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**Investigating Differences in Pronunciation among EFL
Learners: The Case of Education Embassy Private School –
M'sila**

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Submitted by :

Ms. Aicha Hiba MOKHTARI

Ms. Arwa GASMI

Supervised by:

Dr. Mourad TOUATI

Board of Examiners :

Dr Bouazid Tayeb	Chairperson	Mohamed Boudiaf University of Msila
Dr Hammoudi Abou Bakr	Examiner	Mohamed Boudiaf University of Msila
Dr. Mourad TOUATI	Supervisor	Mohamed Boudiaf University of Msila

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Abstract

Speaking is one of the most significant skills that English foreign learners master during learning to achieve fluency. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the differences in English pronunciation among EFL learners of Education Embassy private school. The research was conducted following a descriptive method in gathering quantitative data. The study follows a non-probability sampling method using the purposive sampling technique. A questionnaire and a videotaped test were used as tools for gathering primary data in which 34 participants were selected and divided into two groups. The findings of this study revealed that there are some differences between private and public schools at the level of approaches and methods used. Moreover, The results highlighted the impact of environment, except Mother Tongue, on learners' phonological accuracy and proved that teachers play an important role in improving their learners' pronunciation and reducing from some of the differences and deficiencies.

Key words: Phonological accuracy, Private school, Pronunciation, EFL learners.

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Dedication

To my beloved family who were very supportive, especially my source of happiness, my "MOTHER" for all the money she spent, her prayers and her patience to see her daughter graduating. And to my brother AYMEN, who is now far away, he is the one who encouraged me to choose English and I am thankful for that. Also to my elder brothers "AMINE and SADDAM "and their lovely wives. To my beautiful nieces; " WISSAL and AMANI". Of course, to my amazing "FATHER" and my aunt "FATIMA". To my best friend "AYA". To "DOUNIA", "Fatima", "ASMA", especially, to my dear friend and the best partner ever "ARWA".

This work is dedicated for all of YOU.

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First, I dedicate this work to my source of strength, to my creator Allah SWT. And also to my beloved Father, my biggest support the man who always sees me as his little girl, the greatest man in the world who always pushes me to do better and never feel afraid from chasing my future goals. To my mother, my peace, my hope, my home, thanks mom for being there all the time and of course to the sweetest partner in the world, I just want to say thank you Mokhtari Aicha Hiba for your patience, hard work and the endless love and support. All the memorable moments will remain for the rest of my life. It was a pleasure to have you as a friend and as an extraordinary partner. To my second family, EE's family, to all the colleagues who guided me and loved me unconditionally and whose examples have taught me to work hard for the things I aspire to achieve.

Arwa

List of abbreviation

EFL : English Foreign Learners.

EE : Education Embassy.

EEPS : Education Embassy Private School.

MT : Mother Tongue.

PDD : Phonological Differences and Deficiencies.

SL : Second Language.

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General Introduction

1. Background of the study

Learning the English language has spread for the past seven decades and it is very essential since it became a tool of communication used by people around the world. Hence, language experts tried to study and search more in its usage, its teaching-learning strategies and methods in order to facilitate and clarify this process among learners across the world. However, there exist some factors that strongly hamper this process which lead to differences at the level of the phonological system of foreign learners, such as; pronunciation, fluency, accuracy and many others.

Several studies have shown that there are certain factors that impact the pronunciation of EFL learners and cause a disparity among them. For instance, Kassain (2011) declares that learners of different ages perform equally in the production of sounds; however, there exist some differences in the gender factor but with no superiority. On the other hand, Shenina (2018) mentions that individual differences among learners, including gender, plays an important role in improving the teaching-learning process; in addition to that, there are differences in pronunciation between the two genders with slight superiority of male over female and vice versa in some phonological rules. Qingya and Xiajia (2020) posits that following the strategy of training EFL learners inside classrooms is strongly recommended to reduce errors made and provide suitable environment to communicate. Some studies dealt with MT influence on EFL learners' pronunciation.

In fact, Larsen (2000) concludes that Mother Tongue interference supports the English learning in general. However, Khan (2017) argues that it has a negative effect on the English language pronunciation of learners, yet, through time it disappears.

In the Algerian context, the concept of investigating all the pronunciation differences and deficiencies is quite specified. Brahmia (2021) acknowledges : "*there*

is a significantly negative relationship between anxiety and speaking performance in the sense that FLA is proved to hinder learner's speaking performance" (P.44).

Benouioua and Djellal (2019) claims that there are some difficulties affecting the EFL learners' oral performance, such as Arabic language interference (MT) and lack of interaction inside the classrooms. Speaking of gender influence, Bouras and Mihoubi (2022) hold that there exist statistical significant differences between the two EFL male and female learners at the level of pronunciation performance, in addition to the advantage given to female over the other gender.

The majority of the previous studies focused on one or two factors that may determine the phonological differences like gender and MT interference and so forth. The current paper sheds the light on almost all the situational and external factors; in addition to the impact of environment that create this kind of differences and also investigating the deficiencies displayed by EFL learners during their process of the English language learning.

2. Statement of the Problem

In public schools, general education follows a structured curriculum that is designed based on the students' academic levels. Conversely, private schools aim to provide learners with specific knowledge and training tailored to their individual needs. This is particularly evident in the case of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners who study English to enhance their proficiency in the four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, these learners may encounter certain difficulties, particularly in mastering the speaking skill, specifically related to pronunciation.

Pronunciation is an area of concern for EFL learners as it plays a crucial role in achieving the overall objective of private schools, which is to attain proficiency in

the English language. Despite acquiring knowledge of the phonological rules, learners often encounter differences and deficiencies in their pronunciation abilities. Consequently, these challenges persist, leading to frequent misuse and disregard for one of the fundamental elements of the EFL language.

.3. Research Questions

In the light of what was stated formerly, the research questions are framed as what follows:

1. What is the difference between education in public schools and the one in private schools ?
2. To what extent does the environment influence the EFL learners' English pronunciation ?
3. What is the role of the teachers in building a homogeneous atmosphere regarding the numerous influencing factors?

4. Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis is formulated to be tested in order to provide answers for the research questions :

- There are some factors that impact the English language pronunciation among EFL learners that leads to a set of differences and deficiencies.

5. The Aim of the Study

The major aim of this study is to investigate the main sources and factors that determine the differences in pronunciation and deficiencies that occur among the sample of EFL learners under study.

6. Objectives of the Study

In addition to the major aim, the study is also designed to :

- Reveal the nature of the private schools' learning-teaching strategies and approaches, and general education in public schools.
- Explore the factors and the problems related to the environment which affect English language pronunciation.

7. Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is centered in revealing the main factors and reasons to determine the differences and deficiencies that affect EFL learners' abilities or performance. It provides some recommendations that may reduce the differences and deficiencies.

8. Methodology of the Work

The study is conducted following a descriptive method in gathering quantitative data and using the observation method. The descriptive method is used to cover the phenomena of different pronunciation abilities and deficiencies among EFL learners through using a disguised observation , in order to test the hypothesis of the study. Moreover, the data collected through observation are gathered for the sake of explaining as well as analyzing the participants' performance. The participants in the study are selected from the population that have a certain characteristics that help them contribute with adequate answers. Finally, the analysis in this study follows quantitative and qualitative techniques to explain more and make use of the data collected.

9. The Structure of the work

This research paper is structured into two main chapters in which they are divided into sections. The first chapter is the theoretical framework of the study. The first section of this chapter is about the history and development of the English language as well as the identification of English phonology; in addition to the factors that impact the pronunciation of EFL learners. However, the second section deals with the impact of environment. The second chapter is devoted to three sections; the first one is about to the methodology design, the second section is about data analysis, and the last section discusses the results of the study and the answers of the participants.

Chapter one:

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This chapter provides the theoretical framework of the study in which it is devoted to the status of English language historically, a literature review and an introduction to English phonology and its features. The chapter aims to give an overview on the types of phonology and the factors that may cause differences in English pronunciation among EFL learners.

1. The status of English language

1.1. Historical background on the development of English

The wide expansion of English has been increased throughout time over many years. This journey began in the 16th century when this language took a place as a sovereign tool and laid up as the global language that is spoken by the majority of human beings; thus, another fact exists in which it assumes that Modern English tends to sound entirely different from the olden times one due to the classifications English went through, in which it was pronged into three distinct stages (Old English, Middle English and Modern English) which vastly include dozen varieties.

1.1.1. Old English (The Anglo-Saxon language)

It is the initial shape of the English language that was spoken in England, southern and Eastern Scotland in the early Middle aged 450 CE. This Era is defined by several characteristics at the stage of various language aspects such as words background (vocabulary), grammar and sound system (phonology).

Previously, the whole old English involved an amount of 30 million words which was considered as an insufficient quantity for a dominant communication vehicle that time. However, the Anglo Saxons conversion to Christianity heightened the average of vocabulary which eased the ways towards another divergent features such as grammar, which became characterized by the inflections; additionally, the

phonological features including dialects, which involved four dialects (North Umbrian, the Mercian, West Saxon and the KENTISH). Only a minuscule quantity of Latin words were borrowed and included into the ancient English which led to create an extra homogeneous and facility in the old English terms (Crystal; 2018).

