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**Mother Tongue's Impact on the Phonetic Realizations of the
English Language
Case study: Algerian Arabic vs RP English
Master 2 students in Tiaret and Djelfa as a Case Study**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of Master's Degree in
Linguistics

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Dedication

To our loving parents,

To our families, our brothers and sisters,

To our dearest friends,

If it were not for them, we would not be here.

May Allah bestow upon all of you great prosperity and constant wellbeing.

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Abstract

Algerian learners encounter difficulties in English pronunciation. Students at IbnKhalidoun University - Tiaret and ZyanAchour –Djelfa are no exception. To find out the problematic factors behind this linguistic phenomenon, data is collected using questionnaire and audio recording, then analyzed and described. The results of this study show that Algerian students of English have problems with English on the phonetic level. The findings can be taken as a suggestion for those who want to learn English and improve it. Based on our hypothesis, we believe that these four factors contribute in obtaining an English spoken in the right manner: An early start of learning English, high interest in English and a purpose attached to it, use of methods of acquisition (especially at an early age), and perseverance in practicing English.

Key words:

English pronunciation – linguistic phenomenon – learning English – methods of acquisition – English Practice – level of English.

General Introduction

The spoken version of language started numerous centuries before the written one was invented. Human beings depended on speaking for communication until written scripts were invented. Only remaining evidence of these days are the sounds that were used in these languages. Through these sounds, people narrated stories and exchanged expertise from one generation to another.

Nowadays, almost all the languages all around the world have a written version, but people still communicate through speaking more than they do through writing. English is a global language, which occupies quite an important place in the field of language teaching.

Many learners wish to learn and speak English with correct pronunciation. Among them the students of the English language at the University of IbnKhalidoun – Tiaret and ZyanAchour - Djelfa who are studying English in a non-English speaking setting, therefore face many barriers that hinder them to speak with good English pronunciation.

The first problem that any foreign learner faced is how he can acquire another language beside his native one. The critical period (CP) for language emphasizes on the idea that languages must be learned in childhood to be learned successfully, which has been widely held by educators for over a century (Colombo, 1982). Proponents of behaviorism on the other side such as Ingram (1989: 58), consider that FLA is the result of imitation, practice, habit formation and appropriate feedback. In their first attempts to speak, children imitate the sounds and patterns they hear around them and receive positive reinforcement for doing so.

According to the Innatist approach, children are biologically programmed for language and are born with an innate special ability to discover for themselves the underlying rules of a language system through the 'Language Acquisition Device' (LAD), later referred to as 'Universal Grammar' (UG) or the imaginary 'black box'. The role of the environment is to stimulate the LAD as claimed by Chomsky (1981: 71) "For the LAD to be activated, it only needs to be triggered by samples of the target language at the right time before the end of the Critical Period. Once it is activated, the child is able to discover the structures of the language to be learned by matching innate knowledge of basic grammatical relationships to the structures of the particular language in the environment". While, the sociocultural theory of human mental processing in which Piaget (1953: 131) and

Vygotsky (1978: 63) take an intermediate position between the ideas of Ingram and those of Chomsky. This theory emphasizes the interrelation between environment and language development.

It has been observed in NLL that some students in the same classroom setting progress rapidly through the initial stages of learning a new language while others struggle along making very slow progress. This variation can be ascribed in part to personality characteristics and in part to learning strategies, language aptitude, and first language interference. This later was a subject of debate between many linguists who assumed that it is the main problem that affects students of English pronunciation.

CHAPTER ONE

1 Literature Review

1.1 Literature review and some related theoretical frameworks:

1.2 Mother tongue.

We use this term to refer to the first language (hence after L1) of a child. Normally, a child is exposed to a language immediately after his/her birth. A child starts learning a language that has been surrounding him/her since his/her birth. With the passage of time, this learning of language goes on cognitively and time comes when he/she can speak, read and write that language perfectly. Therefore, mother tongue is the first language of a child, which he/she has learnt first, and uses it for communicating of his/her needs and desires. Mother tongue is also termed as the native or primary language. It is the basics of one's recognition and origin. It is the language, which occupies one's thought process and conscience.

1.1.2 The mother tongue interference.

Many researches have already been done in the area of native language interference in the target language. However, the essay gives an account of the following readings about the topic under study. Ellis (1997) refers to interference as 'transfer' that is the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2. He argues that transfer is governed by learner's perceptions about what is transferable and by the stage of development in L2 learning. In learning a target language, learners construct their own interim.

According to Bhela (1999) 'although foreign language learners appear to be accumulating enough knowledge, they come across problems organizing coherent structures when speaking relying on mother tongue structures in the foreign language, showing a gap between gathering knowledge and producing orally'. In the cases in which the gap increases and becomes more complex to solve thus, the possibility of mother tongue interference emerges. Odlin. (1989). defined the mother tongue interference as the negative transference of linguistic patterns. This means that students take the structure belonging to the mother tongue to construct messages in the foreign language, constraining their learning about new elements. Since they start making performance mistakes that gradually become competence errors.

Kohn (1986) stated that. "As a learning process, transfer supports the learner's selection and remodeling of input structures as he progresses in the development of his inters language knowledge. As a production process, transfer is involved in the learner's retrieval of this knowledge and in his efforts to bridge linguistically those gaps in his knowledge which cannot be stepped by avoidance."

According to Ashworth (1992) ' the mother tongue or native language is the language which the person acquires in early years and which normally becomes his/her natural instrument of thought and communication'. An online article, entitled "Mother Tongue" defines mother tongue (first language. native language or vernacular) as the language a person learns first. Correspondingly, the person is called a native speaker of the language. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language Skiba. (2000) defines mother tongue as one's native language; the language learned by children and passed from one generation to the next; it is received by birth or from ancestors.

On the other hand, Ashworth (1992) states that 'the second language is a language acquired by a person in addition to her mother tongue'. A similar definition of second language is given by the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language mentioned above as the language you learn and adopt after learning yours. In his own View, Parry (1982) said that "Lack of mastery in the English language is due to the environment of the child'. Although English language is the pupils' L2, it is not the language of the community in which he lives. The language of the community is significantly different from English language. Parry (1982) added more that ... 'the child has little opportunity to speak or hear English, thus, he cannot acquire the fluency needed to cope with the secondary school course'.

On how home background affects the students' acquisition and mastery of English language, Ajayi (1977) said that students feel alien to the English language because of lack of initial exposure to the language within the family unit. He then said that students transfer this poor background into schools and this hinders their performances in the acquisition of the language.

Still on home background, Goldstein (1976) said ... the fact that much of the child's educational development takes place at home before he begins to attend school is an obvious fact. For instance, middle class home tends to provide environment more conducive to success in schools than to those of lower class families.

Weireth (1968) writing on environment said that ... when two or more languages are being used in an environment or by an individual, then the concept of bilingualism is at play. This means that individuals within such an environment are going to acquire the two or more languages in use in that environment simultaneously or one after the other. Thus, the individual in the community is acquiring two or more very different or similar or else very similar languages. The learner is, therefore, going to transfer his knowledge of his L1 into the learning process of his L2 to enhance the easy acquisition of his L2 and attempt to suppress features of his L1, which differ markedly from those of the L2 for an easier acquisition his L1.

1.1.3 Mother Tongue Influence on English Language Learning

When we discuss mother tongues, we need to know what mother tongue really is. Al Asmari (2014) stated a mother tongue is a system of meaningful signs. When people want to express and understand something, they are able to access information automatically. From the perspective of sociology, mother tongue means an identification and can define which community a person belongs to. From the perspective of education, through a mother tongue, learners can learn more efficiently and effectively compared to unfamiliar linguistic mediums.

Most people learn their mother tongue when they are a child. So what is the role of a mother tongue for children? Children acquire their mother tongue at home and school as well as in social situations outside the home (Yazici & Glover, 2010). Initially, their parents and close relatives help them learn their mother tongue and, in time, others. According to Meece (1997), “Whatever language they speak, children learn languages at similar rates and follow similar paths and periods of development” (p. 27). From the mother tongue children learn much about cultural, social, and family values. Therefore, their mother tongue is used as a tool for expressing their feelings when they need to communicate with others. In other words, “Language mediates the learning of social rules and cultural values” (Piyade 1990, p. 11). A mother tongue also helps shape children’s daily lives and behaviors.

What influence might a mother tongue have on English language learning? Luo (2014) found that some Chinese students have difficulty distinguishing the English pronunciation between the alveolar nasal sound [n] and the alveolar liquid lateral sound [l]. For instance, they will mispronounce “knife” and “life” as well as “need” and “lead.” Akinwamide and

Tergujeff (2012) explain these phenomena are referred to as mother tongue interference, which frequently happens in second language teaching and learning. What causes such phenomena? From the perspective of phonology, Chinese tend to use tone to distinguish meanings, and it uses the pitch (highness or lowness) of a phoneme sound to distinguish word meaning. Unlike Chinese, English is an intonation language and intonation is meaningful (Luo, 2014). Furthermore, changes in pitch in English are used in order to express feeling or emphasize something instead of distinguishing word meaning.

While learning English, Chinese learners will confront many differences in not only the number of phonemes but also the disparate sound combinations between English and Chinese. The phonetic difference not only happened between English and Chinese, but within Chinese. There are eight dialects, which are used mainly in eight different regions (Luo, 2014).

Mandarin, as the standard, is based on Northern regions. Every region has some sub-dialects. According to Luo, “Sometimes, their utterance sounds quite ridiculous or funny to those from the other dialect regions” (p. 1703). Almost all universities and colleges in China have students whose hometown is outside the province where the university is located. They speak their own dialect, which is different from each other, and it will inevitably cause some trouble while they are learning English, especially pronunciation.

The interference of Chinese in English language learning happens because learners use what they already know to organize the second language phone (Luo, 2014). In other words, Chinese English learners will have difficulty learning English sounds because of the similar Chinese sounds they already know (Zhang & Yin, 2009). Furthermore, Zhang and Yin (2009) stated that some English sounds may exist in Chinese, but the manner of articulation are not the same. Erroneous substitution frequently happen. For instance, Chinese learners may not be able to pronounce words like ‘English’ and ‘rose’ correctly, because the English sounds /r/ and /ʃ/ are different from the Chinese /r/ and /sh/. Chinese has some sounds also found in English but not as separate phonemes. For instance, the sound /i/ both exist in Chinese and English (Zhang & Yin, 2009). The difference is that the short /i/ and long /i:/ in Chinese does not make any difference in meaning. However, in English, these differences are significant, as in the word “sheep” and “ship.” Zhang and Yin (2009) noted, “The result is that Chinese learners are not naturally aware of the difference in English and Chinese and may not even hear that difference” (p. 2). The

English sounds which do not exist in Chinese include both vowels and consonants, such as the vowels /æ /and /aʊ/, and consonants /ð/, /ə/. These sounds can lead English learners to find the similar sounds in their mother tongue and replace the sounds they are unfamiliar with (Zhang & Yin, 2009). Some typical examples will be the replacement for the English /ð/ with /z/ or /s/ and English /æ/ with /ai/.

Hack (2012) also illuminated the interference of L1 on L2 pronunciation. He has another explanation of this phenomenon. By comparing Standard Chinese (SC) phonology with English phonology, we can identify some potential sites of transfer between the two languages. Hack states that SC adult learners of English are often found to substitute consonants. To illustrate, they will use [s] to replace / θ /, [w] to /v/ as well as [z] to /s/. Moreover, “In terms of word structure, Chinese speakers also tend to show deletion of final consonants and reduction of syllable-initial clusters in their English and usually ending with a vowel” (Hack, 2012, p. 511). For example, learners will mispronounce words ‘book’ and ‘bed’ as /bukə/ and /bedə/. What is more, SC speakers may mispronounce some phonemes which are close to English, namely the post-alveolar sounds /ʃ/ (fricative) and /tʃ/ (affricate) and alveopalatals sounds ([ɛ], [t ɛ]).

