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The Pronunciation Problems of English Consonant Sounds Faced by the First Level Students of the Department of English, Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha

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موقع المجلة:

مشكلات نطق الأصوات الإنجليزية الساكنة التي يواجهها
طلبة المستوى الأول بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية
كلية التربية طور الباحة

الباحثة/ صفاء عدنان علي صلاح
كلية طور الباحة الجامعية – جامعة لحج

الملخص

اللغة الإنجليزية ليست علاقة فردية بين الحروف والأصوات، غالباً لا يوجد تطابق بين الكلمة المكتوبة والكلمة المنطوقة، إن عدم اتساق نطق اللغة الإنجليزية جعل متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية مخطئين أثناء النطق.

تهدف هذه الدراسة على التعرف على مشكلات النطق للأصوات الساكنة الإنجليزية التي يواجهها طلبة كلية التربية طور الباحة. وتتناول هذه الدراسة أهمية تدريس نطق اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية التربية طور الباحة. وقد استخدم الباحث في هذه الدراسة لجمع البيانات أدوات الاختبار الصوتي والاستبانة، وقد تكونت عينة هذه الدراسة من أربعين طالباً من طلبة المستوى الأول في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كلية التربية طور الباحة، وعشرين مدرساً من مدرسي كلية التربية طور الباحة.

كشفت نتائج الدراسة أن الأصوات الساكنة الأكثر إشكالية هي (/p/, /v/, /t/, /dʒ/, /ŋ/) والسبب في ذلك أن هذه الأصوات غير موجودة في اللغة العربية.

وتوصي الباحثة مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية بالاهتمام بتعلم النطق الصحيح وبذل جهود إضافية في ذلك وتضمينه في مهارات التحدث في اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، الأصوات الساكنة الإنجليزية.

**The Pronunciation Problems of English Consonant
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Abstract

English is not a one – to one relationship between letters and sounds. There is often no correspondence between written word and spoken word. English pronunciation inconsistency makes EFL learners erroneous while pronouncing. This study aims at investigating the pronunciation problems of English consonant sounds encountered by the students of the Faculty of Education Toor- Al Baha. It deals with the importance of teaching pronunciation of the English at the Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha. The instruments used for collecting data include teachers' questionnaire and a recording test. The subjects of this study are 40 students of English department, Faculty of Education – Toor- Al baha.

The results of the study showed that the most problematic consonants sound are (/p/, /v/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ŋ/). because these sounds do not exist in Arabic Language. Based on the results of the study, it is recommended that additional attention must be given to speaking skill including pronunciation.

Key words: EFL Learners, EFL- English Consonant Sounds.

Background of the Study

Language is a very important way in this life. It is a way to express your idea of something. Good pronunciation is another important thing to master. Many words in English language have exactly the same sound in pronunciation. If such a thing happens, the intention of the speaker will not reach the listener. In other words, misunderstanding occurs. Sometimes learners are confused with the distinction between them in the sound. However, learners need to have a good knowledge of pronunciation to understand the differences between them.

Nowadays, English is the language used for international communication and speaker needs to exchange information effectively, in speaking and in writing.

Pronunciation is the way of pronouncing the word, to convey a message or information, the student must pronounce each word clearly, and pronunciation is important in the English language for the purpose of communication, because if learners make a mistake in pronouncing a word, it will lead to a misunderstanding of the listener. For Morly (1991) "intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence" (p.513).

Most of the students face many problems in acquiring the correct pronunciation of the English language. To overcome this problem which of English language pronunciation is one field in the EFL requires more attention. However, this study investigates the pronunciation problems of English consonant sounds faced by the first level students of the department of English, faculty of education Toor- Albaha, when they attempt to pronounce English and to suggest ways which may help them to overcome these problems.

