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*English Phonetic Transcription and
Instruction in Pronunciation Teaching*
*The case of first and fourth year pupils in Belhamri Mohammed middle school,
Mostaganem*

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Dedication

I dedicate this research work to all members of my beloved family, my precious father and mother, my supportive sisters and brother, and my dearly loved nieces and nephews,

To my dearest friends who supported me all along,

To the teachers and pupils of Belhamri Mohammed middle school,

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ABSTRACT

Despite the late focus put on teaching pronunciation through intensive practice of both segmentals production and spelling exercises and drills in Algerian middle schools' textbooks and the implementation of phonetic transcription into the current curricula, pronunciation teaching still seems to be granted the least attention in FL classrooms and contexts. First year pupils in Algerian middle schools cannot pronounce English alphabet letters properly and cannot distinguish between different sounds or phonemes that affect the meaning of the words, such as, /t/ and /θ/. Not to mention that fourth year pupils still cannot make the difference between silent and pronounced sounds. In this case neither pupils, instructors, or syllabus designers, nor parents could take the blame without proper analysis of the problem of low emphasis put on pronunciation instruction and phonetic transcription or the lack of phonological awareness which should be acquired by the end of middle schooling.

Results of the present study are obtained from the collected data where pupils of Belhamri Mohamed middle school in Mostaganem are taken as samples for this investigation into pronunciation and phonetic transcription and instruction. Four different questionnaires are distributed among four types of informants. Two different types of questionnaires are submitted to thirty pupils from four classes of first year and thirty two pupils from three classes of fourth year. The questionnaires for first year pupils are translated to Arabic to suit their primal level of familiarity with English, in *Belhamri* middle school. In addition, teachers of first and fourth years from three different middle schools in Mostaganem are chosen to undergo the investigation, *Belhamri Mohammed*, *Touahria Mohammed*, and *Benzerdjeb Benaouda* middle schools. Additionally, twelve copybooks from first year classes are selected to be analyzed and compared to their textbooks' activities in terms of compatibility with the textbooks' programme, and performing the planned activities concerning pronunciation as well. For further data and results, some pupils of both levels are put under test through an oral examination and recordings as a tool of research to back up the findings and hypotheses.

Résumé

Malgré l'accentuation récente mise sur l'enseignement de la prononciation Anglaise à travers la pratique intensive de les deux, la production segmentaire et les exercices d'orthographe dans les manuels scolaires au niveau de CEM en Algérie, et l'exécution de la transcription phonétique dans les programmes d'études, l'enseignement de la prononciation encore semblerai d'accorder le moindre de considération dans les classes et environnements de langue étrangère. Les élèves de la première année au CEM ne peuvent pas prononcer les lettres d'alphabet d'Anglais correctement, et ne peuvent pas distinguer entre des sons différents et des phonèmes, telles que, /t/ et /θ/. Sans compter que les élèves de la quatrième année ne peuvent pas maitre la différence entre les sons muets et les sons prononcés. Dans ce cas, ni les élèves, les enseignants, les auteurs des syllabus, ni les parents pouvaient prendre le blâme sans une bonne analyse du problème de l'accent faible mis sure l'instruction de la prononciation et transcription phonétique, ou bien l'absence de conscience phonologique qui devrait être acquise à la fin d'enseignement moyen.

Les résultats de cette étude sont obtenus à partir des données recueillies ou les élèves du Belhamri Mohamed, à Mostaganem, sont pris comme un échantillon pour cette enquête sur la prononciation et transcription phonétique. Quatre questionnaires différents sont distribués parmi quatre types des répondants. Deux types de questionnaire différents sont soumis à trente élèves de quatre classes en première année, et trente-deux élèves de trois classes en quatrième année. Les questionnaires pour les premières années sont traduits en Arabe afin de convenir à leur niveau primaire de leur familiarité avec l'Anglais au CEM Belhamri. En plus, enseignants des premières et quatrièmes années de trois CEM différents sont choisis pour subir l'enquête, Belhamri Mohamed, Touahria Mohamed, et Benzedjeb Benaouda, à Mostaganem. En outre, douze cahiers des premières années sont sélectionnés pour être analysé et comparé en termes de compatibilité avec les programmes, et l'exécution des activités planifiées concernant la prononciation aussi. Pour des données et résultats supplémentaires, certains élèves de deux niveaux sont mis à l'essai par un examen oral, et les enregistrements comme un outil de recherche pour soutenir les découvertes et hypothèses.

ملخص

على الرغم من التركيز الأخير على تعليم نطق اللغة الانجليزية من خلال الممارسة المكثفة لكلي الإنتاج المقطعي وتمارين الإملاء في الكتب المدرسية بالمتوسطات الجزائرية، وكذلك تطبيق الكتابة الصوتية في المناهج الحالية إلا أن تعليم النطق مازال ينال أقل اهتمام داخل أقسام ومحيطات اللغة الأجنبية. تلاميذ السنة الأولى في المتوسطات الجزائرية لا يمكنهم نطق أحرف الأبجدية الإنجليزية بشكل صحيح ولا يمكنهم التمييز بين أصوات ووحدات صوتية فونيمية مختلفة، مثل "ت" و "ث" ، مع الذكر أن تلاميذ السنة الرابعة مازال لا يمكنهم التفريق بين الأصوات الصامتة والملفوظة. في هذه الحالة، لا التلاميذ، لا المعلمين، لا مصممي البرامج ولا حتى الأولياء يمكن أن يتلقوا اللوم بدون تحليل واضح لمشكلة التركيز المنخفض على توجيه النطق والكتابة الصوتية أو نقص في الوعي الفونولوجي والذي يجب أن يتم اكتسابه مع نهاية التعليم المتوسط. تم الحصول على نتائج الدراسة المطروحة من خلال المعطيات المجمع، حيث تم أخذ تلاميذ متوسطة محمد بلحمري بمستغانم كعينة لهذا البحث بشأن إرشاد النطق والكتابة الصوتية. أربعة استمارات استفتاء مختلفة تم توزيعها فيما بين أربع أنواع من المستجيبين. نوعين من الاستمارات تم تقديمها إلى ثلاثين تلميذ من أربعة أقسام السنة الأولى، واثنان وثلاثين تلميذ من ثلاث أقسام السنة الرابعة.

الاستمارات الموجهة لتلاميذ السنة الأولى هي مترجمة إلى اللغة العربية حتى تتناسب مع مستواهم المبتدئ لتعودهم على اللغة الإنجليزية بمتوسطة بلحمري. علاوة على ذلك، تم اختيار أساتذة السنتين الأولى والرابعة من ثلاثة متوسطات مختلفة بمستغانم ليخضعوا للبحث وهم متوسطات بلحمري محمد، طواهرية محمد، وبن زرجب بن عودة، إضافة إلى اثنا عشر دفتير تلاميذ من أقسام السنة الأولى ليتم تحليلها ومقارنتها مع تمارين كتبهم المدرسية من ناحية التوافق مع برنامج الكتب المدرسية وتطبيق تمارين النطق المصممة فيها. وللمزيد من النتائج والمعطيات، تم اختيار بعض التلاميذ من كلا المستويين للقيام بامتحان شفوي والتسجيلات هي أداة بحث أخرى لدعم النتائج والفرضيات.

Abbreviations

AL: Audio-Lingualism
BEM: Brevet d'Enseignement Moyen
CA: Communicative Approach
CD: Compact Disc
CEM : Collège d'Enseignement Moyen
DM: Direct Method
EAL: English Alphabet Letters
EFL: English as Foreign Language
ELT: English Language Teaching
ESL: English as Second Language
FL: Foreign Language
FLT: Foreign Language Teaching
GTM: Grammar Translation Method
ICT: Information and Communications Technology
IPA: International phonetic Association
IPA: International Phonetic Alphabet
NA: No Answer
OTM: On the Move
SET: Sound, Evaluation, Transcription
SOE: Spotlight of English
SP: Successful Pupils
TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language
UP: Unsuccessful Pupils

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General Introduction

Learning a foreign language for the first time means to be equally and regularly exposed to its main aspects like grammar, vocabulary, phonetics, phonology and culture. Nevertheless, this study in particular will be devoted to English pronunciation and phonetic transcription and instruction. The problem we are encountering is the learners' failure in pronouncing English correctly despite the late focus on and improvement of pronunciation teaching in Algerian middle schools. It seems to be insufficient because the pupils' degree of pronunciation is either weak or decreasing mainly for many reasons, such as, mother tongue influence, degree of exposure to the target language among other factors.

However, the main factor which this study is conducted to investigate is "the phonetic transcription and instruction" as a pronunciation teaching method in Algerian middle schools. Concerning pronunciation teaching of first and fourth years' pupils, it does lack various key elements like intensive learning of sounds and rhythm (segmental and supra-segmental features). In other words, the gap of this study lies in phonetic transcription's status in pronunciation teaching in Algerian middle schools.

Furthermore, teaching pronunciation in Algeria has witnessed unbalanced situations and was always put at the rear as far as English teaching syllabuses are concerned. It has been and still is neglected and poorly integrated in Algerian educational contexts despite its vitality in EFL classrooms; however, it is much viewed as a sub-skill of the speaking skill which can be entirely compensated by learning the needed principal skills, for instance, writing and reading skills, vocabulary and grammar building. Moreover, this preconception is not restricted to Algerian instructors only, but it is a worldwide view. Phoneticians and researchers in this field consented to calling pronunciation "The Cinderella area of foreign language teaching" which explicitly implies the weak emphasis and belated importance given to it as it always falls behind the teaching of grammar and vocabulary and other major language skills.

Needless to say, instructors and practitioners in the field seem not to possess the necessary phonological and phonetic awareness to realize how significant it is to teach young learners segmental and supra-segmental features as regards phonetic ability and actual pronunciation in communication and oral skills inside and outside the classrooms. Additionally, teaching pronunciation essentially relies on teaching English sounds and stress and in order to be efficient enough in this case ,many researchers and experts in the field of

EFL teaching believe that using phonetic transcription as a permanent method will effectively enhance and improve the learners' poor pronunciation, still, it is entirely overlooked in most of our educational contexts, particularly, EFL classes. Middle school pupils seem to suffer from their inability to communicate and pronounce correctly; simply because teaching English in Algerian middle schools is unbalanced and certain skills are being prioritized over others.

Basically, English has an inconsistent and intricate orthography system and since it is set to be a non-phonetic language, learning its phonetic transcription is one of the main key elements to achieve successful foreign language teaching and learning. *A.C Gimson* emphasizes teaching English phonetics to youngsters because languages in general are spoken before embarking on the written script and they start with ears, language functions and language terminology proficiency can be achieved later on.

Hence, this proves the major importance that must be given to teaching phonetics to foreign language learners, mainly because the pronunciation of a word cannot always be predicted by its spelling and vice-versa. English's pronunciation involves a complex letter-sound relationship that functions like a code and only learning phonetic transcription can enable them to decipher it. However, the majority of teachers do not implement such a method in classroom activities to teach their middle schoolers the correct pronunciation because they assume it to be difficult to teach especially the cumbersome and awkward symbols, eventually their reluctance will influence their learners who lose motivation and eagerness to explore English language.

Research Questions

The research questions of the present work are, abundant

- Why do the majority of middle school teachers overlook performing pronunciation practice activities in class, especially, teaching sounds through phonetic transcription?
- Can phonetic transcription be a remedial solution for first and fourth year pupils' poor pronunciation if effectively integrated into their syllabuses?

The following are tentative hypotheses to the questions asked earlier

- Algerian middle school teachers fail to notice the importance of teaching Phonetic Notation to their learners because it is not as substantial as grammar and vocabulary are, as well as integrating it as a useful pronunciation teaching method.

- If more focus and perseverance are placed on phonetic instruction and segmentals teaching through phonetic transcription in Algerian middle schools FL classes, first and fourth years pupils' performance and their oral skills may improve gradually, as well as their communication and pronunciation competences.

The Structure of the Study

The present study comprises five chapters listed as follows,

The first two chapters cover the Literature Review part and they are devoted to an overview of the history of pronunciation teaching and different major approaches that have brought many changes to foreign language teaching, including the reform movement and its main principles. In addition to pronunciation's importance and status in FL teaching and the main factors affecting and hindering the learners' progress in achieving good pronunciation. It concludes with the use of phonetic transcription as an effective method in EFL teaching contexts, its history and the main stages of its development and retrogradation throughout the years.

The third chapter presents the research methodology concerning procedure, participants, research methods, tools and materials in terms of questionnaires, recordings and copybooks, as well as, a brief qualitative data analysis of the first and fourth years pupils' copybooks and textbooks. The fourth chapter revolves around the analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data collected from the questionnaires of first and fourth year teachers and pupils, and recordings of the pupils' pronunciation for the sake of getting adequate answers for the hypotheses.

The fifth chapter deals with possible recommendations and some teaching pronunciation anecdotes to grant the teachers a view of different and limitless possibilities to create their own reforms inside the classroom. In addition to a set of some suggested activities for the amelioration of pronunciation teaching in Algerian EFL classrooms.

This study has been conducted specifically and optimistically to realize a set of aims and the main objectives of this investigation are, 1) to essentially shed some light on the reasons behind hindering most of the Algerian middle school pupils' progress and development concerning their pronunciation level through the use of phonetic transcription. 2) Also, to make teachers aware of the problems and obstacles which their learners daily encounter when learning correct and accurate pronunciation. 3) In addition, to help teachers pay more attention to pronunciation lessons and listening/ speaking skills as much as they

emphasize grammar and vocabulary activities, and reading/ writing skills. In brief, the study's main aim is to find solutions for the betterment, improvement, and elevation of pronunciation teaching and instruction in Algeria and creating space for implementing phonetic transcription into their EFL syllabuses.

Additionally, investigating the aspects of pronunciation teaching and the use of phonetic transcription as a successful method in FL teaching contexts has been like an orphan in the wide scope of educational, scientific, and linguistic research. Nevertheless, one key point proudly tops all the possible researches in this field which is the immense contribution of the Reform Movement and the emergence of the International Phonetic Association paving the way to widening the spectrum of pronunciation teaching and science of phonetics.

Moreover, another theory deserves to be pointed out which is the SET theory. It was originally integrated in Japanese EFL settings to teach the learners phonetic transcription, segmentals, and evaluate their levels and performances afterwards. Not to forget mentioning the major works of great leaders and pioneers in teaching phonetics, such as, Harold E. Palmer, Paul Passy, Henry Sweet, Daniel Jones, A.C Gimson, and John Wells who selflessly shared the passion of teaching phonetics and wrote worthy works, flattering and recommending the focus on pronunciation and listening/speaking skills before others.

Chapter I
Literature Review
Preliminary Considerations in
Pronunciation Teaching

Chapter I

Literature Review

Preliminary Considerations in Pronunciation Teaching

Introduction

The first chapter mainly revolves around some of the basic preliminary considerations in the field of pronunciation. In order to grant the readers a clear idea about pronunciation's status in foreign language teaching an overview is being presented to highlight two issues, either teaching pronunciation is following a stable course or it is falling behind other skills. After that, a group of the main teaching approaches is displayed to illustrate the history and status of pronunciation diachronically throughout time; it varies from oral imitative approaches, reforms, until recently established approach, the communicative one in the 1980s. Hence, a short discussion about how pronunciation is of paramount importance in ELT¹ is put forth from the viewpoints of many researchers interested in the amelioration of this aspect. In addition to the issue of correlation between pronunciation and communication and how greatly they seem to complement each other.

Afterwards we tackle the matter of speaking/listening skills which are being marginalized by instructors in favour of reading/writing skills, plus grammar and vocabulary compared to pronunciation teaching. Furthermore, some authors highlight the case of accuracy and fluency and their significant interference in ELT and how lacking the learners' pronunciation could be if one of them was absent. Moreover, learners encounter many problems when exposed to pronunciation of the target language and Kenworthy (1987) introduced the main factors that impair the learners from retaining and grasping the correct articulation, for example, native language, phonetic ability, age factors, and others.

I.1. Pronunciation History in Foreign Language Teaching

I.1.1. General Approaches

In the whole comprehensive history of language teaching, pronunciation has been nicknamed, by several linguists and foreign language teachers, "the Cinderella area of foreign language teaching", Kelly (1969) shows that western philologists and linguists have studied grammar and vocabulary much longer than pronunciation that was overshadowed

¹ English Language Teaching

and overlooked throughout the years. For this reason, grammar and vocabulary have been much better understood by most language teachers than pronunciation, which began to be studied systematically shortly before the beginning of the twentieth century (as cited by Kemp, 2006:02).

In this connection, the field of modern language teaching has developed two general approaches to the teaching of pronunciation, 1) An intuitive imitative approach which was used before the late nineteenth century, and was occasionally supplemented by the teacher's or textbook writer's impressionistic (sometimes phonetically inaccurate) observations about sounds based on orthography (Kelly, 1969, as cited by Ibid. 02). This approach depends on the learner's ability to listen to and imitate the rhythms and sounds of the target language without the intervention of any explicit information; it also presupposes the availability of good models to listen to which is a possibility that has been enhanced by the availability of phonograph records, then of tape recorders, language labs in the mid-twentieth century, and more recently of audio-video-cassettes and compact discs.

2) An analytic linguistic approach which utilizes tools, such as, a phonetic alphabet, articulatory descriptions, charts of the vocal apparatus, contrastive information, and other aids to support listening, imitation and production. Unlike the first approach, this one informs the learners explicitly of the sounds and rhythms of the target language. This approach was developed in the first place to complement the first approach and not to replace it (Ibid. 02).

On the other hand, various language teaching methods had some currency throughout the twentieth century but it must be acknowledged that there are methods, such as, Grammar-translation and reading-based approaches, in which the teaching of pronunciation is largely irrelevant, therefore, seldom taught (Florez, 1998, as cited in Ibid. 02). In such methods, the grammar or text comprehension is taught through the medium of the learner's mother tongue, and oral communication of the target language is not a primary instructional objective. Thus, such approaches gave birth to organizations, for instance, the emergence of The Reform Movement in 1886, and the International Phonetic Alphabet to favor the spoken language over the written one.

I.1.2. The Reform Movement in 1886

The first linguistic or analytic contribution to the teaching of pronunciation emerged in the 1890's as a part of the Reform Movement in language teaching. This movement was greatly influenced by phoneticians, such as, Henry Sweet, Wilhelm Viëtor, and Paul Passy, who formed the International Phonetic Association² in 1886, and developed the International Phonetic Alphabet³. This Alphabet resulted from the establishment of Phonetics as a science dedicated to describing and analyzing the sound systems of languages. Therefore, a phonetic alphabet made it possible to accurately represent the sounds of any language in the world, because there was a consistent one-to-one relationship between a written symbol and the sound it represented (Ibid. 03).

The phoneticians involved in this international organization, many of whom had had experience with the teaching of foreign languages, did much to influence modern language teaching by specifically advocating the following notions and practices,

- 1) The spoken form of a language is primary and should be taught first.
- 2) The findings of phonetics should be applied to language teaching.
- 3) Teachers must have solid training in phonetics.
- 4) Learners should be given phonetic training to establish good speech habits (Ibid. 03).

Afterwards, many other approaches appeared because of The Reform Movement's influence and developed pronunciation teaching like the oral approach and Audio-Lingualism.

I.1.3. Oral Approach and Audio-Lingualism (1940-1950)

Many historians of language teaching, such as, Howatt (1984), believe that the Reform Movement played a great role in the development of Audio-lingualism and the Oral Approach during the 1940s and 1950s in both the United States and Britain respectively. In these two approach classrooms, pronunciation is of great importance and is taught explicitly from the start. As in the Direct Method classroom, the teacher or the recording models a sound, a word, or an utterance and the learners imitate and repeat. However, the teacher also

² Henceforth IPA

³ Henceforth IPA

typically makes use of information from phonetics, such as, visual transcription system or charts that demonstrate the articulation of sounds (Ibid. 03-04).