Pronunciation studies were few and insufficient till the beginning of the 80s. As quoted by Joan Morley in *The Pronunciation Component in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages* (1991), Prator (1971) examined issues relating to phonetics versus phonemics in pronunciation teaching; Allen (1971) wrote on intonation, providing practice suggestions that continue to be cited today; Bowen (1972) focused on contextualizing practice in the classroom, with a classic format that is still recommended, for example, by Celce-Murcia and Goodwin (1991) who refer to it as “Bowen’s Technique”; Kriedler (1972), W. Dickerson (1975), and Dickerson and Finney (1978) stressed the importance of the spelling/pronunciation link for learners; Morley (1975) emphasized the need for learner- involvement and speech self-monitoring; Robinett (1975) suggested ways to present information in a manner that appeals to students' cognitive involvement; Stevick (1975) turned attention to a view of the learner’s feelings and the importance of the affective dimension in learning; L. Dickerson (1975) and W. Dickerson (1976) looked at aspects of variability in L2 pronunciation performance; Cathcart and Olsen (1976) reported on teachers’ and students’ preferences for correction; Parrish (1977) and Stevick (1978) presented viewpoints on a practical philosophy of pronunciation with attention to issues involving linguistic, affective, social, and methodological considerations; G. Brown

(1977, 1978) underscored the importance of focusing listening attention on prosodic patterning; Beebe (1978) provided some sociolinguistic perspectives on "teaching pronunciation, why we should be"; Smith and Rafiqzad (1979) investigated mutual intelligibility among speakers from different cultures.

With a marked change in perspectives on language learning and language teaching, the ideal language classroom today has seen a gradual shift from an emphasis on teaching and a teaching-centered approach to an emphasis on learning and a learning-centered classroom, with special attention to the individual learner as well as the group of learners. At the same time, as pointed out by Canale and Swain (1980) there has been a shift from a narrow focus on linguistic competencies to a broader focus on communicative competencies, within which linguistic competencies (i.e., grammar, pronunciation, etc.) remain an essential component albeit only one of several critical competencies.

The decades beginning 1980s saw the question of pronunciation instruction being studied extensively. James Enile Flege (1981) worked on the phonological basis of foreign accent. Denis R. Preston (1981) studied the ethnography of TESOL; In a very interesting study Alice Myers Roy (1984) worked on teaching non nativespeakes and speakers of non standard English together; Orlando R. Kelm (1985) studied acoustically the difference in the speech of native and non native speakers of Spanish; Garry Molholt (1990) worked on a spectrographic analysis of second language phonology. His subjects were Chinese users of American English. Joan Morley (1991) studied the pronunciation component in teaching English to speakers of other languages. Karen Earline Schairer (1992) native speaker reaction to non native speech; Vivian Cook (1999) studied the appropriateness of the models in language use set by the native users ina mixed classroom; Marnie Reed's research of year 2000 examines the occurrence of hesitation in spontaneous speech of native and non native speakers; Roy C. Major et al (2002) examined the effects of non native accents on listening comprehension and studied their implications for ESL assessment; Mary Grantham O'Brien (2004) enumerated upon the significance of pronunciation in an article aptly titles 'Pronunciation Matters'; John M. Levis (2005) studied the changing contexts and shifting paradigms in pronunciation teaching; Nico C. Sifakis and Areti Maria Sougari (2005) studied the teachers' viewpoint on pronunciation specific issues and the possible links between pronunciation teaching, English as an international language, and the socio cultural identity of non native speakers of English.

The 'native speaker myth' was studied by Paula Golombek and Stefanie Rehn Jordan (2005) studied the aspects of intelligibility and identity; A variety of English accents were the subject of the study carried out by Julie Scales et al (2006) where they studied the language learners' perception of accent; Deyuan He and Qunying Zhang (2010) worked on native speaker norms and China English, from the perspective of learners and teachers in China. In *English Pronunciation Teaching: Four Case Studies from Finland* (2012) Elina Tergujeff has this to say: "Positive effects of pronunciation instruction have been reported in numerous studies. These studies suggest that instruction at both segmental and suprasegmental levels can result in improved pronunciation skills, and that teaching methods such as discrimination practice (e.g. Neufeld, 1977, 1978 quoted in Neufeld & Schneiderman 1980; Derwing et al., 1998), concrete rules, giving immediate feedback (e.g. Elliott, 1995, 1997), and imitation (e.g. Macdonald, Yule, & Powers, 1994) have had positive effects on the learning of pronunciation. In a comparison of narrow/segmental and broad/suprasegmental approaches, Derwing et al. (1998) conclude that the suprasegmental approach is more effective in terms of comprehensibility, accentedness and fluency."

Further that "Observing 32 EFL lessons revealed a range of ten different types of pronunciation teaching methods, including traditional imitation tasks, teacher corrections, teachers pointing out pronunciation issues, reading aloud, use of phonemic script and rhymes, presenting rules, dictation/spelling, sound discrimination, and tactile reinforcement." "Overall, the pronunciation teaching practices can be characterised as being teacher-led to a great extent. This does not correlate well with the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT), which usually aims at promoting learner autonomy and being learner-centred. In many instances the teacher interfered with and corrected a pupil's pronunciation, or gave them information about the pronunciation of a word. Communicative pronunciation tasks were hardly used in the observed lessons. Even though we are living the era of CLT, in fact, CLT and pronunciation teaching is a complicated combination, as stated by Seidlhofer (2001): CLT directs the learners' attention to communication and away from form, but a certain formal aspect, such as pronunciation, can be difficult to learn unless one pays attention to it. This is also demonstrated in Elliott (1995, 1997)."

1.1.4 Second Language Acquisition

Marysia (2004. p.8) observes that language acquisition is innately determined and that we are born with certain systems of language. This is supported by different linguistic scholars. For example, Chomsky (1975. p.26) asserts that each human being possesses a set of innate properties of language which is responsible for the child's mastery of the native language. He further argues that this language mechanism defines the forms in which language may take. The innate properties of language are as well underlined in the philosophy of idealism. Plato puts it that we are born possessing all knowledge and our realization of that knowledge is contingent on our discovery of it'. All that we know already come pre-loaded on birth and our senses enable us to identify and recognize the stratified information in our mind". Marysia (2(1): p. 34) distinguishes between acquisition and learning: Acquisition is a sub-conscious process which leads to fluency, learning on the other hand is a conscious process which manifests itself in terms of learning rules and structures.

Krashen (1985. p. 39) maintains that there are three operative internal processes when learners acquire second language. These are the monitor, filter and organizer. The monitor is responsible for conscious learning and has nothing to do with acquisition. Brown (1973. p. 21) claims that filter are responsible for extent in which the learner's acquisition of the second language is influenced by the social circumstances such as motivation and effective factors like anger and anxiety. The organizer determines the organization of the learner's language. It organizes the usage of incorrect grammatical instructions and provisional precursors, grammatical structures, the systematical occurrence of errors in the learnt item.

1.1.5 Language Interference:

Language interference occurs when a speaker or a writer applies knowledge of his/her native language to a second language. Language interference is also known as language transfer, linguistic interference, L1 inference and cross-meaning (The Free Dictionary by Farlex). Several factors lead students to make errors. One of which is the interference of the learner's native language. Nunan (2001:89) states, "Where the first and second language rules are not the same, errors are likely to occur as a result of interference between the two languages." Language interference can be positive or negative. It is

positive when relevant units or structures of both languages are same and result in correct production of the target language. On the other hand, it is negative when different units or structures of both languages interfere in the learning of the second language. One overlaps with the other and the linguistic interference occurs in polyglot individuals.). If the two languages are drastically different, learners will use the linguistic patterns they have learnt in their native to help them do tasks in L2, as people are usually pattern seekers. Then one could expect relatively high frequency of errors to occur in L2 (Ellis, 1997; Richard & Schmidt, 2002).

Another cause of making errors is the inadequate teaching methods. Methods that encourage translation, cause students to make mistakes (Yule, 2009; Al-Buainain, 2010). Students' personal affairs play a role in this field. For instance, their physical, psychological, social and cultural circumstances may lead them to make errors. Ellis (1994) identifies areas where the learners' external factors as social contexts are related to making errors.

The other source of errors are related to the target language (TL) the student is learning. These errors are called the "intralingual/developmental errors. These are errors caused by some processes that learners recourse to when learning the TL. These include generalization, substitution and other processes. The learner, in this case, tries to “derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language” (Richards, 1970).

1.3 The Interference of the Mother Tongue at the Phonological Level

The influence of the mother tongue, have several effects in different levels and the phonological level is no exception. O'Connor (2003), Yule (2003), power (2003) have linked between the interference of L1 and pronunciation problems. They agree that many sounds such as /p/ and /b/, /th/ and /t/, /th/ and /d/, /ch/ and /sh/ are confused by many students. Moosa (1972:44) reported that /p/ and /b/ sounds are two different phonemes and each one can be distinguish by native speaker but for the Arab learners the situation is different. So the mispronunciation of the previous sounds is result of over practice of Arabic language, for this O'Connor (2003:24) argue that when learners confuse with such sounds they replace each of them with other sounds that are said to be nearest one of them.

To sum up the mother tongue can be as an obstacle that affects the learners' pronunciation progress.

1.4 Language Transfer and the Impact of L1 Interference

Language transfer has been a central element in Applied Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition, and Language Teaching for more than a century. It also known as L1 interference and linguistic interference, it refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their mother tongue to the foreign language. It occurs when speakers who do not share the same language need to communicate; it also occurs naturally in language learning programs when learners transfer elements from their mother tongue to the L2 or FL. Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (1988) defines language transfer as “the effect of one language on the learning of another.” It is viewed that the Transfer is taking something from X situation and put it in Y situation where the context is different.

Obviously, language transfer has been a continuous issue in foreign language for a long time. Its significance in foreign language (FL) learning has also been revised repeatedly. Along with the advance of research on language transfer, linguists have realized that the first language (L1) acts as “a major factor in FL” (Ellis, 1990, p.297). There are evidences of L1 influences at every aspect of FL learners' interlanguage; discourse, lexicon, semantics, syntax, morphology (including bound morphemes), phonetics, and phonology.

In order to get a comprehensive understanding and fully recognize the significance of language transfer, it is important to have a close look at its research developments at different stages and proportional definitions. Over a hundred years ago, Whitney (1881) used the term transfer to refer to cross-linguistic influences, which had been used by many linguists. However, the language is not without problems and leads to different conceptions. Corder (1983) and Kellerman & Smith (1986) advocate abandoning the term or using it with high restriction, yet many linguists continued to use it without any limitation. Up until now, linguists still do not have an exact definition of language transfer, which differ along with the developments of research on it.

1.5 Language Transfer Theories and Views

In the twentieth century, the developments of language transfer research fell into mainly three periods and categories, namely, behaviorist, mentalist and cognitive view (Ellis, 1994, p.297-300). Behaviorists regarded language learning as habit formation, it was assumed that the ‘habits’ of the L1 from the L1 would be carried over into the FL. In cases where the target language differs from the L1 this would result in interference or negative transfer. The notion of transfer is redefined within a mentalist perspective. They consider language acquisition as a creative construction of linguistic rules. Cognitive linguists focused on factors that influence language acquisition.

