this outcome actually supports the researcher's hypothesis No. 1 which reads, *"The final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken English."* The participants' responses are shown in Chart (22).

Chart (22) demonstrates the participants' responses towards the learners' pronunciation problem areas in compare.



2 The Second Hypothesis:

This section, interprets the participants responses to seven statements conducted on 70 Sudanese final year students at the university who were chosen as a representative sample of Shandi university learners

of English at the faculties of Arts and Education. A close look at the table (51), six factors of pronunciation problems have to be analyzed in order to state the findings that may accept or reject the study second hypothesis which assumes that *“Pronunciation errors made by the students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and the little amount of the TL exposure as they appeared in their questionnaires.*

Table (51) Chi-square tests results for respondents’ answers about the items of the second hypothesis:

| Statement of the second hypothesis | Chi-square | DF | Sig | Result | Attitude |
|---|------------|----|-------|-------------|----------------|
| 8.I know pronunciation rules, but I don’t practice them. | 12.571 | 4 | 0.014 | Significant | Agree |
| 9. Insufficient time is devoted to pronunciation practice. | 59.857 | | 0.000 | | Strongly agree |
| 10. I do not know about the pronunciation rules. | 23.429 | | 0.000 | | Agree |
| 11. Lack of English spelling and pronunciation correspondence causes the main difficulties. | 58.857 | | 0.000 | | Strongly agree |
| 12. There is a lack of exposure to English language outside the classroom. | 38.857 | | 0.000 | | Agree |
| 13. Most of my pronunciation errors are made due to the Arabic sound system interference. | 25.714 | | 0.000 | | agree |

Note: DF=Degree of Freedom

With regard to the second hypothesis of this study, the participants were asked to respond to six 5-point Likert-style items designed to ascertain their opinions about the factors that may contribute to weakness

in English pronunciation. In other words, these items might significantly relate to mother-tongue interference and the little amount of the TL exposure.

1. As can be seen clearly in table (51) that, the calculated value of the differences for the students' answers in the first item was (0.014) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the students, which support the study subjects who believed that time devoted to practice the rules of the pronunciation basics at both segmental and suprasegmental levels is inadequate. There should be more contact hours for covering all English pronunciation elements effectively. So time insufficiency for practice was the main cause of the pronunciation weakness.

The next statement looks at students' responses on the lack of knowledge impact on pronunciation learning. The calculated value of the differences for the teachers' responses in the third item was (0.000) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (51), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the respondents, which confirm the students who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students seemed to make pronunciation errors as a result of lack of knowledge. This result supports the third item of testing the second hypothesis which claims that "*Pronunciation errors made by the students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and the little amount of the TL exposure*".

2. The calculated value of the differences for the teachers' responses in the third item was (0.000) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (51), this indicates that, there are

statistically significant differences between the answers of the respondents, which confirm the students who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students seemed to make pronunciation errors as a result of lack of English spelling and pronunciation correspondence causes the main difficulties”, lack of knowledge. This result supports the fourth item of testing the second hypothesis which claims that *Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue and little amount of the TL exposure.*” However, phonemic transcription is likely to be very beneficial for learners who are accustomed to a close phoneme-grapheme correspondence (or shallow orthography) in their native language when they want to learn a language with more complicated grapheme-to-phoneme rules (or deep orthography).

The calculated value of the differences for the teachers’ responses in the third item was (0.000) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (51), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the respondents, which confirm the students who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students that their pronunciation was strongly affected by Arabic sound system interference and lacking of the target language exposure. The main focus of these statements was directed to the Arabic and English sound systems and the little amount of exposure which lead to more problems in the area of pronunciation, and thus causing errors. When students are sufficiently exposed to target language, the possibility of making pronunciation errors is minimized. This result was in accordance with what was claimed by Kenworthy (1987:4-9) that : *“Factors such as the native language, the age, amount of exposure, phonetic ability, attitude and*

identity, motivation and concern for good pronunciation have great influence on pronunciation learning.” This result supports the third item of testing the second hypothesis which claims “*Pronunciation errors made by the students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and the little amount of the TL exposure*”.

3. If we look on this hypothesis, we will find that students of English at Shandi University have “Pronunciation errors made by the students might significantly relate to mother-tongue interference, lacking of motivation, insufficient time for practice, and poor pronunciation knowledge. Taking the results of the second category responses as a whole, the second hypothesis was proven right. In compare with the previous studies mentioned in the literature review, this finding was in accordance with (Kenworthy’s 1987) study. He stated that pronunciation practice is important for the students who plan to study S/FL. Increasing their pronunciation skills beforehand can build confidence and make them feel less reluctant to venture out to speak English. Students’ personal attitude and self-esteem are major factors in improving English pronunciation. Nation (2014) has added that, learning a foreign language occurs in a very different situation. There is not usually a strong need to learn the language, there are not a lot of opportunities to meet and use the foreign language, motivation need to be very high, and the time available is usually very limited.

It is not merely exposure that matters, but how the students respond to the opportunities of listening to English spoken by a native speaker or of speaking themselves. It is worth to mention that this finding was supported by the previous studies. For example, as cited in Patchara Varasarin (2007) in his study on Thai students who faced pronunciation problems in English, that Oxford (1986b) explains that learning

strategies with regard to considerable amount of time for practice, are of great importance because they improve language performance, encourage learner autonomy, are teachable, and expand the role of the teacher in significant ways.

Moreover, Patchara Varasarin (2007) cited from (Morley, 1998) in his study that, the pronunciation instruction that promotes learner strategy awareness more basic knowledge about the relationship between learning strategies and pronunciation is needed. (Bruce Hayes 2009 p.47) has supported this finding. He pointed out that the question of phonemicization is in principle independent from the question of writing; that is, there is no necessary connection between letters and phonemes. For example, the English phoneme /eɪ / can be spelled in quite a few ways: **say** /seɪ /, **age** /eɪg/, **main**/meɪn/. Indeed, there are languages (for example, Mandarin Chinese) that are written with symbols that do not correspond to phonemes at all.

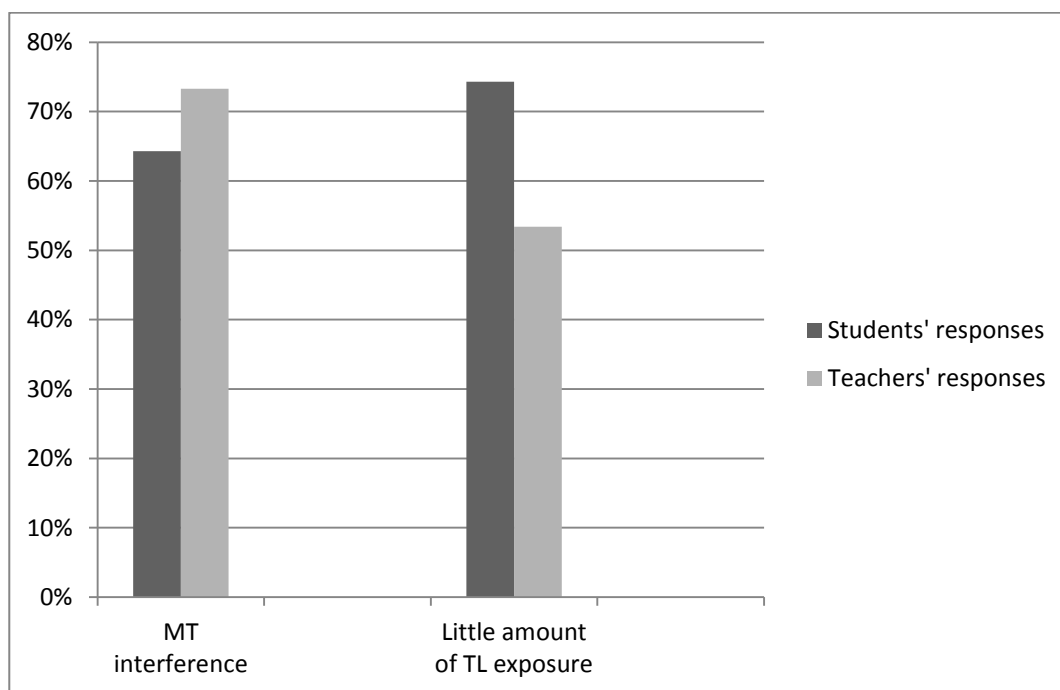
Obviously, there is at least a loose connection between alphabetic letters and phonemes. The above interrelated spelling and pronunciation problems were mentioned as examples that contributed to making English orthography deep and problematic. These problems made English spelling a complicated task for the Arabic learner. Because English orthography is more complicated than Arabic, the native speaker of Arabic might adopt some repair strategies from his or her L1 orthographic system to facilitate his or her spelling and pronunciation task, i.e. reading words such as *debt*, *listen*, and *fasten* as they are written. Kharma and Hajjaj (1997, p.14) summarized this as: The spelling of Arabic is overwhelmingly regular. In contrast, the spelling of English is seemingly very irregular. Moreover, to the learner, written English is not always a reliable guide to pronunciation, and they are

often misled by the graphic representation of sounds. They also gave the following examples as a proof of the irregularity of the English spelling system: /f/ deaf, suffer, rough, phase; all of them are pronounced the same as /f/; /i:/ lead, see, people, machine, me, deceive, believe, quay, key, all of them are pronounced the same as /i:/. This inconsistency in the English sounds leads some of (SUSE) to a mispronunciation. If each English vowel or consonant has just one way of pronunciation, then the student will be able to produce the precise pronunciation.

In conclusion, students made errors due to the inconsistency of English sound system. Comparing with the previous studies, the researcher discovered that this finding was in line with Swan and Smith's (2007, p. 196). They have stated that "English has 22 vowels and diphthongs to 24 consonants", while "Arabic has only six vowels and no diphthongs ... to 32 consonants."

For more support, according to Ancker (2000:21), errors occur for many reasons, for example, interference from the native language; incomplete knowledge of the target language and the complexity of the target language itself. Based on the interpretation of the results revealed by the teachers' responses it is clear that it was in accordance with the results of students' responses regarding the pronunciation errors made by students. Accordingly, this outcome actually supports the researcher's hypothesis No. 2 which reads, "*Pronunciation errors made by the university students are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of (TL) exposure.*" The teachers' and students' responses are displayed in Chart (23).

Chart (23) shows the participants' responses towards the significant contributory factors of the L2 pronunciation errors in compare.



3 The Third Hypothesis:

What are the suggested plans that might help in reducing the difficulties?

Table (52) displays the statistics and the results according to which the students responded to two statements with regard to the third hypothesis which assumes that *“Teachers and students have some remedial techniques that may help overcome learners’ weaknesses and express themselves in better English.”* as they appeared in their questionnaires.