1.1.2. Middle English

It is considered as a linking bridge between the main English periods because it went through major epochs starting with the "Early Middle English", which lasted for 150 years, and was presented by the same Old English writing manner. Then, the "Central Middle English" era took a place when several writers, such as John Gower, caused a marvelous literature and dialectical changes. Moreover, the orthography was highly influenced by the Anglo Normans which had a lot to do with cultural contacts that English speakers came in touch with speakers of other languages. Hence, they extremely effected the language in many ways; among them, borrowing words and concepts from other languages such as Latin, Norse, Japanese, Arabic, French and Scandinavian to fill the language gaps (Crystal; 2018).

These loan words have contributed significantly to change in language since they marked its impact on two important language aspects : Grammar and Vocabulary. Starting with grammar, when researchers showed that grammar in the 1500s shed the light in more analytic mode, which focused on adding extra words and minimizing the flectional ending sections. Furthermore, borrowing raised the language heterogeneously resulting thousands of new meanings on the surface that caused the rhetorical and the stylistic background.

1.1.3. Modern English

This era is from the 15th century till nowadays, and it is divided into two sections (Nordquist; 2020) :

Early Modern English : (1500s ___ 1700s)

It is called the Renaissance period. It highly presented the vowel shift which means a change at the level of vowel pronunciation, which led to a change in the pronunciation of English words as well.

Late Modern English : (1700s until now)

Dozen set of words joined English dictionary especially in the scientific fields. The British colonialism and the American economical emergence spread the language in many essential domains like medicine, politics, economy and technology, the fact that led to enhance those fields' vocabulary background by using the same Latin words roots and stems.

In addition to that, vary contacts such as the world War one built an extraordinary interaction which caused the existence of numerous accents, besides the role of the technology development in the 20th century like television and radio that led to spread language globally. Statistics shows that about 75% of people around the world have the potential to use English regularly in diverse branches of life.

1.2. English Phonology

1.2.1. Definition and components of Phonology

According to Collins and Mees (2006), "*Phonology is the study of selections and patterns of a sound in a language*" (P.7). This branch represents the language sound structure which enables and eases learners' path towards gaining the suitable language recognition, in another manner, Phonology is the study of the sound system which marks the function of these sounds within the language. This later, refers to a vary set of components and changes in speech; such as, Assimilation, Dissimilation, Insertion, Deletion, Strengthening and Weakening.

1.2.1.1. Phonological Assimilation

It is a linguistic operation in which, " a speech sound becomes similar or identical to a neighboring sound " (Nordquist; 2022). There are multiple speech assimilation that are included into English, among them is the combination of the two sounds / d / and / y / which shapes the sound /dʒ/ in the example of "could you" (coojoo). This type of assimilation is called palatalization which happens in many linguistic areas as well, for example :

- / t / + / j / = / tʃ / like in meet y (meetshyou).
- / dz / + / y / = / dʒ / like in Asma reads y a book.

1.2.1.2. Phonological Dissimilation

It is the opposite of assimilation process in which two similar sounds, whether consonants or vowels, becomes less comparable. It is, hence, to clarify that this process usually happens when words and concepts from different languages are borrowed, so the integration of a new background into the target language sound system causes a change at the level of the original sound; for example, the word "communication" exists in both French and English; thus, its pronunciation differs from one to another. Furthermore, this phenomena existed when there were a shift from the Old English to the Modern English which remarked a high change at the level of vowel system (Nordquist; 2018) .

Besides, when liquid consonant took place in which a set of roots of Latin words were used to shape a new English speech acts such as adjectives and nouns by adding suffixes like "al" and "tion".

1.2.1.3. Phonological Insertion (Epenthesis)

" *Insertion is a phonetic process of inserting vowels , glides on consonants into vowel or consonant clusters* " (Joe Wright, 2021). In the light of the previous definition, insertion deals with adding extra sounds to a noun and adjective or a verb and the major reason behind this operation is to shape more language diversity. According to some experts, " *vowel epenthesis is often motivated by the need to make consonant contrasts more distinct* " (*The Handbook of Speech Perception*, 2005), however , sound insertion might be a vowel (adding the sound /e / to the word jewelry to become "jewelery" or it can be a consonant as well in some English dialects, like the word film is pronounced "filum".

1.2.1.4. Phonological Deletion

It is considered as the hardest phonological process since the lack of deletion awareness will shape a terrible lack in the English pronunciation (Battison, 1974). Deleting sounds exists in various situation in a word for example :

- The sound / k / is deleted when it comes at the beginning of the word before the sound / N / like in knowledge and know it is directly pronounced /N/.
- The sound / b / can be deleted on some words when it comes in the middle of the word and after an / m / for example : "crumb", however, it may be pronounced if it followed by another sound like in the word "bombard".
- In some words the / g / sound can be deleted when it is followed by "ht" like in "right" and "flight".

1.2.1.5. Phonological Strengthening (Fortition)

It is a linguistic process which makes the sound look stronger. This latter, is highly parallel with the English aspiration rule which occurs in all voiceless stops as the first sound in a stressed syllable. For example, the word "cat", the aspiration in this word showed that it is pronounced like / k hat /, it may appear in words that end with **P** or **T** as well, for example, "top" and "but".

1.2.1.6. Phonological weakening (Lenition)

It is the process of weakening the pronunciation of sounds. It is highly connected to the flapping English rule; for example, the /t/ in English sometimes is pronounced /r/ when it comes between two vowels. Nevertheless, it can be pronounced as a normal /t/ if it comes at the beginning of a stressed syllable.

1.2.2. The Pronunciation Differences

Nowadays , statistics show that over 1.5 billion people speak English and use it regularly in different sects of life. Diverse accents exist all around the world like the British English and the American one as Oscar Wilde (1887) said, "*we have really everything in common with America nowadays , except , of course the language*". This indicates that the two accents are related to distinct use Conventions, Meaning, Spelling, Grammar, Terminology and even Punctuation.

However, using both of them internationally in diverse regions, situational and cultural concepts hugely affected them in which this operation build a tremendous multiplicity at the level of language competences and skills proficiency, especially when it gets to the point of using speaking skill that involves numerous language aspects such as pitch, tone and word pronunciation. Additionally, the

impact of those regions plays a central role in changing the original shape of British and American accents at the level of pronunciation due to several factors.

The existence of the large sound system and the colossal language features have been producing an unlimited set of variations which highly tackle diverse phonological differences and deficiencies.

1.3. Factors that determine the phonological differences and deficiencies

1.3.1. Age

Acquiring a language sound system (native or foreign) is a natural effort for children and becomes more complicated as one becomes older (Guasti, 2002). Age may be considered as a factor that effect the phonological system of an EFL learner, which means that children, teens (young adults) and adults pronounce words differently.

Researchers believe that there exists a "critical period", situated usually around puberty, in which the ability to acquire native like speech is a low possibility (Patkowski, 1990; Scovel, 1988). However, Fleg, Yeni-Komshian, & Liu (1999) show that (SL) accent can already be noticed in individuals' first exposure to a second language at age 3 and gets stronger as getting older.

Many studies give advantage of pronunciation to EFL children learners over adults and teens as they use the "imitation" of English speech sounds perfectly and Dull (1972) believes that the reason behind this advantage is due to the fact that children do not worry about social judgment and acceptance, while adults or teens usually feel stress while trying to speak even if they are ready. However, a number of

studies give advantage to adults over children; as Hudson (2000) believes that adults can be as able as children or even better because of their cognitive abilities.

Mostly, in Algerian private schools all ages are allowed to study English. Therefore, there are groups for juniors, teens and seniors.

1.3.2. Gender

The study of the relationship between "Gender" and "Language learning" is a subfield of "Sociolinguistics" that helps in studying the differences between male and female's language (Lakoff, 1975). It focused on the pronunciation of each, more specifically "intonation" and "stress".

It has been noticed that there are gender differences in English pronunciation among EFL learners in Algerian private schools. This helps teachers and learners cope with their difficulties and challenges during teaching-learning process. For example, women's pronunciation is closer to British standards and tend to be more accurate and concise; in addition to raising intonation in answering the questions (Jinyu, 2014). On the other hand, men tend to use falling intonation and more stress on syllables in order to show confidence and power (Lakoff, 1975).

1.3.3. Experience

Mostly, EFL learners are considered bilingual and sometimes multilingual, which means they had experiences of speaking at least one or two different languages. Once they start learning English, they will struggle dealing with new phonemes for the first time.

Generally, in Algerian private schools learners have experiences with "Kabyle" as a second language, or the French language due to historical events. This

factor is usually characterized by adults and teens. For example Algerian adults, who are quite fluent in French language, are used to pronounce French phonemes (35) while English has (48) phoneme. This leads to either differences in English pronunciation or deficiencies in the articulation of the (13) new phoneme (Qingya and Xiaojia, 2020).

1.3.4. Need

Learner's need is an important step during teaching-learning process, since it determines the elements that he/she wants to acquire in English. As ESP's popular principle says, "*Tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English that you need*".

In private schools, Needs differ from one learner to another; for example, some need English to succeed in exams, others' needs are to be fluent speakers and so forth. For this reason, many differences appear at the level of pronunciation because a group is interested only in enhancing their vocabulary or grammar rather than speaking, which therefore leads to a contrast in English phonological system among EFL learners.

2. The Impact of Environment

2.1. Language performance

According to Dekort and Leerdam, Performance is the production of actual utterances as a result of psychological process (Vaclav Hemerka; 2009).