1.6 Behaviorist View of Transfer

Behaviorist view of language transfer was minimized to habit formation, which was actually a process of stimuli-responses. The theory controlled language learning and teaching. Research in 1940s and 1950s when behaviourism and structuralism defended that the difficulties in language learning depended on how much the target language was similar, or different from the native language. If two languages were similar or identical, positive transfer from the native language would occur; if they were different, negative transfer from the native language would hinder the acquisition of the target language. Under this belief, Lado (1957, p.23) put forward the theory of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), he believed that language errors and learning difficulties were mainly or completely due to the interference of the native language. Via comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences of two languages, as well as setting up the hierarchy of difficulty. It was possible to predict and explain learners’ errors and learning difficulties.

Behaviorists’ view of transfer was limited to overt correspondences between L1 and FL syntactic structures. The degree of transfer was greatly based on the similarities or differences between the native and target languages. Although behaviorists confirm that the native language played an important role in FL, they exaggerated L1 influences and ignored other factors that prevented FL, such as learners’ individual differences. Therefore, it was not surprising that behaviorist view was faced with great challenges from mentalist view.

1.7 Mentalists View of Transfer

In the early 1950s, Chomsky put forward the theory of mentalism, which was also called conceptualism or psychologism. The theory confirmed that human's language ability was born by nature and everyone would eventually master language because there was Universal Grammar (UG) in language learning, and it was universal grammar rules that determined the mastery of every language.

Besides, Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) completely denied native language transfer and believed that language-learning ability only depended on UG. Ellis (2000) criticized that their conclusion was without experimental support. Hence, mentalists realized their limitation and started to explore the relationship between the native language transfer and UG in 1980s. Although the mentalists are no longer in a position very rejecting native language transfer, they are still under criticism for their theory not having much empirical support.

1.8 Cognitive View of Transfer

In the late 1970s, the drawbacks of the mentalist view encouraged the development of cognitive view, which believed that language learning involved the same cognitive systems as learning other types of knowledge: perception, memory, problem-solving, information processing. (Kellerman, 1977, p. 58-145). In the cognitive view, "It is generally acknowledged that typological similarity or difference cannot on its own serve as a predictor for transfer, but interacts with other (linguistic) factors" (Faerch& Kasper, 1987, p.121).

1.9 Previous studies

Mother tongue refers to one's native language or parent language. ("Mother tongue," 2015). Mother-tongue interference refers to the influence of the native language of the learner on her/his acquisition of the target language. What we mean by the target language is the language the learner is aiming to learn (L2). ("Contrastive analysis," 2015).

When teaching English as a second language, problems of mother-tongue interference arise. One of these problems is mother-tongue interference in Arabic-native speakers' acquisition of the English articles.

Contrastive analysis is concerned with the study of a pair of languages with the aim of discovering their structural similarities and differences. Contrastive Analysis is a method that was widely used in the 1960s and early 1970s to explain why some features of a target language were more difficult to learn than others. (Mozlan, 2015)

Contrastive analysis is used to explain why certain features in second language acquisition are more difficult to learn than others. This method is based on the idea that the more difference between the learners' mother-tongue and the target language, the more difficulty the learner will face in acquiring these structures or items. ("Contrastive analysis," 2015).

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) is based on the claim that the difficulty of second language acquisition could be discovered or foretold depending on the degree of difference between the learners first and second language. However, there are certain problems with this hypothesis. One problem, for instance, is that this hypothesis does not predict many of the errors the learner makes in second language acquisition. Another problem is that this hypothesis predicts interference errors where none would arise. (Eric, 2008)

According to Lado's *Linguistics across Cultures* (1957) those items of a target language that are similar to the learners first language will be easy for her/him to learn. And, those items of a target language that are different than the learners first language will be difficult for the learner to acquire. This is what the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis suggests. (Mozlan, 2015).

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) comes in two versions the strong version and the weak version. The strong version suggests that the number of errors a learner of a target language will face could be equated to the degree of difference between the learners L1 and L2. The weak version suggests that errors a learner of a target language faces depends on the degree of interference a learner faces. ("Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, » 2015).

Arab learners of English tend to make errors when they try to use the article system in ESL/EFL. These errors, as mentioned before, are attributed to the difference between the two article systems in both Arabic language and the English language. i.e. these errors are made due to the interference of the learners' mother- tongue (Arabic) on the learners target language (English). Interference of the mother-tongue is also known as "Transfer".

Transfer is defined as the effect of the learners first language upon the learners target language. It is important to mention, though, that there are two types of transfer, in language learning. According to Sabbah (2015, p. 271) "Transfer can be of two types: positive transfer and negative transfer. The positive transfer refers to the process of using rules from L1 which facilitates or has a positive influence on learning L2. This transfer is mostly due to similarities between L1 and L2. In contrast, negative transfer is the transfer of rules from L1 which impedes or has harmful influence on the command of rules of L2. This is due to differences between L1 and L2".

The cause of errors can be explained by referring to language theories and learning theories. Among these theories are the Contrastive Analysis Theory and the Error Analysis Theory. As declared earlier, the Contrastive Analysis Theory is used to explain learners' errors. Contrastive Analysis studies the similarities and differences between two languages or more. It asserts the claim that learners will tend to depend on and refer back to their native language when they encounter target language items that greatly differ with their mother-tongue. The other theory that is used to explain learners errors is "Error Analysis", which studies learners errors in the target language with the aim of recognizing the reasons behind such errors and their causes. Correct pronunciation, such as the first language (L1) interference, learner's attitude, learner's age, earlier pronunciation instruction, the inadequate language knowledge of English phonetics and phonology and the fact that they speak English just inside their classrooms but whenever they leave their classes, they use their own mother tongue. Consequently , when discussing the influence of L1 on L2, it is necessary to refer to Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) which states that those L2 elements that are similar to learner's L1 will be simple for him/her and those different elements will be difficult. In this context, it is an evident that the language teachers and language learners should know the structures of both L1 and L2. because such knowledge can help the language teacher identify the areas of influence of L1 on L2 and to develop some methods to resolve the interferences (Lado, R. 1957).

For the purpose of this contrastive analysis between speech sounds of both Arabic and English languages, it is worthwhile to mention that the Arabic language has 28 consonant phonemes and 6 vowel phonemes (8 vowels in most modern dialects). All phonemes contrast between "emphatic" (uvularized) consonants and non-emphatic ones. Some of these phonemes have joined in various modern dialects, while new phonemes have been introduced through borrowing or phonemic splits. A "phonemic quality of length" applies

to consonants as well as vowels whereas Standard British English (also known as 'Received Pronunciation') has 24 consonant phonemes and 20 basic vowel phonemes (7 short vowels, 5 long vowels, and 8 diphthongs). While there are only five main vowel letters – a, e, i, o and u in Received Pronunciation, speakers use four times as many vowel sounds (Thelwall, Robin, 1990). Phonologically, English has about three times as many vowel sounds more than Arabic, so it is inevitable that some learners may fail to differentiate between some of the words they hear, such as pin / pen or bad / bed, and will have difficulties in saying such words appropriately (Marcel, 2012).

Amayreh (2003) stated that there were three levels of Arabic language: Firstly, Modern Standard Arabic, which is used in religious ceremony and literature. Secondly, educated Spoken Arabic that is used in schools and public arenas. Thirdly, Colloquial Arabic which is used at home and in the community; significant dialectal variability exists among colloquial forms. Other facts about the Arabic language. First, the Arabic language has emphatic consonants, such as /t/, /d/, /ð/, and /s/. Emphatic consonants are described as those sounds that are produced with the root of the tongue retracted toward the pharyngeal wall. Second, in postvocalic environments the /r/ is trilled; however, in prevocalic environments, the /r/ is tapped. Thirdly, phonemes in the Arabic language that are not found in the English language include the following: /t/, /d/, /ð/, /s/, /χ/, /ʁ/, /ħ/, /ʕ/, and /ʔ/. Next, phonemes in the English language that are not found in the Arabic language include the following: /p/, /v/, /ɹ/, /z/, /g/, and /ŋ/. Finally, dialectal variations in phonology are evident in the Arabic language. Therefore, it is important to recognize this when assessing an Arabic language speaker (Amayreh, 2003). Because this research concentrates on the speech sounds of the Arabic language and their effects on learning the English language pronunciation, there are two types of transfer happening during learning L2.

On one hand, positive transfer that refers to the similarities found in both L1 and L2; that can be found in the grammatical structures, phonology, phonetics, and morphology. Thus, these similarities are believed to facilitate the process of learning L2. On the other hand, negative transfer refers to the differences in the grammatical structures, phonology, and morphology of the L2 compared to the L1. However, it is believed that negative transfer exists as an obstacle for learners in learning L2. In the context of Arab EFL learners learning the English language as a second language, both positive and negative transfer occur in the process of learning such as in grammatical structures, phonology, phonetics, and morphology.

(Johansson, 2008). The researcher's interest in studying the speech sounds of the Arabic language and their effect on learning the English language pronunciation is derived from the fact that it is worth studying, as there is little research in this field. The process of teaching and learning pronunciation should be paid more attention by both teachers and learners whether English is learned as a foreign language or as a second language, (Ha, 2013). Many people around the world have a strong desire to learn and speak English with correct pronunciation since an English learner with a limited pronunciation performance may lose his/ her self-confidence in social interactions, which —negatively affects estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities (Gilakjani, 2012, p. 119). In other words, learners with good English pronunciation tend to be understood despite their grammatical mistakes in the speech. However, having a good knowledge of English grammar is not an insurance of intelligibility, meaning —how much of the speech is actually understood by interlocutors (Munro, 2011, p.9).

Moreover, a wide range of sounds, among which are the universally less frequent uvular, pharyngeal and glottal places of articulation represent the phonemic inventory of Arabic consonants. As a result, it is noticed that Arabic speech sounds have considerable effects on EFL learners since it lacks some sounds which exist on English language, such as the sounds /p, ɲ, d, v, ʒ ... /and others. However, mother tongue interference and overgeneralization rules affect the pronunciation and spelling of some English words. For example, some Arab learners write the word " knife" as " nife " with deletion of the letters —k and "e" since they are silent and mispronounce it as/ knaife/. Also, other learners pronounce the word tongue" as /tʌŋ u:/ instead of /tʌŋ/. Therefore, the researcher paid more attention to such negative effects on learning the English language pronunciation in this research.

★Kharma&Hajjaj (1989) conducted a study to identify problems that face Arab students of English language at initial stages; they presented four main areas of difficulty. As far as consonants are concerned, they presented two problematic issues. First, certain pairs are confused by learners such as /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ as in chair and share ; /v/ and /f/ as in fast and vast; /dʒ/ and /ʒ/ as in jar and erosion ; /p/ and /b/ as in pin and bin; /ŋ/ and /n/ as in /sɪŋ/ sing and /sɪŋ/ sing; /s/ and /θ/ as in sin and thin. Second, learners insert a short vowel to break up the long consonant clusters to pronounce them as in /sɪpɪŋ/ for spring; /wɪʃɪd/ for wished; /ɑːskɪd/ for asked.

In vowels, two types of difficulty are identified. First, certain diphthongs are replaced by other sounds due to L1 interference for example, /eə/ → /eɪ/; /ʊə/ → /u:/; /ɪə/ → /ɪ:/; and /əʊ/ → /ɔ:/ . Second, the distinction between certain pairs of vowels as in /ɪ/ and /e/ as in sit and set; /ʌ/ and /ɒ/ as in luck and lock; /əʊ/ and /ɔ:/ as in coat and caught (Kharma&Hajjaj, 1989, p. 16).

In his study, O'Connor, J .p. (1967) specified the difficulties facing speakers of Arabic when pronouncing some English sounds, including both consonants and vowels. Regarding the consonants, the results showed that: / t / and / d / are dental stops in Arabic, while in English they are alveolar stops; sequences of three or more consonants do not occur in many forms of Arabic. Consequently, careful attention must be paid to these, especially in order to prevent the occurrence of a vowel to break up the consonant sequence. With reference to vowel speech sounds, the difficulties facing speakers of Arabic when pronouncing some English sounds.