Table (52) explains the Chi-square tests results for respondents' answers about the items of the third hypothesis

| Statements of the third hypothesis | Chi-square | DF | Alpha coefficient | Result | Attitude |
|---|------------|----|-------------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. I use a dictionary to identify the phonemic transcription. | 116.71 | 4 | 0.000 | Significant | Strongly agree |
| 2. I imitate teacher pronunciation. | 37.857 | | | | Agree |

Note: DF=Degree of freedom

According to table (52) above, the researcher can demonstrate the results as follows:

1. In table (52), the students responded on two statements with regard to techniques suggested for improving English pronunciation. It can be seen clearly from Table (52) that, the calculated value of the differences for the teachers' answers in the first item was (0.000) which is less than value of significance at the level (.05%). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the students, which support the study subjects who believed that the use of the dictionary was important for identifying the phonemic transcription of the words and helpful in improving pronunciation. This relates to Lintunen's (2004; 2005) suggestion that phonemic transcription is a helpful pronunciation learning tool for learners of English.

2. The next statement looks at students' responses on the use of imitation as facilitative and improvement technique. The calculated

value of the differences for the teachers' responses in the third item was (0.000) which is less than the value of significance at the level (.05%). As noted in table (52), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences between the answers of the respondents, which confirm the students who believed that, the final year students of English in Shandi University students imitate teacher pronunciation. This result supports the second item of testing the third hypothesis which claims that "*Teachers and students use some remedial techniques that may help overcome learners' weaknesses and express themselves in better English.*" It is hypothesized that the use of dictionary helps students master a better English pronunciation.

The study then has reached at several conclusions that validate the hypothesis and then suggested some recommendation that repetition and imitation are largely contribute to eliminating pronunciation difficulties. This finding was supported by the previous studies mentioned earlier in chapter two. Such studies reported that imitation and repetition are useful techniques provided by teachers to help their students to master pronunciation. (Celce-Murcia et al, 1996) pointed out that: "*In this method, students would listen and imitate a model of the target language that was spoken by the teacher (and later by recordings.*"

However, other studies showed evidence that there actually is a difference in results when it comes to the repetition and imitation being presented in context of teaching techniques as stated by (Cohen, Larson-Freeman, & Tarone, 1991) "*Students who showed accuracy in controlled practice might fail to transfer what they learned to actual communicative language use.*"

In general, the researcher can conclude that the participants provided a positive attitude towards suggestions techniques with regard to facing the problems and improving their English pronunciation, such as using a dictionary to identify the correct pronunciation of English words; and imitating what their teacher say. If we look on this hypothesis we will find that teachers and students adopt plans and techniques to overcome the L2 pronunciation problems and to improve students' pronunciation.

4.3 Summary:

The results presented in this chapter revealed that, the final year students majoring in English at Arts and Education Faculties in Shandi University seemed to have English pronunciation problems assumed by the researcher above i.e. Students faced some pronunciation difficulties while speaking English. The majority of students stated that their major problems are phonetic transcription, The other main difficulties mentioned were: some vowels and consonants recognition; lack of correspondence between English spelling and pronunciation; consonantal clusters; intonation; they state that it is difficult for them to apply the rules of stress patterns; they fail pronounce-ed verb endings and -es simple verbs and plurals correctly. A few of them said that they encounter difficulties when it comes to the division of words into syllables. Moreover, the results revealed that there were some factors might contribute to these difficulties. The results offered some remedial plans and technique well as.

To conclude, the results and information obtained from the other data-gathering tools (recording-interview and class observation check list) were presented and discussed in further details in the next chapter. Then all findings were reviewed with a short comment in the last chapter at the end of the study.

5.1 Introduction:

The aim of this research is to investigate the common pronunciation errors among learners of English in the Arts and Education Faculties at Shandi University, find their major reasons, and the suitable plans for solutions.

In this chapter the responses of the participants to the structured questions asked in the interviews, are presented and discussed. In addition to that the findings of the class observation are given. The researcher works through the interview questions and the observation rubrics in a systematic way by first presenting the interview questions and following them by a discussion of the students' responses.

The discussion of the individual responses includes quotations from the interview data and limited references to the literature review in order to substantiate the points being made. It is followed by specific findings that emanate from the responses to the interviews.

In the final discussion of this section, the researcher attempts to summarize the overall findings from the interviews and the class observation and in correlation with the questionnaires findings.

5.2 Results of the interviews:

The interviews consist of five open-ended questions and three closed ones. (Appendix3). However, the answers of these questions were not a part of the study. This kind of questions enable the researcher to receive the information that interviewees want to share with more relaxation. Participants were allowed to give their answers freely and at their own convenience in order to be able to express their real feelings in each question. The aim of the interviews was to provide extra comprehensive data about pronunciation errors investigation. Thus, the

questions were chosen to look for in-depth information for the research. As a matter of fact, participants of this study were the 3rd and 4th year students of English who were better at presenting their viewpoints and supposed to be able to express their ideas orally. Interview questions were designed for sixteen university students majoring in English. These students were selected purposively from 8th semesters from the participating faculties (Arts and Education). Important information about the errors identification; main causes of these errors and possible solutions are hoped to be found after the interviews. Moreover, five interview items aimed at investigating students' attitudes towards English language in general and pronunciation in particular.

The interviews were conducted in January 2015, and took place in the learner's faculty. The main focus of these interviews was to gain an insight into learners' English pronunciation problems they faced and the factors lie behind them. In addition, the theme of the sub study was expanded to touch on learning as well, the aim being to find out whether or not the learners have adopted certain improvement plans.

5.2.1 Assessing the Recorded Test:

Assessing the recordings is a crucial part of the thesis. The interview took place after the participants have completed their first and second years at the university. At this part, the researcher wanted to find out whether or not students of English have problems with "*phonemes recognition; final -ed and -es; consonantal clusters; word stress placement and intonation rules of Wh questions or question tags*". Each of students was requested to read some words and two sentences aloud while the researcher was recording their pronunciations. After each of the (16) student recorded his/her material, the recordings were saved as sound files and labeled individually for easy access. Each subject had a

main file and each file contained two main categories; (i) Segmental features (ii) Suprasegmental features. Later, each item was analyzed and the targeted material was transcribed. Every segment of a target pronunciation element that the subjects produced was recorded and registered. Both mispronunciations and correct pronunciation were taken into consideration in this study. For more clarification, each item that correctly pronounced was marked as (√), while each incorrect pronunciation case was noted down as produced by each study subject. Each participant's responses were tabulated separately (See Appendix 4).The interviewees were asked four general domains which are mentioned in the following sections.

1. Sub-questionsGroupOne:

(A)What are the students' attitudes towards pronunciation teaching?

The students were asked to respond to four sub-questions intended to reflect their attitudes to English pronunciationteaching and learning. It is worth noting that, these questions were not working in the study, but the researcher intended to initiate the interview with personal information to provide students with more relaxation.

In the interview, answering for the first question, the responses reflected that the majority of the respondents' choice of English as a majoring was personal .Only three of them studied English as major upon parents' desire and two of them shared the choice with their parents. Generally, this result revealed that the study subjects had positive attitudes towards learning English. Moreover, the second question responses demonstrated that eleven of the study subjects out of sixteen agreed that they had been learning English for ten years; five of them studied English for eleven years and only one twelve years. According to these responses, the students started to study English in the age of ten to

twelve years and according to the researcher's own point of view, this contributes largely to the problems that faced them later. When students were asked whether or not they faced any difficulties in learning phonetics, it would appear that all of them faced problems regarding pronunciation. This indicates that the students had a positive attitude towards the first hypothesis, which assumes that *"The final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken English."*

With regard to question (3), half of students believed that speaking very good English means speaking quickly and fluently like a native speaker whereas the others believed that it means speaking correctly using the rules learnt in phonetics. This might indicate a general awareness of the importance of spoken English among students and its significant role in successful oral communication. In addition, fourteen out of sixteen student informants were happy that the teaching techniques adopted by their teachers when addressing pronunciation issues. However, only two of them showed less positive attitude towards feedback on pronunciation ways of teaching when they were asked whether or not they feel satisfied with the way they have been taught pronunciation.

2. Sub-questions Group Two:

(B) *What are the most common pronunciation errors made by Shandi University Students of English?*

In this part, the pronunciation difficulties, which students might face when they speak English, were presented and discussed. The aim of this test is to identify the pronunciation errors among Shandi University Students of English (SUSE). A number of utterances were chosen, and each one contains problematic area, which is expected to be

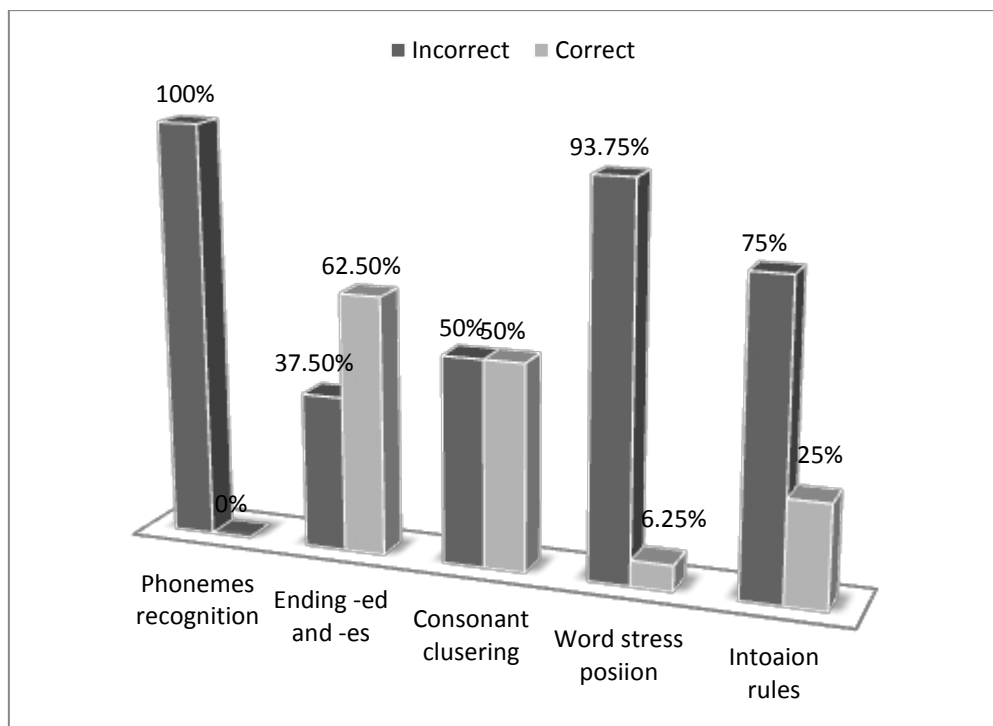
pronounced incorrectly by the students. The test contains some vowel sounds and consonant sounds; each student was asked to read all the utterance aloud, while his/her voice was recorded. At the end of this process, the errors were written on a paper and then tabulated and analyzed descriptively.

The statistics used in this study, for the recorded test, was very simple and clear. Samples of the pronunciations were recorded; then these recorded sounds were counted to see the total number of the incorrect answers done by the whole (16) subjects in all items of the interview, then the total number of the correct answers was also calculated. For the recording test, all the words and sentences recorded from the students were written down on papers, using tables to put each sample of pronunciation beside the student who pronounced it and the number of correct and incorrect pronunciation was counted along with the percentage of both correct and incorrect pronunciation.