Generally, teachers in private schools tend to give their learners the opportunity to practice more inside classrooms in order to be ready to use it in their real life situations without paying attention to grammatical errors, but rather focusing

more on the correct pronunciation of speech sounds. Over-practicing inside the classroom helps EFL learners use the English language outside, which eventually enable them to evaluate their utterances. This process can be a reason to reduce the amount of differences and difficulties found at the level of pronunciation.

For instance, as mentioned earlier, there are some professors at Algerian universities study English in private schools. They must apply what they have learnt before in performing their courses (real situations). Hence, the more those professors speak English in their repeated courses, the less differences will appear between them and the rest of the learners, also less struggles in the pronunciation of words and sounds.

2.2. Mother Tongue interference

To study a foreign language means learning a new language that differs from the learner's mother tongue with new vocabulary, grammar, speech sounds and phonological rules. Many natives from all over have raised an interest on learning English as a foreign language since it is the common international language at the current time around the world. However, some find it hard to achieve fluency because of their MT influence on the English language (Manjula, 2022).

Algeria as a country has quite a great number of dialects in its states. Hence, if there are learners from different states in one classroom, it would be impossible for the teacher to cope with all the different mistakes in pronunciation because it is as important as vocabulary and grammar for communication during learning process.

Mostly, the main reason behind differences in pronunciation, stress, intonation and the others is the obvious influence of MT that can be noticed in the learner's errors of speech sounds and mispronunciation. For example, there are some from

regions of M'sila, which is a state in Algeria, who pronounce the sound /p/ and replace it by /b/, because this is how they have been articulating.

2.3. Method and Learning Strategies

Since English becomes to be more used and trending language in most of the fields in Algeria, natives started to register in private schools to improve their level in English especially "Speaking". Once they start learning, they realize that there exist certain differences between general education in the public school and the private one in their approach and method used.

Private schools in Algeria, which is for teaching English or any foreign language, work to achieve communicative proficiency. Therefore, they follow a set of principles and a special curriculum focusing more on how to make learners express their ideas by speaking. It is important for private school teachers to acknowledge that they deal with natives, who study English for the first time or at least do not know how to form a correct sentence with the right pronunciation of sounds, which therefore requires a group of principles and methods supported by tasks and exercises.

The following methods are the common used by the majority of private schools for teaching languages in Algeria to show the way learning is designed :

2.3.1. Motivation

Getting students involved is recognized as a tough challenging operation for all the teachers due to the dozen students' varieties since learners get into the classroom with an infinite number of diversities; such as their language level and capacities, their social background, their need and goals behind learning language and

of course their learning styles and strategies which are highly regarded as two major effecting aspects.

Most students shed their interest on reaching an instant outcome; however their insufficient awareness about the appropriate way to reach their purpose usually lead them to struggle during their learning trip. Fortunately, teachers discover multiple ways in order to build a smooth surrounding atmosphere for all the students. In this case, increasing students' motivation plays a valid valuable role that aid them to create a suitable classroom for all their customers. Various sorts exist under the umbrella of motivation which are intrinsic, when students are internally motivated by themselves, and extrinsic, when different factors help to motivate students, which means that both entities are strongly improved depending on respecting and following the motivation components namely activation, the process of building a behavior, in addition to persistence, which is resisting and facing obstacles that might be faced in the teaching and learning journey, and finally the intensity, that is related to the percentage of students concentration and it is categorized into a minimal intensity and a greater intensity (Gobel; 2013).

Discovering tips to enhance and increase students motivation is obviously connected to the numerous materials and the very beneficial methods in the classroom. Lately , integrating those methods and materials in classrooms enables learning process to remark faster results like changing students behavior and help them to draw their future plans; plus, increasing students' engagement, practice and interaction lead to destroy the psychological and dominant social barriers and thus these learners will make less mistakes at the level of using the phonological rules while speaking which finally results making less differences (Gardner; 1985). In this

situation, "motivation" is the pushing step towards a successful and wealthy consequence.

2.3.2. The Direct Method

It is considered as a reaction to GTM (The Grammar Translation Method), and mostly used by private schools, in which it involves different characteristics (Fernando; 2012) :

- Providing pictures inside the classroom to clarify and simplify the target language meaning.
- Subjects starts with real life conversational dialogues.
- Text are read for pleasure without any analysis, but rather correcting pronunciation.
- The use of the TPR method (Total Physical Response), which is teaching English vocabulary by using movements.

2.3.3. The Reading Method

- The teacher is not responsible of having a high English level or an extraordinary speaking capacities.
- Reading comprehension is considered as the essential developed skill.

2.3.4. Audio-lingualism

- Usually lessons start with dialogues.
- High focus on language pronunciation supported by error correction.
- The use of the repetition method in order to practice more on pronunciation and the rest of the phonological rules.

2.4. Anxiety

According to linguists, language proficiency is exposed by speaking ,which is the most effective skill that helps learner to be a fluent reader, with correct speech as well as a good writing (Hughes; 2002). Moreover, Ur (2000) mentioned how important is the speaking skill, " *People who know a language are referred to as speakers of the languages, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing* "(P.12). However, this skill can be effected by one of the most common psychological problems among speakers which is "Anxiety".

Rober (1985) defines anxiety in the dictionary of psychology saying, " *Anxiety is more generally, a vague and unpleased emotional state with qualities of apprehension, dread, distress and uneasiness* "(P.43).

Many studies have shown that most of EFL learners feel anxious when it comes to speaking English, even if they master grammar perfectly and have rich vocabulary, due to other factors such as the luck of self-confidence or fear of public and making mistakes; therefore, researches claimed that this FL anxiety affects the oral performance of the learner (Horwitz et al, 1986 ; Horwitz et al, 2010 ; Marwan, 2016 ; Hnifa, 2020). In this light, EFL learners' performance, which is considered as one of the features of speaking skill, will be affected negatively; such as, forgetting the places of sound articulation or where to put the falling and the raising intonation; in addition to mispronouncing the stress and so forth.

In the Algerian context private schools for teaching foreign language struggle with its learners since there are many phonological differences that may be caused by the factors mentioned earlier and affected mainly by this emotional problem.

Conclusion

There are situational factors that affect the English pronunciation of EFL learners in most private schools such as gender, age, experience in other languages and learners' needs. In addition to external or environmental factors such as motivation, anxiety and learning strategies.

Chapter two :

Methodology and Data Collection

Introduction

After reviewing the literature related to this study and dealing with its theoretical framework, this chapter will be devoted to the practical part or the research design of this study, which is defined by Thyer (1993) as "*a detailed plan for how a research study is to be completed, operationalizing variables so they can be measured, selecting a sample of interest to study, collecting data to be used as a basis for testing hypothesis, and analyzing the results.*" (P.94).

In this vision, this current chapter starts with explaining the methodology of the work besides the technique used in collecting data. Then, it reveals and discusses the findings shedding the light on the research questions and problematic in the analysis. Finally, this chapter concludes with a general conclusion, highlights the limitations of the study and suggests recommendations for reducing the amount of PDD.

1. Research Methodology

According to Robson (2002), "*The theoretical, political and philosophical backgrounds to social research and their implications for research practice and for the use of particular research methods*" (P.549)

The study is conducted following a descriptive method in gathering quantitative data with the inclusion of using the observation method. It utilizes a questionnaire and a simple test in a video as the main tools for gathering primary data in addition to a disguised naturalistic observation inside the classroom. Moreover, the study follows a non-probability sampling technique to reach the study objectives.

1.1. Sampling Technique

According to Bernard (2002), "*Purposive sampling technique allows the researcher to decide what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge and experiment*" (P.147).

In this light, the current study follows the non-probability sampling technique method using specifically the purposive sampling technique since the participants are selected according to the characteristics required in the research, in order to provide with valid answers for the research questions.

1.2. Setting, Participants, and Procedures

The study took place in Education Embassy Private School in Algeria, M'sila for English learners. This school is specialized by several characteristics such various developed materials, and competent teachers who have the sufficient capacity to catch the attention of the customers. The research was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023, however, the observation started since the first one which strongly simplified the research operation.

At first, the population included 35 participants; however, 34 of them participated in this study divided between answering the questionnaire and the test. The sampling in this research tried to reach a category of EFL learners with certain characteristics. Among the 34 participants, there were 23 learners with different genders, ages, needs, and experiences and 2 teachers at the EEPS answered the questionnaire, 9 others got tested.

The participants selected in this study are from different levels (High school, Middle school, and Primary school). All the 23 participants, in addition to the two teachers were handed a printed copy, and the 9 others were tested orally in the video.

1.3. Research Instruments

There were three main tools for collecting primary data, the questionnaire under the title : " *Investigating the Phonological Differences and Deficiencies among EFL Learners : The Case of Education Embassy Private School – M'sila* "; moreover, a small activity filmed in a video, and a disguised naturalistic observation inside the classroom during the lesson.