The results showed the followings : / I / and / e / are confused , / e / being used for both , / æ / and / b / are not entirely independent in Arabic and there is a danger of replacing one by the other in some places , / a / and / b / are confused, an intermediate vowel being used for both , / a : / is not always made long, and is then confused with /ʌ / or / b / , / ɜ : / is replaced by a vowel of the /ʌ / or / e / type followed by Arabic / r / , / ei / is replaced by the usually nondiphthongal vowel in Arabic / beit / " house " , / əʊ / is replaced by the non-diphthongal vowel in Arabic / m:z / banana and /iə, eə, ʊə / are replaced by the nearest vowel sound, / i : , ei , u : / +Arabic / r /.

Oxford (1990) developed a taxonomy for Pronunciation Learning Strategies (PLS) aiming at helping learners improve suitable pronunciation of L2. This taxonomy was classified into two groups: the direct and indirect strategies.

★The direct strategies include memory strategies (Representing sounds in memory such as remembering words by making auditory rather than visual representations of sounds), cognitive strategies (including actions that are directly involved in studying and practicing the target language pronunciation such as repeating after the teacher), and compensation strategies (helping facial muscles to become accustomed to moving in new ways to acquire the target language pronunciation by producing approximate sounds). On the other hand, the indirect strategies, include the affective strategies (evaluating one's own pronunciation by praising oneself for correct pronunciation), metacognitive strategies (searching for

practice and trying new sounds), and social strategies (practicing with others and correcting others' pronunciation mistakes).

For Oxford (1990), the two most frequently utilized strategies are cognitive from the direct group and the metacognitive strategies pertaining to the indirect category.

Avery and Ehrlich (1992) pointed out that learners transfer their L1 sound patterns into the second language and this transfer is likely to cause foreign accents. It is reflected by the mispronunciations of words by non-native speakers. In this respect, Avery and Ehrlich claimed that the sound system of the L1 can influence the learners' pronunciation of L2 in at least three ways. First, when there is a sound in the L2 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., phonetic constraints/rules) are different in the learners' L1 from those of the L2, they cause problems for learners because these rules are language specific as they can be different 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 L2.

Barros (2003) identified and analyzed the difficulties encountered by Arabic speakers when pronouncing English consonants to see the influence of learners' L1 on the acquisition of the L2 pronunciation. The participants were a group of Arabic speakers coming from different Arab countries with different dialect Arabic backgrounds. All participants were in contact with the L2 group and culture after the age of puberty for at least four years. The results showed that eight English consonants, namely, /ŋ/, /p/, /v/, /d/, /l/, /dʒ/, /ʒ/, and /r/ are identified as problematic ones for Arabic speakers. He also found that interference of L1 seems to be the major reason contributing to pronunciation problems that might differ from one Arabic speaker to another, depending on the dialect variety of Arabic they use.

Khattab et al. (2006) examined the production of the phonemic contrast between the plain coronal stop /t/ and its emphatic counterpart /tˤ/ in Jordanian Arabic in the environment of the high vowel /i/ and the low vowel /æ/. They reported F1 raising and F2 lowering at the onset of the emphatic vowels (no other vowel positions were measured) relative to their corresponding values in the plain vowels for both high and low vowels. Furthermore, Voice Onset Time (VOT) that is an important feature to distinguish between voiced and

voiceless stops in various languages. Thus, they found that the VOT of emphatic consonants was significantly shorter than the VOT of plain consonants.

Marcel (2012) identified three problems Arab students have in learning English pronunciation. First, Arab EFL learners have difficulty distinguishing between /p/ and /b/. Since Arabic has no /p/ sound Arab speakers will often say /p/ as /b/: like banda, bear, and bolice. Second, they have difficulty in knowing the difference between /f/ and /v/ because there is no /v/ in Arabic. So you will hear many Arab EFL learners say 'fery' instead of 'very'. This is not as widespread as the /p/ vs. /b/ sound. Third, English has many vowel sounds while Arabic only has a few vowel sounds. The words 'pit', 'pet', 'put', 'pot', and 'pat' might be the hardest in the entire language for Arabic speakers to pronounce and recognize. Words that are only differentiated by their vowel sound are tough. Some Arabic students do not know the difference in sound between 'bomb', 'pump', and 'bump'. The /o/ and /ʌ/ sounds are hard for them as well as the /p/ and /b/. Another example is the difference between 'sit' and 'set' which causes problems to Arabic students. The /e/ sound in 'set' just is not found in Arabic. Many Arabs will say 'sit' instead of 'set'. However, these mistakes do not cause too much difficulty in understanding. As long as the word that is said incorrectly is in a sentence to give it context an Arabic student can understand it.

Alshangiti, W (2015) conducted a study entitled Speech production and perception in adult Arabic learners of English: A comparative study of the role of production and perception training in the acquisition of British English vowels. The results of this study demonstrated that Arabic speakers found English vowels were more difficult than consonants, though there were some confusions between some consonant contrasts; /ʒ/-/dʒ/, /ʃ/-/tʃ/, /m/-/n/-/ŋ/. The confusions that Arabic speakers make can be explained with reference to the relationship between the phonemic inventories in their L1 compared to that of the L2. Specifically, they find the phonemes that do not occur in their L1 harder to perceive and produce than those that occur in their L1.

★The researcher assumed that given Arabic consonant numbers (28), and the number of vowels (6), they would find vowels more challenging than the consonants. The findings of this study supported the hypothesis that Arabic participants found vowels more challenging than consonants. One of the essential language learning skills is pronunciation because it makes communication possible. Derwing & Rossiter (2002) stated that the majority of

English second language learners' main difficulty is learning how to pronounce; generally, learners consider pronunciation as the main cause for their communication problems.

Richards (1974) hypothesized about an "interlanguage" that sets between the learner's native (NL) language and the target language (TL) are L1 dependent and lead to errors caused by the first language transfer. These errors vary from one learner to another due to different variables, such as "...learning strategies, different training procedures, individual differences of teachers, text books..." (Jain, 1974, p. 189) and the interlanguage phase is temporary until the learner improves his/her performance which is inevitably based on his/her improved competence of the TL.

Dalton (2000) stressed that pronunciation is the "Cinderella of language teaching" when compared to other skills and components like grammar and vocabulary. Teaching proper pronunciation most often is not emphasized as grammar or vocabulary because many Arab teachers lack adequate phonetic skills or they simply consider other skills of the English language to be more important. Therefore, many learners will acquire sufficient grammar and vocabulary skills but they will not be able to carry on with normal conversations due to difficulties in pronouncing many English words. In addition, many Arab learners of English have deep ingrained problems, which they resist to change even with long exposure to English natives speaking conversations. The issue is more complicated by their teachers making fossilized pronunciation errors that they pass onto their students. Another problem is the direct transfer and interference from Arabic into the second language of English.

Errors are not the same as mistakes. Green and Tanner (1998, p. 93) state that a mistake is characterized as "a slip of the tongue"; that is, "the learner knows the correct form but has temporarily forgotten it". They also added that "There are several reasons why learners may make mistakes; for example, they may be tired, or not concentrating. Learners can often catch and correct their own mistakes". While Gass and Selinker (2008) give a contrasting definition of both errors and mistakes clarifying that "A mistake can be self-corrected, but an error cannot. Errors are "systematic," i.e. likely to occur repeatedly and not recognized by the learner. Hence, only the teacher or researcher would locate them, the learner would not.

Larry Selinker first introduced the term fossilization in 1972. He defined it as: "Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules and subsystems which speakers of a particular NL will tend to keep in their IL relative to a particular TL, no

matter what the age of the learner or amount of explanation and instruction he receives in the TL” (1972: 36). Selinker discussed some factors leading to the stagnation of interlanguage development including the age of learning, social identity and communicative need...etc.

The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Applied Linguistics defines fossilization as: The phenomenon whereby linguistic items (particularly erroneous ones) become permanent in a learner’s Interlanguage. Selinker (1972) used the term in relation to the processes of 'levelling' (lack of forward movement) or 'regression' ('backsliding' where a learner’s language reverts to an earlier stage). Fossilization may occur in relation to any linguistic level, 'foreign accent' being the result of one form of fossilization. (p.135)

According to Selinker, (1996), fossilization refers to the phenomenon that the language programs, grammatical rules and language subsystems related to the target language in interlanguage become stabilized in spite of the ages of learners and the quantity of the taught target language. And Richards et al. (2000) added that there are always incorrect language characteristics accompanied by the language learners’ production in oral and written forms and an accent is typical of fossilization in pronunciation in terms of the classification of fossilization, Selinker(1972 divided fossilization into two categories, namely, individual fossilization and group fossilization.

Based on its property, Selinker and Lakshmansn (as cited in Li, 2003 divided fossilization into temporary one and permanent one. Littlewood(2000) identified two kinds of fossilization based on the observation of the characteristics shown in immigrants’ dialects, naming individual fossilization and community fossilization.

As to the causes of fossilization, Selinker(1972) identified five leading factors: 1. language transfer 2. transfer of training. 3. Strategies of the second language learning. 4. Strategies of the second language communication and 5. overgeneralization of IL linguistic material. Then Selinker and Lamendella (as cited in LI, 2003) added that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors could account for the emergence of fossilization.

Liggett (1983, p. 34) defines EA as “... the study of learners' mistakes..., it starts from the demonstrated student errors”. This definition clarifies that it is more of a study of the learner’s errors than just comparing 2 languages without bearing the learner’s situation in mind as a significant variable. Gass and Selinker (2008) support the same idea adding that error analysis is a “type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make.

Khurma and Hajjaj (1997, p.14) explained that in contrast to the irregular spelling of English, Arabic is overwhelmingly regular. 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.

Fisiak, Lipinska and Zabrocki, (1978) investigated the differences of the native language and the target language using contrastive analysis defined as “a subdiscipline of the linguistics concerned with the comparison of two or more languages or subsystems of languages in order to determine both the differences and similarities between them”.

It was found in a study 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; they also provide hints of opening and closing, and turn taking in speech. According to the study by Keller-Cohen (1997), “A similarity in the suprasegmental patterns of two languages can give a learner important advantages in learning the syntax of the target language”. This research will investigate the pronunciation errors committed by Arab natives; then it will classify the errors into fossilized and not fossilized ones. Odisho, 1979, p. 205) states, “English and Arabic are two languages that differ greatly in the range of syllable structure patterns they make use of”. He concludes, “Thus great interference is expected when English assumes the status of the target language for the native speakers of Arabic”.

Zimmermann (2004) came with the table of words using the minimal pair /b/ and /p/ explaining that Arabic does not exhibit the voiceless stop consonant /p/, whereas English does. Similarly, Smith (2007, p. 197) explained the minimal pairs /f/ and /v/ what explains that the Arabic language does not exhibit the phoneme /v/, but unlike the /p/ case, Arabic does not exhibit the voiced phoneme.

Tushyeh (1996) explained that Arabs commit four types of language errors and one of them is the phonological error where the learners confuse /p/ and /b/; /f/ and /v/; /i/ and /e/. Tushyeh listed numerous intralanguage errors: simplification, overgeneralization, hypercorrection, faulty teaching, avoidance, inadequate learning and false concepts hypothesized.

Scott & Tucker, 1974; Al-Kahtany, (1997) stated that Arabs suffer from diglossia where the public speak colloquial Arabic and not the "Fusha" or the Modern Standard Arabic.

There are errors that characterize certain Arab nationals among 22 Arab counties. For example, Messiha (1985) explained that Egyptian Arabic learners face pronunciation problems with /p/, /□/, /□/, /v/ and these sounds were represented as follows [b], [s], [s],

[f] respectively. Barros (2003) confirmed the same results with Egyptian subjects. But, Messiha (1985) pointed out that some Arab speakers do not share the same difficulties with Egyptian speakers regarding the interdental fricatives.