Table (53): Teachers and Students Responses to Pronunciation errors:

| No | Problematic Areas | Incorrect pronunciation | | Correct pronunciation | |
|----|----------------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| | | No of Ss | Percentage | No of Ss | Percentage |
| 1 | Sounds Recognition | 16 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| 2 | Ending-ed and -es | 6 | 37.5% | 10 | 62.5% |
| 3 | Consonant clustering | 8 | 50% | 8 | 50% |
| 4 | Word stress position | 15 | 93.75% | 1 | 6.25% |
| 5 | Intonation Rules | 12 | 75% | 4 | 25% |

Chart (24): Teachers and Students Responses to Pronunciation errors:



As can be seen in table (53) and chart (24), all students (100%) mispronounced certain sounds in English. Sounds recognition seemed to be the most problematic area. (37.5%) of the (SUSE) were unable to give the correct pronunciation of the ending-ed of past forms and -es of verbs and plurals sounds in the words such as “looked” and “moved” , (see Appendix C). With the consonant clustering, we notice that half (8) (50%) of the (SUSE) among the-sample (16 students) were unable to pronounce words contain consonant clusters correctly such the words “text” and “spring”.Pronunciation of proper stress at word level, only one participant could pronounce itcorrectly. On the other hand,(93.75%) failed to pronounce multisyllabic words. Only one participant was able to attain faultless pronunciation of the word stress.It seemed to appear that word stress position was the most problematic area. For applying

intonation rules, (75%) of (SUSE) did not use the rise and fall tone properly. Only (25%) succeeded in pronouncing Wh- questions and question tags correctly.

5.2.2 Results and Discussion of Recordings:

The analysis and assessment of the recordings demonstrate that a major problematic area in pronunciation learning is the sound recognition and stress placement at word level. With regard to sounds mispronunciation, the most problematic sounds for the students were [θ] and [ð]. Nobody was able to produce it correctly. The students had a tendency to pronounce [ð] as [z] in the word “that” which was pronounced as /zæt/ instead of /ðæt/. On the other hand, the production of [θ] was extremely difficult for the students. The students were inclined to pronounce [θ] as [s]. (See Appendix 4-C). Based on this result, the researcher would say that it seemed to be difficult for the university students to improve the pronunciation of “th” consonants and mainly of [θ] and [ð]. To sum up, it might be seen that all kinds of errors can appear in students’ spoken English. However, although students highly appreciate the role of pronunciation in communication, they are more likely to make errors. For example, they put very little attention to the use of the following pronunciation basics.

1. Segmental contrasts: The researcher finds it necessary to demonstrate the factors that contribute to either facilitating learning or making FLT a hard task for the learners, or thus leading to errors. In light of the table and the chart above, the researcher will give a comparison between sound systems of Arabic and English focusing on the areas of difficulty for the native speakers of Arabic who are learning English as foreign/ second language.

(A) Phonemes recognition: As shown in table (51), (SUSE) failed to pronounce certain English consonant sounds. Most of the participants mispronounced some consonants such as, /p/, /v/, /tʃ/, and /ʒ/. They substituted /p/ with /b/ and /f/ with /v/ as a result of the absence of the voiceless /p/ and /v/ in Arabic language.

Furthermore, (SUSE) mispronounced certain English vowel sounds. Most of the participants faced a complicated problem while pronouncing words, such as “*part*”, [ɑ:] and [p] in /pɑ:t/ and “*pat*”, /pæt/. They tend to say both words with vowel [æ] and the consonant [b] instead of [P]. So the word /pɑ:t/ was pronounced as /bært/ and the word /pæt/ was pronounced as /bæt/, (See Appendix 4-C). This result was supported by (Revell, P 2012) in her study on pronunciation problematic areas for L2 learners. She has stated that difficulties can arise if phonemes don't exist in the L1. For instance, some learners may not have the /p/ and /b/ phonemes in their first language, such as Arabic which has no /p/ sound.

Moreover, (Revell, P 2012) continued that French does not have [ð] and [θ] so learners may have difficulty acquiring and maintaining this pair of phonemes. This result was ratified by the both students and teachers in the questionnaires. Moreover, this result was supported by (Turki A. Binturki 2001) in his study on native speakers of Saudi Arabian Najdi dialect studying in the in King Saud University. His study was conducted to determine the difficulty of /p, v, r /.

Conversely, the results of his study demonstrate that Saudi ESL speakers do have difficulty with the voiced interdental fricative /v/ and to lesser extent, with /p/ and /r /. On the other hand, the most problematic case seemed to be with “th”; [ð] and [θ] consonants production in “*feather*” and “*thought*”. In case of mispronunciation the students

inclined to pronounce [θ] as [s] and [ð] as [z]. They tend to say /fezə/ instead of /feðə/ and /sɔ:t/ instead of /θɔ:t/, (See Appendix 4). With regard to the findings of “th” consonants production in “feather” and “thought”, the researcher pointed out that, it is very difficult to improve these sounds as the problem due to the colloquial use of mother-tongue and with exaggeration, the researcher herself and probably most of teachers themselves face the same difficulty.

(B) Final -ed and -es: Basing on table and Chart (51), the majority of students could not pronounce the final -ed and -es. They tend to pronounce words such as “stopped” /stɒpɪd/ instead of /stɒpt/, and “moved” /mu:vid/ instead of /mu:vd/ (See Appendix 4). Probably, the reasons behind this kind of mispronunciation might be the lack of knowledge regarding the rules of the final -ed and -es pronunciation. Other reasons are related to the absence of onset and coda consonant cluster in Arabic language system as reflected previously in the literature review chapter.

This result was confirmed by Revell, Pamela (2012) in her study on common pronunciation problems for many L2 learners such as Arabic, Japanese, Spanish, French and Italian learners of English. She has cited from (Carlisle, 2001:2) that: “Learners who’s L1 has a different syllable structure, typically, the CV or CVCC structure which is absolute universal in the languages of the world”.

(C) Consonantal clusters: Some students had problems with the consonants clusters as they tend to insert a vowel sound before or after each consonant. Half of the participants pronounced words like “split” as /spɪlɪt/ (vccvcvc) instead of /spɪlt/ (cccvc) and “next” as /nekɪst/ (cvccvc) instead of /nekst/ (cvccc) with inserted vowel sound /ɪ/, (See Appendix 4). However, vowel insertion is a strategy learners adopt to

facilitate pronunciation if the consonant sequence does not exist in their dialect. According to (El ZarkaAmro2013), this error results from the difficulty of pronouncing the consonant clusters at the beginning or the end of words in some cases. In some other cases, it results from the impact of daily spoken Arabic. This consonantal cluster error might lead to other errors such as consonant substitution, vowel insertion, and syllable addition.

2. Suprasegmental contrasts: It is worth noting that (Norton Peter 2003:13) believes that *“Focusing on supra-segmental features of pronunciation enables students to improve their overall intelligibility from an early stage. Consequently, he does not see pronunciation activities as stand-alone, but rather as an integral part of lessons.”*

(Odlin.P 1997, p.118) explains his view of supra-segmental patterns stating that *“Although cross-linguistic influences on pronunciation frequently involve segmental contrasts, the influences are also frequently evident in suprasegmental contrasts involving stress, tone, rhythm, and other factors.”*

(D)Word stress:Suprasegmental contrasts involve stress, rhythm, tone, and other elements. According to the results demonstrated above, the most problematic area for students seemed to be the word stress placement .Students do not emphasize stressed words or stressed syllables at all as it was revealed by the recording interviews results and appeared in table (51). This might due to the habits in their mother tongue that Arabic speakers have stress shifts in their pronunciation that are not recognized stress patterns in English. This can be the result of the stress patterns of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) as indicated by (El Zarka Amro 2013). Possible causes of pronunciation errors: A. Overgeneralization B. Language transference of some elements from

mother tongue. C. Inserting student survey English system. D. Avoidance of some elements in English. E. Students' state of mind. F. Students' abnormal articulation system. G. Students' timidness and embarrassment. H. Students' laziness. I. Students' carelessness. J. Students' poor language competence. K. The effect of teaching and materials. L. Learning environment.

(E) Intonation Rules: Another beneficial feature of suprasegmental patterns is the role of intonation. Arabic speakers learning English might be fortunate, because in one of studies in the same area, it was found out that "... it does seem significant that Spanish and Arabic are, like English, intonational languages", Odlin (1997, p.119). The significance of intonation signals is that they indicate the speaker's emotions and they also provide hints of opening and closing, and turn taking in speech. According to Keller-Cohen's (1997) study, "*A similarity in the suprasegmental patterns of two languages can give a learner important advantages in learning the syntax of the target language*".

Intonation is also a problem for (SUSE). Meanwhile in English, intonation plays a very important role in changing the meaning of a sentence. As appeared in the above tables, students seemed to be reluctant to use the tones of English properly. They tend to say "wh questions" with rising tone and all question tags with falling tone. The researcher supported the idea of suggesting repair strategies for the sake of helping students to overcome these difficulties adding that students should listen to proper pronunciation from their teachers, as the first source of input and should be provided with opportunities to work with minimal pair practice activities.

Moreover, teachers must have strong pronunciation courses to raise their awareness of the English phonetic system. In addition, teachers

might also make use of technology and use YouTube for interesting videos to attract the learners and at the same time give them the opportunity to listen to native speakers. Teachers are recommended to concentrate on 1 or 2 errors at a time to avoid disappointment and to give the learner an opportunity to have enough practice.

From the researcher's own point of view, it is the teachers' responsibility to help their students overcome those problems; otherwise the students will fail in their language learning. Since the teacher is the student's model of correct or preferred pronunciation, it is essential that the teacher is educated in the disciplines of phonetics and phonology in order to provide the students with a high standard language competence.

According to the results above, the results of the recorded test go in the same way with the results of the questionnaire, so (18) of the teachers out of 30 believe that some SUSE made pronunciation errors while speaking English. This result was in accordance with the students' questionnaire's results mentioned previously. However teachers' responses revealed that consonant clustering and intonation might not cause major problems to the students.

3. Sub-question Group three:

(C) What are the most common factors responsible for the pronunciation errors made by university students of English?

The causes of pronunciation weakness at university level were explained in this part. When students were asked about the reasons for English pronunciation weaknesses they faced, the interviewees said that pronunciation errors might be made due to the lack of practicing English both inside and outside the classroom, and the lack of contact hours with native speakers in Sudan society besides limited number of English contact hours with teachers. However, some students claimed that they

were weak because pronunciation of English was difficult to understand. In addition, one interviewee stated that, *“Causes underlying the pronunciation difficulties were the differences between English and Arabic sound system.”*

Interestingly, this result was supported by the previous studies. It was probable that some errors might result from the minimal pairs for example /f/ and /v/ as indicated by (El Zarka Amro 2013) in his study on the pronunciation errors of the native Arabic learners, who are learning English as a second language. Therefore, the native speakers of Arabic resort to the sound that their language exhibits, the voiceless /f/.