Furthermore, the teacher may use a technique derived from the contrastive approach, for example, the minimal pair drills that use words which differ by a single sound in the same position. This technique based on Bloomfield's theory (1933) of the concept of phoneme as a minimally distinctive sound, is used for both listening practice and guided-oral production. Accordingly, there are two kinds of minimal pair drills, word drills, for example, (pin and bin) and sentence drill, be they syntagmatic drills (contrast within a sentence) or paradigmatic drills (contrast across two sentences) (Ibid. 03-04). Further explanation of these types of drills will be presented as suggested activities in chapter six. Furthermore, several approaches and methods continued replacing each other with new reforms and principles. In the 1980s the communicative approach emerged to emphasize fluency (communication) over accuracy (accentedness).

I.1.4. The Communicative Approach in the 1980s

With the development of the communicative method in the 1970s, Fraser (2000) and Bray (1995) (as cited by Nair, Krishnasamy and de Mello, 2006:27) observe that pronunciation was downplayed to disassociate itself with any link to the drilling practices of the audio-lingual method. It appeared to many teachers that they had to make a choice, they could either teach about "articulatory phonetics, with pictures of the human mouth and tongue in various positions", or they could choose not to offer any "explicit instruction in English phonology at all" (Bray (1995) as cited in Ibid. 28). As a result, there appeared to be no avenue for the teaching of pronunciation within the communicative method, neither phonetic rules nor phonological ones.

This approach in particular took hold in the 1980s and is currently dominant in language teaching classrooms even though it is being replaced by The Competency-based Approach. Since the primary purpose of language is communication, using language to communicate should be central in all classroom language instruction. This focus on communication by means of language (fluency/accuracy) brings forth the urgency to the teaching of pronunciation. Empirical and anecdotal evidence shows that there is a threshold level of pronunciation for non-native speakers of English, if they fall below this threshold level, they will certainly suffer oral communication problems and jeopardize the flow of

communication no matter how excellent and extensive their control of English grammar and vocabulary might be (as cited by Nair et al., 2006:28).

In brief, language teaching methods are not new issues in FL⁴ teaching and the struggle about which one should be implemented not only should it be effective but also time-consuming methods, but it remains the most considerable phenomenon in language learning, henceforth, pronunciation history. Moreover, different approaches have been developed within the decades and these approaches were resulted in new classroom practices. Audio-lingual methods and communicative language teaching are obviously turning points for teaching pronunciation, but the processes during Reform Movement are actually headstones of these improvements in teaching pronunciation. After the Reform Movement, language teaching shifted to speech and pronunciation became one of the major skills in FL teaching obligatory to acquire.

So here, it is worthy to note certain differences between the audio-lingual method and communicative language teaching in order to see to what an extent the approaches changed (as cited in⁵ 2012: 09).

(a) The principles, such as, learning language by initially using speaking and teaching the order; sounds, vocabulary, and grammar in certain structures, were the focuses of audio-lingual method, while comprehensible learning in context was the main aim in communicative language teaching, that is to mean, the focus on fluency acquisition rather than accuracy.

(b) Reading and writing skills were skipped to the following stages of teaching in audio-lingual method, even though communicative language teaching was providing options to lecturers in these skills, i.e. to balance between language skills.

(c) In both methods, teaching pronunciation has been one of the main tasks; however, both have different approaches; while the audio-lingual method necessitates “native-like pronunciation” (accuracy/Accentedness), communicative language teaching regards “comprehensible pronunciation” (fluency/Intelligibility).

(d) Communicative language teaching approach changed the goals of teaching pronunciation; from “perfect pronunciation” to “functional intelligibility, communicability, increased self-confidence, the development of speech monitoring abilities, and speech modification strategies” (Morley, 1991). The classroom teaching methods and activities

⁴ Foreign Language

⁵ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

changed from "teacher-centred" into "student-centred" (Otlowski, 1998, as cited by Varasarin, 2007: 28).

Today, there are signs indicating that pronunciation instruction is neither moving nor developing as well as expected after the improvement in foreign language teaching syllabuses in terms of segmental and supra-segmentals. Both an inability to distinguish sounds that carry a high functional load, such as, /i/ in "list" and /i:/ in "least" and an inability to distinguish supra-segmental features like intonation and stress differences in yes/no and alternative questions or words' stress, can have a negative impact on the oral communication and the listening comprehension abilities of non-native speakers of English as in the case of Algerian learners. So, for the sake of success in teaching foreign languages, professional practitioners recommend the urgent but extensive teaching of pronunciation because it represents one of the essential pillars in ELT.

I.2. Pronunciation Importance in Foreign Language Teaching

Numerous researchers and authors, interested in ameliorating the area of pronunciation teaching, proved that pronunciation teaching is unquestionably the most complicated but significant aspect of ESL/EFL teaching. Consequently, in the process of communication, pronunciation has great importance because successful communication takes place only with correct pronunciation. In return, bad or poor pronunciation of English will only make people misunderstand the speaker easily and get tired of trying to figure out what he is saying, whereas, good pronunciation will encourage and persuade them to listen to the speaker willingly and intelligibly, thus the flow and continuum of communication remains fully maintained. Besides, without learning correct pronunciation other aspects of English language like grammar and vocabulary become useless.

Following the same line of thought, Abbas Pourhossein Gilakjani (2011: 01) underlines that speaking a second language involves different skills like grammar, vocabulary, instruction, and so on, but pronunciation is one of the most important skills in English Language Teaching (ELT). Moreover, if speakers have very bad pronunciation, their speech will not be understandable to the listeners, despite the fact that acquiring pronunciation is so difficult and time-consuming but essential to guarantee successful interaction and strain-free communication between speakers. In many ESL⁶/EFL

⁶ English as a Second Language

classrooms, teaching pronunciation is granted the least attention which is the same case in FL teaching in Algeria.

So, the most important part of learning a second language rests on pronunciation, advocated by Celce-Murcia et al. (1996). There is no doubt that we set about pronunciation to learn the foreign language, then we learn speaking, reading, writing and we finally reap the benefits and have an easier access to the second language (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, (1997, as cited by Chen Dan, 2006: 02). So pronunciation is crucially important for the whole of the learning process in terms of sounds articulation, intonation, or rhythm (segmentals and supra-segmentals). The pupils can effortlessly and gradually get into a habit of learning some incorrect pronunciations as a result of their own dialect or they could pick up mispronunciation from their ill-trained teachers.

In this connection, the reformists strongly believed in the significance and worthiness of teaching pronunciation from the start and advocated a list of “must-have” beliefs and qualities for both instructors and learners in EFL contexts, such as,

- 1- The spoken language is primary and that this should be reflected in an oral-based methodology.
- 2- The findings of phonetics should be applied to teaching and to teacher training.
- 3- Learners should hear the language first, before seeing it in written form.
- 4- Words should be presented in sentences, and sentences should be practised by grammar points in context, that is, grammar should be taught inductively.
- 5- Translation should be avoided, although the mother tongue could be used in order to explain new words or to check comprehension (Richards and Rodgers, 1992, as cited in⁷ 2012: 4).

To prove their claims, the forerunners of the movement have thought that language teachings have been beyond teaching grammar rules and translation of written materials. To them, speech patterns, rather than grammar rules, were the fundamental elements of language and their teaching methodology was, thus, shaped according to this view. In this regard, Wilhelm Viëtor noted that *“Reform must begin with the provision of accurate descriptions of speech based on the science of phonetics and there must be a properly trained language teaching*

⁷ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

profession” (Howatt, 1984), and added “*training in phonetics would enable teachers to pronounce the language accurately*” (Richards and Rodgers, 1992 as cited in Ibid. 05).

Abercrombie also says that, “*the language teacher ... will inevitably be a phonetician*”, and Klinghardt taught several language courses by initially introducing English pronunciation (Howatt, 1984). The ideals of the reformists inspired the basic rules of the Direct Methodists and accordingly provided new classroom teaching methods (Ibid. 05).

Furthermore, when speaking of the superfluity of pronunciation teaching and how it is impossible to teach pronunciation to non-native speakers as some authors claim, several opinions overlie each other, if not some of them may prevail. Actually, Ur (2006) is not the only writer to mention the redundancy of teaching pronunciation, for example, Suter and Purcell (1980) have already claimed that “*little relationship exists between teaching pronunciation in the classroom and attained proficiency in pronunciation*” (Otlowski, 1998, as cited in Ibid. 13) which clearly denotes the groundless teaching of pronunciation, if not its current redundant position.

In response to this idea, Pennington (1989) advocates that it does not exist a “*... firm basis for asserting categorically that pronunciation is not teachable or that it is not worth spending time on*” (Ibid. 13-15). Pronunciation is currently regarded as a main course and skill in English language teaching programmes through different methods not only drills, and it is an important part of the other courses as it should be maintaining its proper position in FL teaching syllabuses (Ibid. 14-15).

As a result, the unstable position of pronunciation causes various obstacles for the learner and it is widely argued that failure to produce correct English pronunciation “[...] *can weaken and undermine learners’ self-confidence, restrict social interactions, and negatively influence estimations of speaker’s credibility and abilities*” (Florez 1989). Indeed, it is likely that an EFL learner may take refuge into silence instead of mispronouncing a word in such a way that may result in a negative estimation of their ‘credibility and abilities’ and will certainly inhibit him/her from participating (as cited by Al-Sadig Yahya Abdalla, 2009: 2).

In addition, the place of pronunciation in EFL teaching seems to be variable and not safe, as it has been prone to many changes, if not having undergone some of them constantly. Nonetheless, an “*ear-before-eye*” method of teaching (Kelly, 1969, as cited in⁸ 2012: 02), according to which the learning of spoken language should be put before that of written language, was sometimes recommended, although not necessarily followed by

⁸ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

instructors who tend to blindly prioritize the other skills, such as, reading/writing over listening/speaking. Simply because they may not have enough time to practise oral activities or such skills can be learnt through time.

There are many reasons why the teaching of ESL/EFL pronunciation is currently less than effective, and it certainly is wrong to blame any group in the educational setting, whether teachers, pronunciation specialists, or academics without evidence. Language pronunciation is a topic of great theoretical interest and practical relevance which unfortunately has been out of fashion for some decades and it seems like, after some years of prosperity, the history is rewriting itself, thus preventing it again from regaining its royal status it once-upon-a-time enjoyed.

ESL/EFL teachers should focus on the learners' needs, level and ability, incorporate and fully integrate pronunciation into their oral skills and other classes and focus on both segmental and supra-segmental features whenever there is opportunity and time. Nonetheless, the flourished status pronunciation enjoyed once, decades ago, became a dream most of dedicated EFL teachers strive to make come true passionately to at least grant this aspect some respect and few hours to practise in classes.

I.3. Pronunciation Status in Foreign Language Teaching

Pronunciation teaching is a considerably momentous aspect in FL teaching that is difficult to acquire without constant guidance and perseverance and a huge amount of patience and self-control in front of the hardest responsibility ever a teacher can have, which is teaching clueless and blank minds a new foreign language that is totally different from Arabic and French scripts. But the true reality that is constantly encountered or rather usually witnessed in our educational contexts in general and many English language classrooms in particular is that teaching pronunciation has been and is still unfortunately granted the least attention compared to the other skills.

Still, even if pronunciation is being marginalized and overshadowed by the other skills, simply because it is considered as a sub-skill of the speaking skill more than a dependent one itself. Teachers tend to not faithfully stick to the textbooks entirely so it is up to individual teachers to incorporate pronunciation training into their lessons (Jenkins, 2002; Derwing & Munro, 2005).

However, a lack of formal training combined with an absence of programme directives and plans means that it is up to teachers to inform and prepare themselves on how to best meet their learners' needs (Breitkreutz, 2002; Fraser, 2002; Macdonald, 2002). Consequently, most teachers do not provide instruction at all and those few that do generally adopt a hit or miss approach, relying on materials that lack grounding and the desired results (as cited by Leah Gilner, 2006: 93-94).

This situation is worsened by the fact that even when included in textbooks, pronunciation is being marginalized and treated superficially (Marks, 2006; Silveira, 2002). Therefore, it is important to understand that learners are not receiving the required training they desperately need to reach the expected level in this important aspect of linguistic competence and oral communicative skills. Moreover, there is a risk of discrepancy between what should be taught and what is actually taught; hence an obvious priority is given to vocabulary and grammar in EFL classes at the expense of pronunciation (Ibid. 94).

This unreasonable and unjust status that characterized pronunciation as a marginalized and badly-treated skill over the last few decades provoked several authors to determine pronunciation's status in language teaching and, thus, describe the teaching of pronunciation as "The Cinderella Area of Foreign Language Teaching" (Greenwood, 2002; Kelly, 1969),

"Pronunciation has been something of an orphan in English programs around the world. Why has pronunciation been a poor relation? I think it is because the subject has been drilled to death, with too few results from too much effort."

(Gilbert, 1994, as cited by Chen Dan, 2006: 01)

This quotation clearly implies the exhausting use of pronunciation drills which drained it from its actual benefits and purposes, at the same time, tired out the teachers, and unnecessarily turned learners from active beings by nature to some passive depositories or programmed robots depending on memorization and habit rather than reasoning, positive retention, and critical thinking.

Following the same line of thought, Pennington and Richards (1986) (cited in Nunan: 1991, as cited by Nursat Jahan, 2011: 37) describe the current status of research on teaching pronunciation from the perspective of Communicative Language Teaching, where they suggest focusing on a long-term goal for teaching pronunciation. As a result, pronunciation deserves a better position, it should be taught as an integral part of oral language use, and teaching should aim to reduce the amount of native language influence as one of the major

factors affecting the learners' retention and reception of pronunciation. Similarly, Bouhadiba F.⁹ advocates,

It seems quite plausible to give pronunciation place of pride right from the start, i.e., at the early stages of learning process and to put emphasis on listening (reception) as a way leading to adequate pronunciation (production). (n.d. 03)

As a result, the quotation targets the issue of the implementation of pronunciation in EFL classrooms as early as possible. This way pronunciation status would be preserved in the upcoming years, i.e, they begin extensive teaching of segmental features from first year middle school, they keep integrating the same method in every EFL class for the future years. At the same time, Bouhadiba points out the emphasis on sound retention and reception that is essentially compulsory to lead the learners to sufficient and correct production of English sounds.

As pronunciation is linked to listening, vocabulary and grammar, the teacher probably should highlight these interdependent factors after first maintaining pronunciation as the key element throughout the teaching process. Once pronunciation is integrated into other programmes, more focus should be drawn on the error in phonological forms and structures in the programmes or syllabuses, those which can impair the learners from full comprehension and retention.

Admittedly, pronunciation is a teaching and learning process and it is of central importance because it comes as a part of successful oral production or communicative competence (Hişmanoğlu, 2006) which is a notion first put forward by Dell Hymes in 1966 as a response to Chomsky's linguistic competence (Çelik, 2008). However, clashing debates on the status of teaching pronunciation in FL2/FL3 teaching are still going on. Some linguists have argued that teaching pronunciation is redundant because learners could acquire it automatically over time as long as they are exposed to sufficient input, perhaps due to its being a "sub-skill" or its constant evolutionary and changing sense (Weeren and Theunissen, 1968; Suter and Purcell 1980; Ur, 2006), but some other researchers advocate the deliberate teaching of pronunciation (Wong, 1993; Otlowski, 1998; Rajadurai, 2001, as cited in¹⁰ 2012: 01-02). So, to gain a better understanding of these issues, one probably needs satisfactory background knowledge in the first place.

⁹ Bouhadiba Farouk (1952) Professor of English at University of Oran

¹⁰ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

As a result, quite a big number of great practitioners and authors, throughout the years, designed and recommended effective strategies, practical techniques, practice workbooks, and digital programmes to enhance the teaching of pronunciation and spread it quickly in EFL contexts. But today's instructors seem to neither fully understand the immense importance of pronunciation teaching that can affect the learners' oral and communicative performances and create an apparent shortage in their capacities, nor are they familiar with the modern and compulsory technological tools as mentioned above which facilitate and definitely accelerate the learning process. Nevertheless, EFL instructors tend to disassociate pronunciation from communication though they are strongly linked. Basically, every FL speaker who does not master its pronunciation will eventually suffer from a constant failure in communication because both language aspects correlate.

I.3.1. Pronunciation and Communication Correlation

It is one simple and straightforward equation connecting both pronunciation and communication, as both benefit and effect each other and can't be separated, they essentially have an interactive response. In other words, one of them delays or holds back the other one and the majority of researchers agree that pronunciation can either maintain communication or tear it down. As a result, communication is fully dependant on correct pronunciation or accuracy rather than solely relying on fluency.

In this connection, Hinofotis and Baily (1980), cited in Okita (1999), note that *"up to a certain proficiency standard, the fault which most severely impairs the communication process in EFL/ESL learners is pronunciation"*, not vocabulary or grammar (as cited by Nair et al., 2006: 27). Similarly, in one of her action research experiments for teaching correct and accurate pronunciation in china, Chen Dan describes pronunciation's importance after testing her students and she declares,

From this event, I was able to see it is very easy to understand meaning if the speaking is smooth, but if the speaking is disjointed and mispronounced, others might not understand the meaning. It's analogous to a fish out of water. Pronunciation is the foundation of speaking. Good pronunciation may make the communication easier and more relaxed and thus more successful. (2006: 02)

Hence, she clearly emphasizes how much accurate pronunciation is vital in teaching foreign languages as well as intelligibility to maintain the flow of communication and the continuity of interaction between interlocutors.

Moreover, the underlying premise is that the goals of pronunciation instruction are, first, helping students acquire knowledge, awareness, and skills that will address intelligibility and comprehensibility. Second, promoting the use of effective communication strategies when engaging interlocutors from diverse backgrounds (Dauer, 2005; Jenkins, 2000; Kachru and Nelson, 1996 as cited by Leah Gilner, 2006: 94).

Furthermore, pronunciation instruction should be based on learners' needs, directed by an understanding of the purposes and the appropriate context in which the language is likely to be used. Undoubtedly, FL teachers have a tendency to prioritize certain skills over others especially reading/writing skills plus grammar and vocabulary which receive more attention and practice than speaking/listening skills that keep dramatically falling behind the former, besides it seems to be a disadvantage for them.

I.4. Speaking/Listening Skills vs. Reading/Writing Skills

Pronunciation has always been perceived as a difficult area by teachers and learners alike. Like listening skill, pronunciation is, in most of the time, neglected in the process of language teaching in favour of reading and writing skills, which are rather more likely to lead to success in examination in cultures. That is why teachers are much more focused on those media, as in the case of Algeria, no oral examinations or official assessments take place during the year; thus, this proves that pronunciation still occupies the last position in EFL teaching.

However, it seems rather pointless to study a living foreign language at all if one does not intend to communicate in it with other speakers of that language and, to this end; one must learn how to pronounce it in a way which can be understood by a variety of listeners. English, whether by accident of history, foreign policy, or through purposeful educational policy, has arisen as a world lingua franca, and being intelligible when speaking it has therefore received a great deal of attention recently.

I.4.1. Speaking Skill

It is important at this point in time to make a distinction between speaking and pronunciation as it is sometimes wrongly applied as interchangeable skills. Simply put, pronunciation is viewed as a sub-skill of speaking. Fraser (2000) explains that being able to speak English includes a number of sub-skills; of which pronunciation is "by far the most important" (other sub-skills of speaking include vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics). She

argues that “*with good pronunciation, a speaker is intelligible despite other errors; with poor pronunciation, a speaker can be very difficult to understand, despite accuracy in other areas*” (as cited by Nair et al., 2006: 28).