Statement of the Problem

Majority of the first level students at the faculty of education Toor- Al baha still cannot acquire correct English pronunciation. The main reason is that the traditional teaching laid the emphasis on grammar and vocabulary which caused this problem. Many students cannot pronounce English words correctly. They often pronounce them with equal stress, flat, intonation and no rhythm at all.

English pronunciation becomes the most serious problem that students meet when they learn English. This is happening at the first level students at the Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

- 1- Study the problems of learning English pronunciation that encounter the first level students at the Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha.
- 2- Examine the difficulties of pronouncing English consonant sounds and clusters that encounter the first level students at the Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha.
- 3- Investigate the causes of the pronunciation problems of English consonant sounds.
- 4- Investigate teachers perspective in teaching pronunciation to first year BA students in the Faculty of Education Toor- albaha.

Research Questions

This study tries to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the problems encountered by the first level students of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha in learning English pronunciation?
- 2- What are the difficulties encountered by the first level students of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha in pronouncing English consonant sounds and clusters?
- 3- What are the causes of the pronunciation problems of English consonant sounds?
- 4- What is the teachers perspective of teaching pronunciation to first year students in the Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha.

Significance of the Study

English is the most widely used language in the world as means of communication. The foremost significance of the study is to identify the sounds errors that Yemeni students likely commit in the pronunciation of English words. So this study attempts to deal with this problem to find the most suitable solutions for it. This study deals with the importance of teaching pronunciation of English consonant sounds at the Faculty of Education.

We hope that the study will be useful for all readers, especially for students and teachers. For students this study may help them to improve their understanding the techniques of pronunciation of English language. For teachers this study may assist them to deal with problems of their students. And how they can improve their teaching techniques.

Literature Review

Several factors influence the relation between written and spoken system of a language. Pronunciation is rarely affected by a word spelling and spelling may gradually be modified in accordance with changes in the phonological system (Khansir, 2021). Thus, Bloomfield (1933) asserted that “writing is not language but merely a way of recording language by means of visible marks” (P.21). The pronunciation is the central factor in recognizing words in spoken forms. Thus learning accurate pronunciation of English words is the most important in learning and teaching a foreign and second language especially when know the pronunciation is dilemmic for English language learners.

Kenworthy (1990) addressed several reasons that result in spelling problems among foreign language learners as follows:

- 1- Among learners whose native languages use the Roman alphabet as English does, problems may be caused by confusion between the sound value in English.
- 2- Learners whose native language uses a non- alphabetic system will have to adjust to alphabetic conventions.
- 3- Another source of difficulty is the English spelling system itself. As soon as learners are exposed to written English, they start to make generalization about how the system works, since English is an alphabetic system, this means basically sorting out which letter corresponds to which sound.
- 4- Finally, the pronunciation of the learner. If a learner has difficulty in distinguishing English /p/ as in “pet” from English /b/ as in “bet” then, in doing a dictation, he or she may spell “pill” as “bill”.

The Importance of Pronunciation

Pronunciation is an important factor in learning and using English appropriately (Gussenhoven & Jacobs, 1998). This means that studying errors of English pronunciation is a valuable source to which provides information on students errors. These help teachers to correct errors and improve the

effectiveness in teaching English pronunciation. Also, Yates (2000) explains, “learners with good pronunciation in English are more likely to be understood even if they make errors in other areas, whereas learners whose pronunciation is difficult to understand will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect” (P.1). Similarly, Burns (2003) claims: “clear pronunciation is essential in spoken communication. Even where learners produce minor inaccuracies in vocabulary and grammar, they are more likely to communicate effectively when they have good pronunciation and intonation” (P.5). Harmer (2000) argues that “pronunciation teaching not only makes students, aware of different sounds and sounds features. (and what these mean) but can also improve their speaking immeasurably” and consequently “help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility” (P.183). Therefore, Kelly (2000) also insists on “pronunciation work can, and should, be planned” (P.13). For Morley (1991) “intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence” (P.513).