In other words, /p/ and /v/ cause the native speaker of Arabic to use the repair strategies of voicing and devoicing accordingly, due to their absence in Arabic. These factors are in accordance with what was mentioned previously in the questionnaires findings and in the literature review, that there are many factors affecting the learners' pronunciation. According to Kenworthy (1987:4-9): *“Factors such as the native language, the age, amount of exposure, phonetic ability, attitude and identity, motivation and concern for good pronunciation have great influence on pronunciation learning.”*

In short, through questionnaires and interviews, it was confirmed that more or less, some of students at Faculties of Arts and Education have had difficulties in English pronunciation at both segmental and suprasegmental levels.

4.Sub-question Group Four:

(D) What are the suggested procedures that might help in facing the difficulties?

The repair strategies that the learners attempt to implement to overcome these pronunciation problems were discussed in this part. The

purpose of this question was to find out whether or not students were aware of some techniques or strategies regarding teaching/learning pronunciation. With this question, the researcher wanted to find out if students were autonomous, and what were the main techniques that they used to improve their pronunciation as well as telling us about the material they use. The interviewed subjects provided several suggestions with regard to improving pronunciation during spoken English. Most of them recommended increasing the number of teaching periods. Generally, the students made a number of practical suggestions to improve pronunciation of English at university level such as using a variety of teaching aids and encouraging students to speak in English both inside and outside the classroom. For example, one interviewee stated that:

The best way to enhance speaking skill is to use different types of speaking activities such as group work and pair work; Increasing the number of English contact hours (periods); speaking in English with foreigners in real situations and via the internet; establishing English clubs in the university; and motivating students to speak in English.

According to another student suggestion that, *“Students should do many things to develop their speaking skills such as using English in the classroom with each others.”*

A third student confirmed that, *“Listening to English speakers through TV or the Internet is the first step to improving speaking.”*

In general, the findings with regard to items 1 to 7 are in accordance with the findings revealed in the literature. For instance (Abker Ibrahim's.2016) study on university students in Khartoum State. He reached to conclusion that university teachers should produce their own pronunciation exercises, to help university students to improve their

speaking skills. Speaking tests are very important in all university's levels, so as to, encourage university students to practice their language and pronounce correctly. Establishing English forums and clubs in Sudanese universities should help students to improve their speaking skill through debating cultural activities Providing CDs and Cassettes by native speakers (British or American) speaking in different topics e.g. (daily life topics) help university students to improve their pronunciation.

According to the researcher's point of view, both students and teachers need to join collaborative works in order to the new exchange ideas regarding pronunciation problems solutions. In addition, the responses revealed that students adopted some treatment plans which seemed to be similar to the techniques that teachers used in their classrooms. It is worth mentioning that the majority of the study subjects seemed to think positively towards the teaching and learning strategies and techniques. Techniques such as immediate correction; using dictionaries' imitation 'watching movies, much practicing, and having foreign friends were recommended by the study subjects.

5.2.3 Conclusion of Pronunciation Problematic Areas:

The present experimental study contributes to the identification of specific areas of difficulty which hamper communication through the mispronunciation of individual English phones and sounds. Awareness of the problem areas of learners provides a basis for future material planning, design and production. When students were asked about the pronunciation difficulties, which they might face when they speak English, they identified different difficulties which were demonstrated and discussed in this part. Firstly, incapability to differentiate between English sounds pairs such as [p] and [b];[f] and [v] .This finding was supported by Eckman's (1977) study on S/FL learners' difficulties in

English pronunciation. He stated that “*Common sounds between L1 and L2 are less difficult or less marked than nonexistent sounds which are considered more difficult and more marked.*”

On the whole, the interviewed study subjects mentioned three pronunciation difficulties regarding the segmental aspects such as sounds recognition; mispronunciation of the final -ed past forms and -es final simple verbs and plurals; and consonants clustering. At suprasegmental level, two types of errors were demonstrated: improper use of word stress and intonation.

However, phonetic transcription and spelling and sounds inconsistency were pronunciation challenges students faced. According to the researcher’s point of view unfamiliar sounds which do not exist in the learners’ mother tongue, such as [p] and [v], should be identified by the teachers and given special attention. In the interview, question number 3, reflects more details about students’ problems with English vowels which were presented above. In light of the students’ responses, the researcher added some more explanations for the phenomenon that students had such difficulties in pronouncing the sounds [θ] and [ð] is partially due to their colloquial accents. Generally, the interviews addressed the major difficulties faced by the final year students in pronunciation learning.

As the researcher is an experienced teacher of the pronunciation course for the more than 15 years, she noticed some common problems that students often make, such as word-ending sounds, syllabification, and word stress position and intonation rules. Generally speaking, Arab learners of English encountered by problems in both spoken and written English. This fact has been clearly stated by many researchers; *e.g. Abdulhaq (1982) and Krasper (1983)*. To shed light on the problems

of Arab learners of English, the following are examples taken from different countries. In Jordan, for example, studies have been conducted to investigate lexical, syntactical, and phonological errors made by Jordanian learners of English.

5.3 Observations Results and Discussion

Observation was the third tool, which was used in this research. To obtain information about pronunciation errors, the researcher engaged in direct lectures with the students inside the classroom during their university day. A number of pronunciation lessons were addressed. Most of the students were very interested and they were very happy to express themselves in English during the lessons; while they were doing that, the researcher was writing notes carefully about the pronunciation errors they made while speaking.

After exploring the materials available for pronunciation problematic areas and showing their reasons as well as some suggested solutions for overcoming them, the next step was to go and see how English pronunciation lessons are conducted in order to elicit some pronunciation errors students made while speaking for the sake of more support and confirmation to the results obtained from the interviews and questionnaires and which presented and discussed earlier in this study. For this purpose, classroom observations were arranged. Specifically, the observations were devised with the purpose of analyzing the students' behavior in the classroom when the teacher addressed pronunciation oral communication issues.

By means of using different methods for data collection, it was possible to triangulate and so verify the findings. In other words, carrying out observations at the university meant a close monitoring of the

practices of a group with the purpose of getting closer to what is actually done in the classroom.

As an observer, the researcher had to follow the events as presented in the classroom with no interruption at all. In this particular case, three groups at final year SUSE were observed. The researcher observed four classes, two for each group. The length of the classes was two hours each. The main purpose of this observation was to pay attention to students' responses when pronunciation issue was addressed. In the following parts, the researcher interprets the results from the feedback of the class observations. The study mentions the noticeable pronunciation errors that students made.

The observation focused on certain segmental features such as sound-recognition problem areas; consonantal clusters; and (e) d endings (e) s verbs & plural endings. However, suprasegmental features weaknesses were also observed such as word stress position and the intonation rules usages, specifically, the use of rising tone for wh-questions and using falling tone for tag-questions. (Appendix 3 Observation Guide). Here are examples of the students' errors noted down by the researcher:

- “produce” is pronounced /bərədju:s/ most of the time.
- “advanced” is said like /ədva:nsɪd/ instead of /ədva:nst /.
- “health” is often pronounced /hels/ instead of /helθ /.
- “that” is pronounced as /zæt/ instead of /ðæt/.
- “helps” is pronounced as /helpɪs/ instead of /helps/

During the class observation process, it is noticeable that most [p] appearing in all word positions was pronounced as [b] in words like “pray” was pronounced as “bray”. Results obtained from the questionnaire and the interview responses support the same idea.

Furthermore, according to what was observed by the researcher, all students and most teachers seemed to confuse voiceless with voiced consonants, especially the three pairs: [p] with [b]; [f] with [v]; and [t] with [d] as a result of the absence of the voiceless [p] and the voiced [b] and [v] from Arabic sound system. This might also be problematic for some other Arabic speakers as indicated by (Al-ZarkaAmro: 2013).

In addition, in the researcher's notes during class observation, such minimal pairs as "pen" and "ben"; "pin" and "bin"; were often mispronounced by many students. The other pairs of voiced and voiceless sounds standing at the end of words were also noted to be difficult to most of students, for example, "move" was pronounced /mu:f/ instead of /mu:v/. Another confusion comes with the pairs [tʃ] and [dʒ]; [θ] and [ð]; [z] and [ʒ] as mentioned previously.

Third, the observation confirms the students' problems with English consonant clusters. Accordingly, what students often do when facing consonant cluster is to insert a vowel sound after one or more consonants in the cluster so as to become easier to pronounce. This was illustrated with a number of examples:

- "desks" is pronounced as /deskɪs/ with [ɪ] inserted.
- "tests" is pronounced as /testɪs/ with [ɪ] inserted.
- "months" is produced as /mʌnθɪs/ instead of /mʌnθs/.
- "spell" is pronounced as /ɪzbel/, with initial [ɪ] inserted; voiceless fricative [z] and voiced plosive [b] instead of /spel/.

To conclude, all these results from the phonemes and words, confirm the research hypothesis No (1) which is claims that some students in Shandi University don't use the proper way of word, phrase and sentence stress speaking. In compare by other research in the same field in Sudan and other countries as the researcher mentioned in chapter

two, the researcher discovered that some university students 3rd year in Khartoum State didn't mastering English word, phrase, and sentence stress in their speaking. This due mainly to the shortage of practicing language and lack of phonetic and phonological knowledge.

To sum up, the results from questionnaires, students' interviews and classroom observations, all showed an agreement in the results obtained. In comparison with English phonemes, the final and semi-final year students at faculties of Arts and Education had more difficulties in pronouncing certain English consonants and vowels wherever they stand, in the word finals, in isolating words as well as within utterances.

According to the researcher's point of view, pronouncing these strange sounds, students firstly moved them towards similar sounds which exist in their mother tongue, secondly, insert the vowels between consonant clusters to facilitate the pronunciation of them. Moreover, the researcher noted down some comments with regard to students' no awareness of the suprasegmental concepts such as stress and intonation. As a result of this, the researcher noticed improper use of word stress and intonation rules.

The following part explained how well the respondents understand the concepts of stress and intonation. For example, with the first concept-stress, all students use dispositional stress at the word level. That is to say they completely ignored the stress rules although they were lectured clearly enough to have basic understandings of its rules. The second term to be looked at for students' understanding is intonation. The researcher observed that a small number of the respondents showed their confidence with English pronunciation and used intonation rules properly to some extent, meanwhile a considerable number of students showed that they just understand the concept but not really well. They always make

“statements” with level tone, no rising tone at the end of a “Yes/No” question, no falling tone at the end of a “wh question”. It’s worth noting that, the concept of “stress” is shown to be the most problematic area faced by most of the participants. Among more than (70) students, there is few students used the stress properly at the word level.

In short, of the five English pronunciation features mentioned in the questionnaire, interview and observation, stress seemed to be the most problematic area that students faced. Intonation ranks the same second while English consonant sounds are evaluated to be more difficult than English vowel sounds. It is useful for our teachers of English to note the case so that they can have better balance in their pronunciation lessons. The researcher thought that the problem was that students do not pay much attention to the stress when they pronounce a word or sentence, or they cannot make it their habit.

5.4 Discussion and conclusions

The results of this study indicate that, based on the views of Spanish students enrolled in a BA in English Language and Literature, the role of pronunciation in EFL classes is still insufficient. The students have positive attitudes to the teaching and learning of English pronunciation: knowing how to pronounce English correctly is relevant for them, although a high number stated that it is difficult to acquire; they would like to speak the language fluently; they admit that speaking English will be relevant for them in future. It is worth noting that, the recording test supported a lot the notes and the information, which was taken from the class observation.