" *the questionnaire is the favored tool to many of those engaged in research, and it can often provide a cheap and effective way of collecting data in a structured and manageable form.* " (McLeod, 2000; P: 75)

In this light, the questionnaire is divided into five sections. The first section has one item (1) and is formed to focus attention on the reason behind choosing a private school by EFL learners over the general education in public schools, and to distinguish between the two at the level of methods and the learning strategies used. The item in this section is formed as an open-ended question. The second section contains six items (2 - 7) and is designed to describe the participants' profiles, gender and age, which are selected based on the research needs; in addition to highlight the participants' needs for learning English and the language or languages they have learned before English. In this section, the questionnaire uses four forms : two open-ended questions, two dichotomous questions, one close-ended question, and one multi-choice question. The third section contains four items (8 – 11) and is structured to find out the impact of environment on the factors that determine the PDD. In this

section, the questionnaire makes use of two forms: three dichotomous questions and one close-ended question. The fourth section includes two items (12 – 13) and utilizes the open-ended form in both questions, in order to shed the light on the English language use after mastering the phonological rules and whether it is important for EFL learners or not. The final section has one item (14), which is dedicated for teachers, and is formed to show their opinions about whether they face problems during teaching, since there are differences in learners' English pronunciation, or not. This item was formulated as an open-ended question.

In order to test the participants' phonological application, the research exercises a few of them (9 students), in front of the camera, by applying diverse ways and showing them pictures, words, and sentences, then asking to read out loud.

1.4. Piloting the Questionnaire

This study has been passing through a process of pilot testing in order to check its validity. In fact, the questionnaire was submitted to 2 teachers and 3 master students; in order to provide with their correction of structure and form of items, the order of sections, the questions' relevance to the objective and research questions of the study.

2. Questionnaire Analysis and Data Interpretation

After collecting all data required in this study, the researcher organized and calculated the statistic elements using the Microsoft Excel in order to facilitate the operation of illustration and interpretation of the collected data. Moreover, the answers of some students were translated from Arabic into English.

2.1. Why did you choose to learn English in a private school?

Table2.1

The participants' goals behind choosing a private school.

To learn more things and to enjoy.
To study English with a high level.
Because I love English.
Because the private school accommodates more, you can listen, understand well and ask any time it suits you.
Because I am a graduate and I don't have my school for learning English.
Because it is so perfect and helps me to speak English.
No answer.
Because there is a project and I feel good at this school.
Because the education is good and the certificate is approved.
Because there are fun, funny, enjoyable, amazing, and caring teachers who help me a lot and treat me well more than teachers in the general school. (repeated 6 times)
Because at the general school we don't have sufficient time to learn English and no time to communicate with each other (repeated 2 times)
Because the teaching method is suitable and have enough experience with strict rules to respect the time. (repeated 3 times)
Because I want my English to be better in speaking and writing.
I don't know, but my father wanted that.
Because I want to talk to people around the world.

2.2. Would you please indicate your age

This item suggests that age is considered as a determiner of the PDD. According to **Table2.2** and **Figure2.2**, there are 13.04% of the categories [8 – 10] and [15 - 17] years old, there are also 52.17% of the category [11 – 14] years old. And finally, there are 21% of the category [18 - ...] years old..

Table2.2

The participants' age categories.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
[8 – 10]	3	13.04%
[11 – 14]	12	52.17%
[15 - 17]	3	13.04%
[18 - ...]	5	21%
Total	23	100%

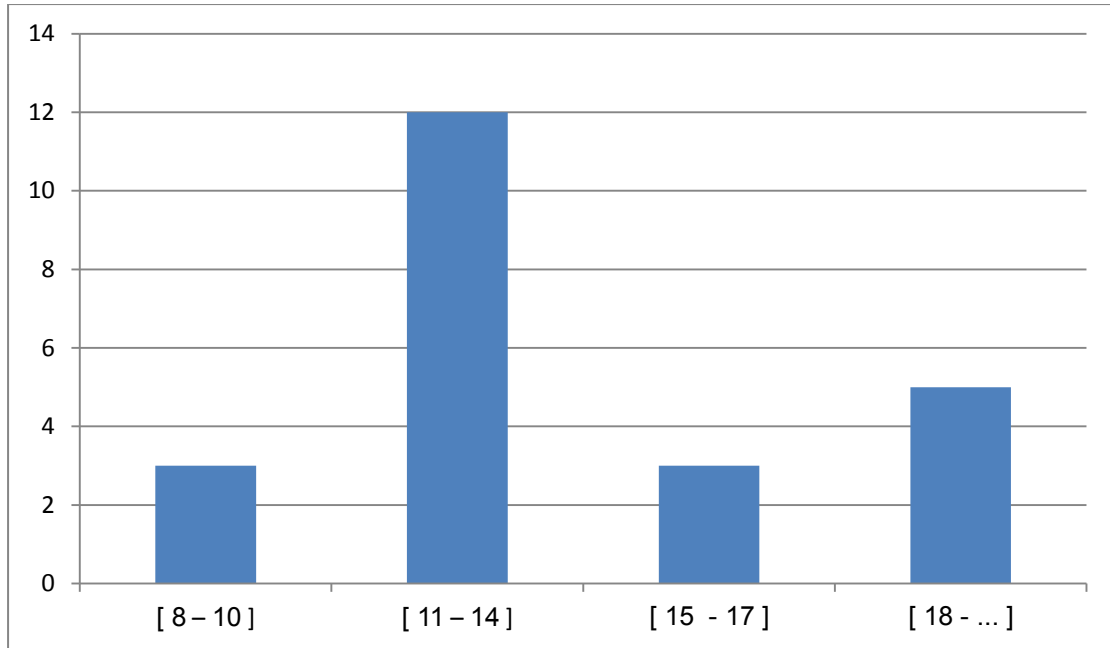


Figure2.2 The participants' age categories.

2.3. Would you please indicate your gender

This item suggests the gender is considered as a determiner of the PDD. The data in **Table2.3** and the graph in **Figure2.3** show that there were 39% of male and 60.8 of female participated in this questionnaire.

Table2.3

The Participants' Gender.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Male	9	39.1%
Female	14	60.8%
Total	23	100%

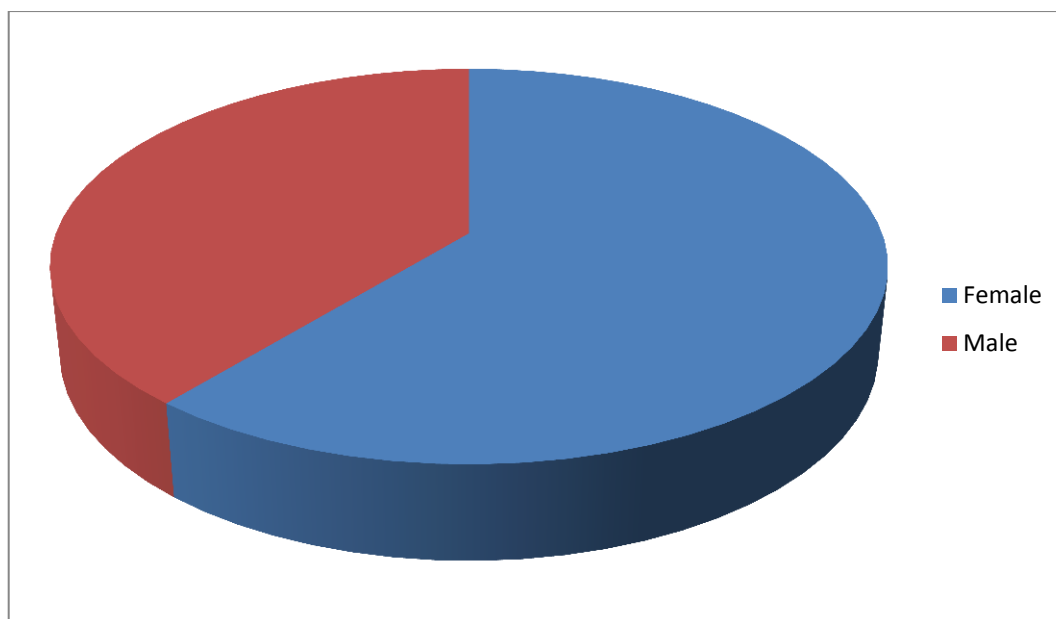


Figure 2.3 *The participants' Gender.*

2.4. What is your main reason for learning English ?

Table 2.4

The participants' objectives of learning English.

Because I want to travel the world and to be able to communicate with foreigners. (repeated 8 times)
Because I want to be a fluent speaker and improve my English speaking skill. (repeated 12 times)
Because English is the language of the world. (repeated 3 times)

2.5. What is your favorite English skill ? (select if integrated)

The current item suggests that EFL learners should select the English skill or skills they need to be improved and the focus on one of them over the speaking skill

will contribute in building differences at the level of pronunciation and the other phonological feature and some deficiencies.

From **Table2.5** and **Figure2.5**, 43.5% chose one skill, 48.5% chose 2 skills, however 9% were with choosing 3 skills, and no one chose all them.

In fact, the 11 participants picked speaking and writing, 9 chose speaking only and one picked writing; while the 2 left picked listening, reading and writing, and the other speaking, reading and writing.