Gordon (2005) reported that Ethnologue includes 35 varieties of Arabic. These versions of Arabic are scattered among 21 countries but are not restricted to Arab countries; they pass borders to other nations including Afghanistan, Cyprus, Malta and Uzbekistan. In the country of Saudi Arabia, there are four dialects: Gulf, Hijazi, Najdi, and Standard spoken Saudi Arabian dialect.

Scott & Tucker (1974) proposed that 23 cases of interference in spoken English by Arab learners is from colloquial Arabic as certain speakers of Arabic dialects produce different errors than speakers of other dialects. Yost (1959: 115) explained that Syrian and Lebanese learners of English often have problems in distinguishing between certain sounds like [s] and [t]. For example, the word chestnuts would be pronounced like [gostrust] by Syrian speakers of Arabic since [s] never follows [t] in the same syllable in Arabic. The author also stressed the influence of Arabic sounds on learners' English by giving examples of vowel errors such as the word put pronounced as [put] and full turned into [ful]. In addition, Yost further explained the absence of some English phonemes in Arabic, which were substituted, by phonemes from the native language as in the following: /p/ became [b].

Barros (2003) concluded that Egyptian subjects make pronunciation errors that were different from errors made by subjects from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Flege & Davidian (1984) illustrated that phonological rules may be transferred from the first language (L1) inappropriately to the L2. In a phonetic comparison study of voiced stops produced by Saudi Arabs and by both American and Saudis in English. The authors concluded that when Saudis pronounced /b/ it was indistinguishable from /p/ to the native speakers of English.

Abdulwahab (2015) stated that some English consonant sounds do not exist in the Arabic like /p/, /ŋ/ and /v/ and even these consonants, which seem similar to some Arabic consonants like /t/ or /k/, are not identical but different in the manner and even in the place of articulation. He explained that English /t/ is alveolar and aspirated in word initial position followed by a vowel like tea /ti:/ where as the Arabic /t/ is dental and non-aspirated in the same word position like in /ti:n/.

Jalal Ahmad and Mohammad Nazim (2014) studied errors made by students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in pronouncing English words at Najran University and they concluded on the causes of these errors made by those learners.

Al-Hattami (2010) highlighted the phonetic contradictions between English and Arabic. The author gave some examples of the contradiction: /p/ is a phoneme in English but not in Arabic; /t/ is alveolar in English but it is dental in Arabic language; /d/ is alveolar in English but it is dental in Arabic language; /c/ is a phoneme in English but it does not find place in Arabic, and /v/ is a phoneme in English but not in Arabic.

Al-Shuaibi (2009) studied the problems of phonology and revealed that Arabs have difficulties in pronouncing final consonant clusters, reduction, substitution, and deletion. The author concluded that these are the three prime factors of these clusters which are involved in the pronunciation process.

Altaha (1995) focused on pronunciation errors made by Saudi sophomores English students. He identified seven major pronunciation errors: first, replacing the sounds /p, v, e/ and /eə/ with the sounds [b, f, i] and [ə:], respectively, second, vowel insertion in words that contains a sequence of two consonants initially or inserting a vowel between the first two consonants in words that have a sequence of three consonants initially, third, the pronunciation of “silent” letters; fourth, pronouncing the letter c as [k] when it should be pronounced as [s]; fifth, pronouncing the voiced stop /g/ as a voiced affricate [dʒ] and vice versa; sixth, pronouncing the digraph dg as two phonemes medially; seventh, shifting the place of stress.

1.10 Labov, “acts of identity,” language variation and change, and variable rules

William Labov

After ten years as an industrial chemist, wrote his MA thesis as Weinreich's pupil at Columbia University; it was published in Word in 1963 as “The social motivation of a sound-change.” It was based on data he collected in the summer resort of Martha's Vineyard, and demonstrated the linguistic acts of identity made by those who wished to be recognized as natives of the island as distinct from summer visitors and commuters. His doctoral thesis, *The Social Stratification of English in New York City* (again under Weinreich) was published in 1966. He had studied research methods at the Bureau of Social Research in New York; and while a graduate student had taken part in sociolinguistics meetings organized respectively by Gumperz, Ferguson, and Bright. In his

thesis, he approached sociolinguistic analysis primarily as a means of dealing with variation in a principled way – i.e., to account for it within the framework of categorical, invariant rules (Labov, 1971b: 461). In relating phonological variation and change to social class and social prestige in New York he had been preceded by studies of Black usage in Washington (Putnam and O'Hern, 1955) and by Ruth Reichstein's 1960 study (also in Word) of 570 girls at three socially differentiated Parisian schools. She quantified the incidence of the variants of three phonological variables and correlated them with the type of school, the arrondissement, the middle-class or lower-class occupation of the parents, and whether they came originally from Paris or from the provinces. She was able to show the direction of phonological change as affected by the usage of working-class districts near the center of Paris.

Labov's "stratified random sample" of New York speakers took account of their "ethnic origin" (New Yorkers, Italians, Jews, Blacks) and their assignment to a social class: Upper Middle, Lower Middle, Upper and Lower Working Class, on the basis of income, level of education, and occupation. (Trudgill's 1974 Norwich study followed Labov's schema fairly closely.) Labov introduced the variable of style into his analysis, recording formal and informal speech, reading aloud from a text, and reading a series of minimal word-pairs, to cover the range from least to most relaxed speech, a procedure we later followed in our Belize studies (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985). The "most relaxed" style was said to be marked by "channel cues" such as laughter, prosodic features, and speed. The assumption was made that the informants would be speaking "English."

Labov's most important innovation in the 1966 study was to quantify the incidence in different speech samples of variants of significant linguistic variables and then to write "variable rules." The quantities he plotted were not individual scores, but the mean scores for each social group in each style or mode. If we take as a simplified example his pilot study of the use of the variable "post-vocalic (r)," getting shop assistants in three different "classes" of New York stores to direct him first in a casual and then in an emphatic way to the "fourth floor," we can say that the group of shop assistants in each of the stores had an average incidence of some kind of rhoticity (r-coloring) which he calls (r-T), and an average complementary incidence of r-lessness (r-°), in the loci where (r-T) might occur – that is, where (-r) is present in "the lexicon of the language." A "rule" might then emerge in the following "explanatory" way within the grammar of "New York English" (NYE): The variable (r) can occur in NYE in the following position [statement here as to

possible loci] either as (r-°) or (r-T), since a sound-change affecting it has not affected all speakers of NYE equally, for a variety of reasons.

Among a group of “working class New Yorkers” the mean incidence was observed to be in x percent of possible loci as (r-°) and in y percent of possible loci as (r-T) when they were speaking in a relaxed way. Among the same group speaking in a more formal and deliberate way there was a higher percentage of (r-T), lower (r-°). The second score was in fact more like that of the mean relaxed usage of a middle-class group.

1.11 Non-standard English, Black English, Creole studies, and the 1968 Mona Conference in the 1950s and early 1960s Basil Bernstein's “deficit hypothesis”

That working-class children internalized a “restricted code” from their parents’ limited syntax and so did badly at school where middle-class teachers judged them in terms of their own “elaborated code” – gained wide currency among educationists in Europe (see Dittmar, 1976) and in the US (see Murray, 1983) where ambitious remedial programs such as Operation Headstart were conceived, particularly for Black children.

Labov, who was opposed to the basic premises about the “deficient language” of these children, carried out for the US Office of Education and Welfare a study “of the structure of English used by Negro and Puerto Rican speakers in New York City” (see Labov, Cohen, and Robins, 1965). His well-known account of the variable rules he proposed for copula-less Black English constructions (Labov, 1969) derives from this study of Harlem street gangs. In his account, the Black English speaker's copula-less constructions (e.g., “The man sick”) are derived from the standard grammar by a variable deletion rule which the speaker could apply wherever it was possible for prior contraction of the copula to take place. In fact, however, copula-less constructions are the norm in Caribbean Creole English, and it seems absurd to posit that the Black English speaker should start from a knowledge of the standard grammar and then apply a deletion rule to achieve the vernacular. It might be better to accept the use of such constructions alongside those of more Standard English as examples of code switching.

There were by this time a number of other educational, sociolinguistic, and sociological studies under way on Black English speakers by, for example, W. A. Stewart, J. L. Dillard, R. W. Shuy, R. Fasold, W. A. Wolfram (see bibliography). Work on pidgin and creole

languages was expanding steadily; in the 1960s two volumes of my Creole Language Studies, B. L. Bailey's *Jamaican Creole Syntax*, Cassidy's *JamaicaTalk*, and the first edition of the *Dictionary of Jamaican English* (1967) were all published and came to the attention of the Americans.

In 1968 Dell Hymes and DeCamp organized the second international conference on pidgin and creole languages at Mona, Jamaica (Hymes, 1971) and Labov wound it up with an extended survey, "The notion of system in creole languages." Several speakers had approached the problem from different directions: DeCamp's "Analysis of a post-creole speech continuum," Gumperz and Wilson's study of "convergence and creolization" on the Indo-Aryan/Dravidian border in India, Samarin's "Salient and substantive pidginization," Tsuzaki's "Co-existent systems in Hawaiian English." The solutions included code-switching between coexistent systems, DeCamp's implicational scalograms, and the concept of mixed codes. Labov had concluded that creole/standard language and pidgin contact situations could not be fitted into the Chomskyan paradigm, and that DeCamp was mistaken in trying to do so; he felt that some of the pidgins discussed "may be less than languages ... the notion of syntax begins to give way." To make a leap forward in time, in Mülhäusler's (1986a, b) opinion (and my own) what has to give way is the stereotypical notion of "a language."

Studies of creoles and pidgins and of Black English have been important to theoretical linguistics, to the sociology of education, to social anthropology, and to sociolinguistics in both the US and Britain; see, for example, V. Edwards (1986), R. Hewitt (1986), S. Romaine (1988, 1992), M. Sebba (1993), and the work by W. Edwards cited below and by Bickerton, Fasold, Shuy, Stewart, Wolfram and others cited above. A number of writers (notably Thomason and Kaufman, 1988) have concluded (I think erroneously) that creole languages are a special case in language typology, standing outside the schema of "genetic relationship" regarded as the norm (see Le Page, 1994).the norm (see Le Page, 1994).

1.11 The Case Study: Investigating Algerian English Pronunciation

The subjects are 80 first-year students of English at the University of Oran II, 40 females and 40 males. All have studied and lived in Oran, Algeria. The experiment was to make them orally pronounce and phonemically transcribe 328 words. In English Phonetics classes, students need to produce and transcribe sounds and words in isolation and

connected speech. The selection of those words was not based on what the informants had believed to have been difficult to assimilate but instead on what they had assumed to have been easily and well pronounced. In fact, the selected words were those the participants had believed to be non-problematic in class. The experiment lasted several weeks. Moreover, every time it was conducted, it was to respect a duration of one week or two following the instruction of a particular phonetic/phonological segment. For example, when the minimal pair /ɪ/, /i:/ was taught in class, for the experiment purposes, the subjects had to transcribe and pronounce words containing those sounds one or two weeks later.

After having recorded the informants' pronunciation and collecting their transcription of the selected words, an analysis of the results was organised as follows. First, a comparison between the two types of collected data was made; second, sounds that were both pronounced and transcribed similarly were identified; third, common recurrent realisations were classified into categories; fourth, the major similar deviations in pronunciation and transcription were filtered according to their being the result of CLI from Standard Arabic, Colloquial Oranese Arabic and French.