In spite of this, the teaching of pronunciation remains largely neglected in the field of English language teaching from a worldwide perspective compared to the other skills, for this reason it was named “The Cinderella Area”. It must be borne in mind that listening and speaking go smoothly hand-in-hand in foreign language teaching because speech is a very important medium through which communication is achieved. That is to say, language is primarily speech and it is more basic to communication than the written form (Larsen-Freeman, 2000 as cited by Mufit Senel, 2006: 112).

According to Knowles (1987) written language has the advantage that it is permanent so that it can be studied easily and at leisure, but spoken language is more ‘elusive’. In other words, written language looks like an imperfect version of the spoken language, especially, for the case of English that is not a phonetic language which offers no direct relation between letters and sounds. As individuals, we all learn to speak before we learn to read and write; which means, people learn the language by hearing the sounds spoken around them in their environment. Unlimited numbers of sounds, especially speech sounds and words uttered in the language, help the learner to understand and to produce the language orally (Ibid. 113).

By the same token, Chaney (1998) indicates that speaking is, “*The process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts*” (as cited by Fewzia Bougandoura, 2012: 02). This point led many scholars like Richards (2002) and Florez (1999) to consider the speaking skill also as an interactive and productive ability that involves producing and receiving and processing information to master the target language quickly. According to Brown (1994), teaching speaking involves both macro and micro skills; the former refers to producing the smaller chunks of language, for instance, phonemes, morphemes, words, collocation, and phrasal units. Whereas, the latter implies that the speakers should accomplish appropriately communicative functions according to situations, participants and goals (Ibid. 02). Furthermore, the status of the speaking skill will be discussed from an Algerian researcher’s point of view.

I.4.2. The Status of Speaking Skills in Language Teaching

English language teaching has long focused on written form at the expense of the spoken one. Actually, educators, researchers, and teachers acknowledged that even though some active pupils are able to write sentences and simple passages correctly; they are incapable of interacting in English inside the classroom; unable to utter a very simple question or answer properly, and sometimes they even mispronounce some easy English words. In fact, many scholars and instructors are convinced that any person learning any given language, but incapable of speaking it; it is simply as if learning a language in a vacuum. They are often resembled to a pianist who excels in musical theories but unable to play the notes.

Therefore, teaching speaking skill should not be perceived as an end itself, but rather a medium through which the EFL learners would be able to develop their oral proficiency. Besides, they are expected to have the benefit of practicing all the language skills in an integrated, natural, communicative way, even if one skill is the main focus of a given session. Hence, instructors must be aware of such a fact and must maintain certain equilibrium between the four skills, instead of prioritizing one skill over another one.

The Algerian educational authorities have shifted from one approach/method to another in order to pave the way to improving the teaching/learning of English language. Despite these educational procedures and changes to maintain the teaching/learning of the target language, secondary school learners encounter difficulties and display low achievement particularly in oral skills.

To account for this pedagogical problematic, one should bear in mind that English being taught as a foreign language means that, unlike French L2, there is an absence use of the target language within the social community (Ibid. 03-04), merely, because of the low focus on it during middle school. Not only that, but the listening skill is also being severely overlooked, thus overpowered by reading/writing skills when it comes to learning sounds and speech segments for the first time.

I.4.3. Listening Skill

Listening to the modelling sounds is commonly essential in teaching pronunciation. Listening to native or native-like sounds plays an important role in pronunciation teaching since correct input is of a practical way to turn into correct output. The ear plays a crucially significant role in the sounds' perception and retention process. Furthermore, Harmer (2001) states that *“the key to successful pronunciation teaching is to have the learners listen and notice how English is spoken either on audio or videotape or from the teachers themselves”* (as cited in¹¹2012: 20). Harmer's point is obviously referring to the link between self awareness and intelligibility when introduced to the sounds of a foreign language for the first time directly through native speakers or teachers who clearly possess a great command over its pronunciation and phonetics as well as phonology.

Moreover, Dalton (1997) believes that if the English language sounds are not received clearly, the learners' mind converts them into the closest sounds in their native language. Correspondingly, Bouhadiba discusses the issue of reception,

There is a tendency to focus on production as being the most obvious problem affecting our learners. In fact, most research indicates that it is more of a reception difficulty in the first place. (n.d. 02)

Once again, the problem of which aspect to concentrate on “fluency or accuracy” comes to light as far as teaching pronunciation of English sounds is concerned. Nonetheless, teachers encourage their learners to produce sounds and practise articulation solely and so little focus and attention falls on the issue of reception. When learners mishear or misinterpret uttered sounds, he/she either converts it to the closest sound in his/her mother tongue or convinces him/herself to keep quiet and cease to participate.

In spite of the fact that the positive effect of phonetic instruction as a teaching method on learners' listening ability has been reported by some researchers, little research has been carried out in this regard in the Algerian context. Similarly, in an attempt to provide an effective way for enhancing high school students' listening skill in Korea, Chung (2005) taught English pronunciation and found that it had a positive effect on their listening ability (Ibid. 21).

¹¹ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

By contrast, Shimamune & Smith (1995) conducted a study on the relationship between pronunciation and listening discrimination in which Japanese students were taught to pronounce and discriminate English words that contain unfamiliar phonemic contrasts (e.g., rock and lock), not to mention that Japanese people naturally do not differentiate between /l/ and /r/ sounds . The results of their research indicated an interaction between pronunciation and listening discrimination. Teaching pronunciation was found to be easier than teaching listening discrimination (as cited by Ghorbani, 2011: 26-27).

Moreover, if the general principles of pronunciation are not clear or are confused by one's native language or if a person has developed incorrect habits in pronunciation, the written word may only give misleading information (as cited by Nina Kuuti, 2009: 06). Resulting from this overview of English pronunciation teaching as regards Listening/Speaking skills, it appears that a revised version of EFL teaching syllabuses should first and foremost put pronunciation before the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, and apply the "Ear before Eye" method, but also the very fact that a synonym for "language" is "tongue", i.e. it should primarily be considered as something oral.

Further research in this field should investigate these claims in more detail. In addition, such a revision of the teaching of English pronunciation goes hand-in hand with a close analysis of the recurrent difficulties that Algerian learners come up against, as well as, an account of the most frequent errors to avoid in foreign language teaching and learning. Another case in FL pronunciation teaching should be highlighted which is the constant conflict between accuracy and fluency. Somehow, without a doubt, correlating both aspects has become controversial because today's practitioners cannot help but separate them.

I.5. Accuracy vs. Fluency in Pronunciation Teaching

When objectives and methods differ and even might collide in the way pronunciation must be taught, some researchers believe that a learner must acquire the ability to produce and recognize all speech sounds used by the speaker of the target language. Thus, the learner guarantees an accurate articulation of sounds regarding phonetics and grammar; while others think that if the goal is solely communication then it is not necessary to teach all phonemic aspects.

That is to mean, if their principle goal in the long run is to teach the foreign language, they should learn pronunciation accurately, correctly, and authentically; otherwise, when communication is possible, there is no obligation to strive for perfect pronunciation. But this cannot mean that everyone accepts such a statement, and it is true that teachers of foreign languages either focus on accuracy or fluency but not both.

One of the general objectives in the foreign language teaching, maybe the most substantial one, is to teach the learners to speak the target language accurately and intelligibly since to learn a language also means to produce its sounds, utterances, and the words properly and correctly rather than just being able to communicate lousily with the people in the target language community.

Joann Miller (2009) on the one hand, introduces the two concepts as it follows, “*accuracy is the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently*” (p. 04). However, accuracy is always associated with, not only grammar but, phonetics as well, as it surrounds all sides of correct and accurate sounds and words uttered to produce meaningful sentences when exposed to a foreign language for the first time. She also adds,

Whenever learners are involved in communication they are concerned with accuracy, in that they are making the best use of their language system to meet the communicative demands placed upon it. In spontaneous communication learners have little time to reflect on the langue they produce. But if they are given time to prepare what they have to produce then there will be a concern for formal accuracy within a communicative context (Ibid. 04)

That is to mean, accuracy is, regardless fluency, much more needed and important within any given communicative context to maintain the stability of communication and interaction between interlocutors. At the same time they possess certain proficiency in language system, be it grammar, phonetics, vocabulary, etc. By contrast, fluency is the ability to produce written and/or spoken language with ease, speak with a good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary and grammar, communicate ideas effectively, and produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties or a breakdown of communication.

Normally, foreign language teachers give more attention to and put more focus on fluent communication because for them communication stability is more important than accurate articulation inside the classroom, performing oral activities or being in an active conversation with a native speaker. However, such views always vary from one teacher to another one.

On the other hand, in his article, Nursat Jahan (2011) focuses more on accuracy in speaking and advocates that accurate pronunciation helps the learners achieve goal in communication, i.e. their utterance can be understood by the audience clearly and easily and they will also be able to understand native speakers' conversations easily. But achieving accuracy in pronunciation does not become so easy for the learners and teaching pronunciation seems to be difficult for the teachers as well (p.37).

Accordingly, Bouhadiba views that in Algerian educational contexts also FL teachers avoids teaching pronunciation and says,

Most of teachers of English in Algeria, and probably elsewhere, see pronunciation as the most difficult teaching aspect. Some would even deliberately set it aside as it gets them involved in the "wildworld" of Phonetics (mostly articulatory in the case of Algeria) and Phonology which they did not grasp or disliked as BA students of English.

(n.d. 01)

As a result, teaching pronunciation, particularly Phonetics, is stereotyped to be the most difficult aspect to be taught in FLT. Admittedly, it is the same case in Algerian schools, where teachers tend to intentionally overlook teaching it to their learners despite its vitality and usefulness for the sake of well-improved pronunciation and stable communication achievement. Ur (2006) also gave several important clues to improve learners' pronunciations. She defends that,

Pronunciation improvement is not to achieve a perfect imitation of a native accent, but simply to get the learner to pronounce accurately enough to be easily and comfortably comprehensible to other speakers.
(as cited in¹² 2012: 12)

¹² <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

She suggested that teaching pronunciation did not mean exact imitation of a native accent or necessarily obtain full accentedness, but referred to pronouncing comprehensible and intelligible utterances. Of course, it is certain that for a foreigner to have a “perfect” accent might be difficult to achieve as Ur (2006) mentioned, but to be, at least, an understandable or comprehensible speaker is one of the leading aims in teaching pronunciation.

The truth is that no matter how hard we try or what our language abilities are, a second language will often sound somehow different when spoken by a native speaker of the language. Even though one may have a thorough knowledge of grammar and know a great range of vocabulary, it will rarely sound the same on his/her lips (Hanna Winiewska, 2000: 1). Here the author is trying to point out the problem of the must-be-taught accent which also seems overlooked by teachers in pronunciation teaching classes and instructions considering the fact that teaching the RP (Received Pronunciation) in middle schools is a bit early but necessary in order to grasp and retain, not only native-like pronunciation, but the basic intonation and rhythm as well.

Conversely, grasping the pronunciation of a foreign language or even master it flawlessly would be merely impossible if the learners encounter some crucial difficulties and the teachers perform no immediate remedies or solutions. Some of the main factors that impair learners from attaining pronunciation will be discussed in the following section.

I.6. Factors Affecting Learning Pronunciation

It is worthy to mention that language learners always come across some difficulties and worries while learning a new foreign language. One of the most remarkable difficulties seen in this process happens to be in the pronunciation of the foreign language vocabulary. So, foreign language learners have a lot of problems with pronunciation of the target language because of some important factors, be they psychological, linguistic, or pedagogical, for example, native language factor (mother tongue interference), age, environment, personality, etc. which strongly affect their motivation in learning the FL.

Rivers (1986) urges that all persons have experience and familiarity when listening to foreigners’ speaking language, hence, they suffer from having a great difficulty in understanding what they are trying to say (for instance, watching a movie or a programme without the Arabic subtitles), not because of their lack of knowledge of vocabulary and language structure, but because the sounds they produce seem peculiar to them and the voice

rises and falls in unexpected places. This emphasizes a well-known fact that most of the people learning a foreign language encounter some problems of pronunciation of the new language, due to some contributory factors. Consequently, they fail in oral communication although they are sufficient enough in other skills of the language (as cited by Mufit Senel, 2006: 112).

Kenworthy (1987, cited in Nunan, 1991, as cited by Nursat Jahan, 2011: 37) has identified six main factors affecting pronunciation learning. These are,

1. The native language
2. The age factor
3. Amount of exposure
4. Phonetic ability
5. Attitude and identity
6. Motivation and concern for good pronunciation

Accordingly, Ur (2006) adds the intelligibility factor that links both fluent utterances and accurate pronunciation, and which she thinks is essentially compulsory for communication maintainability. So, these crucial factors will be explained respectively in the following part of the chapter for further reflection and consideration of their significance when taken into advantage neglected by the teachers in foreign language pronunciation teaching.

I.6.1. The Native Language Factor

Needless to say, learners exposed to a foreign language speak it in a different way, sometimes slightly different and sometimes highly different than the native speakers' do, which is called "a foreign accent", the nature of which is determined to a large extent by a learner's native language (Avery & Ehrlich, 1987). This is known as mother tongue interference, that is to say, every language in the world has different varieties and different accents. Therefore, the way we speak is part of our identity, that is, phonemic differences between languages cause the speaker to have a foreign accent. As a result, there may not be any difference in the pronunciation of [ɪ] and [i], and then a foreign accent carries the sound characteristics of the learners' native language. As known, a language is part of a culture; thus, mother tongue interference is inevitable, which is native language influence on

the pronunciation of the target language learning process. This view had been endorsed by Whorfian Hypothesis (Ibid. 112-113).

As users of Arabic language, there is a difficulty in some English words and sounds which are not found in our native language. For example, /v / sound do not exist in Arabic alphabet, and though it is an easy-to-learn sound it does not mean all learners can pronounce it at first hand. The other problem occurs when the rules for combining the sounds in forms of syllables are different in two languages. English allows some consonant sound clusters which Arabic does not have, such as, /spl-/, /str-/. In foreign language learning, the influence of the native language is unavoidable; this happens to be a malady of language teachers. A well-trained English teacher in phonetics and phonology can diminish the negative transfers of sounds to a greater extent using specially prepared pronunciation teaching techniques and methods.

Through a little comparison and contrast, learners gain knowledge of the fact that there are similarities and differences between the sound system of their mother tongue and that of L2¹³ or L3¹⁴. In this way, the teacher tries to convince his/her learners that there would be no serious problems with the pronunciation of the similar-to-L1 sounds; however, it is necessary to spend enough time on the production of difficult sounds. The greater differences between the first and the second/third language structures, the more difficult the learning task will be (Hayati, 1997; Yarmohammadi, 2000 as cited by A. Majid Hayati, 2010: 122).

In this respect, Avery and Ehrlich, (cited in Thanasoulas, 2003) point out that the sound system of the native language can influence the learners' pronunciation of a target language in at least three ways. First, when there is a sound in the target language, which is absent from the learners' native sound inventory, or vice versa, learners may not be able to produce or even perceive the sound(s). Second, when the rules of combining sounds into words (i.e., phonotactic ¹⁵constraints/rules) are different in the learners' mother tongue from those of the target language, they cause problems for learners because these rules are language specific as they vary from one language to another. Third, since the rhythm and melody of a language determine its patterns of stress and intonation, learners may transfer these patterns into the target language (as cited by Gilakjani, 2011: 06).

¹³ Second Language

¹⁴ Third Language

¹⁵ the patterns in which the phonemes of a language may combine to form sequences.

Nunan (1991) has mentioned that teaching of pronunciation is dealt with from different points of view because influence of the first language seems prominent in the case of pronunciation and only gifted learners can attain the mastery over pronunciation, though they start learning language after puberty (as cited by Nursat Jahan, 2011: 36). Polivanov (1932) and Trubetzkoy (1958) state that L1's effect on L2 is indispensable, since, “*learners tend to map what they hear in L2 onto the sound system of their L1¹⁶*” (as cited in Leather, 1999: 27). As a result, the native language of the learners occupies the majority of his/her phonological background and its effect on L2/L3 sounds production is unavoidable but not necessarily unchangeable.

In this case, it is probably worthy to mention that the majority of native learners' accent in Mostaganem unintentionally forces them to transfer the misheard sound to the closest sound in their accent, such as, /θ/ to /t/ and /ð/ to /d/ if not the force of speech habit, and the former sounds are rarely pronounced in the accent spoken in Mostaganem, which is somehow problematic for them to learn and be familiar with the habit to pronounce dental fricative plosives at the beginning. In the same line of thought, Bouhadiba tackled the issue of English pronunciation and mother tongue influence and says,

A speaker of Arabic does not seem to encounter this particular pronunciation problem with the dental voiced fricatives as he has a similar sound [...], he will face other pronunciation difficulties (the most frequently cited ones are in the labial series [p, v] and in the final three consonant clusters
(n.d. 02)

Consequently, Algerian learners mainly do not find difficulties in pronouncing dental voiced fricatives / θ /, / ð / because these two sounds already exist in Arabic alphabet. By contrast, /p/, /v/ sounds are, in most of the time, difficult to pronounce especially for those who are unfamiliar with or lack proficiency in French language like people living in rural regions.

I.6.2. Age Factor

The influence of age on language acquisition and specifically its pronunciation may make adults find pronunciation more difficult than children do, and that they probably will not achieve native-like pronunciation. According to the “Critical Period Hypothesis” proposed by Lenneberg (1967) there is a biological or neurological period, which ends

¹⁶ First Language (mother tongue)

around the age of 12; after this period, it becomes extremely difficult to attain the complete mastery of a L2/L3 language, especially its pronunciation for the majority of learners (as cited in¹⁷ 2012: 17-18). As Krashen (1988) mentioned that acquirers who receive exposure to a 2nd/3rd language during childhood generally achieve higher L2/L3 language proficiency than those beginning as adults. He also stated that lateralization i.e. functional specialization of the brain, with some skills, as language, occur primarily in the left hemisphere and others may even be complete by the age of 4, not by puberty. Some researchers and neurolinguists have claimed that there is a strong connection between language learning and lateralization (Ibid. 18).

Lenneberg hypothesized that lateralization¹⁸ greatly effects pronunciation learning process. He had also added that right hemisphere in children is more active in the language function but as the child develops the two sides of the brain, he becomes specialized for different functions and thus lateralization takes place. “The critical age hypothesis” claims that there is such a biological timetable (Brown, 1987), “ *It has also been claimed that there is a critical age period for language learning, but it is widely discussed whether there is a critical period for language or not*” (Ibid. 18).

Similarly, in one of her interviews, Ur (2006) answered one of the addressed questions to her; “What difference does the learner's age make in learning pronunciation?” and she claims that,

Children seem to pick up accents very quickly; and the ability to do so seems to diminish with age; though this may be for psychological reasons (a need to preserve one's identity as expressed in the way one speaks) rather than physical or physiological capability. However, this diminished ability is compensated for to some extent by adults' increased ability to understand difficult explanations, discipline, and apply instructions. One conclusion might be that conscious pronunciation training is likely to be more helpful with classes of older learners. (Ibid. 16-17).

In a nutshell, since children are better in learning the language in short run, teaching pronunciation process should start before puberty because it has been claimed that beyond puberty it is quite difficult to teach the learners to acquire a native-speakers-like language accent. As a result, the age of the learner is highly important in the pronunciation learning of a foreign language due to the factors mentioned above. It is said that it is more desirable to

¹⁷ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

¹⁸ It is a slow process that begins around the age of 2 and is completed around puberty.

input English sounds into young children's brains before they reach the 'critical period' (yuzawa, 2006: 43). In view of that, Mrs. Naima Iddou-Derraz equally adds,

Long-term studies pointed out the success of young children over older children, and old children over adults. The findings demonstrated that children acquire native pronunciation in a second language easily and quickly simply because they possess certain flexibility in motor skills which adults do not have (2009: 12)

Therefore, the matter of acquiring a native-like accent is not impossible, but only if the learners are exposed to L2/L3 at a young age, besides being aware of the differences between their mother tongue and the target language helps them to avoid its influence, in addition to other factors which will be dealt with next.