According to Harmer (2001), a lot of teachers do not pay attention to English pronunciation. There are different reasons for this negligence. Many learners state that they do not need to learn pronunciation and learning pronunciation is a waste of time. They state that just communication in English is enough and when they are understood, nothing else is important. Harmer (2001) emphasized that the main aim of teaching and learning in any language is to enable students to communicate in the target language and if this is the case, communication is an important term to explain communication means to understand and be understood. Many learners think that because they can talk to their teachers and other students so they can easily communicate in English.

Consonant Sounds Problems

Consonants are formed by interrupting, restricting, or diverting the airflow in a variety of ways (Kelly, 2000, P.47). There are many difficulties in English pronunciation face students at Faculty of Education Toor- Albaha from the fact that the sound systems of Arabic and English are different in number, as well as in place and manner of articulation some English consonants do not exist in the Arabic sound System like /p/, /v/, /ŋ/. For Nation and Newton (2009) argue, “when some teachers and students complain about difficulties in speaking, they are often talking about

pronunciation” (P.75). For Watson (2002) the following consonants /p/, /b/, /f/, /v/, /ʃ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, seem to be problematic for students learning English. Arabic is a consonant heavy language compared to English. Even though Arabic is a consonant heavy language English use many more consonant clusters to form words (Majeed, 1999). In English, the essential factors or features to be included when describing English consonants are voicing, point of articulation and manner of articulation, English consonants are, for example, different in number as well as in place and manner of articulation. (Eide, 2012) some English consonants do not exist in the Arabic sound system like /p/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ʃ/, /ŋ/, and /v/ even those consonants, which seem similar to some Arabic consonants like /t/ or /k/, are not identical, but different in manner and in place of articulation. (Majeed, 1999). For example, English /t/ is an alveolar and aspirated in word initial position followed by a vowel like tea /t/ whereas the Arabic /t/ is dental and non- aspirated in the same word position like in /ti:/ (fig). In addition, Arabic /t/ and /d/ have pharyngealized productions that have phonemic value. Pharyngealization involves a secondary approximation of the back and root of the tongue into the pharyngeal area. These pharyngealized consonants are categorized as emphatic consonants (Waengler, 2009). For Altaha (1995) shares this same opinion as he declared: A great deal of research analyzing the grammatical, lexical, and spelling errors committed by Arab students in an EFL situation have not been dealt with. (P.110). Students had problems with some oars of consonant sounds (i.e. /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ as in "chair" and "share"; /v/ and /f/ in “van” and “fan” /p/ and /b/ as in “pat” and “bat”); consonant clusters (i.e. “allow” often mispronounced “al – low”).

Kharma & Hajjaj (1989) wrote a book attempting to identify problems Arab beginning learners of English face They collected the data by oral interviewing their subjects. The mispronunciations were identified and then analyzed according to what they involve (consonants, vowels, stress). The authors identified some consonants (i.e. /p/, /v/, /ŋ/, /θ/, /ð/, /r/, /l/) as problematic for Arabs to pronounce. However, considering the lack of literature in this area, they believe there is still much to be done. The Australian Government (1978) published an article about the likely difficulties of English pronunciation Arabic speakers encounter when learning English. It was reported that Arabic speakers have difficulties with consonant clusters (pronouncing

“espy” for “spy”), and consonants /tʃ/, /p/, /v/, /ŋ/, /θ/, /ð/, /r/, /l/, /g/, and /dʒ/, Marzouk (1993) carried out a study that investigated some aspects of phonological transfer from Arabic to English. His focus was on vowel transfer and consonant clusters (two or more consonants together in a word). Marzouk analyzed a number of interlingual identifications of epenthesis (phonological intrusion: i.e., saying “filoor” instead of “floor”) produced by Arabic learners in their oral production of English consonant transfer was not investigated. Avery & Ehrlich (1992) wrote a book about how to teach American English pronunciation to selected groups, and the difficulties listed, regarding English consonants, for Arabic speakers pronunciation were: /θ/, /ð/, /tʃ/, /ŋ/, dʒ/, and consonant clusters. However, the difficulties listed were generalized to Arabic learners of all learning levels.