The following examples enclose some frequent realisations observed in the transcription and speech of the informants. All the listed deviations are caused by a transfer of phonology from Arabic and French to English. The distinction between the front short and long vowel in *ship/sheep* is not noticed, so words having /ɪ/ or /i:/ are generally produced with [i]. The same realisation for both words is quite common since Arabic uses length mainly as a contrastive element in grammar. Central vowels seem to be the last to be acquired among all English vowels, and words having /ʌ/ such as *money* are either realised with [a] if the transfer is from Arabic or [o] if the transfer is from French. Other productions of central vowels might reveal to be front as in *no* /əʊ/ that is realized as [e:ʊ] where the lips are slightly relaxed.

Front vowels, however, such as /e/ or the diphthong /eə/ are produced as [ɛ:] as in *hair* in which the front quality /e/ is articulated below and behind its presupposed position. Then, diphthongs such as /əʊ/ as in *most* /məʊst/ are, sometimes, changed into [ew] [mewst] where the second vowel becomes a consonant; becoming, thus, a rural Algerian diphthong. As to consonants, although /θ/ and /ð/ exist in Standard Arabic and in some varieties of Colloquial Algerian Arabic, they do not exist in Colloquial Oranese Arabic;

instead, they are replaced with [t] and [d]. The latter can be observed in the articulation of words such as *athlete* and *brother*. During the experiment, /θ/ – /ð/ are used when the reading is slow. However, when the participants were trying to read the words rapidly they tended to pronounce [t] and [d]. Furthermore, among other pronouncing deviations in English consonants, the following are found. /s/ when intervocalic as in *disagree* or *disappear* undergoes a French phonologic rule —when intervocalic [s] becomes [z]. These words are, therefore, realised as [dizæɡri:] and [dizəpiə] instead of [disæɡri:] and [disəpiə]. Next, unlike English, French initial or final voiced consonants, for instance, are fully voiced. In a word such as *oui* ‘yes’ /wi/, /w/ is fully voiced whereas /i/ is pronounced with a whisper phonation rather than a voiceless phonation. The English pronoun *we* /wi:/ is produced in the same way as the French *oui*/wi/ [uj̥].

The findings have revealed that the informants’ pronunciation of English sounds seems to be more influenced by French than by Arabic. Nonetheless, concerning syllable structures, the informants mostly apply Arabic syllable structures, as there is a tendency to insert a vowel between English initial consonant clusters. Arabic syllabic structure is usually CV or CVC as in *kataba* ‘to write’ or *maal* ‘money’, a word such as *disappear* /,dis.ə'piə/ which contains the following syllable structures cvc+v+cv becomes [,di.zə'pi:r] with the following structure cv+cv+cvc.

The overall results prove that English vowels are the most difficult phonetic/phonemic segments to learn. Standard Arabic has 36 phonemes, among which eight are vowels. French has 37 sounds, among which 16 are vowels. Those numbers make Arabic and French a far less complicated vocalic system than that of English that has 20 vowels in addition to five other triphthongs. Students of English can utilise the target sound system with more or less important interference of their own phonological/phonetic properties.

The native tongue or a recently acquired language influences foreign language performance because learning enfolds a new sound structure and new models of articulation and perception (James 1988) which only a few can master effortlessly investigating vowel productions of HSs and L2 learners allows us to compare the phonetic/phonological systems for both populations. There are several reasons that lead us to predict variability in vowel production between these groups. First, age of exposure to the target language (TL, viz Arabic) is one of the main factors that differentiates both groups. For the L2 learners, the first intensive exposure to Arabic is in adulthood being language learners in college level classes.

In contrast, HSs are exposed to Arabic since infancy as children born and raised in families who speak Arabic as their first language (L1). Given that HSs are exposed to the TL earlier, their total exposure over their lifetime is greater, and in addition, their Arabic language experience is expected to be richer. Typically, it is anticipated that the amount and extent of exposure to the target sounds vary between and within these groups. By examining HSs' TL vowel acquisition, this thesis contributes to the growing body of research on heritage language acquisition (Au et al. 2002; Godson 2004; Lee 2006; Montrul et al. 2008; Chang et al. 2008); specifically on phonology acquisition by HSs as well as L2 learners.

Chapter Two

2 Data Analysis.

2.1 Introduction:

When it comes to learning or acquiring L2, we cannot exclude the effect that one's mother tongue has on L2, be it phonetically, semantically or pragmatically. That effect cannot be simply disposed of. For that to happen, one needs repetitive conscious efforts and practice. The Data gathered through questionnaire and audio recordings is to be analyzed in this chapter to measure to what extent does an Algerian Student's mother tongue have an impact on his/her phonetic realizations in their English speech.

2.2 Description of the tools used in gathering data:

In this study, two tools have been used; questionnaire and audio recording. Since the study is to check to what extent does Algerian students' mother tongue, Arabic, influence their phonetic realizations in their English speech, then it is conventional to use audio recording to gather different phonetic realizations from different students.

The questionnaire, in this particular study, seemed to be a weak tool since it is not really a tool one can use to collect phonetic data. We could have included direct phonetic inquiries in the questionnaire, but then not many students would be honest about their "weak phonetic realizations." The only way to gather authentic data is through audio recording. However, we found a way to create a very simplistic questionnaire that would seem like it has nothing to do with phonetics in order for the students to answer authentically.

The questionnaire was shaped when we had to consider these different hypotheses:

- * The earlier one starts learning English; the better they are at it in all levels.
- * The more one is interested in English and have a purpose attached to it, the more they put effort to learn it and become even better at it.
- * Those who use methods of acquisition of L2 are naturally better than those who use methods of learning. (Especially so for those who start learning L2 at an early age)
- * Perseverance in practicing English

The following is our hypothesis that we are to consider: An early start of learning English
+ High interest in English and a purpose attached to it + use of methods of acquisition

(especially at an early age) + perseverance in practicing English = High level of English with less impact of one's mother tongue.

Now, the questionnaire was used to gather information about when did the students start learning English, when did they start being interested in it, for what purpose did they choose it, how did they learn it, and how often did they practice English. Once we have gathered this information using the questionnaire, we record the informants. Then we analyze the gathered data and check our hypothesis.

2.3 Description of the Sample Algerian Students' of English:

The targeted sample is master degree students of English from the two colleges of IbnKhaldoun – Tiaret and ZyanIbnAchour- Djelfa. The sample's age range is from 23 to 30. It consists of around 50 students whose mother tongue is Arabic. 25 informants for the questionnaire and the other 25 for the audio recording.

2.4 Questionnaire Analysis.

2.4.1 Description of the Questionnaire:

Questions 1-4: these questions check the background of the student with the English language.

Questions 5-7 investigates the student's feelings/subjective attitude towards English.

Question 8 investigates if the informants had had any difficulties in pronunciation in learning English.

Questions 9 and 10 have the same purpose as the questions 5-7; which is checking how interested the student is in English, but they mainly focus on how devoted the student was to learning English.

Questions 11-14 check the student's thoughts on their level of pronunciation and how comfortable they are with their speaking skills.

Questions 15-17 checking if the student had had any difficulties on the phonetic, semantic and pragmatic levels when learning English.

2.4.2 Analyzing gathered data

2.4.2.1 Specifying gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	38	76%
Female	12	24%
Total	50	100%

Table 1. Student's Gender

When the informants were asked to determine their gender, it was found that (76%) of them are males and (24%) of them are females.

2.4.2.2 Students' view on learning English

When the informants were asked if they thought English is an easy language to be learned and acquired (question 1 from the questionnaire), and whether or not they had personally chosen to learn English (question 7), all of them ultimately gave the same answer: Yes. All of them thought English was an easy language to learn, and all of them had chosen to learn English personally. However, only two of the informants clearly stated that they wanted to learn English but did not want it to be their field of study in college.

Questions 5 and 6 were mainly to investigate the informant's subjective attitude towards English. In question 5, the informants were asked if they would they want to become better at English if it were not their subject of study, and in question 6, they were asked if they liked the fact that they were studying English, all of them concurred.

When the informants were asked questions 2 and 3 from the questionnaire, they were mainly questions to separate those who started learning English in middle school from those who were keen on it at an early age. In order to determine this furthermore, they were asked (in question 4) to mention how and where did they learn English because knowing the method would allow us to determine if the informant had been acquiring English or merely learning in school. The following will elaborate more.

2.4.2.3 The age the informants started being interested in English:

Age range	Early childhood (Birth- 6 years old)	Late childhood (6- 11/12 years old)	Early teens (11- 15 years old)	Late teen (15- 19 years old)
Number of informants	4	10	5	6

Table 2. The age the informants started being interested in English.

As the table shows, late childhood 6-11 years old is the age when most of the informants started being interested in English (10 informants), which is before entering middle school. Four of the informants were interested in English before that i.e. at an early childhood. Five of the informants started being interested in English during their middle school years. Six of the informants started being interested in English at their late teen .i.e. either during their high school years or when entering college.

2.4.2.4 The age the informants started learning English:

Age range	Early childhood (Birth to 6 years old)	Late childhood (6 to 11/12 years old)	Early teens (11 to 15 years old)	Late teen (15 to 19 years old)
Number of informants	2	5	14	4

Table 3. The age the informants started learning English.

Naturally, most of the informants started learning English at middle school. Four of the informants were serious in learning English only during their high school or college years. Five of the informants started learning English even before they entered middle school through learning-games and available pc programs for learning. Only two of the informants started at their early childhood who were taught by their parents. Fourteen of the informants started learning English during their early teens, which is during their middle school years.

2.4.2.5 How and where did the informants learn English (methods):

In question four, the informants were asked to mention the methods that they had been using to learn English or where they had been learning it. Ultimately, this question was to distinguish between those who used methods of acquiring (usually unconsciously) and those who used methods of learning.

When the informants were asked question 4, only two of the informants said that they learned English in school. However, most of the other informants either did not include school as a factor that taught them English or specifically stated that they had begun learning English conventionally in middle school, but it was not what really helped. Most of the informants gave the following methods as the main reason that they had learned English (most of which are methods of acquiring; they are stated in order as to how many times they were mentioned by the informants):

Music and movies.

TV.

Videos games.

Social media (interacting with friends or foreign people).

Net (YouTube and other websites).

Books.

Applications.

Dictionaries.

Computer programs.

2.4.2.6 The difficulties the informants have had in the process of learning English.

In question 8, the informants were asked to mention some of the difficulties they have had in the process of learning English. We inserted this question only to check if the informants would mention that they have had difficulties with pronunciation. Only six of the informants mentioned that they had a problem with pronunciation. The other informants mentioned other difficulties but not pronunciation.

However, when it came to question 17 where the informants were asked if they had a problem with pronouncing certain sounds or words, surprisingly, the informants who did not state that they had difficulties with pronunciation said that they had difficulties pronouncing certain sounds and words. Six of the informants stated that they had no difficulties pronouncing words or sounds.

The answer	YES	NO
Number of informants	19	6

Table 4. Informants' difficulties pronouncing certain sounds or words.

According to the informants' answers on question 17, here are examples of the sounds/words that the informants considered difficult to pronounce:

Sounds: consonants	/p/ and /b/, /ʒ/ and /dʒ/, /r/, /l/, the American /t/, /ŋ/, /v/ and /f/, /d/ and /r/
Sounds: vowels	/u/, /i/, /e/
Words	Patronizingly, suggestions, miraculously, particularly, order, harder, boarder.

Table 5. Sounds and words informants find difficult to pronounce

2.4.2.7 The period the informants took to start comfortably communicating in English.

In question 9, the informants were asked to estimate the period they had taken to start comfortably communicating in English. The purpose of this question was to investigate how devoted the informant was to learning English. Naturally, the more devoted the informant was to learning English, The shorter the period they needed to communicate comfortably in English. We gauged the period starting from the day they started learning it to the day they were comfortable communicating it.