I.6.3. The Amount of Exposure Factor

Another factor from the above list is the amount of exposure to the practice of English. Learners who live in an English speaking country are daily exposed to English and face no difficulty concerning the amount of exposure. But, if the learners who live in a non- English speaking country, like Algeria, in this case; English is neither a second language nor is properly and regularly spoken outside. Therefore, there will be no advantage for them to use it as frequently as French is used. So, these learners will only be exposed to focused-listening, and they will have no chance or opportunity to use the target language in a real environment, hence, no communication and if no communication takes place, there will not be language learning.

Since those learners will not have any English-speaking environment except their classrooms, they will have to be satisfied with listening, but it is clear that correct and accurate pronunciation cannot be taught by just asking pupils to listen to non-authentic listening courses carried out in the classrooms by the teacher himself whose pronunciation cannot be reliable all the time. It is not merely exposure that matters, but how the learners respond to the opportunities they are presented with (as cited by Mufit Senel, 2006: 115). If the learner does that, she/he will be more successful in case of improving his/her pronunciation.

The best ways of being exposed would be native speakers' videos, shows, films, CDs¹⁹, radio or television programmes, computer-assisted language teaching programmes,

¹⁹ Compact Disc

etc. Unfortunately such necessary instruction tools are rarely found in any Algerian classroom. Also, the amount of exposure is crucial and it must make the learners creative, practical and active, not passive and dull. Therefore, the dose of exposure must be adjusted with great caution. In addition to focusing on pronunciation and accent in class, teachers must encourage and motivate learners to speak English outside the classroom and provide them with assignments that structure those interactions.

I.6.4. Phonetic Ability Factor

According to *D. Jones*, there is a common view that some learners have a better ear capacity for foreign languages than some other learners. So, they are able to discriminate between two sounds more accurately than the others can be, and are able to imitate sounds even better. These people can be accepted as those with phonetic abilities. Also, this gifted phonetic ability of the learner affects the development and building of his/her pronunciation positively. But it does not necessarily mean that people who have a better phonetic ability will be successful and the others will not be. Thus, language aptitude exists in many people, but its degree is variable and depends on each learner's mental and oral capacities, as some learners have more ability others may have less or even none (*Ibid.* 116).

Besides the factor mentioned above, the influence of age must be stated as an efficient sub-factor for phonetic ability because the earlier beginners start to learn a language, the more successful they become. It is clear that learners may lose some of their abilities when they become older, so it can be difficult for them to pronounce the target language with a native or near native-like accent. The poor phonetic ability can be cured again by the foreign language teachers' patient attempts to fix such curable disabilities by understanding their learners' lacking abilities and needs through their feedback and examining their flaws or shortcomings of their performances. There are several devices to motivate the poor pronunciation of the learners like the phonetic labs and remedial pronunciation teaching techniques. Those learners must not be discouraged but must be treated meticulously and carefully.

I.6.5. Personality and Attitude Factors

These are also other important factors that affect the pronunciation of EFL learners in a bad way if the learners have negative attitudes for the target language community or they are introvert learners. For instance, shy or introvert learners do not want to take part in

classroom activities, they rather choose to remain silent instead of participation, so they cannot find any opportunities to make practice and to make use of phonological and/or phonetic activities. Besides, courageous or extrovert learners have more chance to improve their pronunciation and phonetic abilities by constant interaction with the teacher and self-monitoring or correction of mispronunciation.

According to Elliot (1995) learners who were more concerned about their pronunciation had better articulation of English as a Second Language. Sparks and Glachow's work (1991) on personality found similar results. They state that learners with motivation to learn with positive attitudes towards the target language and its native speakers were more successful than were learners with less positive attitudes. So, it is crucial for today's lecturers and practitioners to consider the "emotional factors", such as, the learners' "ego, identity, and the level of self-confidence" which will affect learners' learning process (Hişmanoğlu, 2006, as cited in²⁰ 2012: 19). As Moira Laidlaw (2005) says in her handbook focusing on the teacher's crucial role in this matter,

We believe that the teacher's own enthusiasm about his/her subject is what motivates students the most. If you love your subject, then it's more likely that your students will too. Your enthusiasm will lead you to question what you are doing (using the Action Planning process) in order to find better ways of doing it in the future".

(Cited by Chen Dan, 2006)

Hence, the teacher's positive or negative attitudes towards the subject he/she teaches can be greatly reflected on his/her learners' social demeanours and performances inside the classroom. So, they either like it, become determined to exceed themselves for better results, or hate it, become reluctant to further learning, and grow to avoid improving themselves once and for all.

Chen Dan is a Chinese university teacher and she had plenty of pronunciation problems in her classes; so, she hosted once Moira Laidlaw to observe her lecture at the same time she was putting everything she learnt from the former's handbook into practice and she continued,

The enthusiasm is so important that it could rebound on my students, because I was setting an example in the classroom. It is like spring

²⁰ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

water to encourage me to think continuously and learn more knowledge. In order to be a better teacher, never enable the students to call me a teaching robot. I must keep my enthusiasm to assist their motivation and ensure they like my class, listen in my class, understand the knowledge and develop their own abilities. Beside this, I need to show humour, tolerance, and patience. Whatever the age of my students, I should try my best to activate the atmosphere in the classroom. When I found the students feeling tired, sometime I would have a rest in the class and discuss some interesting things or invite one or two of students to sing a song. I found this could help the students gain confidence. Some of them had thought it was impossibly difficult to study English, and I could look down on them. It was a vicious circle for them. By teaching them with enthusiasm, humour and patience, I broke this vicious circle (Ibid. 08)

This young and novice teacher did not give up on her students by the beginning of the road and she dedicated most of her time in looking for and improvising new techniques and strategies to boost her students' spirits, change their views and static negative attitudes, and teach them to look at the bright side of English, and even love it no matter how much they hated it in the past. No matter what their ages were or tired they could get, she counterattacked the obstacles with humour, patience, and tolerance to fight away everything that could discourage and undermine them from continuing to learn English and of course help them gain more confidence.

I.6.6. Motivation Factor

If the learners are highly motivated to have a better pronunciation, they can develop a special concern for learning pronunciation, and become more eager to take part in the activities, pay more attention to discriminate the sounds of the target language, and they try to produce better utterances. According to Brown (1997) the motivation is thought of as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to perform a particular action. He also stated that learning a foreign language requires some of all three levels of motivation which can be global, situational, or task-oriented. For example, a learner may possess high global motivation but low task motivation on the written mode of the language (as cited by Mufit Senel, 2006: 117).

When it comes to motivation in FL teaching, they always refer to Gardner and Lambert's research on motivation wherein two main types are highlighted. The first type of motivation is instrumental which is possessing the appropriate motivation to learn the L2 for the value of linguistic, occupational, and financial achievement. The second type is integrative motivation, which describes the desire to continue learning about the L2/L3

culture and integrate into the society; thus, have positive attitudes for its population and their traditional cues and views.

According to Gardner and Lambert, students with integrative motivation would be expected to work harder to develop communication skills in the second language because they are more likely interested than their less interested counterparts to seek out native speakers of the language (Ibid. 117).

Needless to say, teachers may need to distinguish the source of a learner's motivation in order to meet particular needs. That is, pronunciation teaching must be directed according to the learners' needs, expectations, attitudes, intelligence, etc. of the learners. At the same time, motivation can be achieved by paying attention to the learners' concern for pronunciation, because they generally are not aware of that the way they speak is full of irritation and misunderstanding for the hearer, not to mention, inhibiting them inside the classroom which seems embarrassing, hence, it drives the learners to quit participating and might lose interest in the whole subject.

I.6.7. Intelligibility Factor

In pronunciation teaching, the goal is neither to help learners to attain native-like accents nor to promote comfortable intelligibility to native speakers, but to ensure mutual intelligibility among non-native speakers of English. Therefore, J. Kenworthy (1987 as cited by Hanna Winiewska, 2000: 02) enhances the importance of pronunciation teaching in terms of intelligibility. She indicates that foreign speakers need to be intelligible, so that they can communicate correctly and comfortably. The author defines the term as something 'close enough' to native-like pronunciation and not exact one. In practical terms,

If a foreign speaker substitutes one sound or feature of pronunciation for another, and the result is that the listener hears a different word or phrase from the one the speaker was aiming to say, we say that the foreigner's speech is unintelligible (Ibid. 02)

Such a situation might create misunderstandings between speakers and might lead them into serious problems. Likewise, a similar view is presented by J. Harmer (1991) who states that *"They need to be able to say what they want to say and this means that their pronunciation should be at least adequate for the purpose"* (Ibid. 02).

This in a row, involves the sounds of language, stress, rhythm and intonation. Essam Hanna Wahba (1998) highlights learners' need to understand the functions of these

components. The first requires special attention as many problems related to pronunciation can be attributed to the differences between the sounds of their native language and English. However, this does not de-emphasize the importance of other components in phonetics teaching. Thus, *“work on pronunciation, whether in the form of feedback or in the form of explicit lessons, can help to further other instructional goals in the language curriculum”* (Pennington, 222).

The work on pronunciation of individual sounds can help learners distinguish individual words from the passage in listening comprehension (Ibid. 02). This purely highlights the importance of teaching segmentals and articulatory phonetics integration into the language curriculum for more proficiency.

Consequently, some factors that are effective in pronunciation accuracy are examined here. All of these factors apply much influence on the learners. It is impossible to change the age and phonetic ability of the learners, and it is clear that the influence of age is undeniable in language learning process. Children are more successful than the adults. When we take into consideration the children of immigrants, we see the difference between their counterparts. Since they start their learning process in their early ages in the target language spoken country, they can be able to speak the target language with a native-like accent.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, all the elements being discussed earlier, one way or another, highlight the importance of pronunciation aspect in FL teaching. Several researchers emphasize the urgent focus on teaching correct pronunciation to young learners from both fluency and accuracy perspectives. They encourage today’s instructors and practitioners to equalize between reading/writing skills and speaking/listening ones, so their learners could gain adequate efficiency and proficiency in all aspects of the target language.

Bearing in mind that many factors interfere in this process and the teachers’ job is to lessen the negative results by paying attention to similar difficulties and fight them with the appropriate solutions and remedies. However, in many Algerian middle schools, pronunciation seems to be given the least consideration and remains the Cinderella area in FLT. It still has not gained back the prestigious position it once occupied after the so many reforms that took place in the past years, the same reforms introduced phonetic notation and transcription and persuaded practitioners of the field of teaching to incorporate it as an effective teaching method for the improvement and betterment of pronunciation.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Preliminary Considerations in Phonetic Transcription Teaching

Chapter II

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Preliminary Considerations in Phonetic Transcription Teaching

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to discussing phonetic transcription in foreign language teaching. First of all, some preliminary definitions are put forth to introduce phonetic transcription and its types, “narrow and broad transcriptions” and their accessibility and easy usage in enhancing pronunciation learning. These definitions are followed by a brief history of Phonetic Transcription, its emergence in the 18th century, its development through time as different phoneticians worked hard to develop it from its retrograded state, and make it easy to retain for the upcoming generations, through the creation of the Alphabet of the International Phonetic Association (IPA). This organization strongly favoured teaching the spoken language (pronunciation) first before the written one (grammar and vocabulary), and also accentuated the integration of Phonetic Transcription into FL syllabuses as a useful pronunciation teaching method.

For more clarity and demonstration, two experiments are displayed, one took place in Iran and the second one in Finland, both researchers experiment the effects of teaching phonetic transcription on their learners and the results were approximately satisfactory. Afterward, a short review on the phonetician Harold E. Palmer’s achievement in FL teaching and his successful experiments particularly in phonetic instruction is presented in order to provide the readers with a glance about his dedication to teaching and continuous attempts to elevate this field. He also shared with his fellow phoneticians the same view of Phonetic Transcription implementation in EFL teaching. The chapter is concluded with a recently established theory called “The SET Theory”, the initials stand for “Sound, Evaluation, and Transcription” and it was implemented into the Japanese teaching contexts for pronunciation upgrading.

I.7. Phonetic Transcription

Transcription, in its linguistic sense, has been defined as the process of recording the phonological and/or morphological elements of a language in terms of a specific writing system. Transcription, in other words, is writing down a language in a way that does not depend on the prior existence of a writing system but rather using a newly devised writing system or distinctive symbols. Peter Roach defines Phonetic Transcription in his encyclopedia as, “*the writing down of a spoken utterance using a suitable set of symbols. In its original meaning, the word implied converting from one representation (e.g. written text) into another (e.g. phonetic symbols), (2004: 82).* Hence, the invention of the phonetic transcription happened under the pressure of different and peculiar languages’ pronunciations and old manuscripts which needed urgent and necessary decipherment and interpretation for further research. Polàchová (2006) describes it as, “*a mean used to express the pronunciation in written or printed text. It is often based on special characters and glyphs assigned to the appropriate sounds*” (p. 07). Further more, Jaqueline Bauman Waenglar defines it this way,

Broadly defined, phonetic transcription is the use of phonetic notation to record utterances (Abercrombie, 1967). Phonetic notation refers to a set of symbols that stand for sound segments. In other words, phonetic notation uses a specific type of symbol system to describe each speech sound within a given language (2008: 52)

Systems of transcription have existed from the earliest times. Traditional writing systems of most languages may originally have been transcriptions of speech. Journalists, missionaries, colonial administrators, teachers, traders, travellers, and scholars have all, at one time or another, required a precise way of writing down previously unwritten languages for various purposes, for example, to improve communication, to make available translations of the Bible and of noteworthy literary works, to provide education, to record folk literature, and so on.

For phoneticians above all, it is essential to have a notation system that allows sounds to be referred to unambiguously (A Kemp, 2006: 396). Admittedly, this notation system has undergone changes through time and it evolved to have types, narrow transcription with diacritics and broad transcription which is the simple presentation of sounds frequently used in FL dictionaries.

I.7.1. Types of Transcription

I.7.1.1. Narrow and Broad Transcriptions

It is said that the truest representation of the sounds of a spoken utterance is a recording. But sounds cannot be printed on paper, and even a graphic representation, for instance, an oscillogram²¹ or spectrogram²² may be impossible to read. The most detailed way of representing speech sounds with printed symbols is a close or a narrow transcription. Such a transcription tries to represent as much details as possible and encodes dialectal details and peculiarities of a speaker through the use of diacritics. Such a detailed transcription would not be very helpful for a language learner looking up the pronunciation of a word in a dictionary, because there can be many possible narrow transcriptions for one word in a given language.

For such a purpose, an idealized or broad transcription is much more appropriate. Such a transcription shows much less details but represents the essential sounds that have to be used to pronounce a word correctly without including superfluous details that might be language-specific or speaker-specific. For example, a “p” at the beginning of a word in English is pronounced with aspiration; that is, it is produced with a certain amount of audible airflow after the release of the plosive, thus, it is represented by a small “h” next to the sound [p^h].

A dictionary would transcribe only [p] without indicating the aspiration aspect. In French, such a release has to be produced without this flow of air (i.e. without aspiration), but the dictionary would also transcribe it a [p] (*Henningz and Jongman, 2010: 23-24*). Moreover, all the changes and developments mentioned earlier took time and effort of many phoneticians who dedicated everything for the betterment of this notation system. A brief history of phonetic transcription will be dealt with in the following section.

I.7.2. A Brief History of Phonetic Transcription

In the 18th century, social reformers tried to establish a standard form of pronunciation to facilitate the spread of literacy, thus, he reformed spelling systems that were suggested every time. Thomas Sheridan (1719–1788) was one of the firsts to publish a pronouncing dictionary of English in 1780, which gave a respelling to every word. Afterwards, a similar dictionary was published in 1791 by John Walker (1732–1807). In America, spelling reform

²¹ A record produced by an electric current

²² A photographic visual and electronic representation of a spectrum

led the famous American statesman, scientist, and philosopher, Benjamin Franklin, to put forward a new alphabet in 1768 that was limited to 26 symbols of which six were newly invented to replace the ambiguous letters (A Kemp, 2006: 400).

Next, it was William Thornton (1759–1828), a Scottish American, who travelled and lived in many places also attempted to reform English spelling, and in the longer term to make the transcription of unwritten languages possible. His dissertation, entitled “Cadmus”, or “a dissertation on the elements of written language” (1793), won the Magellanic gold medal²³ of the American Philosophical Society²⁴ (Ibid. 400). The notation he used was Roman-based and introduced some well-designed additional letters.

The increasing involvement of Europeans with the languages of Asia, Africa, and America, whether as traders, missionaries, travellers, or colonial administrators, emphasized the need for a standard, universal alphabet for all the languages. One of the first phoneticians and researchers to try to provide a transliteration for Asian languages was the brilliant English oriental scholar and linguist Sir William Jones (1746–1794). He was a highly skilled phonetician, and during his time as a high court judge in India (1783–1794), he saw the need for a consistent way of transcribing languages (Ibid. 400).

His system was presented in a dissertation on the orthography of Asiatic words in Roman letters (1788). An ideal solution, he believed, would be to have a natural character for all articulated sounds. The ‘grammatical analogy’ would not be lost, and there would be no danger of representing ‘a provincial and unrefined pronunciation’. The system was not intended as a universal alphabet, his notation was confined to the letters of the Roman alphabet, supplemented by digraphs and a few diacritics for regional dialects (Ibid. 400).

Subsequently, another ambitious phonetician, Francis Lodwick (1619–1694), published a similar system in 1686 under the title “An essay towards a universal alphabet”. He stated in his text the important principle that “*no single character should have more than one sound, nor any one sound be expressed by more than one character.*” Another iconic alphabet was published in 1765 by the French scholar and magistrate, Charles de Brosses (1709–1777). The work was intended for scholars investigating languages, rather than for everyday usage. Brosses’s understanding of speech production is suspect in a number of

²³ Or Magellanic Premium which is a prize awarded for major contributions in the field of navigation, astronomy, or natural philosophy. It was established in 1786 through a grant by Jean-Hyacinthe Magellan, Benjamin Franklin, then President of the American Philosophical Society,

²⁴ Henceforth APS, founded in 1743 and located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It is an eminent scholarly organization of international reputation that promotes useful knowledge in the sciences and humanities through excellence in scholarly research, professional meetings, publications, library resources, and community outreach.

ways; for example, he classes /s/ as a nasal consonant, and his first attempt at notation was complex (Ibid. 401). Hence, for the improvement of an international notation system, François Volney introduced a prize for ambitious researchers who can devise a new system that could surpass the old ones.

I.7.2.1- Volney and the Volney Prize

The French orientalist, statesman, and reformer, Count Constantin François Volney (1757–1820), had been concerned for many years about the difficulties experienced by Europeans in learning oriental languages, and the poor standard or procedure followed when teaching these languages. His book, “Simplification des langues orientales” (Paris, 1795), put forward a system for transliterating Arabic, Persian, and Turkish into Roman script, supplemented by a few Greek letters and some newly invented symbols. During a visit to America from 1795 to 1798, he stayed with William Thornton, and while there, he became acquainted with Sir William Jones’s alphabet (Ibid. 401).

He conceived the idea of a universal alphabet, not for scholarly purposes, but to act as a practical tool for travellers, traders, etc. However, Volney realized that further research was needed, and his final gesture was to leave 24 000 francs in his will, for a prize to be awarded by “L’institut de France” to anyone who could devise a suitable ‘harmonic alphabet’ (Kemp, 1999). The Volney Prize for the first year (1822) was to be for an essay setting out the necessary conditions for such an alphabet.