Table2.5

The participants' favorite English skill

Option	Frequency	Percentage
1 choice	10	43.5%
2 choices	11	48.5%
3 choices	2	9%
4 choices	0	0%
Total	23	100%

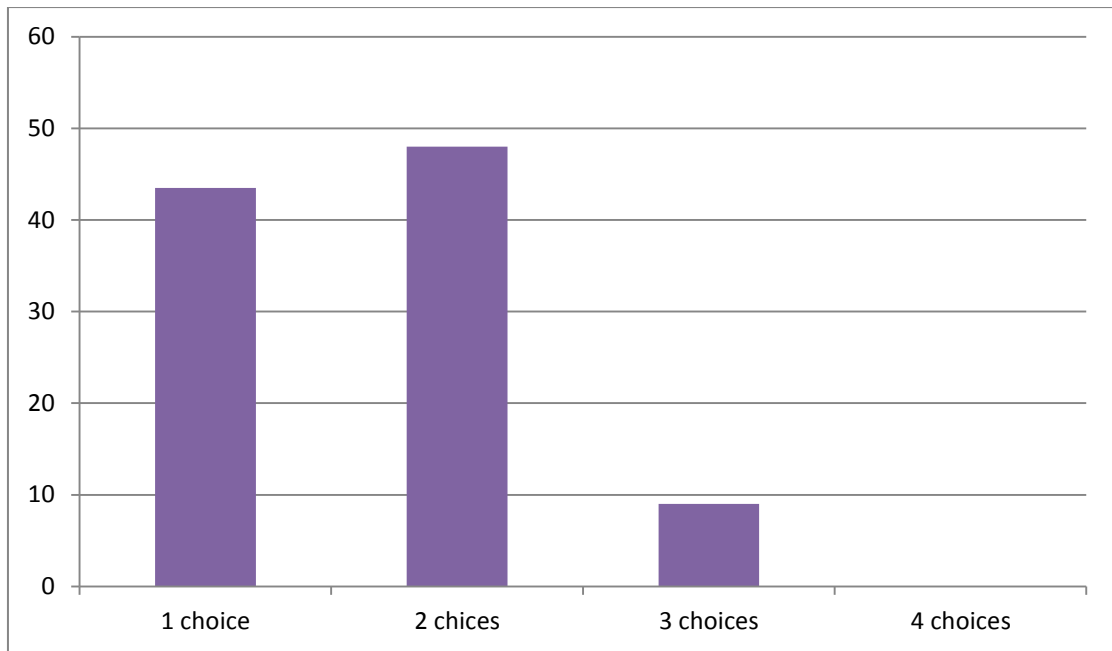


Figure 2.5 *The participants' favorite English skill*

2.6. How long have you been learning English ?

This item was designed for the sake of showing how long have the participants been learning English and suggests that the more years of learning English the more they have a good background of the phonological abilities.

The **Table 2.6 & Figure 2.6** show that 91.30% have been learning English from 1 to 4 years, however about 4.34% have been learning from 4 to 8 years and from 8 and over.

Table 2.6

The Participants' English learning journey.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
[1 – 4 [21	91.30%
[4 – 8 [1	4.34%

[8 - ...[1	4.34%
Total	23	100%

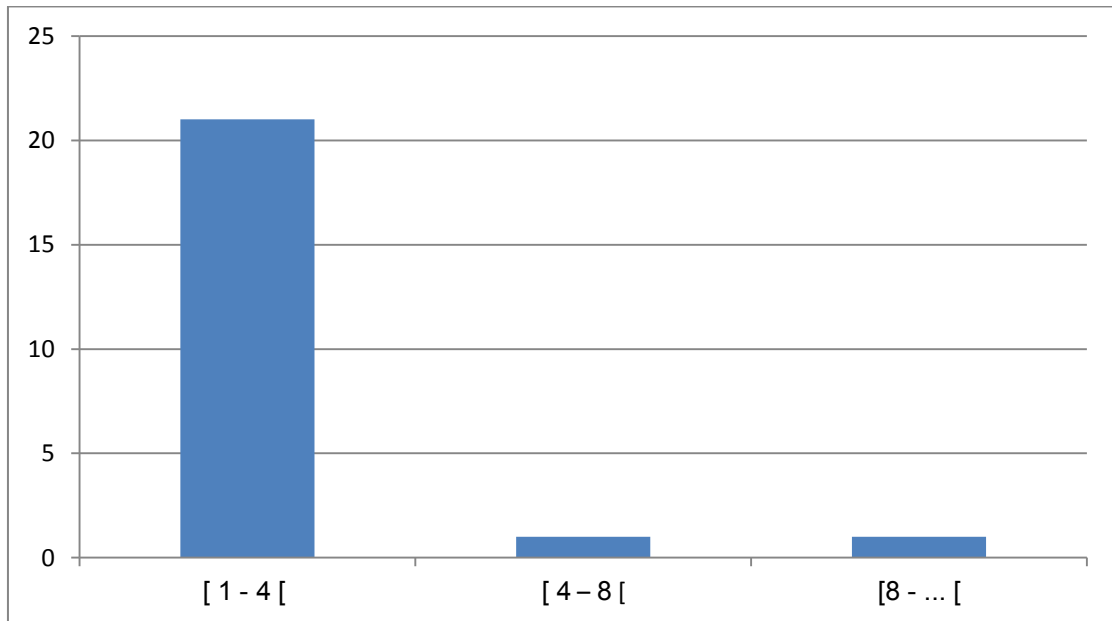


Figure2.6 The participant's English learning journey

2.7. Do you speak other foreign languages ?

This item suggests that the participants' experience in other foreign languages, besides the MT and English, is considered as a determiner of PDD.

According to **Table2.7** and **Figure2.7**, there are 95.6% said YES, they speak other languages, and only 4.34% said NO, he/she did not.

Table2.7

The Participants' experience in other foreign languages.

option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	22	95.6%

No	1	4.34%
Total	23	100%

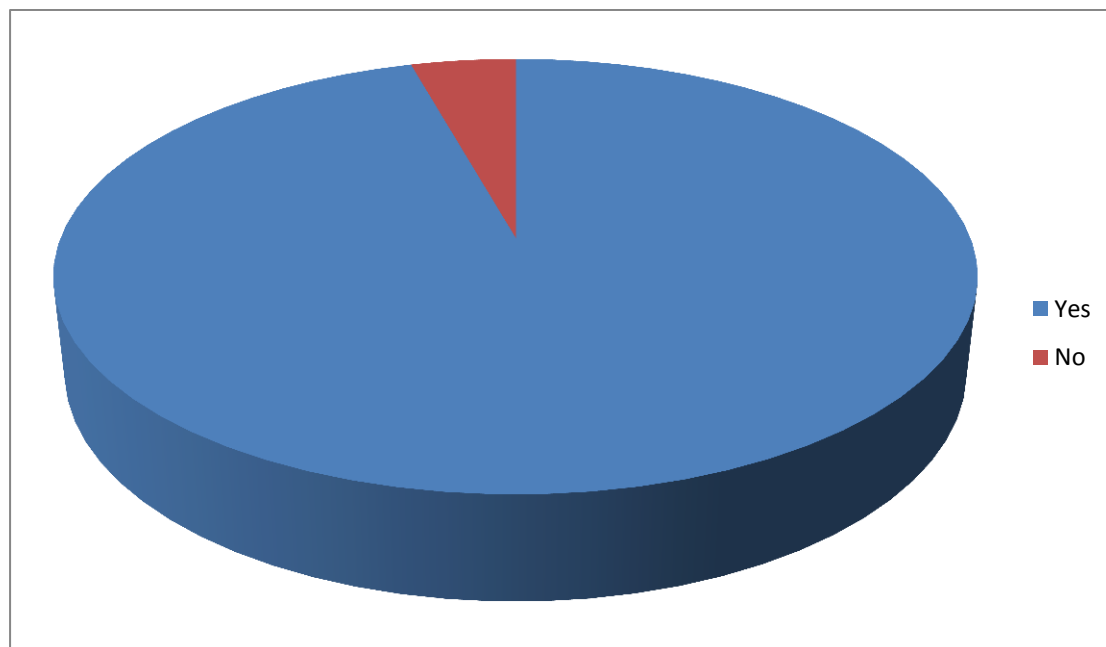


Figure2.7 The participants' experience in other languages

This question was followed by another sub-question for the category who said "YES" (22 participants), about the languages they speak. According to data in **Table2.7.1** there is one student (4.54%) speaks Russian language, and other one (4.54%) speaks Turkish language. The rest 20 participants (90.9%) speak French language.

Table2.7.1

The Participants' other spoken languages.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Russian	1	4.54%

French	20	90.9%
Turkish	1	4.54%
Total	22	100%

2.8. Do you think that your mother tongue affect your English Pronunciation ?

This item suggests that mother tongue interference can impact the pronunciation of EFL learners which causes differences and struggles.

Table2.8 and **Figure2.8** show that only 13.04% said YES for the impact of MT, while 86.9% said NO.