There is clearly a need for more research in this area. In Altha’s (1995) research Arabic speakers immersed in the target culture were not investigated. The study conducted by Kharma & Hijjaj (1989) was limited to Arabs who were beginning learners of English. The article published by the Australian Government (1978) also concerned Arab who were beginning learners of English. Difficulties experienced by Arabic speakers immersed in the target culture for a considerable period were not mentioned. Marzouk (1993), although conducting research about phonological transfer, did not (1992) generalize the difficulties of Arabic speakers immersed in the target language culture for a considerable period of time.

Factors Affecting the Learning of Pronunciation

As Wong (1987) pointed out, “the teaching of pronunciation is not exclusively a linguistic matter” (P.17). Therefore, teachers need to consider factors (such as the learners age, the exposure to the target language, aptitude, identity, personality, attitude and the native language) which can affect significantly the teaching of pronunciation. The following sections introduce some of these factors and explain how they might affect the learning of pronunciation.

- Age

One of the important factors to consider is the age of the learner, which is the subject of much and controversial research. For Lenneberg (1966) suggested that “after about the age of 12 years, the demand of verbal

behaviour quickly declines” (Pp.239-240). He hypothesizes that there is a “critical period” for learning a second language (critical period Hypothesis), “between age 2 and puberty”, language seems to disappear after this age” and “foreign accents (inan12) cannot be overcome easily after puberty” (Lenneberg, 1967, P.176). However, Scovel (1988), discussed that the critical period hypothesis is only valid when considering the acquisition of the

pronunciation of second language. According to the Scovel (1988), this hypothesis is not applicable to other aspects of the language. Because pronunciation is “the only aspects of language performance that has neuromuscular basis”, requires “neuromotor involvement”, and has a “physical reality” (Scovel, 1988, P.101). He predicted that learners who start to learn a second language later than a round age 12 will never be able “to pass themselves off as native speakers and will “end up easily identified as non- native speakers of that language (Scovel, 1988, P.185). In fact, it is generally accepted that learners who learn and 12 after the end of the critical period have “neurological or motor skill constraints” that render native- like speech production “highly unlikely or impossible” (Moyer, 1999, P.82).

- Exposure to the Target Language

The amount of exposure to the target language is an important factor. For Krashen (1982) learners acquire a second language primarily from the input they receive, which has to be in large amounts and most importantly, comprehensible. In English as a foreign language (EFL) settings, since the students have very limited or no English native input outside the classroom, “the burden will fall more on the teacher to provide an adequate model of the target language”, and “to ascertain that students have opportunities to experience samples of the authentic oral discourse of native speakers” (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996, P.171).

- Phonetic Ability (Aptitude)

As Kenworthy (1990) claimed that, “some people are able to discriminate between two sounds better than others, and / or are able to mimic sounds more accurately” (P.6-7). Celce- Mercia et al. Mention the work of Carroll (1962, 1981), in which he assumes that there are four traits that constitute language aptitude:

Phonetic coding ability”; b) grammatical sensitively”; c) “inductive language learning ability”; d) “memory”. The first trait relates to the “capacity of discriminate and code foreign sounds such that can be recalled”; the second concerns “the ability to analyse language and figure out rules”; the third refers to “the capacity to pick up language through exposure”; the fourth involves “the amount of role learning activity needed to internalise something” (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996, P.17). Learners weak in phonetic coding ability “have much more difficulty achieving a readily intelligible pronunciation than those with high aptitude in this domain”; therefore “teachers need to be sensitive to such learner differences and not expect all learners to achieve the same level of success in the same amount of time” (Celce – Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin, 1996, P.17).