The prize winners were both German librarians, Josef Scherer (1829) who argued that what was needed was a transcription reflecting pronunciation, rather than a transliteration, whereas A. A. E. Schleiermacher (1787–1858), the co-winner, favoured a transliteration, for very much the same reasons as those given by Sir William Jones. Scherer and Schleiermacher submitted detailed transcription systems for the 1823 prize, which was won by Scherer. The alphabet was never adopted for wider use. Further essays on transcription were submitted for the Volney Prize over the next 20 years, but the commission set up to administer the prize believed none of the essays had the ‘final answer’ to the problem (Ibid. 401).

After that, Alexander Melville Bell, who was the son of an elocution teacher who, between the years 1843 and 1870, lectured in the universities of Edinburgh and London. In 1864, he gave public illustrations of his new scheme for recording speech in writing, and in 1867 the system was published under the title “Visible speech”, the science of universal

Alphabets. Bell's symbols were much better in design than most alphabets of this kind, but he faced the immense task of persuading people to adopt a system that looked very different from what they were used to seeing. The alphabet failed to find supporters outside the circle of his pupils.

Additionally, Henry Sweet (1845–1912), perhaps the greatest of 19th-century phoneticians, studied under Bell, and his “Handbook of phonetics” (1877) was intended to be an exposition and development of Bell's work, but in this book he used a Roman-based notation, which he called “Romic”. However, in 1880, he took over Bell's notation, which he regarded as “*an improvement on any possible modification of the Roman alphabet*” for scientific purposes. He modified it and added some symbols, but always had a feeling that, even for more practical purposes, the necessity to add other devices to the Roman alphabet made it cumbersome and inefficient. Sweet's organic alphabet did not enjoy a long life, nor did the idea of iconic alphabets, even though Daniel Jones and Paul Passy (1859–1940) thought it worthwhile to propose another similar scheme in “Le maître phonétique” (1907) (Ibid. 405-406). All those phoneticians' attempts interrelated and gave birth to the most worldwide known association for phonetic transcription notation the IPA.

I.7.3. The Alphabet of the International Phonetic Association

L'Association Phonétique Internationale was founded in 1897. It grew out of two previous organizations, The Phonetic Teachers' Association that was founded in Paris in 1886, and L'Association Phonétique des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes, which replaced it in 1889. The first version of the IPA alphabet based on Pitman's alphabet of 1847, and on Sweet's broad Romic, appeared in 1888. From the beginning, the emphasis was on practical use for language teaching. Consequently, the symbols were chosen in terms of clarity, familiarity, and economy. The published IPA principles predetermine that,

There should be a separate sign for each distinctive sound; that is for each sound which, being used instead of another in the language, can change the meaning of a word, i.e. for each single phoneme (Ibid. 407).

Over the years, the alphabet has been modified for use as a general phonetic resource, to make detailed phonetic transcriptions and comparisons of language sounds. Furthermore, diacritics have been accepted as permissible for certain limited purposes. The IPA principles have been altered in certain aspects, notably to make it clear that IPA symbols should not be

seen simply as representations of sounds, but as *“shorthand ways of designating certain intersections of a set of phonetic categories which describe how each sound is made.”*

However, it is still stated that the sounds that are represented by the symbols are primarily those that serve to distinguish one word from another in a language. The alphabet of P. W. Schmidt was first published in 1924 who kept most of Lepsius’s symbols, adding some diacritics to distinguish sounds left undifferentiated by Lepsius, but introduced the IPA symbols /æ/ and /œ/ (Ibid. 407-409).

At its annual meeting in January 1887, the name of the association was changed from ‘Phonetic Teachers’ Association’ to ‘Association Phonétique des professeurs de langues vivantes’. The Association was rapidly becoming more international also in the composition of its membership, and on 5th January 1888 the first international council was elected. Until then, the administration of the association had been solely in the hands of Passy and his colleagues in Paris. Later on, Passy withdrew as president in favour of Wilhelm Viëtor, although he maintained his leading role as a member of the executive committee and editor of *The Phonetic Teacher* (Richard Smith, 2004: 418).

By that time, French had been adopted as the official language of the association, and in 1889 its bulletin appeared for the first time with the new title “Le maître phonétique”. The journal continued to be printed in phonetic transcription, but the alphabet was changed to one which Passy had devised himself, based largely on Sweet’s Broad Romic. Eventually, it evolved into the International Phonetic Alphabet. A provisional set of suggestions for such an alphabet was published in the August 1889 issue of *The Phonetic Teacher*, as follows,

1. There should be a separate letter for each distinctive sound; that is, for each sound which, being used instead of another, in the same language, can change the meaning of a word.
2. When any sound is found in several languages, the same sign should be used in all. This applies also to very similar shades of sound.
3. The alphabet should consist as much as possible of the ordinary letters of the Roman alphabet, as few new letters as possible being used.
4. In assigning values to the Roman letters, international usage should decide.
5. The new letters should be suggestive of the sounds they represent, by their resemblance to the old ones.
6. Diacritic marks should be avoided, being tiring for the eyes and troublesome to write

(Ibid. 418-419).

Afterwards, a universal system of phonetic sounds was created and called “The International Phonetic Alphabet” which is a system used for describing the sounds of the spoken language. It was originally developed by French and British language teachers, led by Paul Passy, under the sponsorship of the International Phonetic Association, established in Paris in 1886. These teachers based the IPA upon the Romic alphabet of Henry Sweet (1880–1881, 1971), which was formed from the Phonotypic Alphabet of Isaac Pitman and Alexander John Ellis, but it never stopped the alphabet from undergoing a number of revisions during its history.

I.7.3.1 The IPA Six Principles

Below, there are the six IPA Principles commented on by Passy and Rambeau, as translated from the original French script by Stern (1983) and cited by Richard Smith (2004: 419-420):

Article 1: Foreign language study should begin with the spoken language of everyday life, and not with the relatively archaic language of literature.

Article 2: The teacher’s first aim should be to thoroughly familiarize his pupils with the sounds of the foreign language. Towards this end, he should use a phonetic transcription which will be employed exclusively in the early stages of the course without reference to conventional spelling.

Article 3: The teacher’s second aim should be to introduce his pupils to the most common sentences and idiomatic phrases of the foreign language. With this end in view, his pupils should study consecutive texts — dialogues, descriptions and narratives — which should be as easy, natural, and interesting as possible.

Article 4: In the early stages, grammar should be taught inductively, complementing and generalizing language facts observed during reading. A more systematic study of grammar should be postponed to the advanced stages of the course.

Article 5: Possible expressions in the foreign language should be related by the teacher directly to ideas and other expressions in the foreign language, and not to the native

language. The teacher should take every opportunity to replace translation by references to real objects or pictures or by explanations given in the foreign language.

Article 6: At a later stage, when writing is introduced, such written work should be arranged in the following sequence, first, reproduction of thoroughly familiar reading texts; second, reproduction of narratives orally presented by the teacher; and third, free composition.

To sum it up, even after the reform movement, quite a huge number of phoneticians, specialists, teachers or practitioners in the field continued to explore the vast science of phonetics. Also to unfold its shaded corners on the light of the previous reformers' significant and valuable discoveries that brought up the field of pronunciation to the surface ages ago before it is being reburied once again by today's users.

Their immense contributions to create a wide-world and universal notation are merely appreciated today as the status of pronunciation is either diminishing or collapsing. The following section will deal with the phonetic transcription as a teaching method, its importance, effectiveness and usefulness in enhancing the EFL learners' pronunciation and all language skills. According to the earlier reforms, using phonetic transcription has always been efficient, handy, and practical.

the international phonetic alphabet (2005)

consonants (pulmonic)	LABIAL		CORONAL				DORSAL				RADICAL		LARYNGEAL
	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Retroflex	Alveolo-palatal	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Epi-glottal	Glottal
Nasal	m	ɱ	n				ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ			
Plosive	p b		t d			ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ				
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ	
Approximant		ʋ	ɹ			ɻ	j	ɰ					
Tap, flap		ⱱ	ɾ			ɽ							
Trill	ʙ		r									ʀ	
Lateral fricative			ɬ ɮ			ɮ	ɬ	ɮ					
Lateral approximant			l			ɭ	ʎ	ʟ					
Lateral flap			ɺ			ɻ							

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a modally voiced consonant, except for murmured *ɦ*.
 Shaded areas denote articulations judged to be impossible. Light grey letters are unofficial extensions of the IPA.

consonants (non-pulmonic)

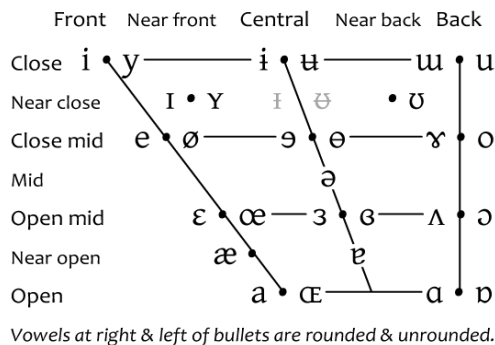
clicks	implosives	ejectives
⊙ Bilabial fricated	ɓ Bilabial	ʼ <i>examples:</i>
Laminal alveolar fricated ("dental")	ɗ Dental or alveolar	p' Bilabial
! Apical (post)alveolar abrupt ("retroflex")	ɠ Retroflex	t' Dental or alveolar
!! Subapical retroflex	f Palatal	k' Velar
‡ Laminal postalveolar abrupt ("palatal")	ɡ Velar	tʃ' Lateral affricate
Lateral alveolar fricated ("lateral")	ɠ Uvular	s' Alveolar fricative

consonants (co-articulated)

ɱ	Voiceless labialized velar approximant	//morphophonemic//
ɰ	Voiced labialized velar approximant	/phonemic/
ɰ	Voiced labialized palatal approximant	[phonetic]
ɧ	Simultaneous x and ʃ (existence disputed)	<orthographic>
ɥ	Affricates and double articulations	
ɡ̊	may be joined by a tie bar	

brackets

vowels



suprasegmentals

ˈ	Primary stress	ˈˈ	Extra stress
ˌ	Secondary stress	[ˌfoʊnəˈtɪfən]	
eː	Long	eˑ	Half-long
e	Short	e̘	Extra-short
.	Syllable break	t̚a	Linking (no break)
intonation			
	Minor (foot) break		
	Major (intonation) break		
↗	Global rise	↘	Global fall

(tone)

level tones	contour tones (e.g.)
é ˩ Top	ě ˩ Rising
é ˩ High	ê ˩ Falling
ē ˩ Mid	ě ˩ High rising
è ˩ Low	ě ˩ Low rising
è ˩ Bottom	ē ˩ High falling
tone terracing	ē ˩ Low falling
↑ Upstep	ě ˩ Peaking
↓ Downstep	ě ˩ Dipping

diacritics

Diacritics may be moved to fit a letter, as *ɲ* or *ɻ*. Other letters may be used as diacritics of phonetic detail: *tˢ* (fricative release), *bʰ* (breathy voice), *mʷ* (glottalized), *ə* (epenthetic schwa), *oʷ* (off-glide), *uᵇ* (compressed).

SYLLABICITY & RELEASES	PHONATION	PRIMARY ARTICULATION	SECONDARY ARTICULATION		
ɳ ɳ̥	Syllabic	ɳ̥ ɳ̥̚	ɳ̥ ɳ̥̚	ɳ̥ ɳ̥̚	ɳ̥ ɳ̥̚
ɳ̥ ɳ̥̚	Non-syllabic	ɳ̥̚ ɳ̥̚̚	ɳ̥̚ ɳ̥̚̚	ɳ̥̚ ɳ̥̚̚	ɳ̥̚ ɳ̥̚̚
ɳ̥̚ ɳ̥̚̚	(Pre)aspirated	ɳ̥̚̚ ɳ̥̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚ ɳ̥̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚ ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚ ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚
ɳ̥̚̚̚	Nasal release	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚
ɳ̥̚̚̚̚	Lateral release	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚
ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚	No audible release	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚
ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚	Lowered (β is a bilabial approximant)	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚	ɳ̥̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚̚

Figure (1): International Phonetic Alphabet

IPA : English consonants		
/p/	/p ^h /, /p/	pen, spin, tip
/b/	/b/	but, web
/t/	/t ^h /, /t/, /t̪/, /t̬/	two, sting, bet
/d/	/d/, /d̪/	do, odd
/tʃ/	/tʃ ^h /, /tʃ/	chair, nature, teach
/dʒ/	/dʒ/	gin, joy, edge
/k/	/k ^h /, /k/	cat, kill, skin, queen, unique, thick
/g/	/g/	go, get, beg
/f/	/f/	fool, enough, leaf, off, photo
/v/	/v/	voice, have, of
/θ/	/θ/, /t̪/	thing, teeth
/ð/	/ð/, /d̪/	this, breathe, father
/s/	/s/	see, city, pass
/z/	/z/	zoo, rose
/ʃ/	/ʃ/	she, sure, session, emotion, leash
/ʒ/	/ʒ/	pleasure, beige, equation, seizure
/x/	/x/	loch (Scottish), ugh
/h/	/h/, /h̥/, /ç/	Ham
/m/	/m/, /m̥/	man, ham
/n/	/n/	no, tin
/ŋ/	/ŋ/	ringer, sing, finger, drink
/l/	/l/, /l̥/	left, bell
/r/	/r/, /r̥/	run, very
/w/	/w/	we, queen
/j/	/j/	yes, nyala, yellow
IPA: English vowels and diphthongs		
/æ/	/a/~ /æ/	lad, bad, cat
/e/	/e/	pen, send, bed, beg
/ʌ/	/ʌ/	cup, but, shut, smuggle, hut
/ɑ:/	/ɑ:/	pass, path, sample
/ɒ/	/ɒ/~ /ɔ/	not, wasp, off, loss, cloth, long, dog, chocolate
/ɔ:/	/ɔ:/	law, caught, all, halt, talk
/ə/	/ə/	about, again, water,
/ɜ:/	/ɛ:(ɪ)/	bird, heard, first, word
/ɪ/	/ɪ/	sit, hit, bit,
/i/	/i/~ /i/	city, happy, sunny, daisy
/i:/	/i:/	meat
/ʊ/	/ʊ/	book, good, should, could,
/u:/	/u:/	food, moon, shoot,
/eɪ/	/eɪ/~ /ɛɪ/	day, pain, whey, rein
/aɪ/	/aɪ/	my, wise, high
/ɔɪ/	/ɔɪ/	boy, hoist
/oʊ/	/oʊ/	no, toe, soap
/aʊ/	/äʊ/	now, trout
/ɪə/	/ɪə(ɪ)~/, /ɪ:(ɪ)/	deer, here
/eə/	/ɛə(ɪ)~/, /ɛ:(ɪ)/	mare, there, bear
/ʊə/	/ʊə(ɪ)~/, /ʊ:(ɪ)/	tour, pure, cure

Table (01): IPA for English sounds.

I.8. Phonetic Transcription as a Teaching Method

When teaching pronunciation is involved, it has been proved previously that phonetic transcription has traditionally been used as an efficient teaching method for enhancing foreign language learners' pronunciation of English, especially at advanced levels. Gomes de Matos (2002) listed transcription reading skills as one of the basic abilities that every foreign language learner should master and certainly most books for EFL learners include phonemic symbols in vocabulary sections, and there are also transcription workbooks, such as, García Lecumberri & Maidment's 2000 and Morris-Wilson's 1984 (as cited by Pekka Lintunen, 2005: 01).

Phonemic symbols are considered as necessity for writing spoken or uttered words, but they are often neglected in teaching and overshadowed by the immense focus on grammar and vocabulary teaching, although there is a considerable variation between levels and individual teachers. Phonetic transcription is likely to be very beneficial for learners who are accustomed to a close phoneme-grapheme correspondence (or shallow orthography) in their native language just like the case of Arabic which has neither an inconsistent spelling system nor is as full of patterns as English.

Similarly, improved phonemic awareness is assumed to aid learners' pronunciation skills (e.g. Wells 1996). One recent study has suggested that teaching phonemic transcription should be beneficial for pupils at risk for learning difficulties or learning impairs in a foreign language (Dufva & Vauras 2002). Moreover, the raised phonological knowledge resulted in improved reading and writing skills, which suggests that good transcription skills can help and develop other language skills as well (Ibid. 01).

Following the same line of thought, in several languages like in English, the pronunciation clues given by orthography are often somewhat unpredictable. However, phonetic transcription provides useful help to clear off such ambiguity describing the oral form of the words as authentically as possible. As early as in the 1960s, A. C. Gimson (1964), as quoted by Morris-Wilson (2003), has suggested that phonetic transcription is a good method to reinforce the information analytically and logically which the learner may have received imperfectly by the ear (Ibid. 06), which is a common case with beginner learners who are exposed to English or any foreign language for the first time.

Indeed, phonetic transcription might provide a good aid to correct misperceptions of sounds and segments, beware of and be familiar with the tricks of the English orthography system. Even though textbooks normally should use phonetic transcription in their vocabulary lists and glossaries, it was interesting to find out if its use as a teaching method could be even more extended, for instance, to include whole texts to practice transcription and stress. It was surprising to find out how little research has been done on such questions.

Typically, both learners and some teachers can be immediately spooked by the IPA and transcription when they are first exposed to it. But the IPA of English sounds is what concerns this language's learners and there is no need to tackle outside and complicated sounds which belong to other different languages, but only sounds of the target language. It is important to explain the advantages of transcription to them in order to get them past this psychological dislike. Once they learn the IPA (which they can often manage in an hour or two, with a bit of motivation and good instruction), the advantages of being able to understand and write phonetic transcriptions will often compensate for the time required to learn the alphabet (Anthony Atkielski, 2005: 01-02).

In this connection, ESL/EFL teachers are often reluctant to use phonetic transcription because they are unfamiliar with it, and the odd appearance of the IPA makes it seem complicated to them not bearing in mind that they are not obliged to learn and teach all the IPA's sounds; because it is irrelevant to their speciality; however, they are only concerned with teaching English sounds all the forty four sounds precisely.

A piece of advice has been repeatedly addressed to all the teachers and practitioners of foreign languages by phoneticians, "if you have not previously used phonetic transcription or dared resort to the International Phonetic Alphabet to improve your learners' pronunciation, it is worth mentioning that it takes only a few hours to learn the IPA and a few more to understand the basic and necessary concepts of phonology and phonetics, which you'll rapidly gain back as time and energy saved in teaching your pupils". Needless to say, the inconsistency of English spelling stirs unwanted balance between the way words are written and uttered which makes teaching phonetic transcription both relevant and compulsory.

I.8.1. Phonetic Transcription Importance as a Teaching Method

Pupils learning the foreign language for the first time, particularly teenagers, essentially have to rely on what they hear from their teacher who tries his best to model the acoustic features of the spoken language. Moreover, they can also learn pronunciation when listening to the sound recordings, such as, tapes, CDs, songs, or any computer multimedia. Nevertheless, it is very often necessary to find out how to pronounce some unknown and difficult words and there the phonetic transcription is essential to write the vocabulary with some hybrid phonetic symbols²⁵. It is a completely risk-free, practical, and useful tool to facilitate pronunciation and ensure better retention of sounds through both auditory and visual capacities.