We specified from 3 to 15 years since no one gave a period less than 3 years or more than 15 years.

The period (in years)	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	15
Number of Informants	8	4	2	2	4	2	1	1

Table 6. The period the informants took to communicate in English

3 to 4 years was sufficient for 12 informants to learn English and start comfortably communicating using it. Other informants' time to learn and speak English freely took more since we see that two informants took 10 years and 15 years. The other 10 informants who took from 5 to 8 years.

2.4.2.8 How often do informants use English outside of its specified contexts?

In question 10, informants were asked to mention how often do they use English outside of its specified intended contexts (outside of college), and to mention for what purposes. This question aims to investigate how often do the informants practice English even when they are not in the contexts that "force" them to use English. This helps to check how devoted the informant is to improving his level of English. As for the purposes, we wanted to check if the informants use English freely outside of the specified contexts and if they have other contexts in which they are "forced" to use English. All of the informants said that they used English outside of its specified contexts except for one.

We found that most of the informants practice English outside of its specified contexts whether it is for fun or a job. These informants had different purposes for using it. Only four of the informants said that they use/speak English in order to improve it. Most of the informants said that they used English to communicate with friends or classmates, or on social media. These purposes are as follow (they are stated in order as to how many times they were mentioned):

Communicating with my classmates/colleagues/friends.

Social media.

A job as an English teacher.

Communicating with foreign friends.

Improving my English (by speaking with themselves).

Video games communities.

Reading, searching, computing and programming, blogging, online debates.

2.4.2.9 Pronunciation rating

In question 11, informants were asked to give a rating to their own pronunciation and to state how they feel about it. Naturally, an informant being asked this question, will unconsciously and indirectly compare their pronunciation to a native one regardless of what kind of accent it is (mostly American or British). We wanted to check if any of the informants believe that they have perfected a pronunciation without the impact of mother tongue.

Pronunciation rate	Like a native speaker	Almost like a native speaker	I have a fluent accent	I have a good accent	I have a heavy accent
Number of informants	0	3	8	10	4

Table 7. Pronunciation rating

Ten (40%) of the informants said that they had a good accent. Eight (32%) of them said that they had a fluent accent. Four (16%) of them said that they had a heavy accent. Three (12%) of them said that they had a pronunciation almost like a native speaker, and none of these informants said that they had a pronunciation like a native speaker.

2.4.2.10 How do informants feel about their pronunciation?

In question 12, we asked the informants to state how they feel about their pronunciation. In addition, in question 13, we asked them if they think their pronunciation is as good as they want it to be. In case they say no, they ought to mention why not. We wanted to check two things: 1) if the impact of mother tongue is only due to a lack of practice and 2) if the informants believe that it is unnecessary to have a pronunciation that is free of the impact of mother tongue if it is understandable, therefore, not practice on getting rid of that impact.

How they feel about their pronunciation	Proud	Good	Neutral	Embarrassed
Number of informants	9	9	5	2

Table 8. How the informants feel about their pronunciation.

Most of the informants stated that they feel either good or proud about their pronunciation despite that fact that none of them mentioned that they have a pronunciation like a native speaker (a pronunciation that is free of mother tongue's impact). Five of the informants stated that they feel neutral about their pronunciation. Two of the informants said that they feel embarrassed about their pronunciation.

After checking the informants' response to question 13, on whether or not their pronunciation is as good as they want it to be, here are the results:

The response	Yes	Yes, but can be improved	No
Number of informants	7	4	14

Table 9. The informants' evaluation on their pronunciation

Fourteen of the informants stated that their pronunciation is not as good as they want it to be. Seven of them stated that their pronunciation is as good as they want it to be and four of them stated the same. However, they said that it could be improved.

We wanted to know why those fourteen informants said that their pronunciation is not as good as they want it to be. We found following reasons:

Lack of practice (Not practicing English due to the environment.Lack of use*2. Needing a lot of work*3)

Aspiring to make it better*2

Aspiring for native accent *2

Not understood.*2

Not starting sooner.

The influence of other accents creating a mixture.

Six of informants' answers indicated that lack of practice is the reason why their pronunciation is not as good as they want it to be. Four stated that they aspire for better

pronunciation or one like a native speaker. Two said that they are not understood when they speak. One said that it was because they did not start sooner. Another one mentioned it was due to the influence of other mixtures of accents.

2.4.2.11 *Did the informants try to improve their English speaking skills?*

To dig further deep into the lengths the informants went to improve their pronunciation, we devoted question 14 to investigate that. The informants were asked if they had tried to improve their English speaking skills. This question also aims to check if the informants have tried to have a better pronunciation (to get rid of mother tongue's impact).

Five (20%) of the informants said that they had not tried to improve their English speaking skills. When why asked them why not, two did not give a reason and three of them gave the following reasons:

- 1) I was satisfied with mine. It serves the purpose. I am understood.
- 2) Because I think it comes in time by itself through listening, plus I am lazy and it is not a hard thing to accomplish.
- 3) I never thought about it.

Twenty (80%) of the informants said that they had tried to improve their English speaking skills. When we asked them how. They gave these methods (they are stated in order as to how many times they were mentioned):

Watching movies/series.

Watching videos on YouTube/ on improving my English.

Speaking English/ at work, school, or with friends

Speaking it / recording my voice.

Contacting with native speakers.

Listening to songs and /sing with them.

Reading books/ reading aloud.

I repeated what I heard until I got good at it.

Reading phonetic lessons.

Teaching.

Learning English online.

2.4.2.12 *The language the informants use in their mind.*

In question 16, the informants were asked the following question: When you are writing in English, do you find yourself thinking in Arabic than translating to English or thinking in English straight away?. This question was constructed to check the existence of the impact of mother tongue, Arabic, in the informants' English speeches semantically, pragmatically, and phonetically.

After checking the informants' answers, the result is as follows:

The answers	In English	Both	In Arabic
Number of informants	14	7	4

Table 10. The informants' language use in mind.

Fourteen (56%) of the informants stated that they think in English straight away. Seven (28%) of them said that they think both in Arabic and English. Four (16%) said that they think in Arabic.

2.5 Audio analysis.

2.5.1 Introduction

In this fragment, 25 informants were given a bunch of words in order to examine their pronunciation level and to gauge the impact their mother Arabic has on their pronunciation in their English speech. We did not specifically use certain words to examine certain sounds individually. We focus on the whole sounds in a word. Example: testing the informants' pronunciation of the sound / l /, and we give them a word like 'believe'. Here, we do not simply focus on the sound / l /, but also on the sounds /b/ and /v/ where the informant is not paying attention these two sounds as much as they are to the sound /l /, which makes their pronunciation somewhat authentic.

2.5.2 Description of the record

The words the informants were asked to pronounce were not very hard rather very common to the English speaker. We chose these simple common words in order not to confuse the informants' unfamiliarity with the words with their mispronunciation. Bear in mind that this analysis is done by comparing a native speaker's pronunciation of a sound to an Algerian English speaker's.

These are the words the informants were asked to pronounce:

Fear, briefcase, proof, valid, evade, believe, bat, bubble, rib, cribs, promise, upper body, probably, ape, shapes, shield, sheer, reshape, childish, chop, recharge, rich, joke, pleasure, urge, jet, joy, jail, ages, rage, huge, think, pathetic, aesthetic, they, thorns, thoughts, these, breathe, stealth, reduce, procedure, gain, ring, linger, agony, big, foreign, language, lamp, light, filled, bubble, probable, right, ring, rail, surreal, seal, and feeling.

2.5.3 Analyzing gathered data

2.5.3.1 Pronunciation of /b, f, v, t, θ, ð/.

	Number	Percentage
Correct	25	100%
Incorrect	0	0%

Table 11. Pronunciation of /b, f, v, t, θ, ð/

When we asked all informants to pronounce the aforementioned words, we noticed that no informants had any trouble pronouncing the following sounds: /b, f, v, t, θ, ð/.

2.5.3.2 Pronunciation of /p/

	Number	Percentage
Correct	22	88%
Incorrect	3	12%

Table 12. Pronunciation of /p/

When we asked the informants to pronounce words with the sound /p/, only three (12%) of them mispronounced it as the sound /b/. The other 22 (88%) informants pronounced it correctly.

2.5.3.3 Pronunciation of /l/

	Number	Percentage
Correct	8	32%
Incorrect	17	68%

Table 13. Pronunciation of /l/

When the informants were asked to pronounce words with the sound / l /, eight (32%) pronounced it correctly and 17 (68%) mispronounced it incorrectly.

2.5.3.4 Pronunciation of /r/

	Number	Percentage
Correct	4	16%
Incorrect	21	84%

Table 14. Pronunciation of /r/

With words that hold the sound / r /, four of the informants (16%) were able to pronounce it correctly as the way a native speaker, and 21 of them (84%) could not.

2.5.3.5 Pronunciation of /ʃ/

	Number	Percentage
Correct	21	84%
Incorrect	4	16%

Table 15. Pronunciation of /ʃ/

When the informants were asked to pronounce certain words that held the sound /ʃ/, four of the informants mispronounced it as the sound /tʃ/. Whereas the other 21 (84%) informants pronounced it correctly.

2.5.3.6 Pronunciation of /tʃ/

	Number	Percentage
Correct	18	72%
Incorrect	7	28%

Table 16. Pronunciation of /tʃ/

With words that hold the sound /tʃ/, seven of the informants (28%) mispronounced it as /f/. Whereas 18 of them (72%) pronounced it correctly.

2.5.3.7 Pronunciation of /dʒ/ and /ʒ/.

	Number	Percentage
Correct	13	52%
Incorrect	12	48%

Table 17. Pronunciation of /dʒ/ and /ʒ/

When the informants were given a word with the sound /ʒ/, all of them pronounced it correctly. Then, the informants were given certain words with the sound /dʒ/ in them, 13 of them (52%) pronounced it correctly whereas the other 12 (48%) mispronounced it either as /ʒ/, /d/, or /g/.

2.5.3.8 Pronunciation of /g/

	Number	Percentage
Correct	20	80%
Incorrect	5	20%

Table 18. Pronunciation of /g/

With the words that hold the sound /g/, 20 of the informants (80%) pronounced the sound correctly. However, five of them (20%) did not. They mostly mispronounced it as /ʒ/.

2.5.3.9 Pronunciation of /ŋ/

	Number	Percentage
Correct	22	88%
Incorrect	3	12%

Table 19. Pronunciation of /ŋ/

When we analyzed how the informants pronounced the sound /ŋ/, we noticed that 22 of them (88%) pronounced it correctly, and three of them (12%) pronounced it incorrectly. They either pronounced it as /g/ or /ʒ/.

Chapter

Three

3 Conclusion

3.1 Introduction

It is very common that when a person starts learning a foreign language, they consciously or unconsciously start to assimilate it to their mother tongue at all the phonetic levels. It is only after they arrive at a very late stage of learning L2 that they can dispose this impact that their mother tongue has on their L2. This chapter tackles the findings of the previous chapter; both the questionnaire and the audio recording. This also can be taken as a recommendation to many learners.

3.2 The interpretation of the questionnaire

After we have investigated the informants' answers to our questionnaire, we have gathered that all the informants have personally chosen to learn English. Most of them have an objective reason for that. On top of that, they are attached to it emotionally as well because most of the informants also stated that they simply love the language.

When we wanted to find out when did the informants start being interested in English, we concluded that most of the informants were interested in English at an early age i.e. before entering middle school. Bear in mind that most of them were susceptible to English through media. However, the learning process did not start until later. The rest of the other informants started being interested in English either in middle school, high school or when entering college.