- Influence of the Mother Tongue in Pronunciation Acquisition

So far, speakers have seen the differing of opinions about the existence of a “critical period” for the acquisition of speech in a foreign language. However, there is not doubt that languages are learned differently by children and adults and that this is a direct result of the brain syntax. It is also true that some adults achieve separation as native pronunciation, and that the degree of accuracy of pronunciation varies greatly from one individual to another. Avery & Ehrlich (1992) stated that the fact variability exists among adult learners means that ESL classroom time can profitably be devoted to improving students’ pronunciation. In order to improve the students’ pronunciation, first we have to identify the origin of the errors.

Avery and Ehrlich (1992) claimed: “learners of a language speak the target in a different way: sometimes slightly different and sometimes highly different than the native speakers do, which we call foreign accent, the nature of which is determined to a large extent by a learner’s native language” (P.9). The term cross-linguistic transfer refers to when Cook (2008), “a person who knows two languages transfer some aspects from one language to another” and “what can be transferred depends, among other things, on the relationship between the two languages” (P.76). This phenomenon does not concern only individual sounds but also Kenworthy (1990) “combination of sounds and features such as rhythm and intonation” (P.4). As Kenworthy (1990) claims, “there has been a great deal of research in which the sound systems of English and other languages are compared, and the problems and difficulties

of learner predicted” (P.4). Concerning individual sounds Cook (2008) mentions the word of Fred Echmann et al., Who have identified there possibilities: a) “the first language has neither of the contrasting L2 sounds”, therefore learners have to “learn two new phonemes from scratch”; b) “the second language has one of the L2 sounds”, therefore “learners have to learn an extra phoneme”; c) “the second language has both sounds as allophones of the same phoneme”, therefore learners “have to learn that what they take for granted as alternative forms of the same phoneme are in fact different phonemes in English” (Cook, 2008, P.76).

According to Kenworthy (1990), “the more differences there are, the more difficulties the learner will have in pronouncing English (P.4). In fact, according to Gimson (1989), “teaching should obviously be concentrated on those features of English which are not found in the learner’s native language” (P.318).

English speakers, most of the times, are able to identify Spanish accent, Arabic accent, German accents, French accents, etc. This shows that the sound pattern of the first language is being transferred into the second language. According to Avery & Ehrlich (1992), the nature of a foreign accent can be determined by the learner’s native language. Every language has its own particular inventory of phonemes into words, and different stress and intonation patterns. The mispronunciations of words by nonnative speakers are not random attempts to produce the correct sounds, but they reflect the sounds, rules, stress, and intonation of their native language. Avery & Ehrich (1992) pointed out that the sound system of the native language can influence the students’ pronunciation of English in at least three ways:

- 1- When a learner encounter sounds in English that are not part of the sounds in inventory of the learner’s native language. As mentioned before, the pronunciation of sounds depends on the proper use of the musculature in the mouth. Therefore, if the muscle needed for a certain sound is not exercised, the learner may not be able to produce it.
- 2- When the rules of combining sounds in to words are different in the learner’s mother tongue. Sometimes the sound present in the second language is also present in the native language. however, the rules of combining this sounds into words may be different, causing a problem for the pronunciation of English.
- 3- The rhythm and melody of a language determine its patterns of stress and intonation.

Learners may transfer the rhythm of their first language into English. Students may also have a problem in hearing a sound that is not present in their native language inventory of phonemes. Avery & Ehrlich (1992) believe that the native language affects the ability to produce English sounds as well as the ability to hear English sounds. Many ESL teachers may have experienced the frustration involved in having students continually repeat a mispronounced word in the same way. As Avery & Ehrlich (1992) observe, "It is as if learners hear the second language through a 'filter' the filter being the sound system of the native language". (P.xv)

It may seem that the student does not want to correct himself/ herself, but actually, he/she hears the word through the sound system of the mother tongue language. Therefore, sounds that are familiar in the native language are heard instead of the actual sounds of English produced by the teacher.