5.5 Summary

The results presented in this chapter suggest that, in general, university students of English at Arts and Education Faculties had a positive attitude towards English pronunciation lessons. The results also show that these students face many types of pronunciation difficulties and they are generally weak when it comes to speaking in English.

Moreover, the findings suggest many factors that can cause difficulties for students in terms of pronunciation in spoken English. Based on the analyses of the data, chapter six provides a detailed summary of the study's results and the findings discussion.

The recording test supported a lot the notes and information, which was taken from the observation conducted by the researcher for the same purpose. In compare with results of the questionnaires we will find that the recording test results supported a lot the notes and the information, which was taken from the observation and the questionnaire responses.

The following chapter highlighted the findings of the study with reference to the research questions in order to explain how the objectives set for this study were fulfilled.

6.1 Introduction

This study is conducted to investigate the pronunciation errors that, the final year students at Faculty of Arts and Education -Shandi University- make while speaking English, and to explain causes of such errors. This study also aims at obtaining information on the most common difficulties in pronunciation. It also aims at attempting to reach to some treatment strategies or techniques that might help in getting over these difficulties for both segmental and supra-segmental features of English pronunciation.

After the analysis and discussion of the collected data in the previous chapters; the researcher is going to figure out the findings that have been worked up throughout the research period in light of the analysis and interpretation of data collected by the three data-gathering instruments, which are: (1) two close-ended questionnaires, (2) audio-recorded interview, and (3) class observation check list. In this part, the answers to the three research questions proposed in the introduction are going to be summarized. Moreover, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies are included.

6.2 Summary of the Study

The outline of this study can be found in the introductory chapter i.e. chapter one. It explains the main objective of the research that is investigation of segmental and supra-segmental errors made by EFL at the Faculty of Arts and Education- Shandi University- learners while speaking English and to discuss the factors underlying these errors. Moreover, the research aimed at reaching to some possible solutions and effective strategies or techniques that can be adopted by both teachers and students to help overcome the difficulties in English pronunciation.

Chapter two includes a survey of the previous relevant studies, and this is followed by chapter three which shows experimental part of the study. The researcher used different data-gathering techniques in order to obtain insightful information for the stud.

Segmental and supra-segmental errors investigation is the core of chapter four which includes the types, causes and solutions of pronunciation errors in details. Illustrations, measurements and other evidence were shown in this section with more concentration on sounds and words production. The study was always illustrated by charts and appendices were also available for the reader to refer to.

The investigator used a variety of data -gathering tools to collect the data for this study, (i) survey questionnaires ;(ii) an audio-structured interview; (iii) and observation check list. Each of all survey instruments were used to gather reliable and valid information for the study.

However, each instrument was designed to collect a specific type of data, but the responses for all instruments were analyzed collectively in relation to the goals of the study. University teachers of linguistics from Shandi and Khartoum Universities, and 3rd, 4th year students majoring in English at faculty of Arts and Education at Shandi University participated in the survey of this study.

The audio- recorded interviews, (Appendix 3) were designed to elicit information from (16) EFL students at Shandi University. Those interviews were audio recorded and words were transcribed by the researcher for qualitative and quantitative content analysis. Then data were coded for recurrent themes and themes of interest in relation to the research questions. In addition, a class observation checklist was conducted, (Appendix 4). Regarding the class observation, four different classes taught by different teachers were observed by the researcher for

the purpose of supporting the results of data obtained from the questionnaires and the interview. The questionnaire survey instruments, (Appendix 2) were administered to (35) university teachers (30 completed and returned back), and (86) students (70 completed and returned back) representing the two faculties in Shandi University (Appendix 1-A).

Data collection took place from January 17, 2015 to February 5, 2015. Data collected from the questionnaires were tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics generated by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study tried to examine three hypotheses in the area of pronunciation problems which are:

1. *The final year students of English at Shandi University have pronunciation errors profiles in spoken and read English;*
2. *Most pronunciation errors were caused by mother tongue interference and little amount of the target language (TL) exposure as well some other factors;*
3. *“Teachers and students have some remedial plans and techniques that may help overcome learners’ weaknesses and express themselves in better English.”*

The researcher then used the results of these hypotheses to answer the three research questions:

- (a) *What are the pronunciation difficulties that the final year students of English majors at Faculties of Arts and Education –Shandi University meet when they speak English?*
- (b) *What are the causes of the difficulties met by the final year students of English majors at Faculties of Arts and Education in their pronunciation learning process?*

(c)What are the possible solutions, the most effective techniques that can be used to help students overcome their difficulties in English pronunciation?

After using the data collected from the two questionnaires to explicate the research questions, the researcher used a follow-up audio-structured interview with the selected participants in order to (i) confirm the most important findings that obtained from the questionnaires; and (ii) elucidate some of the enigmatic findings i.e. students' responses from the interviews might enhance findings and add more depth, insight clarification since the aim of the study is to pinpoint certain English speech sounds/phonemes , consonant clustering (segmental features) , stress and intonation (supra-segmental features) that seem to pose a problem for Sudanese students of English as foreign language.

The results of all types of data-collection tools and analyses processes were described in the paragraphs that followed. After that, the researcher offered reflections into the main findings of the research. Then, the areas where future research is needed were carefully explored.

6.3 Main Findings of Study

The findings that have been discussed and stated in this section seemed to confirm that, there are major errors related to pronunciation in spoken English, at both segmental and supra-segmental aspects. Such errors are made by the final year English-major students at the Faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University.

In the previous chapters, chapters, (4 and 5), an analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires, audio-recorded interviews as well as class observation check list, for the three research questions were discussed and answered. Each question will be considered separately.

6.3.1 Findings for Study Question (1)

The present study highlighted the English pronunciation problematic areas at both segmental and supra-segmental levels since it was conducted at the university level. The survey results revealed that, the English pronunciation problems that students majoring in English at Shandi University faced were related to the following areas:

1. Vowels-recognition difficulty in which students were not able to differentiate between vowels of the Target Language (TL) in terms of length. While virtually all vowels may cause problems, the most confusing ones were: [ɑ:] and [æ] in “part and pat”, students tend to pronounce the two words with the same vowel quality, that was: /bæt/ and /bæt/ instead of /pɑ:t /and/pæt/. It is claimed that there are differences in the inventory of English and Arabic languages that compromise the learners’ perception and production of English sounds.
2. Mispronunciation of consonants that do not exist in Arabic language such as [p] and [v] in “*park* and *very*” were pronounced as / bærk/and/ferı/ instead of/ pɑ:k/ and /verı/ . Moreover, some students pronounced the two consonants [θ] as [s] and [ð] as [z] in words like “thank” and “that” which were pronounced as /sænk /and /zæt/ instead of /θæŋk/ and /ðæt/. In this situation, the Colloquial Sudanese Arabic might contribute to this mispronunciation because the two consonants [θ]and[ð] exist in Standard Arabic Language and produced as [s] and [z] colloquially.
3. Mispronunciation of the -ed past verb ending and -es verbs and plural endings in words like “looked and bags” which were pronounced as /lukd or lukɪd and bægs / instead of /lukt and bægz/. This is probably because the learners were not familiar with the rules of -ed past verb ending and -es verbs and plural endings pronunciation.

4. Consonant clustering difficulty in which students usually tend to follow the strategy of epenthesis in English clusters i.e. inserting of short vowel when pronouncing words such as in “street, play, next” for the purpose of facilitating their pronunciation. However, some students seemed to pronounce these words with the short vowel [ɪ] insertion as in the following manners: /ɪstri:t/, /pɪleɪ/, /nekɪst/, instead of /stri:t/, /pleɪ/, /nekst/. The results of both the students and the language teachers responses suggested that the English cluster consonants are comparatively better perceived and produced by the Sudanese learners than the vowels.

5. Difficulty of placing stress at word level, for example, the words “library” and “collect” .Some students tend pronounced these words with wrong stress placement as in the following manner: /lɑɪ'brəri/ and /'kələkt/ instead of /'laɪbrəri/ and /kə'lekt/. However, based on this study, the findings revealed that stress seemed to be the most problematic area that students had.

6. Students seemed to face problems in displaying the correct intonation in speaking conversation. They tend to use rising tone (↗) for wh-questions and falling tone (↘) for all tag-questions in questions like “What did you say? She is clever, isn't she? However intonation patterns in Arabic are said to be similar to those of English in contour and meaning .as claimed by Ravell.P (2012)

Wh-questions, suggestions and offers are marked much more frequently by a rising tone than by any structural markers, and this is carried over into English. When reading aloud, however, as opposed to conversing, the Arabic speaker tends to intone or chant, reducing intonation to a low fall at the ends of all question tags.

7. Spelling seemed to contribute directly to some pronunciation errors as reflected by the results. Words such as, “debt”, “laugh”, “rhyme”, are

very confusing to the learner and might lead to mispronunciation based on the written form. It is worth noting that this finding was in consistent with the famous claim that: the word “fish” could be spelt “ghoti” because: ‘gh’ in ‘enough’ is pronounced /f/ , ‘o’ in ‘women’ is pronounced /ɪ/ ‘ti’ in ‘motion’ is pronounced /ʃ/ so ‘ghoti’ could be pronounced /fɪʃ/. <http://www.thesoundofenglish.org/>. This highlights the fact that English has a deep orthography system in which the relationship between letters and sounds is not a one to one relationship. In other words, a group of letters might represent only one sound as in (tio) making the sound /ʃ/.

Another problematic area in English orthography as well, is when one letter is represented by different sound articulations i.e. the letter (a) in words such as “*man*”, and “*many*”. On the contrary, the Arabic orthographic system is said to be shallow. The letter sound relationship in Arabic is more explicit than that in English. In Arabic the word is almost pronounced as it is. The inconsistent letter to sound rules of English lexis may result in mispronunciation.

8. Other detailed problematic pronunciation areas related to the final-word consonants; consonant clusters; phonetic transcription; syllabification; stress and intonation difficulties have also been identified. The researcher noticed that this problem is not only encountered by EFL/ESL learners in Sudan but also in other countries. That some university students didn’t pronounce some consonant sounds in a proper way for many reasons: first there are some differences between English and Arabic languages. Second there are some phonemes that do not exist in the two languages. In some countries regional dialects and accents affect the speaker’s pronunciation. Possible reasons for these difficulties will be discussed in the next section.

6.3.2 Findings for Study Questions (2)

This part was devoted to highlight the findings revealed from the results of the second research hypothesis which claims that: *The most pronunciation errors were caused by mother tongue interference; lacking of the (TL) exposure; and some other contributory factors* such as the low motivation, insufficient time for practice, and poor knowledge of pronunciation. These factors were discussed in this part:

1. Students did meet certain pronunciation difficulties in spoken English, which leads them to fail in efficient communication. These difficulties seemed to be misrecognition of certain English vowel sounds; substitutions of certain English consonants as mentioned above. The most notable factors that contribute to these difficulties were in the categories of “mother-tongue interference”. However, there are other contributory factors such as the lack of exposure to the (TL); Moreover, the lack of the learner’s knowledge of pronunciation negatively affects the perception and production of intelligible speech.
2. Time devoted to practice the pronunciation basics might be insufficient and the students’ exposure to the (TL) seemed to be little. Based on the researcher’s own long personal experience in the field of teaching English language to both adults and children, insufficient time for practicing and little exposure directly and largely affect the learners’ mastery of English pronunciation concepts in particular and other aspects of English language in general.
3. When investigating the same three factors which are: “mother-tongue interference; lack of practicing the basic pronunciation rules; and insufficient time”, the findings revealed that, for both teachers and students, the reasons behind such errors might mostly due to the mother tongue influence and insufficient time.