Table2.8

The participants' opinions on the impact of the MT on English pronunciation.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	3	13.04%
No	20	86.9%
Total	23	100%

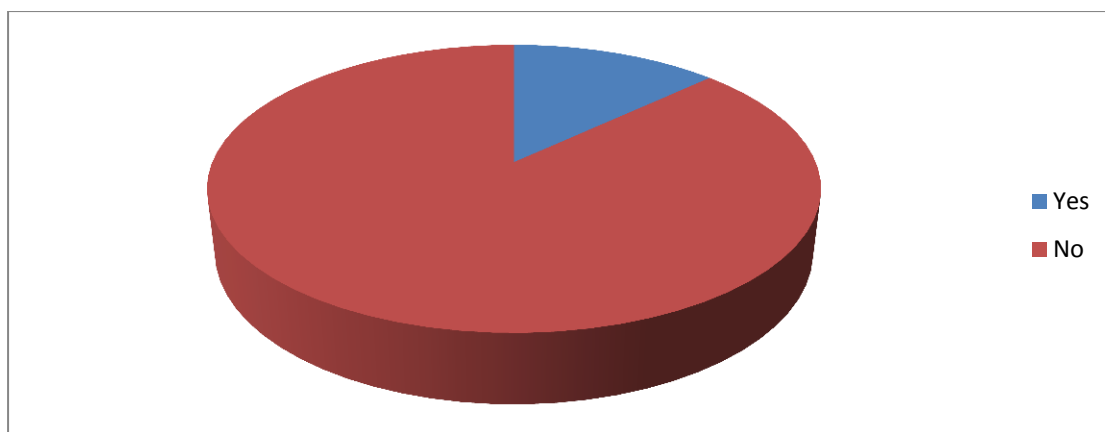


Figure2.8 The participants' opinions on the impact of the MT on English pronunciation

2.9. Did you face any difficulties at the level of mastering the English phonological rules of pronunciation ?

This item suggest that EFL learners face some problems at the level of mastering English phonological rules.

The **Table2.9&Figure2.9** show that 30.5% said YES to facing difficulties in learning the phonological rules, however, 69.5 said NO.

Table2.9

The participants' opinions on the difficulties of English phonological rules of pronunciation.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	7	30.5%
No	16	69.5%
Total	23	100%

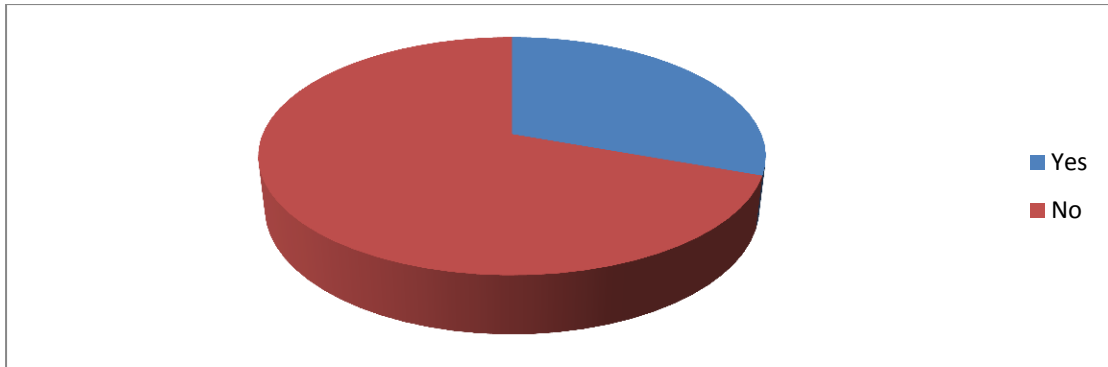


Figure 2.9 The participants' opinions on the difficulties of English phonological rules of pronunciation

2.10. On a scale of 1 – 10, how would you rate your pronunciation ?

This item suggests that the learners' evaluation about themselves at the level of mastering is based on how much they are motivated.

The Table 2.10 and Figure 2.10 show that No one rated under 4/10, while 4.34% rated 5/10, and 8.7% rated 7/10 and 7.5/10. However, 87% rated from 8/10 to 10/10.

Table 2.10

The participants' evaluations on their pronunciation.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
[0 – 2 [0	0%
[2 – 4 [0	0%
[4 – 6 [1	4.34%
[6 – 8 [2	8.7%
[8 – 10]	20	87%

Total	23	100%
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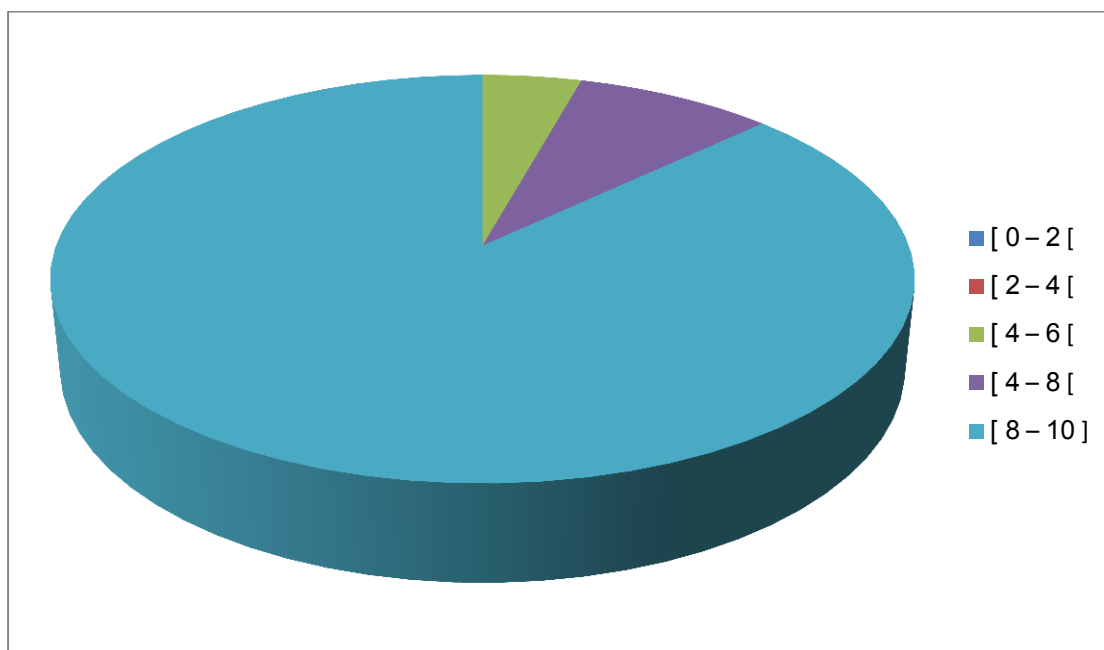


Figure 2.10 The participants' evaluations on their pronunciation

2.11. Imagine you are reading a text in English in front of your classmates and you mispronounce a word, how would you feel ?

This item suggest that anxiety in EFL learners contributes in making mistakes at the level of pronunciation which leads to at the appearance of PDD.

The **Table 2.12** and **Figure 2.11** show that 82.62% said that they feel fine, while only 4.34% said nervous, however, 13.04% said 50/50.

Table2.11

The participants' opinions on the impact of anxiety on pronunciation.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Fine	19	82.62%
Nervous	1	4.34%
50/50	3	13.04%
Total	23	100%

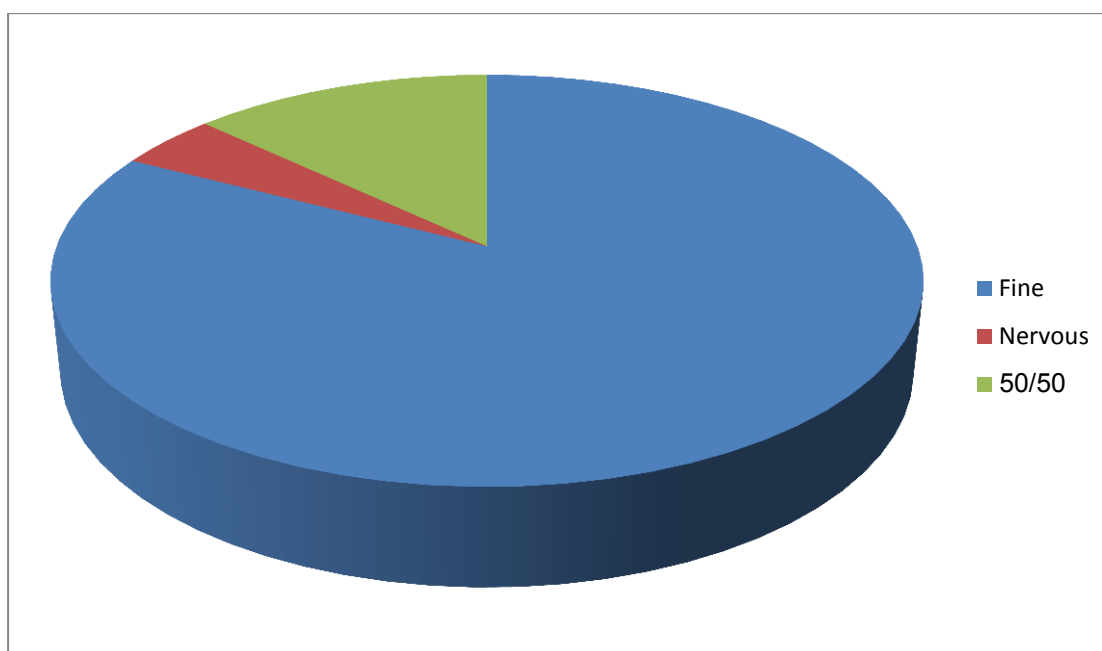


Figure2.11The participants' opinions on the impact of anxiety on pronunciation.

2.12. How important is it for your English pronunciation to sound natural ?

This item was designed in a form of an open-ended question to allow participants share their opinions about how is it important for them to be fluent speakers and pay attention to each mistake at the level of pronunciation.

16 of participants agreed that it is very important because they want to be fluent speakers; while 5 of them refused by NO saying that they do not really care about the pronunciation as much as just understanding the language. The 2 left did not give an answer.