Methodology

This research was carried out during the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023. This study used two instruments to collect data. These instruments were a questionnaire and a recording test, they were designed to give accurate evaluation of the problems that face the first level students of the first level students of the department of English the faculty of education Toor- Albaha in pronunciation of English consonant sounds. Twenty (20) copies of questionnaires were distributed to the teachers, which served to achieve the objectives of the study. They were selected randomly from Faculty of education Toor- Albaha. The questionnaire was handed out by the researcher to the participants. Then gathered and analyzed.

The recording test was conducted at the faculty of Education Toor – Albaha. 40 students were chosen of the first level students. In testing the pronunciation errors, the researcher prepared (31) words written on a paper in each word there was a target sound, each of the students read the whole words loudly and the researcher was recording their pronunciation.

Data Analysis

This study uses the frequency count as, statistical tool for the correct and incorrect pronunciation with the help SPSS program.

Recording Test

The first data collection tool in the research was recording test. The subjects were asked to pronounce (31) words, mainly three different positions

of consonants sounds (word initial, word middle, word final). The recording test (recording of research subjects pronunciations of words were transcribed by the researcher according to international phonetic Alphabet. A telephone number was used to record the students have mispronounced eleven (11) consonant sounds (/p/, /b/, /f/, /v/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ŋ/, /θ/, /ð/, seem to be problematic for the first level students at the faculty of education Toor- Albaha in learning English. This is due to the absence of these oppositions in Arabic.

Table (1) comparison between correct and incorrect pronunciation in the students' pronunciation of English consonant sounds in the final position word.

Sounds	words	Transcription	Number of students responses	percentage	Incorrect responses	Percentage
/p/	ship	/ʃɪp/	10	25%	30	75%
/b/	lamb	/læm/	10	25%	30	75%
/f/	life	/laɪf/	8	22%	32	78%
/v/	live	/lɪv/	6	17%	34	83%
/ʃ/	fresh	/frɛʃ/	18	45%	22	55%
/ʒ/	garage	/gə ra:ʒ/	0	0%	40	100%
/tʃ/	catch	/kætʃ/	12	17%	28	83%
/dʒ/	Manage	/mænɪdʒ/	0	0%	40	100%
/ŋ/	hang	/hæŋ/	14	37%	26	63
/θ/	bath	/bɑ:θ/	8	20%	32	80%
/ð/	clothe	/kləʊð/	8	20%	32	80%
Total			94	21%	346	80%

According to the above table, 10 of the subjects pronounced the sound /p/ in the final word 'ship' correctly and 30 pronounced it incorrectly. 25% of the subjects pronounced the sound /b/ in the final word 'lamb' correctly and 75% pronounced it incorrectly because they did not differentiate between /p/ and /b/ sounds. On the other hand, 22% of the subjects pronounced the sound /f/ correctly in the final word 'life' and 78% of them mispronounced correctly. In addition, 17% of the subjects are able to pronounce the sound /v/ in the final word 'live' correctly and 83% pronounced incorrectly. Most of the subjects mispronounced the sound /v/ in the final word position because they cannot differentiate between /f/ sound and /v/ sound.

Also, 45% of the subjects pronounced the sound /ʃ/ in the final word 'fresh' correctly and 55% of them mispronounced it correctly. Also, 17% of the subjects pronounced the sound /tʃ/ in the final word 'catch' correctly and 83% pronounced it incorrectly because the sound /tʃ/ composed of two sounds the plosive /t/ and the fricative /ʃ/. Otherwise, no one of the subjects

pronounced the sound /3/ in the final word 'garage' and 100% are pronounced it incorrectly. All the subjects mispronounced the sound /3/ in the final word correctly because they did not differentiate between /g/ and /3/ sounds. As well as 100% of the subjects mispronounced the sound /d3/ in the final word 'manage' and no one pronounced it correctly because the /d3/ sound composed of two sounds the plosive /d/ and the fricative /3/. 37% of the subjects pronounced the sound /ŋ/ in the final word 'hang' correctly and 63% pronounced it incorrectly. Furthermore, 20% of the subjects pronounced the sound /θ/ in the final word 'bath' correctly and 80% pronounced it incorrectly. Also, 20% of the subjects are able to pronounce the sound /ð/ in the final word 'clothe' correctly and 80% pronounced it incorrectly because they did not differentiate between /ð / and /θ/ sounds.