4. On the whole, the pronunciation problematic areas of the final year students of English at the faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University seemed to cause major difficulties in learning English pronunciation to other university students in other areas in Sudan. For instance some university students in Khartoum State faced segmental and supra-segmental difficulties while speaking English.

5. The results obtained from the questionnaires; recording interview and the class observation, reflected a number of factors that might contribute to the pronunciation difficulties faced by Shandi university students majoring in English at the faculties of Arts and Education. The findings of the research supported the second hypothesis which assumes that pronunciation errors made by the university students English are significantly related to mother-tongue interference and little amount of target language exposure. These results are consistent with previous research studies. (Ladefoged, 2001, O'Connor, 2003) who claimed that lack of pronunciation knowledge; insufficient time for practice and the little amount of exposure to (TL) lead the learners of other mispronunciation. However, it is worth mentioning that, the causes that received strong agreement among teachers and students were the mother-tongue interference; and lack of practicing the basic pronunciation rules.

6. Inconsistency between spelling and English sound might lead learners of English to wrong pronunciation of some words.

7. Both teachers and students had positive attitudes towards the important role of motivation in learning pronunciation. It is worth noting that this finding is consistent with findings of many other studies as mentioned earlier in this study.

6.3.3 Findings for Study Questions (3)

With regard to the analysis of the suggested plans and effective techniques that that might contribute to reducing pronunciation errors and lead to improvements, the results revealed insightful information about the treatment of the pronunciation errors that might be made by the university students majoring in English at the Faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University.

It is worth mentioning that, the study of the pronunciation errors analysis and their causes tend to be very useful for both teachers and students, specifically, in providing students with learning strategies that may contribute to eliminating difficulties as well as helping them improve their English pronunciation competence and also providing the teachers with a number of effective strategies and techniques to help in teaching pronunciation more effectively and interestingly. From that, teachers could find the best way to teach pronunciation and explain the important concepts that will help them improve their students' English pronunciation. Interestingly, it is found that teachers and students of English seemed to have some techniques such as using audio and visual aids to help in solving the difficulties in learning pronunciation.

In light of the participants' responses, the researcher would try to present the suggested teaching techniques that might help to minimize pronunciation difficulties that students meet while speaking English. Hopefully, they could be somehow helpful to teachers and students at the faculties of Arts and Education-Shandi University since what techniques the teachers often use have great influence on the way that students get the knowledge. These solutions were stated as follows:

1. Students should be allowed to listen to English sounds, words or texts on CDs, Tape recorders or videos.

2. Using a dictionary was highly recommended in teaching pronunciation as it helps learners of English to improve their pronunciation skills particularly in familiarizing themselves with phonetic symbols and ordinary letters relationship. Participants made use of digital dictionaries in advance.
3. Adopting imitation and repetition as teaching techniques facilitates the learning and acquisition of English pronunciation.
4. Using of audio and visual aids is important in teaching pronunciation.
5. There should be enough time to practice phonetic transcription.
6. Being in contact with the target language helps learners to correct their pronunciation errors.
7. A good technique to test pronunciation is to record students' dialogues or readings.
8. Considering the use of mimicking technique seemed to be used by teachers to explain some features of pronunciation.
9. Segment discrimination is a technique that helps students to differentiate between the pronunciation of English sounds and words easily. Moving on to exercises of minimal pairs will help learners further refine their pronunciation of individual phonemes.
10. Speech rhythm exercises help students to be fluent and give them the chance to practice stress and intonation.
11. Collaboration with the other teachers of phonetics and phonology i.e. sharing lessons of pronunciation with other English language teachers to enrich the field of pronunciation teaching with new techniques and strategies.

In conclusion, the researcher would like to draw the teachers' attention to be well-qualified and well-trained in order to convey the basic pronunciation features to the students in a proper way.

6.4 Conclusions

Based on the participants' responses to the questionnaires, the interviews and observation items, along with the researcher's viewpoint, the conclusions are listed below. It is worth noting that the results obtained from the different tools, helped greatly in identifying pronunciation errors and finding the exact reasons behind the errors among Sudanese university students. The findings led the researcher to state a number of conclusions pertaining to the three research questions:

1. Research question (1) asked *what the pronunciation errors that the final year students at the Faculties of Arts and Education make when they speak English are*. In looking at the data for "Identifying the Pronunciation Errors", it is generally believed that the Sudanese learners have some serious issues in learning English pronunciation. The study findings indicated that some students had pronunciation difficulties especially in the recognition of sounds and the differences in the articulation of these sounds.

Referring to the results of this study, the first hypothesis was proven right because the analysis showed that some students of English at Shandi University encountered by difficulties in pronunciation of some English sounds, both vowels and consonants. Moreover, other difficulties were displayed by the research results that; lack of correspondence between English spelling and pronunciation led students to mispronounce words contain *-ed past verb suffix* and *-es verbs and plural ending* such as "moved, looked" and "asks". Moreover, the results reflected that it was difficult for students to apply the rules of stress patterns and intonation. Students encountered difficulties with the syllabification and a great deal of agreement displayed that the majority of students had major problems with phonetic transcription. Also students had a problem with

consonantal cluster and vowel length contrast as well as displaying the incorrect intonation in speaking conversation. The researcher would like to mention that, the pronunciation errors made by Shandi University students seemed to be the same errors made by other university students in other areas in Sudan. Such finding is previously reported by Ali Ezzeldin (2013) that producing English vowels is one of the most challenging tasks for the Sudanese university EFL learners. The same finding is supported by what Abker Ibrahim (2016) when he mentioned that, his study participants faced problems in pronunciation of some consonant sounds, word, phrase and sentence stress.

2. Research question (2) asked *what are the causes of the pronunciation errors that made by the final year students at the Faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University?* According to the results, these errors might occur due to the absence of some English phonological features in the Arabic phonological system, and thus reflect negative L1 interference. Furthermore, the participants confirmed that lacking of exposure and motivation played a significant role in causing pronunciation difficulties; moreover, the study subjects' responses demonstrated that, the amount of time devoted to explain pronunciation basics was insufficient. Therefore, the researcher could infer that students needed more time to practice pronunciation rules.

Finally, the results showed that a great majority of students at Faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University made segmental and supra-segmental errors due to the lack of pronunciation knowledge. This result was supported by the findings of some other previous studies, for example (O'Connor, 2003; Yule, 2009). According to the interview results, some students seemed to believe that pronunciation was one of the most difficult aspects of English to learn and master and needed

considerable help from the teachers in particular and from students in general. This difficulty, led to mispronunciations.

On the whole, it is worth noting that the factors behind the pronunciation errors that the 3rd and 4th year students at the Faculties of Arts and Education in Shandi University seemed to share the same difficulties that contribute to mispronunciations mentioned by many other studies. However, the factors of pronunciation errors that received strong agreement from both teachers and students are: the mother-tongue interference; lack of pronunciation knowledge due to the insufficient time for practice and the little amount of exposure. In conclusion, in the beginning of the study, the researcher assumed that the pronunciation errors among most of the university learners of English due to a number of factors such as “mother-tongue interference; lack of practicing the basic pronunciation rules; lacking of motivation, insufficient time for practice, and lack of knowledge.”

The findings of the research supported the second hypothesis that these factors led to mispronunciations. This finding was supported by Zoltan Dornyei (2012) who reported that “*Motivation has been widely accepted by both teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second/foreign language (L2) learning.*” Moreover, the researcher would like to draw the teachers’ attention to the significant role of motivation in learning pronunciation and the teachers should do their best to keep maintaining and enhancing the students’ motivation.

3. Research question (3) asked, *what are the techniques and plans that effective to overcome the pronunciation difficulties and contribute to improvement?* This part presents the compensating strategies which might help in reducing pronunciation difficulties mapped in the study results .

1. The study participants seemed to use some techniques and strategies that might help in facing pronunciation difficulties.
2. The results revealed that participants were aware of the crucial role of pronunciation in communication. According to the researcher's point of view, the awareness of errors contributes in encouraging the learners to improve themselves in this area. Interestingly, this result was in accordance with the previous studies which pointed out that learning from errors can be a good way to improve pronunciation. Edge (1989, p14) reported that: "*errors are in fact signals that our students are successfully learning the language, they are taking the necessary learning step*".

To conclude, this study had yielded very interesting results that can be beneficial to the teachers of pronunciation in general, including the researcher. The result of the participants' responses reflected that mother-tongue interference; lacking of exposure to English and the insufficient time devoted to teach pronunciation basics are the strongest factors that contribute to pronunciation difficulties. The main difficulties made by the learners and mentioned above, included both segmental and supra-segmental difficulties. These difficulties were clarified as follows:

1. Segmental difficulties:

- (i) Phonemes (vowels and consonants) recognition.
- (ii) Consonantal clusters mispronunciation.
- (iii) *-ed past form* verbs endings and *-es 3rd person singular* of the present simple and plurals.

2. Supra-segmental difficulties:

- (i) Improper use of word stress patterns.
- (ii) Incorrect application of the intonation rules.

Furthermore, the researcher would like to add that, this study is one of the studies that handle some important issues in the field of L2

pronunciation problems in both segmental and supra-segmental features. All segmental and supra-segmental of pronunciation work together in combination when speaking, so that difficulties in one area may impact on another, and it is the combined result that makes someone's pronunciation easy or difficult to understand.

However, in general, it is essential that learners attend to both aspects of pronunciation. Moreover, this study is of special significance since it was implemented to investigate the pronunciation errors among students majoring in English at Shandi University, their causes and the possible treatment techniques.

6.5 Recommendations

The present study has been conducted to investigate the pronunciation errors and find out the main causes that underlie them, in addition to offer some suggested plans and techniques that might help EEL university learners overcome the problems and improve their English pronunciation. Based on the findings stated earlier in this chapter, and for the sake of reducing the number of pronunciation errors made by university learners of English as a foreign language and improving the teaching pronunciation of English in the context of the English Curriculum taught at Sudanese universities in general and Shandi University in particular, the researcher has figured out some recommendations in the following subsections:

1. Teachers should raise their students' awareness of the importance of learning pronunciation in such a way as through (i) seminars or class meeting for pronunciation orientation or in English clubs activities, (ii) they can also raise students' concern about English pronunciation in forms of tests; (iii) more importantly, teachers need to make the pronunciation lessons more comfortable and interesting.