Admittedly, phonetic transcription is one of the long-used and known to all teachers' technique. It is a code consisting of phonetic symbols and often based on special characters and glyphs assigned to the appropriate sounds to distinguish between them. Each symbol describes a single sound, which is in fact different from some of the letters of the English alphabet. True as it is, in order to use phonetic transcription one must learn the code and it vastly takes time and requires too much effort for practice

All good modern learners' dictionaries use phonetic symbols to indicate pronunciation, and learners must, therefore, be familiar with them mainly to facilitate deciphering the daunting symbols. For instance, the information conveyed by Howatt (1982) gives the impression that pronunciation teaching has been an important part of language teaching at least since the Reform Movement emergence where it was totally reformulated; especially the method of transcriptions of target language sounds into special phonetic symbols. Howatt (1982), in this context, notes that,

The heart of the Reform Movement's philosophy was the supremacy of the spoken language. The children hear the new language first, spoken properly by the teacher in the classroom, before seeing it in its written form. Moreover, when they did come to read the texts, they should not be misled by the use of the phonetically irregular and inconsistent traditional orthography, but should see the words in especially prepared, phonetically transcribed form first

(as cited in²⁶2012: 07)

²⁵ Roman alphabetic letters plus signs derived from other languages.

²⁶ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

The main point on which Howatt focuses more is that the learner must familiarize his/her ear with the spoken utterances by listening carefully to the speaker and train his communicative and speaking skills by imitating his/her teacher and practicing pronunciation drills and transcription before moving to writing phase which concerns the complex orthography of English, in the sense that, phonetic transcription can be utilized as a useful medium to facilitate the ambiguous letter-sound relationship.

In the same line of thought, Varasarin suggests that “*Phonetic symbols should be introduced to learners as early in their education as possible because pronunciation and intonation are the foundations of verbal language*” (Ibid. 19). This particularly suits first year pupils’ teaching by dealing with teaching segmental features and phonetic sounds for starters and afterwards, introducing supra-segmental features for third and fourth years’ pupils and it might turn of good use when indicating stress and words’ syllables division.

Apparently in a more advanced stage in phonetic transcription teaching, as pointed out by Saito (2007), phonetic instruction would make learners more aware of their pronunciations in EFL situations where English is contextually reduced and they do not have access to real-life communication with native speakers of English (as cited by Ghorbani, 2011: 27). Mainly when stress and intonation are concerned, but everything they learn during the whole year remains locked up behind the door of the classroom without any application or practice outside the classroom.

The use of phonetic transcription in the teaching of English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) along seems to be handy, additionally, J. C. Wells immensely puts the focus on the importance of phonetic transcription in pronunciation teaching and confidently says,

Nowadays learners of foreign languages ought to have ample and plentiful opportunities of hearing the language spoken, and not just by their teacher and their fellow-pupils. Television, video tapes, cassettes and CDs give today’s learners an advantage which earlier generations did not have. However, mere exposure to authentic language material, while it will certainly improve learners’ comprehension ability, is not sufficient to ensure a good productive command of the language or a good pronunciation. Almost everyone can benefit from explicit pronunciation teaching, in which the use of phonetic transcription has an important role

(Polachova, 2006: 11)

Although he speaks about Phonetic transcription as a teaching method, he not only puts more emphasis on that but also brings in how to benefit and enhance the learners' communicative abilities and pronunciation with help of audio-visual aids. Constant exposure to the target language also improves and sharpens their listening skill.

The wheel keeps spinning and comes back again to the issue of letter-sound relationship and facts of this kind are not revealed in ordinary spelling, but rather are immediately evident once phonetic transcription is used. The main problem is ambiguity of spelling that must be solved by the beginning of the target language teaching and learning process.

Ideally, every learner should learn the correct pronunciation of a word at the same time as he incorporates it into his/her active vocabulary stock. Nevertheless, experience shows that even advanced pupils sometimes fail in this task because of the lack of guidance, monitorship, and poor emphasis on the issue. Additionally, Bouhadiba, regarding this matter, states,

The second pronunciation difficulty is intra-lingual. It stands as a difficulty that probably all learners will face, whatever their native tongue maybe. This difficulty lies in the big gap that exists between English spelling and sound equivalence. A case in point would be the pronunciation of the alveolar sound /ʃ/ in she, ocean, pollution, mission
(n.d. 02-03)

At first hand, all foreign language learners must be aware of the difference between English spelling and pronunciation because, in most of the time, the way words are uttered, they are pronounced differently. Thus, phonetic transcription plays an essential role clearing the vagueness for the learners about the inconsistency of English spelling and bridges the gap mentioned earlier between English spelling and sounds.

In this connection, two experiments, among others, were conducted for the sake of furthering research on the issue of enhancing pronunciation through the regular usage of phonetic transcription (symbols). Both experiments took place in two different countries, but done for the same purpose, to get approximately similar results as predicted by the experimenters.

I.8.2. Experiments in Teaching Phonetic Transcription

I.8.2.1. Iran's Experiment

To prove their hypotheses about the importance of phonetic transcription and its constructive contribution in improving the learners' pronunciation, as well as, their other skills, many researchers conducted experiments for this reason and two of them were selected to illustrate the present study's aim. The first experiment was carried out by Ghorbani Mohammed Reza (2011), an Iranian researcher who was concerned with improving his students' listening skill. He performed an experiment to support his study and research about listening enhancement through Phonetic transcription.

The subjects involved in this experiment were third year high school students in Bojnord, the capital city of Khorasane Shomali province in the north east of the country. Since random assignment was not possible, pre-test-post-test design was employed in this study. That is, subjects were tested in existing groups and both groups were measured before and after treatment, but only one group received the treatment to compare results (Ibid. 28-30).

According to the experiment's results and statistics, the experimental group who received phonetic instruction had a better performance than the control group who did not receive it. Thus, the findings suggest that phonetic instruction and learners' phonetic transcription of different words benefit the subjects in learning the sound system of the English language more accurately. Since this teaching method seems to have facilitated the process of listening enhancement in Ghorbani's experiment, its application can be suggested to analytically reinforce the information that learners may receive imperfectly by ear.

In fact, the researcher himself stated that the application of phonetic instruction and phonetic transcriptions in the classroom as a teaching method is worth further research (Ibid. 31-32). Thanks to his experiment, Ghorbani contributed in consolidating the suggestion of using phonetic transcription as a teaching method because it is practical, beneficial and extremely rewarding in boosting both listening ability and pronunciation.

I.8.2.2. Finland's Experiment

As far as Finnish people are concerned, their foreign accent when speaking English can be promptly recognized by any target language native speaker, so for the sake of remedying or reducing mother tongue influence and other factors that can impair Finnish learners from acquiring the accurate pronunciation of English, Pekka Lintunen (2005) conducted an experiment, (explained thoroughly in her article, 2005), to check whether phonetic instruction can be useful in developing and enhancing Finnish learners' pronunciation of English.

The study suggests that phonetic transcription is an effective teaching method for foreign language learners of English. The results showed that the subjects' performances in the pronunciation and transcription tests were both qualitatively and quantitatively related. Moreover, it was shown that those subjects who were the best transcribers were also the ones whose pronunciation developed the most during the testing period. The effectiveness of transcription may have been enhanced by the fact that the subjects were native speakers of Finnish. Their pronunciation was in the end almost as accurate as their transcription.

Interestingly, the second transcription test also reflected the subjects' final pronunciation test as far as the numbers of errors are concerned. One has to bear in mind, however, that observed correlation does not reveal how one variable affects another. Thus, it is not valid to claim that transcription skills caused the development in the subjects' pronunciation skills (as cited by Pekka Lintunen, 2005: 04).

By contrast, in one of his interviews, Peter Roach talked about background knowledge in Phonetics and phonology that can help and give the teachers a deeper understanding and insight of what is going on in class concerning their learners' difficulties with pronunciation. He said, *"It is really a matter of the importance of having some background knowledge that helps you understand the learners' problems."*

Unless the teacher understands and masters all what concerns his field of expertise, and rather be a phonetician to perform his role as an FL teacher properly, everything he provides to his learners will be insufficient and improper no matter how much efforts he gives to teach them. In the following section, a short overview based on Richard C. Smith's PhD thesis will be shown as regards the well-known writings of Harold Palmer²⁷ in ELT and his rewarding experiments and contributions in improving pronunciation.

²⁷ Harold E. Palmer (1877-1949)

I.9. Harold Palmer and “Le Maitre Phonétique”

He is a shining beacon that guided and lit every dedicated and passionate practitioner’s path in the field of foreign languages teaching. His unfading willpower and miraculous achievements in teaching are conspicuously deep-rooted in their minds and apparent in their teaching ways and methods, especially in the fields of phonetics and phonology. He’s Dr. Harold E. Palmer, a memorable personality and one of the greatest founders of the International Phonetic Association, the writer of the influential article “Le Maitre Phonétique”, a pioneer in the study of intonation, and the maker of several beneficial methods in Pronunciation teaching. M. L. Tickoo, admires Palmer in the following passage,

Dr Harold Palmer is known today as the author of several ELT works which have withstood the test of time. But there are other aspects of his life and work which deserve scholarly scrutiny. Palmer was not a ‘trained professional’ or a ‘sophisticated theoretician’; he was a dedicated amateur who, all his life, toiled to find answers to knotty problems. Two things stand out in his work: his commitment to the classroom, where he found insights that guided and shaped much of his work; and his pursuit of the practical possibilities of novel ideas

(p.1).

If we look back at ELT reforms and their numerous makers in the first half of this century, we notice a major difference between then and now. Today’s expert is a professional; he has received initiation and training at a university, and has a certain research degree. All this was much less true or even possible decades ago. In those days, many of the most productive ideas came from practitioners who had received no formal training in language or in language teaching methodology. There is an example that concerns Palmer’s early experimentation with phonetic transcription apart from his extensive studies on Intonation. According to Daniel Jones (1950), Palmer invented, around 1905, ‘a system of phonetic transcription (with diacritic marks) which he used for some years’. In fact, this transcription system, or a prototype of it, had already been used in the 1904 correspondence course. In this area, Palmer was to describe his own development during the period 1905–10 as follows,

About five years ago, I commenced using a phonetic transcription for teaching English to my pupils [...] during a period of about three years I used phonetics more or less experimentally, the pupils working from manuscript sheets. I was therefore free to introduce any modification which I might consider useful or necessary. From time to time I did modify a few details and according to the results obtained, either rejected or permanently adopted the modification”.

(Palmer, 1910, as cited by Richard Smith, 1999: 46)

This quotation clearly shows that Palmer had, by around 1905, developed a conscious ‘action research’, or, as he himself conceived of it, ‘experimental’ orientation to his teaching. It is important to note, also, that the same kind of orientation extended to his own study of languages. A curriculum vitae written in the 1920s (Kuroda, 1985) indicates that he “conducted experiments and research into the phonetics of German, Spanish and Polish, between 1905 and 1913”. (*Ibid.* 46-47)

The years 1906–1907 saw a number of publications deriving from Palmer’s learning and teaching experiences up to that point in Verviers. For example, Jones (1950) implies that Palmer used his own form of phonetic transcription around 1905 in a “*card index system*” to help students to learn languages effectively. Instructions and exercises were printed on one side of each card, and keys were printed on the reverse side. Probably Jones is referring here to the apparently no longer extant “*Cartes Palmer*” (1906-1907), in addition, these were self-instructional materials. They seem to have been printed locally and designed for use with his own students, and perhaps were based primarily on techniques Palmer had devised for his own experiments in language learning, some kind of an innovative approach to self-instruction (*Ibid.* 2004:105).

Speaking of Palmer’s growing passion towards phonetics, Richard C. Smith In his dedicatory and ambitious dissertation adds,

*Part of Palmer’s experimentation at this time was connected with ‘the replacing of the traditional orthography by [...] phonetic transcription’, which is said to have ‘produced [...] splendid results’. His growing interest in this area was evidently linked to his membership of the IPA, and 1910 saw his first contribution to its bulletin, *Le maître phonétique*, an article on ‘The transcription of English vowels’*
(Ibid. 103)

In this article itself (written in phonetic script, as had been required of contributors to “*Le maître phonétique*” since its inception), Palmer offers up his own transcription system for evaluation, wondering whether a system using French acute, ‘grave’ and circumflex accents might not most effectively represent the English vowels. This contribution drew a response from Daniel Jones under the same title as Palmer’s article, in the following issue of the journal (Jones 1910). Collins (1988) analyzes the exchange of views as follows,

Jones chooses not to criticise Palmer’s transcription for the bewildering array of diacritics which he presents to the reader, but instead concentrates on his usual theme of the need for unity of transcription. [. . .] The intellectual stance of the two men is typical of them both. Palmer is innovative, inquisitive, and eager to test his ideas out on others; Jones is more cautious and pragmatic, and unwilling to upset the balance which has already been achieved

(Ibid. 104)

Consequently, this quotation implies a certain comparison between Palmer’s way of handling different issues in teaching, and Jones’ opposite perception of things. However, despite the fact that they perceive things differently they share the same long-lived passion and infatuation with phonetics teaching and how to improve the IPA for an easier usage by the readers smoothly (Ibid. 103-104).

Indeed, he was not to change his basic methods of teaching until the year 1886, under the influence of, primarily, the German and Scandinavian reformers. However, he began to learn that phonetics was a whole science, not just a way of representing pronunciation (a means of transcription) but it include several essential aspects. As he read more in the field, pushed by practical necessity and experimenting relying on his own curiosity, he became more excited about the possible discoveries and applications that could be made in the phonetic field. This period of self-instruction in phonetics seems to have lasted from 1879 to about 1885 (Galazzi, 1992, cited in Ibid. 397-398). He always put his feedback in good use, devising new techniques and improving his students’ capacities in terms of both Phonetics and Didactics.

Phonetic transcription, for long decades before introducing other teaching methods, has been one of the most significant and practical methods devised and recommended by the founders of the IPA, as well as, being the only method that occupied a firm position in previous foreign language teaching syllabuses. It was the saviour of pronunciation teaching from a fatal decline. Hence, nobody can deny its utility and efficacy, although it is disregarded and overlooked by most of practitioners in the field simply because they think it is difficult to teach and learn especially its cumbersome symbols and awkward patterns.

Basically, to learn how to pronounce sounds and words of a foreign language does not consist of just learning how to transcribe words in phonetic fonts, reading them, and listening to the lecturer or native speaker. Instead, as Miller (2000) puts forward, improvements in pronunciation necessarily depend on *"how much responsibility the student takes, how much the student practices outside of class, and how ready the student is"*, (as cited in²⁸ p.41).

In other words, mastering a foreign language cannot happen easily by only learning by heart all the basics or excelling in transcription, Miller rather advocates that when the learner takes full responsibility to dedicate his/her time and efforts in learning a language diligently, has motivation as well as the right attitude, and puts everything on the ledge to overcome his/her weaknesses and obstacles, this will definitely privilege him/her to master it quicker than the others. Besides, if the teachers' positive attitudes and full involvement in teaching the subject are shown, this can motivate the learners even further to achieve his/her best score. Therefore, the instructors should widen the spectrum of research and incorporate as many effective and practical methods and techniques in order to ensure fruitful results, such as, the SET Theory.

I.10. The SET Theory (Sound, Evaluation, Transcription)

The SET theory has been implemented in Japanese EFL classrooms, as a pronunciation teaching method, under the order of the Japanese ministry of education in order to underline and highlight the value of teaching English pronunciation to non-native speakers. In addition to enhancing the teaching/learning process and benefit their learners as much as possible. In terms of correct pronunciation, the author *Yuzawa Nobuo* (2006) strongly believes that in order to enable Japanese learners of English to acquire English

²⁸ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>

pronunciation successfully, three elements need to be integrated effectively into EFL teaching syllabuses, (1) ‘sound’ as stimuli, (2) ‘evaluation’ to judge learners’ pronunciation accurately, and (3) ‘transcription’ to make those sounds easier to acquire and retain. This integrated English pronunciation teaching method, called ‘SET theory’ (‘S’ for sound, ‘E’ for evaluation and ‘T’ for transcription), is diagrammed as follows (Ibid. 14),

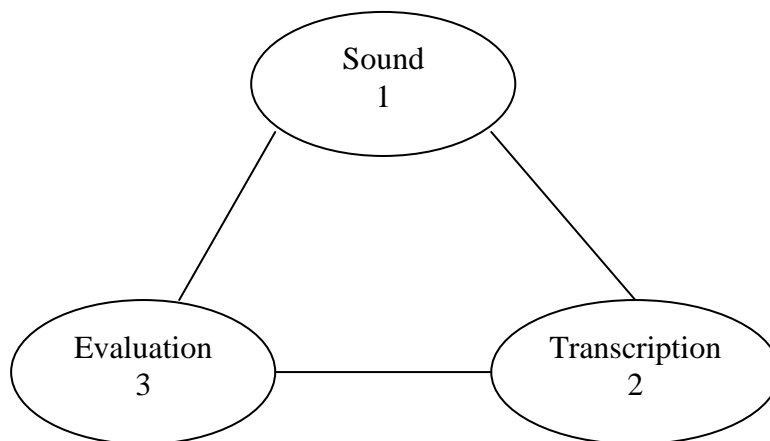


Figure (2): The SET theory diagram

In the following passages, the three elements are briefly explained starting with “sound”,

I.10.1. Sound

It goes without saying that among the three elements, sound is the most important one. The other two simply work complementarily to make pronunciation teaching successful and faithful. The author claims that in real communication, neither transcription nor evaluation is necessary, and the role of transcription can be found to indicate the correct pronunciation of words and to facilitate checking how to pronounce unknown words when consulting dictionaries for their correct production. Without these two elements, however, it is difficult to acquire English pronunciation in non-English-speaking countries like Japan (Ibid .44-45). Nevertheless, it is similarly the exact case of English pronunciation teaching in Algeria where either little reforms are being conducted for the sake of improvement and betterment of pronunciation teaching in middle schools, too little attention is drawn on it, or a small room is dedicated for practicing pronunciation activities, such as, sounds’ articulation and drills.

I.10.2. Evaluation

The author truthfully states that evaluation is included in the SET theory as it is important to judge accurately whether each learner's pronunciation is correct and give him/her the appropriate feedback to somehow remedy his/her articulated errors and catch up to the suitable level. Ideally, teachers should monitor each learner's pronunciation during the class and give pronunciation tests regularly, especially oral and communicative ones but it is practically impossible to make such painstaking efforts with 40 or more learners in a classroom within very short time, in addition to noise and pressure.

She also adds that in order to improve this situation, an automatic pronunciation evaluation system may be an option if it is financially feasible and technology continues to advance of course to facilitate learning pronunciation as much as possible. As a result, the Yuzawa Nobuo supports the use of an automatic pronunciation evaluation system if financial and technological problems are solved. There are four reasons for this suggestion. First, learners can be more motivated and curious to discover such new technologies. Second, learners can practice English pronunciation anywhere and anytime freely. Third, those who do not like to practice in front of others can be relieved of psychological stress. Fourth, learners can get appropriate and immediate feedback to improve their pronunciation (Ibid. 46).

I.10.3. Transcription

Finally, the third and main element in the SET theory is transcription. The author introduces three approaches concerning transcription stage which are the quantitative approach, the qualitative approach, and the quantitative-qualitative approach. To take 'pool' and 'pull' which form a minimal pair as examples, they are transcribed as /pu:l/ and /pʊl/ , respectively. What should be noticed here is that they are two different words in different approaches, 'pull' in the quantitative approach and 'pool' in the qualitative approach. This misunderstanding may not be a problem because the qualitative approach is not common in Japanese English teaching or English-Japanese dictionaries.