2.13. Is it hard for you to care about your pronunciation inside the classroom or outside ? why ?

Table2.13

The participants' beliefs on the challenges faced in language use.

Of course inside the classroom because I get very nervous outside.
Outside, because I play video games and I talk to people.
Outside, because we learn again and again inside the classroom only and use it outside.
Both, in order not to face any difficulty in any situation whether abroad or in the department.
Outside, because I need to speak it all day.
Outside, because it is a global language and it helps me reach my goals.
Inside the classroom to communicate with other pupils.
Both, because language does not differ in both cases, it remains the same.
Both, because I learn inside and apply outside.
Both, because I want it to be like my mother tongue.
Outside the classroom, because I learn then I practice outside.
Outside, because I learn inside the classroom and practice outside when I travel.
Both.
Outside, because I want to go out of this country.
Yes. (repeated 3 times)
No it is not actually. It is easy in both cases.

Outside because I need to communicate with the people from different countries and for programming computers.
The two, because I want the language of English to be my daily language.
For me it is hard outside, I don't like people laughing at me and I don't know how to pronounce.
No answer. (repeated 2 times)

2.14. Do you have a problem dealing with differences at the level of learners' English pronunciation during teaching ?

This item was designed in a form of an open-ended question to allow the teachers participants share their beliefs on the problems facing them dealing with different learners' capacities at the level of pronunciation.

Table2.14

The teachers' opinions on dealing with the EFL learners' phonological differences.

No I don't, because it's quietly normal to face students with different pronunciations and different accents, since English is not their native language and adding the fact that in our country Algeria they're significantly away from English yet close to French. So this case is always faced, so what we do to deal with this issue is always trying to give listening tasks during and outside the classroom make them give an oral summary on what they have listened to, always correct the pronunciation when speaking is mispronounced, it's a lot of work indeed, and sometimes it's a brain problem in which the student give no results no matter what. In this case this problem will be ignored and more focus on the language itself would help in my opinion.

Actually, I don't have a problem. Because there are many factors the influence the learners' phonological abilities such as their origins, experiences, accents or maybe they don't practice much at home. But in order to create a balance, the teacher should be competent enough and aware about his/her learners' capacities and weak points at the level of pronunciation. Also, I don't really care about the accent as much as the tone and the transcription of the words are correct.

3. The Test Analysis and Data Interpretation

The video suggests that in order to observe the differences and deficiencies, the participants should be tested orally and in front of the camera for further explanation on how anxiety, motivation, and the factors affect their pronunciation.

The **Table3.1** shows that the 10 years old male pronounced correctly the two words and did not make an intonation in the question, while the female was wrong in all of them. Moreover, the 12 years old female was correct in making the intonation and mispronounced the words, while the male was wrong in all of them. Moving to the 7 years old male and female, who were both equal in pronouncing two words correctly and the third was wrong. The 14 years old female was correct in all the three tests. Finally, the 40 years old male mispronounced the two words and the ones in the sentence with no intonation, in the other hand, the 25 years old male pronounced the words correctly; however he did not make any intonation.

Table3.1

The participants test results

Words / Pictures / Sentences	7 Years old		10 years old		12 Years old		14 years old	Over 18	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	F	M (40)	M (25)
Chart			✓	×					
Share			✓	×					
How do you do ?			×	×					
Breath					×	×			
Communication					×	×			
Have you seen my shoes?					×	✓			
Crayon	✓	✓							
Kite	×	×							
Mouth	✓	✓							
Bolster								×	✓

Available								×	✓
Which planes would be the most useful for cutting crimes ?								×	×
Stairs							✓		
Grapes							✓		
Wow that's beautiful !							✓		

M: Male / F: Female

4. Results and Discussion

The primary data were collected in order to reach the target of this study, which sheds the light on the investigation of the major sources and factors that determine the PDD that may occur among EFL learners of EE private school.

4.1. Private school VS Public school

Table2.1 shows that participants have multiple perspectives each according to his/ her need. Furthermore, referring to different items, some participants argued that the major reason behind choosing to delve into a private school learning process is the high teaching level due to the qualified teachers and the suitable helping and enjoyable environment that aids them to develop their language skills capacities; on the other hand, some participants related this part to their main reason which stands behind their intention to master their English pronunciation for the sake of chasing their future goals such as working and studying abroad. However , two participants mentioned that having extra time for the language is strongly considered as a major cause behind selecting a private school. One comment on this idea said : "*I don't know, but my father wanted that* ", in addition to that one candidate who preferred not to answer this question.

As discussed earlier in the first chapter the **item2.4**, indicates that students tend to have divergent reasons according to their personal needs in which they find that the appropriate way to reach their targets is to cohere with a balanced classroom that fits all learners mentalities and capacities regarding the various phonological aspects which are already taken into consideration by the school teaching system.

4.2. The four Factors and their Contribution to the Appearance of Differences

Table2.2&Figure2.2 revealed that there are different ages answered the **item2.2**. The majority were young adults (11 to 14 YO), there were also 3 kids (8 to 10 YO) and other 3 teens (15 to 17 YO), while adults were 5 (18 and over). Moreover, the **Table2.3&Figure2.3** showed that most of these participants are females with 60.8% and only 39% males.

The participants expressed their needs for learning English by answering the questions in **item2.4&item2.5** of the second section. Data in **Table2.4** revealed that most of teens and adults, both females and males, wants to learn English for the sake of being fluent speakers and to improve their speaking skill, which is mentioned also in the interpretation of the **item2.5**. While kids' answers were similar saying, for instance, "*Because it is the language of the world*", and the rest of the teens responded that they want to use it when they travel.

Table2.6&Figure2.6 revealed that most of the participants have been learning English for a short period of time from 1 to 3 years; while 2 learners, who are adults, have been learning for 4 to 8 years. Furthermore, the data in **Table2.7&Figure2.7** show that most of the participants agree on having an experience with another foreign language before English, and according to **Table2.7.1**, the

language most spoken is the French (90.9%) over Russian and Turkish (4.54%) for each.

The responses to the reason for learning English (Need) in **item2.4** and **item2.5** is matching the idea mentioned earlier (see **2.4**) that there are some EFL learners who want to learn English to be fluent speakers by enhancing their Grammar and Vocabulary and ignoring the phonological rules, such as pronunciation, which therefor create complexities and different levels of abilities. Furthermore, the answers to EFL learners' experiences with foreign languages before English in **item2.7** revealed that the majority of learners, especially adults, speak French since it is the first foreign language they learn. One participant in the video, who is 40 years old man, said that he is a French fluent speaker and he is not aware about all the English phonemes yet; therefore, he mispronounced the word "Available" /ə'veɪləbl/ saying /ə'veɪlæbl/ (see video). Another example, the 12 years old boy and girl who mispronounced the word "Communication" /kə,mju:nɪ'keɪʃn/ saying /kɒmju:nɪ'keɪʃn/ which is similar to the French word "Communication"(see video). This idea was mentioned before (see **2.3**) that Algerian adult learners face problems in articulating new English phonemes which are different from the ones in French.

According to the video & **Table3.1**, the 12 and 14 years old girls used intonation correctly in " Wow that's beautiful !" [↗] and in " Have you seen my shoes " [↗]. On the other hand, the boys did not make any intonations. These responses reflect the idea mentioned in **2.2** which declares that females tend to be more accurate.

In **2.1**, studies gave advantage of pronunciation to children over adults and teens since they memorize and imitate the English speech sounds from teachers by heart. According to the video and **Table3.1**, the children participants (7YO boy and girl)

were equal in both pronouncing and mispronouncing the same words due to the fact that they imitate what they hear and memorize it

4.3. The Environment Impact on the EFL Learners' Phonological Abilities

The first question of this study was represented in section 3 & section 4 of the questionnaire as an indirect close-ended, multi-choice and open-ended questions.

4.3.1. Language performance and Learning materials

Table 2.13 revealed that the majority of participants find it hard to care about their pronunciation outside the classroom; like one of the participants said " *For me it is hard outside, I don't like people laughing at me and I don't know how to pronounce* ", while 3 said " *YES*" without explanations. However, there was one participant who did not find a difficulty saying " *No, it is not actually. It is easy in both cases*". Moreover, there were some responses commenting that they practice in the classroom then apply outside, like one of them said " *Outside, because we learn again and again inside the classroom only and use it outside* " which reflects the idea suggested by the first teacher who said " *... trying to give listening tasks during and outside the classroom make them give an oral summary on what they have listened to, always correct the pronunciation when speaking is mispronounced ...* ".

According to **3.3.4**, Audio-lingualism is a method used in Private schools which focuses highly on language pronunciation supported by error correction and the use of repetition to enhance their pronunciation. Furthermore, this idea was mentioned also in **3.1** which claims that over practicing inside the classrooms help EFL learners use English language outside.

4.3.2. Mother Tongue interference

In fact, participants' responses to the level of MT impact on their English pronunciation in **item2.8** revealed that the majority do not have a problem of their MT interference as shown in **Table2.8&Figure2.8** that 86.9% said "NO", while the others said "YES".

According to **3.2**, M'sila has many dialects in its regions, which obstruct people from pronouncing some phonemes in English and since all participants are originally from central M'sila, they do not have a problem in making a balance between English and Arabic, unlike the French language (see **2.3**).