After collecting the responses to the questions the researcher computed the mean scores and the Standard Deviation and other related statistics of those students who answered correct to each words pronunciation. The results were calculated and illustrated in table (2)

Table (2) Mean and Standard Deviation for each group

Sounds	Word	Mean	Std. Deviation
/p/	ship	4	1.89
/b/	lamb	4	1.89
/f/	life	4	1.89
/v/	live	7	1
/ʃ /	fresh	2.2	3.72
/3/	garage	0	0
/tʃ /	Catch	5	1.06
/d3 /	manage	0	0
/ŋ /	hang	3	2.9
/θ /	bath	5	1.06
/ð /	clothe	5	1.06

According to the results calculated in table 2, the mean and standard deviation were analyzed for each group of the study using inferential statistics. Such statistical computations allow drawing conclusions on the significance of the research questions. The results show whether the difference between the mean and standard deviation for each sound.

The researcher noticed that most of the participants faced the highest problem when pronouncing the sounds /d3/ and /3/ because these sounds do not exist in Arabic language.

Results and Findings

The main results of their study can be summarized as follows:

- Most of the teachers believed that the weakness of students in pronunciation is one the main reasons for their problems in the English language. Therefore, the focus should be placed on teaching and enriching students' pronunciation.
- There is no great emphasis on accurate pronunciation for many reasons, including students' low proficiency in the English language and their lack of knowledge of the importance of pronunciation.
- Students's negative attitude towards their own learning process are also factor that reduces teaching effectiveness.
- The time allotted for English classes during the academic year is so short that teachers may not even be able to cover the entire course. It should be noted here that the English language is treated as a foreign language in Yemen, so the opportunities for students to use the English language outside the classroom are almost non existent.
- The education environment is the lack of facilities which could help the teacher a lot. Laboratories (at least tape, recorders with a few preliminary instructional tapes), simple English books in libraries, and some other teaching devices, such as video- players, computers, DVD players, and like seem to be of great use and help in teaching English, especially in early intermediate classes.
- The students faced problems while pronouncing the consonants sounds, /p, /v/, /3/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ŋ/. This is because these consonants are not presented in Arabic and this reason, caused trouble for the learners.
- Students do not enough pronunciation instruction in all high schools and lack of effort learners.

Recommendation

- 1- Teachers should check the pronunciation of words before the lesson to provide their students with the correct pronunciation of the sounds.
- 2- Teachers must give words and pronounce them accurately with regards to consonants, vowels, stress and intonation.
- 3- Additional attention should be given to the development of speaking skill in general and articulation in particular. This interest is supposed to be one of the first stages of learning English.

- 4- The students should listen carefully before saying new words.
- 5- Spelling should be taught at all stages after teaching pronunciation. Such arrangements can contribute to overcome the overlap between the Arabic language and the English language, especially in the correspondence between spelling and pronunciation rules.
- 6- The teacher should draw the students' attention to the silent letters. This focus is more useful in learning spelling and pronunciation.
- 7- Teachers should create exercises that overcome common articulation problems.
- 8- The teacher should conduct a test of analyzing the needs of the students regarding pronunciation according to the needs of the students.
- 9- Some appropriate materials and strategies must be provide to be practiced in the classroom to reduce students' problems.

Suggestions for Further Studies

A Further research can be done to investigate

- The pronunciation problems of some English vowels sound faced by the second level students of the department of English, faculty of education Toor- Albaha or any other EFL context.
- An Acoustic Analysis of Yemeni EFL Students in Pronunciation English Vowels.
- Error Analysis Approaches a Remedy to Overcome Pronunciation Problems Made by Yemeni EFL Students in Pronouncing English Consonants.

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