English-Japanese dictionaries seem to have adopted the quantitative approach in the past, but many of them have changed to the quantitative-qualitative approach. This is a good shift, because vowel duration is not fixed in English and qualitative differences become more important (like **a** in father and **ee** in sheet). When a syllable has a structure of VC, the

vowel is shortened when the consonant is voiceless or fortis. The author thinks that it is much easier to understand what each symbol means when they are transcribed separately rather than when they are transcribed together which effectively highlights the idea of using transcription as a reference for the learners to check and correct their pronunciation errors and the phonetic symbols, as well as, get used to relying on themselves, build their self-confidence, and consult the dictionaries when necessary (Ibid. 46). Retention and reception of isolated sounds at early stages of learning is effective in FL teaching using transcription for clear demonstration.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, there is no doubt that pronunciation in ELT has taken a major leap from its low position to a more descent one thanks to the continuity of researches and experiments through time. However, pronunciation is still maintaining the same reputation it suffered in the past in Algerian middle schools as the Cinderella. Moreover, so little attention and time are devoted to such a central aspect in FLT contexts, mostly, for many reasons argued by our teachers. Not to mention that several practitioners support integrating phonetic transcription as a teaching method in order to enhance the learners' oral and communicative skills, as well as their listening capacities that seem so crucial when involved in direct communication with native or non-native speakers. It is not late to attempt new reforms into our educational contexts, in particular, our middle schools where pronunciation of English is introduced to young learners for the first time, nonetheless, it is taking quite a bad turn and getting overshadowed by grammar and vocabulary teaching instead of being equal to them, in terms of time, effort, and original methods and tools. Hence, exhaustive and urgent implementation of phonetic notation into first year pupils' textbooks is required to improve pronunciation learning and limit obstacles, in addition to constant monitor and scrutiny of the instructors' faithfulness and professional demeanour inside the classroom.

Chapter III

Data Collection and Analysis

Methodology and Qualitative Data Analysis

Chapter III

Data Collection and Analysis

Methodology and Qualitative Data Analysis

Introduction

The first objective of this study is to illustrate how much teaching phonetic transcription is significant and crucial in foreign language teaching, especially, in the art of speaking “Pronunciation”, because people slowly start to notice its importance when their communication with native speakers is failing. Second, to diagnose the participants’ performances (both teachers’ and pupils’), to ensure the teachers’ perseverance in applying pronunciation rules and methods, and practicing sounds’ articulation in classroom, or their negligence of integrating this indispensable aspect in FLT. Furthermore, to indicate the pupils’ actual competence in pronouncing and transcribing simple sounds and words which they are supposed to know and learn throughout their middle school years.

In this regard, before applying the questionnaires, a small-scaled oral survey of opinions with the pupils is conducted to know if they are interested in English in general and pronunciation in particular, in order to slowly attract their attention to the issue of learning the right pronunciation using phonetic transcription. For these reasons, three research tools are chosen to collect the suitable data to validate or invalidate the study’s hypotheses, hence, they are questionnaires addressed to first year and fourth year middle school teachers and learners, recordings of the latter’s real pronunciation, and their school copybooks’ and textbooks’ analyses to make a small comparison between the programmed exercises and performed activities inside the classrooms.

II.1. Procedure

For the sake of this study’s continuity, a corpus is gathered by the means of three research tools for experimental and observational researches in order to get predictable and reliable data. Firstly, questionnaires are directed to both first and fourth year pupils and teachers targeting the issue of neglecting pronunciation teaching and avoiding teaching phonetic symbols or integrating phonetic transcription into FL teaching methods. The results will be shown in the form of statistics followed by brief discussion and analysis.

Secondly, pupils from each level mentioned above are asked to provide us with their authentically recorded articulation of words and sounds already dealt with during their school years. Thirdly, a small assessment and examination of the pupils' copybooks exercises takes place with a comparison between the latter and school books' activities. The coming-up analysis of questionnaires, recordings and school copybooks will either approve or disapprove the study's hypotheses. So, for the reliability of the whole investigation, two research methods are used, quantitative and qualitative. The former one comprises two survey researches, questionnaires addressed to Algerian learners and teachers, and recordings of the learners' English pronunciation. The latter is concerned with observational and comparative analysis between the copybooks' practised pronunciation activities and the textbooks' programmed and designed exercises.

II.2. Participants

The total number of the middle school pupils, who responded the questionnaires and are chosen purposely from Belhamri Mohammed middle school, is estimated to be sixty two pupils from both first and fourth levels. That is, thirty two participants from first year and thirty from fourth year. The participants are kept in their classes when the questionnaire distribution took place, eight questionnaires in each of the four classrooms of the first year (total of thirty-two), and ten questionnaires in each of the three classrooms of fourth year (total of 30).

Basically, the respondents are exposed to the target language for around four hours per week and they should be keeping term in classroom attendance for the whole year. The questionnaire allocated for first year pupils is designed specifically for them; each question in English is translated to Arabic (using Grammar-Translation method to meet their needs at this early stage), in order to fit their primal level compared to fourth year pupils whose seniority obliges them to read and answer everything in the target language, still their questionnaire preserved simplicity.

On the other hand, teachers of English from four different middle schools in Mostaganem are chosen to answer two slightly different questionnaires in terms of first and fourth year syllabuses' teachability and level of instruction. The number of teachers varies between six to seven to eight; depending on their number in each middle school and their gender.

II.3. Research Method

The research method conducted in this study is divided into two types of inquiry. The first type is the quantitative analysis which is widely concerned with the findings of the data gathered and statistics in the form of questionnaires and voice recordings for two levels in one Algerian middle school. These questionnaires are systematically submitted to first year teachers and pupils and so are addressed to the last fourth level teachers and pupils to make a little comparison between their educational and intellectual level from the first year till the fourth one, and observe any kind of progress as far as pronunciation and phonetic transcription teaching are concerned. The statistics of the collected data will be represented through percentages and tables or pie charts and figures.

The other type is the qualitative analysis, which is closely related to the textbooks' and copybooks' analytic comparison. But in this study particularly, the analysis of middle schools' textbooks is not mandatory, they work only as a guidebook for the pupils' copybooks analysis which is more important. The exercises and activities of pronunciation practised in the textbooks the whole school year are analyzed and the results are provided accordingly.

II.4. Materials

The materials used in this study are made up of two main media of data collection. The first one is the questionnaires prepared for first year teachers and pupils and fourth year teachers and pupils as well. The questionnaires allotted to the teachers consist of a table of yes/ no questions (closed-questions) followed by a group of opinion questions (open-ended questions) to clarify their choice of answering. Similarly, the pupils' questionnaires are designed with yes/ no questions as well, but enclosed with pronunciation and phonetic transcription exercises for the purpose of collecting more thorough data and consolidating the study's objectives. All the questionnaires are designed and written in English except for the first year pupils', which are provided with Arabic translation to serve their primal level and limited needs.

The second medium of data collection is the pupils' copybooks which are the primary resource when it comes to the lessons being taught and activities being practised, whether they are reality or myth. First and fourth year pupils' textbooks work as a useful manual to compare lessons and activities with the copybooks'. Six to ten copybooks were borrowed from both first and fourth levels' classes on the logical basis of the pupils' level, a good

pupil, an intermediate one, and a low-levelled one in order to compare the activities practised on their copybooks with the ones' written or programmed in the textbooks and also to monitor the teachers' compatibility with the textbooks and detect any attempt of improvisation of newly integrated pronunciation activities. As well as the occurrence of any deviation in the syllabus, as far as pronunciation and phonetic transcription lessons and activities are concerned. The textbooks' brief analysis, however, is used in this study as a complementary tool to the pupils' copybooks'. It can serve as a useful guide in the comparison of activities and lessons mentioned just earlier.

II.5. Questionnaires

Questionnaires for first and fourth year pupils are carefully designed to meet their expectations, they are simple, short, and practical in terms of essentially basic pronunciation and transcription exercises. Later on, the questionnaires are quietly distributed among pupils of first year and fourth year of Belhamri Mohammed middle school in Mostaganem inside their classes during recess period. Sixty two questionnaires are distributed equally among both levels' pupils; thirty two questionnaires in classrooms of first year, and different thirty two questionnaires in fourth year's classes. As a result, it means eight questionnaires in each of the four classrooms of the first year and ten questionnaires in each of the three fourth year classrooms. Both levels are being exposed to the target language for three to four hours per week. On the other hand, seven questionnaires are distributed among seven teachers of English from three middle schools selected from Mostaganem, "Belhamri Mohammed", "Touahria Mohammed", and "Benaouda Benzerdjeb" middle schools.

II.5.1. Questionnaire of First Year Pupils (see Appendix n°01)

First year pupils' questionnaire include seven close-ended questions for ticking "yes or no", mainly seeking their familiarity with phonetic symbols, phonetic transcription, and their teachers' behaviour inside the classroom in terms of correcting their mispronunciations during the lessons. These seven questions are specifically designed from general to specific tendencies; that is, the questionnaire aims at finding out if,

- a) they like learning English or it is troublesome for them,
- b) they are familiar with phonetic symbols and sounds,
- c) their teachers' instructional endeavour inside the classroom is constantly present.

Accompanied with the questionnaire, an exercise suitable to their knowledge level is designed to test and assess their learning level, which is a table of the English Alphabet letters. They are asked to transcribe them sound by sound. Generally, the twenty six alphabet letters are being taught to the first year pupils by the beginning of the year to recognize the pronunciation of each letter, discern between a certain writing of the letter, but peculiar pronunciation, and explicitly offer them an idea about the letter-sound relationship issue.

II.5.2. Questionnaire of Fourth Year Pupils (see Appendix n°02)

By contrast, the questionnaire submitted to fourth year pupils is much longer than the first year pupils'. It includes twelve close-ended questions and they have to pick the right answer in terms of "yes or no", also, in the same regard, seeking their familiarity with and amount of knowledge about phonetic symbols, and asking for their personal choice whether they like learning them or not, although, it entirely depends on the way and by which means it has been introduced to them during their whole school year.

These twelve close-ended questions also target the issue of teaching phonetic transcription, encompassing, at the same time, other related issues, hence, they aim at finding out if,

- a) they have a liking towards learning a foreign language like English,
- b) they practise or like to further their learning in relation to phonetic transcription,
- c) they are familiar with word stress and words syllables' division.
- d) their teacher conducts the appropriate demeanour at class.

On the back of the questionnaires four exercises are listed to refresh their memories concerning phonetics and phonology lessons (phonetic and phonological rules) which they are indirectly exposed to without even understanding them, that is to mean, no appropriate introductions are being offered regarding both fields of study.

The first exercise is designed specifically for one sole purpose, which is testing their ability to distinguish single vowels from long vowels, from double vowels (diphthongs), and from consonants. Therefore, this exercise is relatively within their reach because, according to fourth year syllabus, these phonetic symbols of English sounds are being introduced during their school year. Nine random sounds are put forth and fourth year pupils are

directly asked to identify each sound as either long or short vowel, and to make it more interesting, consonants and diphthongs are included as a trap question, too.

The next exercise; however, flows directly into the issue of this study. Fourth year pupils are required to write a list of twenty nine single words into their phonetic form i.e. transcribe them. The majority of these words are monosyllabic, simple and frequently used, besides, they encompass the majority of English sounds in order to test their ability in transcribing all of them in addition to indicating the stress when necessary.

The third exercise requires efficiency in phonological rules and traditional techniques to identify and locate the boundaries when dividing words into syllables. If the learner is not aware of those phonological rules or traditional techniques like tapping on something, clapping, and the hand placed under the lower jaw to count the syllables, thus, this objective could be impossible to achieve. Twelve words are put forth and they need to be divided and varied between monosyllabic, two-syllabic and three-syllabic words.

In the last exercise, the same list of twelve words is once again introduced, but this time the aim behind this exercise is to transcribe these single words and point the stress where necessary. Not to mention that fourth year pupils are familiar and aware of indicating stress in isolated words as programmed in their school year syllabus.

II.5.3. Questionnaire of First and Fourth Year Teachers (see Appendix n°03/04)

As for the teachers, first year teachers' questionnaire does not differ a lot from the fourth year teachers', they are almost identical, the sole difference between them is that two questions are added to the fourth year teachers' questionnaire according to their teaching programme. Whereas, first year teachers' questionnaire contains fourteen close-ended "yes or no" questions which revolve around teaching pronunciation, pronunciation activities, and using phonetic transcription as an effective teaching method to improve their pupils' poor pronunciation. The aim behind these questions is to know if,

- a) the teachers focus on the pronunciation of their pupils inside the classroom.
- b) pronunciation activities and drills are performed regularly making a good use of phonetic transcription.

- c) they are out-dated or up to-date teachers concerning technological aids (ICT²⁹) and theoretical backgrounds (intellect of recent reforms) in ELT.

This questionnaire also comprises thirteen open-ended questions to make the teachers express their own opinions and feelings, and share their knowledge, their experience and behaviour in the teaching context. Moreover, in terms of pronunciation and phonetic transcription, these questions seek to discover the teachers' points of view regarding,

- a) the process of teaching English in their middle schools.
- b) the obstacles that impair and prevent their first year pupils from learning the correct pronunciation in terms of segmentals.
- c) using phonetic transcription as a teaching method in the classroom.
- d) the means, tools or methods they employ to teach pronunciation.
- e) their behaviour when dealing with recurring mispronounced sounds and words.
- f) their focus on certain skills and their own personal precedence.
- g) their self-improvement or assessment as far as phonetics field is concerned.

Regarding the questionnaire submitted to fourth year teachers; it does not carry much difference from the first year teachers'. They have the same list of close and open-ended questions and only one query is added concerning the use of dictionaries inside the classroom. Conversely, this is not mentioned in the first questionnaire, because first year pupils are not very efficient in the English vocabulary and Grammar-Translation Method³⁰ was more or less the prevailing method in teaching them any foreign language for the first time. Initially, this questionnaire's aims are similar to the objectives of first year teachers' questionnaire in terms of pronunciation and phonetic transcription teaching and instruction. The second list of the thirteen questions is identical to the first year teachers' as well, except for the fourteenth one which targets the issue of accuracy and fluency when teaching English pronunciation is involved.

²⁹ Information and communications Technology.

³⁰ Henceforth GTM

II.6. Pupils' Recordings

For additional credibility and reliability of this investigation, another survey research is carried out, besides questionnaires and pupils' copybooks' and textbooks' analysis, to make sure the previous results of the questionnaires are compatible with the recordings' of first and fourth year pupils from "Belhamri Mohamed" middle school in Mostaganem. They are the same subjects from the same levels who take the test as the questionnaires. Twenty one pupils from both First and fourth year classes are given three oral exercises to be recorded respectively. Those exercises put focus on memorization of English alphabetic letters and different syllabic words for first year pupils; while, exercises designed for fourth year pupils encompass phonetic transcription and pronunciation of isolated words with different syllable. The aim behind these recordings is to check and evaluate the level of our middle schoolers' pronunciation, to draw attention to their failure in learning correct English pronunciation, and to find out if they are familiar with phonetic symbols and sounds as they claim in the questionnaire.

II.7. Copybooks

Classroom copybooks on the whole reflect the pupils' perseverance and lesson continuation inside the classroom, as well as, being useful tool to store the information they learn everyday and an indispensable reminder of previously-dealt-with lessons. Furthermore, they work as a significant tool to investigate the teachers' compatibility to the textbook's syllabus as long as a comparative analysis between the two tools is required for this study's reliability.

Consequently, in order to check whether teachers of English in "Belhamri Mohammed" middle school are devotedly following the same syllabus as the textbooks or not, whether they improvise some exercises concerning pronunciation and phonetics transcription to improve their pupils level or not, whether they overlook certain exercises and favour certain skills over other ones or not. For this reason, twenty one copybooks are selected from two classes (twelve copybooks from first year classes, and nine copybooks from fourth year classes), bearing in mind that all the four first year classrooms have the same teacher of English and fourth year classes have another teacher, as a result, they follow the same programme performed by the teachers. The copybooks are chosen on the basis of a good pupil, an intermediate pupil, and a low-levelled one in order to,

- 1) compare the teacher's faithful or unfaithful follow-up to the textbooks' lessons and exercises, particularly pronunciation and sounds.
- 2) observe if pupils, be they good or low-levelled, are being followed and monitored by their teachers.
- 3) evaluate the pupils' copybooks in terms of phonetic transcription exercises or pronunciation activities.

II.7.1. First Year Textbook's and Pupils Copybooks' Comparison Analysis Introduction

Pupils' classroom copybooks represent each one's identity and reflect every single aspect of his/her personality, in terms of lessons' organization, diligence in exercises practice and follow-up and furtherance, commitment to the target language or subject being taught, in addition to classes' perseverance and consistency. All these are personified through the copybooks. For this reason, first and fourth year pupils' copybooks are gathered as part of the present investigation's corpus to back up the results of the questionnaires, and validate or invalidate the study's first hypothesis. Total of twenty one copybooks is gathered to compare pronunciation lessons and activities with the textbooks'. The aim behind the pupils' copybooks' and textbooks' analysis is to check if pronunciation lessons and activities are being practised.

It is worth noting that the teacher who is responsible for teaching first year classes is not the same who occupies teaching fourth year, hence, different in methods and approaches of teaching English could probably differ. As regards first year textbook, "Spotlight of English³¹", the lessons are divided into seven files; each file has three sequences that encompass all language skills and culture lessons and activities. Nevertheless, the present study is concerned with pronunciation rubric, precisely, phonetic transcription, sounds articulation, and basic observation observations about word stress, syllables, and consonant clusters. In this regard, each file contains one sound to two sounds, vowels or consonants, introductory part followed by a series of short exercises in the form of drills where pupils are asked to carefully listen to the teacher who reads the words out loud. Afterwards, they are required to repeat the same examples after him (Mimic-Memorization Technique³²).

The textbook exercises will be displayed next, as far as pronunciation and English sounds activities are concerned, with a comparison between these exercises and the pupils'

³¹ Henceforth SOE

³² Henceforth MMT

collected copybooks for the reasons mentioned earlier. Generally, SOE begins with an introduction to the Alphabet of English language letters. First year pupils, necessarily, should attain the English alphabet. Through this alphabet, they are introduced to the different letters from which words are formed to create sentences, speech, and language. The following table demonstrates the same data as found in SOE. Each letter is highlighted in red as the initial letter of each word given to the pupils as examples so they can identify each letter's form. By contrast, the table does not indicate any pronunciation of the peculiar English letters, particularly letters, such as, E - I and G - J, which means no sounds are visually introduced, only spoken utterances. Afterwards, the table is followed by "listen and repeat" activity, pupils listen to their teacher who is supposed to provide each letter (written in capital letters and small ones) with its pronunciation.

As a small observation, the words chosen as examples on the table displayed beneath seem somehow unattainable for beginners who have just started learning a foreign language totally different from Arabic which contains twenty eight letters and English, by contrast, contains twenty six letters. Needless to say, English, unlike Arabic, has an inconsistent orthography system and its letter-sound correspondence is not reliable. Preferably, newly introduced words should be monosyllabic and very simple, and can be illustrated by ready-made examples (pictures and images).

For instance, the "a" letter in "astronaut" could be replaced by "ant", "apple", "ape", ect. Letter "p" in "passport" could be replaced by "pen", "pencil", "pear", etc. Or they could use tangible objects inside the classroom to help them associate the name with the image, and with the concept. For example, "a" as in "apple", "apricot", "ad", for "b", we have "brush", "book", "bag", "board", etc. for "c", there is "copybook", "can", "cat", etc. for "d" letter, "door" or "desk" and so on. Words derived from their surroundings can assist them with easy memorization and retention of words and letters, as well as, their correct utterances.

Additionally, it is observed that English Alphabet letters are introduced to first year pupils without any phonetic transcription of the uttered words. After the introduction of the letters, they are asked to listen to the teacher's pronunciation then repeat after him. By contrast, in first year pupils' copybooks, a table was drawn with the alphabet letters in capitals, right beneath, there is the pronunciation of each letter but written in letters and not sounds, demonstrated as follows,

A ei, **B** bi, **C** si, **D** di, **E** i, **F** ef, **G** dji, **H** eitʃ, **I** ai, **J** djei, **K** kei, **L** el, **M** em, **N** en, **O** eou, **P** pi, **Q** kyou, **R** ar, **S** es, **T** ti, **U** you, **V** vi, **W** dʌblyou, **X** eks, **Z** zed.