Despite the fact that most of the informants were interested in English before getting into middle school, they did not consciously start learning it until they got into middle school. Most of the informants started the process of conscious learning when they got into middle school. Only few started the process of conscious learning before middle school. They learnt it through learning-games and available pc programs for learning or taught by their parents. Others started only when they got into high school or college. This is probably because they were in the branch of languages in high school or English became their subject of study in college.

We also concluded that, at an early age, the methods the informants used to learn English were mainly methods of acquisition (Movies, music, videos games...). However, only few of them started consciously learning English at that age. Whereas the other

informants, in their late teen, either used learning methods (books, dictionaries...), methods of acquisition, or both.

When we wanted to find out if the informants had any difficulties when learning English, we wanted to focus if they had any problems with pronunciation. We concluded that the informants had difficulties with pronunciation, even more that they care to admit or maybe pronunciation just did not matter to them. Because in question eight, most of the informants did not mention they had a problem with pronunciation. However, in question 17, most of the informants said that they had difficulties with pronouncing certain sounds or words. They even presented some sounds and words that they had difficulties pronouncing.

When trying to find out how devoted the informants were to learning English by knowing how long they took learning it, we found that almost half of the informants devoted themselves to learning English since they took 3 to 4 years to start comfortably communicating with English. The other 10 informants took longer perhaps due to lack of devotion, seriousness, or maybe perseverance. As for the other two informants who took 10 and 15 years, we conclude that they were not quite devoted. It is safe to say that they either learnt English only in schools, did not use methods of acquiring as extensively as the other informants who took 3 to 4 years, or they were not as motivated and devoted as the others were.

In an attempt to know how often informants used English outside of its specified context and for what purposes, we concluded that most informants had purposes for using/speaking English outside of its specified contexts. The method they used in these alternative contexts were mainly audio-visual, which can be methods of acquiring English. Others had occupational purposes for using English outside of college.

When we asked the informants to give a rating to their own pronunciation, most of them said that they had either a good or a fluent accent. Few said that they had an accent almost like a native speaker. Others said that they had a heavy accent. However, none of

them said that they had an accent like a native speaker. We drew out that these informants, consciously or unconsciously, realize that there is an impact of their mother tongue on their English speech since none of them said that they had a perfect accent (an accent that is free of mother tongue's impact).

Regardless of the fact that most of the informants feel either good or proud about their pronunciation, some of them still want to improve it. Some informants mentioned that they aspire to have an accent like native speakers (a pronunciation that is free of mother tongue's impact). Others said that they feel neutral about their pronunciation. Meaning, they are either contented with their mother-tongue-influenced pronunciation, therefore, they think it is unnecessary to have a pronunciation that is free of mother tongue's impact, or they just do not care about improving their pronunciation, perhaps because they think that it serves the purpose.

We also drew out that some informants traced back their weak pronunciation to their lack of practice of the English language. Some informants may already have a good pronunciation; however, they want to obtain a pronunciation like that of a native speaker (an accent free of mother tongue's impact). Overall, according to the informants, weak pronunciation's number one cause is lack of practice.

After questioning the informants about the methods they have been using to improve their English speaking skills, most of them mainly gave audio-visual methods. The others stated that they did not try to improve it for different reasons presented by them: 1) Pronunciation comes along with listening 2) They did not think about improving it. 3) Or they were satisfied with their pronunciation.

It is proven that those who are at an early stage of learning L2 tend to have a massive interference of their mother tongue on all the phonetic levels since they have not been exposed to (phonetic) English speeches more often. Accordingly, those who think in Arabic then translate to English are the ones who are still under the influence of their mother tongue semantically and pragmatically. Therefore, their English speech is still

greatly impacted by their mother tongue on the phonetic level. Moreover, those who think in English straight away are the ones who had gotten rid of their mother tongue's impact on the semantic and pragmatic level (but not on the phonetic level as we have seen in aforementioned analysis).

Despite the fact that most informants are beyond the early stage of learning L2, meaning, they have gotten rid of the impact of their mother tongue semantically and pragmatically. Yet they have not been able get rid of the impact of their mother tongue despite their constant practice of L2. (This will be further elaborated in audio-recording analysis).

3.2.1 Comparing our findings to our hypothesis.

Our hypothesis: An early start of learning English + High interest in English and a purpose attached to it + use of methods of acquisition (especially at an early age) + perseverance in practicing English = High level of English with less impact of one's mother tongue.

It is safe to say that our hypothesis is correct. The first three aforementioned features apply to most of the informants we have questioned and most of them do have a good level of English semantically and pragmatically. However, the impact of mother tongue on their pronunciation is still existent due to lack of perseverance in practicing English.

3.3 Interpretation of the audio recording

After analyzing the findings, we noticed that all informants could pronounce the following sounds correctly: / b, f, v, t, θ, ð /. This is probably because most of these sounds are existent in both formal and dialect Arabic except for /v/, which is technically a voiced /f/. Their ability to pronounce this sound could be due to their familiarity with the sound in the French language.

However, the result could have been different if we had conducted our study in other regions as it is shown in different studies. Some speakers pronounce the sound /v/ as /f/ in some rural areas, because they are not familiar with this sound by no means since they have not been susceptible to the French language perhaps. Alternatively, in Algiers in

particular, they pronounce the sound /θ/ as /t/. For example, instead of saying (three) /θri/, they say /tri/. This mainly happens because even in their mother tongue (dialect), they tend to switch the sound /θ/ with /t/. Here, the /f/ and /t/ are not considered mistakes, rather allophones.

Some informants pronounced the sound /p/ as /b/ when presented with words that hold the sound /p/ in them. It is very common that in some specific areas in Algeria, some people who live in the rural areas pronounce the sound /p/ as /b/, the same way they do pronounce the sound /v/ as /f/. This also could be the absence of the sound /p/ in formal and dialectic Arabic in addition to their unfamiliarity with the French language.

Most of the informants could not pronounce the sound /l/ the way a native speaker can. Of course, this goes back to the nonexistence of the two allophones of the sound /l/: light and dark /l/ in Arabic. In Arabic, the /l/ sound does exist; however, it only exists with a different manner of articulation that does not exist in Arabic. Therefore, the informants find it very hard to pronounce this sound. Even those who were close to pronouncing it do not distinguish between the uses dark /l/ and light /l/. We concluded that the sound /l/ and /r/ are the most difficult to pronounce.

Most of our informants did not pronounce the sound /r/ correctly. They mainly pronounced it with a very clear impact of the /r/ that we hear in their mother tongue Arabic. This, with no doubt, is due to the nonexistence of this particular /r/ in their mother tongue. We do find the sound /r/ in Arabic, but not in the same type and manner of articulation.

When the informants were given the words that hold the sounds /ʃ/ and /tʃ/, most of them could easily make a distinction when it came to familiar words. This shows that most of the informants are familiar with the distinction between when to pronounce /tʃ/ and when to pronounce /ʃ/. However, with other certain words, some of them could not make that distinction. Regardless to this, all of them could easily pronounce the two sounds. This is undoubtedly because the sound /ʃ/ exists in Arabic. As for the sound /tʃ/, this sound does

not exist in formal Arabic; however, it commonly does exist in Algerian Arabic dialect. Therefore, it was quite easy for the informants to pronounce those sounds.

Regardless of the 12 informants' inability to distinguish between the pronunciation of the sound /dʒ/ and /ʒ/, they could pronounce both easily since both these sounds exist in formal and dialectic Arabic; nonetheless, they just could not make the distinction of when to pronounce /dʒ/ or /ʒ/. This is probably due to the inconsistency between spelling and pronunciation in the English language, which is filled with words in this fashion. They tend to pronounce /dʒ/ as /ʒ/, /d/, or /g/. For example: reduce, procedure, joy, urge. We conclude that this is only a matter of unfamiliarity.

When the informants were asked to pronounce words that hold the sound /g/, most of them could pronounce it correctly. This is because the sound /g/ does exist in dialectic Arabic very commonly. Some of the informants did not pronounce the sound correctly. They mostly pronounced it as /ʒ/. This is probably due to the impact of the French language's tendency to pronounce /g/ as /ʒ/ especially when followed by a vowel. Algerian students learned French way before they learned English therefore they carried this habit, especially those who are yet to become advanced in English.

Despite the fact that the sound /ŋ/ is not very common in Arabic, however, most of the informants could pronounce it correctly. This may be due to the familiarity of the informants with this sound in the French language.

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Annex

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This questionnaire holds a few questions about your relationship with the English language as an Algerian Arabic native speaker. Our study is to measure to what extent does Algerian master students' mother tongue; Arabic, influence their English speech.

Age:

Gender:

Level:

Please, read the following questions and answer them at ease:

- 1- Do you think English is an easy language to be learnt and acquired?
- 2- How old were you when you started being interested in English?
- 3- How old were you when you began learning English?
- 4- How and where did you learn English? (You may mention methods).
- 5- If English were not your subject of study, would you still want to become better at it?
- 6- Do you like the fact that you are studying English?
- 7- Did you want to learn English? If yes, Why?
- 8- What difficulties have you had in the process of learning English?
- 9- How long did it take you to start comfortably communicating in English?
- 10- Do you often use English outside of its intended, specified contexts (outside of

college)? If so, for what purposes?

11- How would you rate your own pronunciation?

- a- Like a native speaker
- b- Almost like a native speaker
- c- I have a fluent accent
- d- I have a good accent
- e- I have a heavy accent

12- How do you feel about your pronunciation?

- a- Proud
- b- Good
- c- Neutral
- d- Embarrassed

13- Is your pronunciation as good as you want it to be? If no, why is that?

14- Have you ever tried improving your speaking English skills? If yes, how? If no, why not?

15- Do you find yourself having a hard time speaking English in front of others? If yes, why?

16- When you are writing in English, do you find yourself thinking in Arabic then translating to English or thinking in English straight away?

17- Do you find some difficulties pronouncing particular sounds or words? If yes, please give examples.

Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate to what extent does mother tongue, Arabic, effect the pronunciation of Algerian English speakers' speech; exactly, on their phonetic realizations. To help Algerian English speakers overcome this phenomenon, this study was conducted in order to figure out the reasons why this happens. The results of this study show that Algerian students of English have problems with English on the phonetic level. The findings can be taken as a suggestion for those who want to learn English and improve it. Based on our hypothesis, we believe that these four factors contribute in obtaining an English spoken in the right manner: An early start of learning English, high interest in English and a purpose attached to it, use of methods of acquisition (especially at an early age), and perseverance in practicing English.

Key words:

English pronunciation – linguistic phenomenon – learning English – methods of acquisition – English Practice – level of English.

ملخص

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو التحقق من مدى تأثير اللغة الأم، العربية ، على نطق كلام المتحدثين باللغة الإنجليزية الجزائريين، بالضبط، على المخارج الصوتية. لمساعدة الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية الجزائريين في التغلب على هذه الظاهرة، أجريت هذه الدراسة لمعرفة أسباب حدوث ذلك. تظهر نتائج هذه الدراسة أن طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية الجزائريين لديهم مشاكل مع اللغة الإنجليزية على المستوى الصوتي. يمكن اعتبار النتائج بمثابة اقتراح لأولئك الذين يرغبون في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية وتحسينها. بناءً على فرضيتنا ، نعتقد أن هذه العوامل الأربعة تساهم في الحصول على اللغة الإنجليزية المنطوقة بالطريقة الصحيحة : بداية مبكرة لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية والاهتمام الكبير باللغة الإنجليزية و هدف مرتبط بتعلمها ، واستخدام أساليب اكتساب (خاصة في وقت مبكر من العمر) والمثابرة في ممارسة اللغة الإنجليزية.

كلمات مفتاحية : نطق الإنجليزية – ظاهرة لسانية – تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية – أساليب الإكتساب – تمرن على الإنجليزية – مستوى الإنجليزية.