4.3.3. Motivation and Anxiety

Table2.10 and **Figure2.10** revealed that most of the participants (87%) are highly confident and motivated, through answering the **item2.10** by evaluating their pronunciation from 8/10 to 10/10. Moreover, the more they are motivated, the more they practice on pronunciation. This is mentioned in **3.3.1**, which is one of the main methods used in Private schools, that this process will lead learners eventually to be highly confident and motivated to pronounce correctly.

One of the significant results noticed during observation was that females are more motivated than males, and that children memorize the pronunciation of words quickly when they are motivated. As a consequence, the more they are motivated by their teachers, the more they focus on a correct pronunciation and the other features, the less differences and deficiencies.

However, in **3.4**, it was stated that when the learner feels anxious, he/she will not be able to pronounce or apply any of the phonological rules correctly. The video

revealed that children do not get nervous like adults and teens do. This, in fact, is matching the idea which is declared in **2.1** where Dull believes that children do not worry about social judgment and acceptance, while adults and teens feel stress while trying to speak even if they know the phonological rules.

4.4. The Role of Teachers in Reducing the Differences

The **item2.14** sheds the light on investigating the impact of phonological differences inside the classroom in which two competent teachers choose to participate. According to **Table2.14**, the first one focused on diverse language perspectives such as mother tongue language, the effective teaching methods and comprehension capacities as well. In this case, this teacher considered the existence of those phonological differences as an ordinary aspect that may happen inside the classroom teaching besides the numerous factors. Additionally, the second respondent related those phonological differences to diverse reasons namely needs, experience and language use, furthermore, he/she suggested to put their language into more practice focusing more on the essential language aspects such as tone, pitch and intonation.

These varying answers are highly connected to the first chapter that tackled many points which are represented by the teachers. According to **3.2** learning a new language means dealing with new Grammar points, Vocabulary, Speech sounds and Phonological sounds. All the previous features are totally far from students' mother tongue language so it is obvious that many difficulties will appear during their new language learning journey. Moreover, teaching methods play an important role. As discussed earlier referring to the **3.3**, there are several ways to push students' will and master their skills such as motivation and other teaching ways. When it comes to the

second participant, need and experience are mentioned in the 2.3 in which the word "experience" is characterized by whether bilingualism, multilingualism or even learners' English field experience. In addition to that, it was emphasized in 2.4 that each student has his/her own methods to learn language; for so, private schools in this care simplifies their ways towards their targets due to the exact methods and teaching ways.

4.5. Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter analyzed and interpreted the data gathered from the questionnaire, video and the observation. The discussion of the results showed the responses to the research questions of the study; moreover, it supported the first hypothesis that if there are some factors that impact the English language pronunciation among EFL learners, a set of phonological differences and deficiencies will appear.

The findings emphasized on the fact that private schools are more chosen than public ones in teaching English due to the methods used in learning, teachers, the strict rules and so forth. Furthermore, the findings revealed that all the factors that determine the PDD are interrelated and that the environment participate in both increasing or reducing these differences and difficulties. The results emphasized on the significant role the teachers play during the teaching-learning process in improving the EFL learners' phonological abilities.

5. Recommendations

The major recommendations derived from the findings of the study are :

- Providing public schools in all levels with extra sessions for listening and speaking in the English course.
- Reinforcing the English teaching process with the use of ICTs and modern materials to practice more on their pronunciation.
- Considering a methodology of teaching that motivates EFL learners to practice speaking more.
- Suggesting new creative tasks to improve the learners' speaking skills.
- Practicing on overcoming the fear of public speaking and the stress that comes before performing.
- Paying more attention to the correction of errors of the phonological rules made by EFL learners.

6. Limitations

In spite of the research findings that answered the research questions and achieved the objectives of the study, conducting this work was not limitation-free. First, the insufficiency of time and financial resources. The researchers planned to collect data in the first semester. However, it was hard to find a proficient photographer to film the video, in addition to some participants who submitted their answers to questionnaire late. Second, the lack of collaboration. The selection of learners in for the questionnaire was supposed to be half for females and half for males with different ages; however, females were more than the others and the

majority were teens. For the video, researchers could not find a male for the 14YO category as well as a female for the adults. Moreover, researchers planned for 5 teachers to answer; while only 2 participated. Finally, the resources limitation. There were only three studies conducted the topic of investigating the differences and they were limited by dealing with one feature.

General Conclusion

The spread of English as a global language prompted more people to learn it, focusing more on improving their speaking skill which led to remarkable challenges and differences at the level of the phonological abilities among EFL learners. General education in public schools tends to emphasize on teaching reading and writing that led students to register at private schools to achieve fluency since its primary objective is to achieve communicative proficiencies.

Private schools for English learning in Algeria contains classes for different levels with different ages and genders supported by modern materials for listening and speaking; however, the fact that these learners struggle with acquiring all the phonological rules led to differences at the level of pronunciation, intonation, pitch and so forth. This study investigated the factors that may determine these differences and deficiencies, as well as the external impact of environment on learners' pronunciation. The first chapter was devoted to the theoretical framework, in which its first section highlighted the English language development and English phonology. While the second section explained factors that determine the differences in pronunciation (Age, Gender, Experience and Need) and the impact of external factors of environment such as MT interference, language performance, motivation and anxiety on learners' pronunciation. The second chapter of this study was designed for methodology and data collection. The study was conducted following a descriptive method in gathering quantitative data with the inclusion of using the observation. The participants were selected based on a non-probability sampling technique to reach the study objectives.

The findings supported the hypothesis suggesting that there are some factors that impact the English language pronunciation among EFL learner which lead to different abilities. The results revealed that most of EFL learners prefer improving

their speaking skill in a private school due to as set of limitations in the public one. Additionally, the four factors (Age, Gender, Experience, and Need) are, in fact, interrelated and each one cannot determine the phonological differences and deficiencies by itself. Moreover, the results revealed that the more EFL learners are highly motivated and less anxious, the more they will be able to practice on their pronunciation and other features which lead to less differences and challenges that may obstacle the process of learning. Finally, the findings showed that teachers play an important role in making a balance between their learners' different abilities and straggles by following certain methodologies.

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Appendices

Appendix.1 The Questionnaire of the Study

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF MOHAMED BOUDIAF – M'SILA

A questionnaire about :

Investigating the Phonological Differences and Deficiencies among EFL Learners :

The Case of Education Embassy Private School – M'sila

Thank you for taking the time to answer this short questionnaire about investigating the phonological differences and deficiencies that may appear among EFL learners. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather your information and opinion about this topic.

Your participation will be kept confidential and anonymous.

1. Why did you choose to learn English in a private school ? (briefly)

.....
.....

2. Would you please indicate your age :

[8 - 10]

[11 - 14]

[15 - 17]

[18 - ...]

3. Would you please indicate your gender :

Male

Female

4. What is your main reason for learning English ? (briefly)

.....
.....

5. What is your favorite English skill ? (Select if integrated)

Speaking

Listening

Reading

Writing

6. How long have you been learning English ?

.....

7. Do you speak other foreign languages ?

Yes No

- If "Yes", what is / are the language (s) ?

.....
.....

8. Do you think that your mother tongue affect your English pronunciation ?

Yes No

9. Did you face any difficulties at the level of mastering the English phonological rules of pronunciation ?

Yes No

10. On a scale of 1 – 10, how would you rate your pronunciation ?

.....

11. Imagine you are reading a text in English in front of your classmates and you mispronounce a word, how would you feel ?

Fine 50/50 Nervous

12. How important is it for your English pronunciation to sound natural ?

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

13. Is it hard for you to care about your pronunciation inside the classroom or outside ? why ?

.....

.....
.....

The following question is formed for teachers :

14. Do you have a problem dealing with differences at the level of learners' English pronunciation during teaching ?

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

Thank you



for your precious time



Appendix. 2 The Videotaped Test

المخلص

تعتبر المخاطبة (التحدث) إحدى أهم المهارات التي يجب على متعلم اللغة الإنجليزية إتقانها لتحقيق الطلاقة فيها. لذا تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اكتشاف الفروق الصوتية بين المتعلمين و كذا الصعوبات التي يمكن ملاحظتها لديهم في المدرسة الخاصة " سفارة التعليم " لتعليم اللغات باعتبارها ميدانا لهذه الدراسة. و قد اعتمد هذا البحث كمنهجية على طريقتي الوصف و المراقبة (الملاحظة) في جمع المعلومات الكمية، كما تبنت استراتيجيات أخذ العينات غير الاحتمالية باستخدام طريقة جمع العينات المستهدفة فقط ، مستعملا في ذلك استبيانا و اختبارا مسجلاً بالفيديو كأدوات لجمع البيانات الأولية حيث تم اختيار 34 مشاركا و تقسيمهم على مجموعتين . و تشير نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن هناك اختلافات بين المدارس الخاصة والعامة على مستوى المناهج و الأساليب المتبعة ، كما أشارت إلى أن العوامل الأربعة هي عوامل مترابطة و التي بدورها تحدد الفروق الصوتية و الصعوبات. و أبرزت النتائج أيضا تأثير البيئة باستثناء اللغة الأم على الدقة الصوتية ، كما أكدت على الدور الهام الذي يلعبه المعلم في تحسين النطق و إزالة بعض الفروق و الصعوبات أو التخفيف من حدتها.