2. Pronunciation is a motor skill that needs practice by the learners, therefore students are strongly recommended to be involved in regular practice training using cassettes, CDs, listening and repeating pronunciation of different sounds.
3. Phonetics and phonology club are strongly recommended to be set up since it was reflected by students' results from the second data-obtained from the recording interview.
4. Students should be advised to listen to good English from what available source - radio, television, native speakers, and good local speakers of the language since exposure to English is among the most agreed upon factors that contribute to students' pronunciation difficulties.
5. The best way to help students improve their pronunciation skills is to encourage them to speak English as much as they possibly can. The teachers are responsible for creating a native-like language environment in the English classes.
6. Students need to record their speech, and then compare it to that of a native speaker in terms of vowels, consonants, consonant clusters, stress, intonation, etc., find their problems in each area, and practice the correct pronunciation.
7. Teachers must frequently remind their students that when they speak in English, they must think in the target language so that they do not bring in any feature of their mother tongue.
8. English is not an easy language to master. Teachers of English should advise their students to persevere in studying English. When they are sufficiently exposed to target language, the possibility of making pronunciation errors is minimized.

9. Teachers should encourage students to speak in English with their fellow students in university or on campus and create an atmosphere in class that is conducive to learning the language.

10. Phonetic description of the articulatory system of the target language is important since it offers the learners an opportunity to develop explicit knowledge about the representations of L2 sounds.

11. Teachers of pronunciation should be confident, competent and knowledgeable enough to provide their students with clear accurate information to enable them to communicate in an efficient way.

12. A useful way of helping learners understand how sounds work together in connected speech is the *back-chaining* technique. This is a drilling technique intended to help learners pronounce difficult sound groups, words or sentences. To do this, a teacher can conduct a mini drill, by starting with the last word, which the learners repeat, and then gradually builds up the word or phrase by going 'back' to the beginning.

Example of back chaining technique:

(Students listen and imitate)

Teacher: *Are you studying the present progressive?*

Teacher: progressive?

Students: *progressive?* 

Teacher: the present progressive?

Students: *the present progressive?* 

Teacher: Are you studying the present progressive?

Students: *Are you studying the present progressive?* 

13. Regarding the appropriate activities for advanced level, teachers should concentrate on lessons focusing on continuing students'

familiarity with the IPA in order to focus on the issue of connected speech in English.

14. The primary focus of spoken language is communication, where pronunciation represents the most important skill in both listening to understand and listening to imitate. Skills such as these can successfully be developed through language laboratory exercises that train learners to achieve accurate perception and production of the basic segmental and supra-segmental features of the new language.

15. Teachers should think critically and creatively about their own lessons and they should be able to identify their own areas of weaknesses in pronunciation teaching field.

16. Students should be supported to use phonetic resources that are available in dictionaries as phonetic transcription seemed to be one of the most difficulties that students of English in Shandi University had.

17. Teachers should serve as a model of correct pronunciation, especially at the beginning level where a proper foundation of all the aspects of foreign / second language pronunciation is crucial.

6.6 Suggestions for further studies

Based on the data in this study, the conclusions drawn and by taking cues from the results, the following topics for additional research are recommended:

1. Further large-scale and comprehensive investigations may be conducted to cover other areas that have to do with the speech intelligibility issue in the Sudanese EFL classroom. Therefore, research will be required in the following themes; insufficient practice, wrong implementation and lacking amount of exposure to English language which represent major causes of such problems.

2. A study that treats the use of the language laboratory to teach phonetics and listening comprehension skills is required.
3. Study is required to look at the effectiveness of some particular teaching techniques in motivating students' pronunciation learning.
4. Moreover, it would be interesting to carry out deeper investigation in students' pronunciation self-learning and practicing to see what improvements can be made during a pronunciation course.
5. Contrastive analysis between English and Arabic segmental and supra-segmental features should be conducted in order to:
 - (i) Provide useful insights to the teachers and make them aware of real learning problems and best way(s) of teaching.
 - (ii) Practice learning difficulties and help syllabus designers to produce the most effective material
6. This study was restricted to a specific group of participants. It would be very interesting to conduct a similar study targeting other university students and compare the findings of both studies. This would help to establish the common pronunciation difficulties among Arabic speakers.
7. Research is needed to investigate the reasons for weakness in EFL reading, writing and listening skills in relation to English pronunciation.
8. A further study could include factors such as gender, age, linguistic background or other factors relating to the students as well as information concerning the responsibilities of a teacher, which in turn could give important insight into the process of acquiring English pronunciation.
9. Weak forms proved to be one of the most neglected features of pronunciation teaching. Many students are accustomed to the strong forms as it is the only variant they have known so far that it is extremely difficult for them to incorporate the weak forms in their speech.

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Appendix (1)

(1-A)

In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious the most Merciful

Shandi University

Faculty of Postgraduate Studies &Scientific Research

Ph.D. Thesis Research

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Student, to what extent do you agree with the following items?

The following items ask about the obstacles you encounter during speaking English. Remember there is no right or wrong answers; just answer as accurately as possible. Please read the statements below carefully and tick the appropriate choices that reflect your attitudes and perceptions towards English pronunciation.

Thank you for your participation

Supervisor:

**Doctor : Ali Ahmad Hussein
Idries**

mail:seemaaliidries@gmail.com

Investigator:

Sumaya Ali Mohammad

E-

Investigator signature

Use the scale below to answer the questionnaire items.

Strongly Agree = 1; Agree =2; Neutral =3; Disagree =4; Strongly Disagree =5

Note: Tick (√) only one option for each item in the questionnaire.

Students' English pronunciation and obstacles they encounter during in spoken English:

| Statements | SA | A | NO | DA | SDA |
|---|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 1. I mispronounce certain sounds in English. | | | | | |
| 2. I have difficulties with the division of syllables. | | | | | |
| 3. I have major problems with phonetic transcription. | | | | | |
| 4. I mispronounce the -e d and -e s words endings. | | | | | |
| 5. I ignore stress placement. | | | | | |
| 6. I face a huge problem with intonation. | | | | | |
| 7. I have difficulties with consonantal cluster. | | | | | |
| 8. I know pronunciation rules, but I don't practice them. | | | | | |
| 9. Insufficient time is devoted to pronunciation practice. | | | | | |
| 10. I do not know about the pronunciation rules. | | | | | |
| 11. Lack of English spelling and pronunciation correspondence causes the main difficulties. | | | | | |
| 12. There is a lack of exposure to English language. | | | | | |
| 13. Most of my pronunciation errors are made due to the Arabic sound system interference. | | | | | |
| 14. I use a dictionary to identify the phonemic transcription. | | | | | |
| 15. I imitate teacher pronunciation. | | | | | |

Thank you so much for participation

Appendix (1-B)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

جامعة شندى

كلية الدراسات العليا و البحث العمي

اطروحة دكتوراه الفلسفة في اللغة الانجليزية (اللغويات التطبيقية)

بعنوان : **تقصى اخطاء النطق أثناء التحدث باللغة الانجليزية لدى طلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية : دراسة حالة بكليتي الاداب و التربية بجامعة شندى**

استبانة الطلاب

عزيزى الطالب/ عزيزتي الطالبة

السلام عليكم و رحمة الله و بركاته

انطلاقا من اهمية تعلم مهارات اللغة الانجليزية في تحقيق اهداف العملية التعليمية و التربوية فان الباحثة تتطلع الى مساهمتكم الفاعلة في انجاح هذه الدراسة بالمشاركة عبر تعبئة الاستبانة المرفقة و التي تهدف الى التعرف على مدى اهتمامك بتعلم مهارات النطق الصحيح في اللغة الانجليزية و الكشف عن العوقات التي تواجهك اثناء التحدث باللغة الانجليزية و الوصول الى مقترحات و حلول تساعدك على تطوير مهارات النطق لديك . فيرجى الاجابة بدقة و موضوعية علما بان المعلومات الواردة فيها تستخدم فقط لاغراض البحث العلمي.

الباحثة : اشراف:

سمية علي محمد د. علي احمد حسين

يناير 2015 م

ارجو استخدام المقياس ادناه للاجابة على اسئلة الاستبانة

1- موافق بشدة 2- موافق 3- محايد 4- غير موافق 5- غير موافق بشدة

ضع علامة (√) على الخيار الذى يناسبك:

| غير موافق بشدة | غير موافق | محايد | موافق | موافق بشدة | العبارات | |
|----------------|-----------|-------|-------|------------|--|----|
| | | | | | اخطأ في نطق بعض الاصوات في اللغة الانجليزية | 1 |
| | | | | | اواجه صعوبة في تقسيم الكلمة الانجليزية الى مقاطع. | 2 |
| | | | | | استخدام الرموز الصوتية من اهم الصعوبات لدى. | 3 |
| | | | | | اواجه صعوبة في نطق ال - es , - ed في نهاية الكلمة. | 4 |
| | | | | | لا افهم وضع علامة التشديد في الكلمة و لا استخدمه ابدأ. | 5 |
| | | | | | اواجه مشكلة في فهم و استخدام التنغيم عند التحدث. | 6 |
| | | | | | اواجه صعوبة في نطق الاصوات الساكنة المتتالية. | 7 |
| | | | | | اعرف قواعد النطق الصحيح و لكن لا امارس استخدامها. | 8 |
| | | | | | الوقت المخصص لممارسة قواعد النطق غير كافي. | 9 |
| | | | | | ليس لدى معلومات عن قواعد النطق باللغة الانجليزية. | 10 |
| | | | | | اختلاف الحروف و الرموز الصوتية يؤدي للنطقالخطأ. | 11 |
| | | | | | لايتم استخدام اللغة لانجليزية خارج قاعة الدراسة. | 12 |
| | | | | | معظم اخطاء النطق لدى سببها تدخل اللغة العربية. | 13 |
| | | | | | استخدم قاموس اللغة الانجليزية لأيجاد النطق الصحيح. | 14 |
| | | | | | اقوم بتقليد المعلم عندما ينطق الكلمة. | 15 |

شاكرا لك حسن تعاونك

Appendix (2)

In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious the most Merciful

Shandi University
Faculty of Postgraduate Studies &Scientific Research

Ph.D. Thesis Research

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Colleagues:

I am a graduate student at the Faculty of Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research of the University of Shandi .I am currently conducting a research in fulfillment for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Shandi University, entitled: An Analysis of EFL Learners Pronunciation Errors in Spoken English: A Case study at the Faculty of Arts and Education, and will be working under the supervision of Professor Ali Ahmed Hussein. I am hereby inviting your participation in my study which focuses mainly on the investigation of the most significant pronunciation errors made by EFL learners in spoken English. The research aims to identify the errors; find out the contributory factors and discuss some techniques to overcome the errors and help achieve an efficient communication in English .The researcher would be grateful if you kindly take part in this study. If you have any questions about the research, please contact me at the address provided below.

Supervisor

Investigator

Doctor : Ali Ahmad HusseinSumaya Ali Mohammad Idries

E-mail:seemaaliidries@gmail.com

Use the scale below to answer the questionnaire items.

Strongly Agree = 1, Agree =2, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 4, Strongly Disagree = 5

Note: For each of the following items, indicate your answer marking one of the options that suits your case.

Category 1: Pronunciation Problematic Areas and the Probable contributory Factors:

| Statements | SA | A | NO | DA | SDA |
|---|----|---|----|----|-----|
| 1. My students mispronounce certain sounds in English. | | | | | |
| 2. It is difficult for my students to apply the rules of stress. | | | | | |
| 3. My students encounter difficulties with the syllabification. | | | | | |
| 4. The majority of students have major problems with phonetic transcription. | | | | | |
| 5. My students have a problem with vowel length contrast. | | | | | |
| 6. Students mispronounce -e d verbs and -e s verbs and plurals endings. | | | | | |
| 7. My students encounter difficulties with the initial and final consonantal cluster. | | | | | |
| 8. My students add unnecessary sound at word boundaries | | | | | |
| 9. Students misuse intonation of wh-questions tag-questions. | | | | | |
| 10. Lack of knowledge contributes to pronunciation errors. | | | | | |
| 11. Mother-tongue interference leads to pronunciation errors. | | | | | |
| 12. Students make pronunciation errors because of lack practice of rules | | | | | |
| 13. It is hard to keep students motivated. | | | | | |
| 14. Time is insufficient to cover all the pronunciation aspects | | | | | |
| 15. Teachers take much time to introduce the pronunciation basics since the students have no idea about them. | | | | | |

Category 2: Techniques that might improve students' pronunciation.

Use the scale below to answer the questionnaire items.

Strongly agree = 1, Agree =2, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 4, Strongly Disagree =5 **Note:** Here are statements regarding the techniques that might improve s L2 pronunciation. Please read each one and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement.

| Statements | SA | A | NO | DA | SDA |
|---|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 16. Repetition facilitates the acquisition of English pronunciation. | | | | | |
| 17. Audio / visual aids are important in teaching pronunciation. | | | | | |
| 18. Teachers should make use of e- dictionaries as well. | | | | | |
| 19. Sufficient time is required for practice phonetic transcription. | | | | | |
| 20. A dictionary is highly recommended in teaching pronunciation | | | | | |
| 21. Being in contact with the target language helps learners to correct their pronunciation errors. | | | | | |
| 22. A good technique to test pronunciation is to record students' dialogues or readings. | | | | | |
| 23. I use of mimicking to explain some features of pronunciation. | | | | | |
| 24. Segment discrimination helps sounds recognition. | | | | | |
| 25. I allow the class to listen to words or texts on CDs, Tape recorders or videos. | | | | | |
| 26. Speech rhythm exercises help in fluency and practicing stress and intonation. | | | | | |
| 27. I ask my students to imitate what I say. | | | | | |
| 28. I collaborate with the teachers of phonetics. | | | | | |

Thank you so much for your collaboration

Appendix (3)

In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious the most Merciful

Shendi University

Faculty of Postgraduate Studies & Scientific Research

Ph.D. Thesis Research

Students' Interview Questions

Student Number _____

Dear Student:

You will be part of the solution of this problem. I want a resource person and a problem solver. You are the most qualified candidate for this work. As a development provider, your participation will involve taking part in a 15-20 minute audio-recorded interview in which I will ask you about the pronunciation difficulties you encounter, mainly to identify the most common pronunciation errors made by EFL learners in spoken English, which is a doctorate of philosophy study work. All information you provide will be fully confidential. Interviews will be conducted individually; no information taking part in this study will be conveyed to others either in or out of the work community. The audio-tapes will be immediately destroyed after transcribing them. Participation is completely voluntary; and you are under no obligation to take part in this research. I will be very grateful if you provide me with full feedback.

Supervisor:

Investigator:

Doctor: Ali Ahmad Hussein Sumaya Ali Mohammad Idries

E-mail: seemaaliidries@gmail.com

Signature of Conductor:

*Recording device will be brought to record the participant's responses.

| Research sub-questions | Interview sub-questions |
|--|---|
| <p>Attitudes towards English pronunciation and its teaching.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For how long have you been learning English? 2. Your choice of English was Personal or Parental. 3. How do you find the lectures of phonetics? a- Interesting b- Ordinary c- Boring 4. Do you feel satisfied with the way you have been taught pronunciation? |
| <p>What pronunciation obstacles have you faced in spoken English?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you face any difficulties in phonetics? 2. Give an example of a problem you have. 3. How often do you make pronunciation errors? a-Always b-Often c-Sometimes d-Rarely |
| <p>What are the common contributory factors?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your plan to do to overcome your problems? 2. Do you think that oral expression helps you improve your pronunciation? |
| <p>Pronunciation problematic areas (A) Segmental errors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phonemes recognition. | <p>Read the following English words:</p> <p>oppose ,forbid, stomach tongue , shoes , measure part , pat , fool , full , bead, bid ,</p> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Final -ed and - es endings. | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Consonant clustering. | <p>Play, splash spleen spring asked, sixths, , Asks, sixths, texts, twelfths.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>(B) Supra-segmental features</p> <p>1. Stress placement.</p> | <p>Read the following English words:</p> <p>Collect , library , climatic elicit , pronounce, potato , chimpanzee , absentee , cigarette ,</p> |
| <p>2. Wh-questions.</p> | <p>Read the following English :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you say? 2. Why are you late? 3. How old is the baby? |
| <p>3. Tag-questions.</p> | <p>Read the following English:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You don't take sugar in tea, do you 2. Those are naughty children, aren't they? 3. I am not surprised, am I? |
| <p>Suggesting procedures that might help in overcoming the areas of difficulty.</p> | |

Thank you so much for your collaboration.

Appendix (3-A)

Audio-Recorded Interviews

Student (1)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /fəðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | Pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | /mi:ʃə/ | /stɒməʃ/ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | /bært/ | /bært/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | ccvc | cvcc | cvccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions ↘ | | Question tags ↗ | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | | She is clever, isn't she? | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | Oo | oOoo | Ooo | Ooo | √ | | ↘ | | |

Student (2)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /fəðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | Pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | /bært/ | /bært/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | ccvc | cvcc | cvccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions ↘ | | Question tags ↗ | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | | She is clever, isn't she? | | |
| √ | vccvc | cvvc | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | ↗ | | √ | | |

Student (3)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /fəðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | /bært/ | /bært/ | /stɒpt/ | √ | √ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skɪz/ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | ccvc | cvcc | cvccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions ↘ | | Question tags ↗ | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | | She is clever, isn't she? | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | Oo | oOoo | Ooo | OoO | √ | | √ | | |

Appendix (3-B)

Student (4)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | /sɔ:t/ | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | √ | √ | /stɒpd/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | Question tags | | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | She is clever, isn't she? | | | |
| √ | vcccv | √ | √ | Oo | √ | Ooo | OoO | √ | √ | | | |

Student (5)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | Pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | /pært/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | Question tags | | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | Potato | absentee | What did you say? | She is clever, isn't she? | | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | Oo | oOoo | OoO | Ooo | √ | ↘ | | | |

Student (6)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | /pært/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | Question tags | | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | She is clever, isn't she? | | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | x | x | √ | x | ↘ | √ | | | |

Appendix (3-C)

Student (7)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|----------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:sks/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | /bært/ | /bært/ | √ | x | √ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skɪs/ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | Question tags | | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | Potato | absentee | What did you say? | She is clever, isn't she? | | | |
| √ | vccvc | cvcvc | cvcvcc | √ | oOo | oOo | OoO | ↗ | √ | | | |

Student (8)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:sks/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | /pært/ | √ | /stɒptɪd/ | mu:vɪd | √ | √ | /ɑ:skɪxs/ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | Question tags | | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | Potato | absentee | What did you say? | She is clever, isn't she? | | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | Oo | oOo | √ | OoO | ↗ | √ | | | |

Student (9)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:sks/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | sɔ:t | /bært/ | /bært/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | Question tags | | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | She is clever, isn't she? | | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | oO | oOo | oOo | oOo | √ | √ | | | |

Appendix (3-D)

Student (10)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /fedə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feathe r | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions ↘ | | Question tags ↗ | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | | She is clever, isn't she? | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | Oo | oOo | oOo | Ooo | √ | | √ | | |

Student (11)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /fedə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feathe r | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | /bært/ | /bæt/ | /stɒpd/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions ↘ | | Question tags ↗ | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | Potato | absentee | What did you say? | | She is clever, isn't she? | | |
| cvcv | vcccvc | cvcvc | cvcvcc | Oo | Ooo | oOo | Ooo | ↗ | | √ | | |

Student (12)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|--------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /fedə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | /sɔ:t/ | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feathe r | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Supra-segmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions ↘ | | Question tags ↗ | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | Potato | absentee | What did you say? | | She is clever, isn't she? | | |
| √ | vcccvc | cvcvc | cvcvcc | Oo | oOo | Ooo | OoO | ↗ | | √ | | |

Appendix (3-E)

Student (13)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|---------|--------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | /meʃə/ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | √ | √ | /stɒpd/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Supra-segmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvccccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | Question tags → | | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | She is clever, isn't she? | | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | oOo | √ | Ooo | √ | → | | | |

Student (14)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|---------|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|----------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | x | /bært/ | /bæt/ | /stɒpd/ | √ | √ | √ | /ɑ:skɪz/ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Suprasegmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvccccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | Question tags → | | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | Potato | absentee | What did you say? | She is clever, isn't she? | | | |
| √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | oOo | √ | Ooo | √ | → | | | |

Appendix (3-F)

Student (15)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|--------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | √ | √ | /stɒpɪd/ | /mu:vid/ | √ | √ | /ɑ:skɪz/ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Supra-segmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions → | | Question tags ↗ | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | | She is clever, isn't she? | | |
| cvcv | vcccvc | cvcvc | cvcvcc | √ | √ | Ooo | Ooo | ↗ | | √ | | |

Student (16)

| Segmental Features | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------|--------|--------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Sound-recognition | | | | | | | Final (e)d and(e)s | | | | | |
| /feðə/ | /meʒə/ | /stʌmək/ | sɔ:t | /əʊ:t/ | /pɑ:t/ | /pæt/ | /stɒpt/ | /mu:vd/ | /restɪd/ | /bægz/ | /ɑ:skz/ | /bʊʃɪz/ |
| feather | measure | stomach | sort | thought | part | pat | stopped | moved | rested | bags | asks | bushes |
| /fezə/ | √ | √ | √ | /sɔ:t/ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Segmental Feature | | | | Supra-segmental Features | | | | | | | | |
| Consonant clusters | | | | Stress placement | | | | Intonation rules | | | | |
| ccv | cccvc | cvcc | cvcccc | oO | Ooo | oOo | ooO | Wh questions | | Question tags ↗ | | |
| play | split | picked | texts | collect | library | potato | absentee | What did you say? | | She is clever, isn't she? | | |
| cvcv | vcccvc | cvcvc | cvcvcc | Oo | oOo | OoO | Ooo | ↗ | | √ | | |

Appendix (4)

In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious the most Merciful

Shendi University

Faculty of Postgraduate Studies &Scientific Research

Ph.D. Thesis Research

Class Observation Check List

Teacher _____ **Course** _____

Date _____

Below is a list of teachers and students behaviors that may occur within a given class. It will be used as guide to making observations, not as a list of required characteristics.