What is shockingly noticeable is that the Alphabet letters, not only are written in the form of letters but also combined with sounds, like in **W** dʌblyou, **H** eitʃ, no notation possibly exists to represent the two sounds this way (letters and phonetic symbols). The letters' pronunciations could be represented through English notation advanced by the IPA and introduced to young learners to not terror them with the weird symbols later.

Nougat	Astronaut
Orange	Bus
Passport	Camera
Question	Dates
Radio	Elephant
Spaghetti	Fruit
Taxi	Guitar
Uniform	Helicopter
Vase	Igloo
Wagon	Jeans
Xylophone	Kangaroo
Yo-yo	Lamp
Zebra	Melon

Table (02): English Alphabet Letters from SOE.

In the same file, but different sequence, a lesson on English pronunciation and spelling is presented in Listen and Speak rubric. In this regard, the pupils listen to a sequence of words pronounced by the teacher and then repeat after him/her to practise the following sounds /i:/, /e/, /ɪ/, however, the point that must be referred to here is that these sounds were written in the syllabus differently. They have the form of letters although they are called SOUNDS. The vowel sounds are written this way: 'i'-'i' (ai)-(i). A table is drawn with two columns, for sounds and stress respectively. Afterwards, the pupils are required to identify the previous sounds in another series of words, and compare them again in a third sequence of examples.

File One

In the first file of SOE, sequence two, pronunciation and spelling exercise is put forth. A table with two columns for sounds and stress is displayed beneath. The pupils are required to listen and repeat certain examples (three, eleven and thirteen) according to the words classified on the table. In this activity, the sounds involved are not written phonetically, which drives us to think that pupils now associate sounds uttered to the following letters in bold fonts, fourteen, ten, listen, nineteen, instead of their actual representations (sound).

Consequently, the pupils now bear in mind that the sound is “een” and not long vowel /i:/. In the next year, they would be shocked to see those sounds in their different form (phonetic transcription). Some pupils might start confusing them with letters and when confronted with reality, they would question their teachers’ efficacy from now on. Back to the exercise, the pupils have a list of words to identify the sounds (long or short vowels), and then compare them. In addition to that, the second column is devoted to stress in words. The stressed syllable is highlighted in red and bold fonts, unlike sounds which are represented through letters plainly written in black. By contrast, in the pupils copybooks, no lesson of the former sounds exist, except a table of numbers for learning how to count in English, but not a single sound was written in this file.

1- Listen and repeat: three, eleven, thirteen, fourteen, nineteen.

2- Identify: three, thirteen, fourteen, listen, eleven, seventeen.

3- Compare: thirteen, seven, Sweden, sixteen.

sounds		stress
thirteen	seven	thir teen
fourteen	ten	fi teen
fifteen	eleven	seven teen
sixteen	listen	se ven
seventeen	Sweden	le ven
eighteen	li sten
nineteen		Swe den

Table (03): Examples of vowel sounds, /i:/, /e/ and /ɪ/.

Analysis

It is worth noting that the letters “ee” and “i” in “thirteen” and “listen” does not imply the same sound because when correctly uttered the hearer can differentiate between both sounds thanks to their length. In the word “thirteen” the sound is longer than the one in

“listen” or “sit”, which is why it is useful to introduce both sounds through their phonetic symbols to facilitate the visual memorization and help the pupils distinguish between long and short “i”, /i:/ and /ɪ/ using contrastive analysis, such as, introducing minimal pairs like “bit /bɪ t/-beat /b i: t/”, hit /h ɪ t/- heat /h i: t/, etc. By contrast, the vowel sound /e/ as in “seven” differs from the previous vowel sounds in terms of quality, so practicing minimal pairs is effective in this case too in order to help the learners memorize the vowel sounds and distinguish them as well.

File Two

According to the syllabus, file two introduces /g/, /dʒ/, /s/, /z/. In this file, pronunciation and spelling first exercise is programmed in sequence one. There is the table for sounds and stress, however, there are no sounds only words (see table down) that start with /g/, /dʒ/. These two sounds are written, in the syllabus, this way: “g”, “dj”. Moreover, sounds occur in different parts of the word, they could be in initial position, middle, or final, for example, game /geɪm/, sugar /ʃʊgə/, and bag /bæɡ/. Similarly, the second table for /s/, /z/ is put forward in sequence two with the same sounds and stress table format. Groups of words that contain /s/ and /z/ are introduced in letters. The main questions asked are: how could first year pupils identify new sounds written in letters? How could they know that “dogs” (written with “s”) is pronounced /z/ without introducing the appropriate phonological rule? Compared to the copybooks’ practised activities, regarding the sounds /g/, /dʒ/, /s/, /z/, no activity is found, consequently, no sounds are introduced.

1- Listen and repeat: good, Jack, glad, Jim, greet, Jenny, imagine.

2- Identify: good, Joe, Jane, game, big, job.....

3- Compare: game, Jane, give, Algeria, Nigeria, magic....

Sounds		Stress
good	Jack	good mor ning
glad	Jim	good after noon
greet	job	good even ing
game	June	good night
	imagine	

Table (04): Examples of consonant sounds /g/ and / dʒ/.

Analysis

First year pupils must bear in mind that /g/ and / dʒ/ are two different consonant sounds when written down or uttered. Despite the fact that consonants are easier to retain than

vowels because the majority of those consonant sounds do not change form neither as letters nor as transcribed symbols, such as, /g/ found in different positions in the word, initial position in “good”, middle position in “sugar”, and final position in “big”, at the same time, it is of great usefulness that the teacher brings in /g/ for the first time as a voiced palatal plosive. However, the teacher must focus on consonants that change in transcription, such as, / dʒ/ which is called a “blend”. It is a combination of two consonant sounds, voiced velar plosive /d/ and voiceless post-alveolar fricative /ʒ / and it is found in words, for instance, “job”, “judges”, and “huge”, etc. But receiving such sounds for the first time and through phonetic transcription can be tiring and time-consuming but fruitful eventually.

1- Listen and repeat: speak, is, contest, eyes.

2- Identify: it’s, has, what’s, legs, eyes, yes, street, straight, kilos, photos.

3- Compare: Mrs, miss, yes, eyes, slim, student.

sounds		stress
is	is	m odel
contest	kilos	b eautiful
it’s	Mrs	t elephone
yes	has	i nterview
street	eyes	ch ildren
what’s	legs	f ashion

Table (05): Examples of consonant sounds /s/ and /z/.

Analysis

Firstly, the teacher must introduce /s/ and /z/ consonants as two different fricative sounds which means they are produced with a friction of air between the tip of the tongue and alveolar ridge. /s/ is a voiceless fricative sound and it is found in word initial position (at the beginning of the word) as in “speak”, “start”, “sing”, etc. in middle position like in “contest”, “best”, “host”, etc. and in final position (at the end of the word), such as, “kiss”, “tennis”, “cats” (for both singular and plural nouns) to practise often. /z/ is a voiced fricative sound and usually does not differ from its letter “z” except when it is a final “s” or some exceptional cases. It can be found at the beginning of words like in “zero”, “zone”, in the middle of words, for example, “bazaar”, “miser”, and at the end of words like in “has”, “legs”, “freeze”, etc. It is of great importance to focus on how uttered sounds alter from their written form (spelling) to their transcribed one, and it depends on its position in the word and sounds preceding it.

File Three

/ʃ/ and /tʃ/ sounds are introduced in this file, sequence one, however, written in the letters “ch” and “tch” instead of “ch” and “sh”, just like the words match – dish / cheese – she. The same previous argues imply on this file, still stressed syllables highlighted in red and bold, and sounds remain without any logical indicator, neither coloured letters nor phonetic symbols. In sequence two, /θ/, /ð/ sounds are represented in the syllabus as “’th’ the two sounds”, but no symbols of sounds are provided.

It is believed that constant exposure to oral pronunciation of these words can help learners to memorize them, but introducing phonetic symbols through transcription (mainly broad one) remains effective and essential to convey accurate oral articulation of the sound followed by its visual image (symbol). Thus, learners can discriminate between letters in spelling and sounds in pronunciation, especially one letter that has different physical realizations, such as, the letter “o” in actor /æktə/, it is pronounced /ə/, in odd, it is /ɒd/, in corpse /kɔ:ps/, in open /əʊpən/. Compared to the pupils’ copybooks’ activities as regards the sounds /ʃ/, /tʃ/, /θ/, /ð/, no activities or examples are found.

1- Listen and repeat: watch, wash, match, flash, chips, she....

2- Identify: China, shoot, Manchester, champion, she, cheese, chocolate, child.

3- Compare: ships, chips, shop, chop, shoe, chew.....

sounds		stress
flash	match	t ennis
dish	chat	b aseball
fish	chips	c ricket
cheese	she	v olleyball

Table (06): Examples of consonant sounds /ʃ/ and /tʃ/.

Analysis

The majority of pupils face their most difficult challenge in pronouncing “ch” /tʃ/, and “sh” /ʃ/ correctly, mainly for one known reason which is pronouncing such letters the same as /ʃ/ because of the influence of French language on their unstable input, and usually /tʃ/ sound does not exist in this language. Consequently, the pupils tend to convert /tʃ/ in “chips” to /ʃ/ and pronounce it /ʃips/, hence, it loses its actual meaning and gains another meaning that of the word “ships” plural of a “ship”. It is necessary to introduce /tʃ/ in “chat”, and /ʃ/ in “shut” as two different phonemes, the easiest task to do so is to practise minimal pairs

focusing on the difference between the two sounds. /tʃ/ is a voiced affricate (a combination of two sounds, voiceless dental plosive /t/ and voiceless post-alveolar fricative /ʃ/, and it is called a blend produced with a simultaneous obstruction and explosion of air followed by an instant friction). /tʃ/ sound can be found in different word positions, for instance, “cheese”, “butcher”, and “beach”. Additionally, /ʃ/ is a voiceless post-alveolar fricative sound that is produced with a friction of air between the tongue and alveolar ridge like in “she”, “fishing”, “dish”, “sugar”, “machine”, “pollution”, etc. with constant perseverance in practice of phonetic transcription and pronunciation drills, the pupils would memorize the difference between /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ quickly and effortlessly.

1- Listen and repeat: fourth, this, thin, they.

2- Identify: thank you, that, thirteen, brother, then, them, thick, bath, south, north, weather, mouth, mother, cloth, clothes.....

3- Compare: thin, this, theme, them, fifth, bath, athlete, other, Earth, birth.....

sounds		stress
thin	this	pl ayer
fifth	mother	ke per
thanks	they	tea cher

Table (07): Examples of consonant sounds /θ/ and /ð/.

Analysis

As regards this lesson, it is necessary to tell the pupils that the letters “th” have two different utterances, / θ/ voiceless dental fricative as in “thin”, “bathroom”, and “fifth”, and / ð/ voiced dental fricative in words like “this”, “weather”, “mother”, and “breathe”. Learning these two sounds can be very confusing for this level. But with constant practice of pronunciation drills and phonetic transcription exercises these sounds can be quickly received and retained. Also, modelling the sounds through authentic recordings of native speakers is essential and effective inside the classroom. However, the majority of Mostaganem urban pupils rarely pronounce /θ/ and /ð/ sounds as our mother tongue does have these two sounds, our colloquial language in Mostaganem does not, so they tend to convert them to /t/ and /d/ sounds respectively, instead of saying / θæŋk ju:/ they say /tæŋk ju:/, instead of saying / ðɪ s/ they say /dɪs/.

File Four

Basically, the same procedure of the same exercises goes for all pronunciation and sounds rubric. With sounds' tables, words are provided with "n" + "k" / "n" + "g", supposedly written sounds. The sounds of final "s" in words are illustrated on the table with different examples. Pupils are asked to listen to and repeat certain words, identify sounds, and then compare them in a series of words. The objective behind such activities is to help pupils discriminate between sounds. But still no phonetic representation is introduced so far. By contrast, when the pupils' copybooks are consulted no similar lesson or activities are found unfortunately.

1- Listen and repeat: sing, morning, song, long, bank, rank.....

2- Identify: kicking, ringing, doing, working, learning, teaching, having, and dancing.

3- Compare: reading, riding, teaching, timing, sleeping, sliding.

sounds			stress
sing	song	bank	play ing
drink	strong	bang	tak ing
singing		ban	vi siting
king			drin king

Table (08): Examples of sounds /ɪŋ/, /ɒŋ/ and /ŋk/.

Analysis

For this primal level, voiced nasal sound /ŋ/ is a little bit difficult to learn quickly, unless the teacher is quite perseverant in practicing it regularly. It is even practical to note that first year pupils may retain this sound fast by knowing that /ŋ/ is always associated with the "ing" form of verbs or nouns, for example, "sing", "king", "playing", etc. this is the first rule which the teacher should introduce to his/her pupils because it is the easiest, as well as the "ong" /ɒŋ/ form as in "song", "strong", "Hong Kong", and also "ang" /æŋ/ form as in "hang", "bang", "fang", etc. However, the second phonological rule says that when the letter "n" is followed by the letter "k" then the nasal sound /n/ turns to /ŋ/ followed by /k/, for example, "bank" /bæŋk/, "drink" /drɪŋk/, "donkey" /dɒŋki/, but it is transcribed /n/ in "ban" /bæn/ because it is not followed by a "k". The exercise instructions above the table require the pupils to identify and compare a list of words which all contain only "ing" form words. This might seem inconvenient with the words listed in the table and it proves no consistency between the sounds /ɪŋ/, /ɒŋ/, /æŋk/, and /ŋk/.

1- Listen and repeat: cats, dogs, horses.

2- Identify: nieces, sisters, uncles, aunts, flags, capitals, countries, parties.

3- Compare: school, schools, learner, learners, age, ages, glass, glasses.....

sounds			stress
cats	dogs	horses	cats
shops	seas	foxes	dogs
chops	girls	banks	horses
friends	beaches		foxes

Table (09): Final “s” /s/, /z/ and / ɪz/ sounds.

Analysis

Introducing final “s” and how to pronounce words ending with the letter “s” correctly must be carefully dealt with. First year pupils have fresh and blank minds, as stated by one of the concerned teachers, that accept anything new, hence, receiving the rules of how to produce final “s” can be easy to retain. The teacher should provide the pupils with a list of voiced and voiceless sounds coordinated with final “s” pronunciations /s/, /z/, /ɪz/, for example, /t/ is a voiceless alveolar plosive and when a word ends with /t/ like in “cat”, in plural we pronounce it /kæts/. By contrast, /d/ is a voiced alveolar plosive and when a word ends with /d/ sound like in “bed”, in its plural form we pronounce final “s” as /z/ /bedz/. Hence, the teacher tells his/her pupils that words ending with a voiced sound followed by “s” for plural forms (or “s” for verbs of the third person “he”, “she”, “it” in present) are always pronounced with /z/ except for /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ sounds which will be produced with /ɪz/, such as, churches /tʃɜːtʃɪz/, judges /dʒʌdʒɪz/, etc. Plural words ending with “s” (or “s” for verbs of the third person “he”, “she”, “it” in present) preceded by a voiceless sound, for example, /f/ or /t/ are pronounced /s/, for example, laughs /lɑːfs/, hats /hæts/, except for the sounds /s/, /z/, and /ʃ/ like kisses /kɪsɪz/, /sɜːpraɪzɪz/, and /bʊʃɪz/, etc. The teacher can also prepare a table with voiced and voiceless sounds to facilitate memorization of the rules; the table can take the following form,

/s/ with voiceless sounds	/k/	/t/	/p/	/θ/	/f/	/h/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
/z/ with voiced sounds	/g/	/d/	/b/	/ð/	/v/	/l/	/m/	/n/	/ŋ/	/r/	/w/	/j/	/	/	/

/vz/	/f/	/tʃ/	/dʒ/	/s/	/z/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
------	-----	------	------	-----	-----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Table (10): Lists of voiced and voiceless sounds for final “s”.

File Five

The same procedure of sound and pronunciation exercises is followed with the sounds /s/ and /ʃ/, written in the SOE syllabus as follows: “s” (s/ch) which indicates the way “s” letter is pronounced differently, /s/ in same, and /ʃ/ in sure. Final “er” and “ar” – “ure” and “or” in words. According to the pronunciation of the examples, we guess the sounds, such as, in butter, pepper, dollar, dinar, and bar. It is concluded that the sounds programmed in this file are /ə/and /ɑ:/. When pupils’ copybooks are compared to the exercise no similar lesson or activities are found regarding pronunciation or phonetic transcription.

- 1- Listen and repeat:** sugar, water, after, doctor, picture.
- 2- Identify:** butter, bar, sugar, doctor, dollar, supper, car, guitar.
- 3- Compare:** sugar, bar, doctor, dollar, supper, car...

sounds			Stress
salt	sun	sugar	spagh h etti
saucer	Sunday	sure	s andwich
salad	subject		s upper
syrup	supper		s ugar
soda	sushi		

Table (11): Examples of consonant sounds /s/ and /ʃ/.

Analysis

Apparently, this exercise helps the pupils pay extra attention to the complicated relationship between English spelling and its pronunciation. Noting that not every letter is pronounced as it is written, in this case, file five of “SOE” textbook for first year pupils deals with letter “s” which can be pronounced /s/ as in “summer”, and /ʃ/ as in “sugar” among other utterances, such as, /z/ in “surprise”, and /ʒ/ as in “vision”. Nevertheless, this lesson could be included into the same context as lesson of /s/ and /z/ in file two as part two, so the pupils can make a relation between the diverse pronunciations of the same letter “s”. Confusing between /s/ and /ʃ/ may occur, especially, because of their close and similar form (/ʃ/ seem to have an extended shape of /s/), unless the teacher practises more minimal pairs and phonetic transcription. The pupils would be able to discern between these two sounds without difficulty. Moreover, there is a common mistake of indicating the sound /ʃ/ by the letters “ch” which is phonetically wrong.

1- Listen and repeat: some, sugar, sure, supper, surely.

2- Identify: spaghetti, sandwich, seven, sports, sugar, salt, some, soup.

3- Compare: son, sun, supper, Sunday....

sounds			stress
grocer	sugar	bar	v egetables
starter	dollar	car	reci p e
pepper		Hoggar	ch ocolate
butter		dinar	lemon a de

Table (12): Example of vowel sounds /ɑ:/ and /ə/.

Analysis

This lesson is the second and the last one dealing with vowel sounds after /i:/ and /ɪ/. It deals with “er” and “ar” in final position of isolated words as indicated in table (11), for example, butter /bʌtə/, finger /fɪŋgə/, beggar /begə/ and polar /pɒlə/. However, there are other words which end with “ar” but are pronounced differently, such as, “far” /fɑ:/, “car” /kɑ:/, “star” /stɑ:/, etc. On the one hand, in the first case, the teacher should introduce /ə/ sound or “shwa” as the shortest sound that can be found in weak syllables. It takes the form of “er”, “ar”, “or” like in “pepper”, “sugar” and “doctor”. On the other hand, words ending in “ar” are not pronounced / ə/ but /ɑ:/ as in “far”, “guitar” and “bazaar”. That is why it is useful to explain to the pupils that words ending with “ar” (monosyllabic ones and weak syllables) are always pronounced /ɑ:/, such as, star, far, car,. Other two and three-syllabic words ending with “ar” often pronounced /ɑ:/ can be dealt with in forthcoming years.

File Six

In this file, they deal with /h/ sound in sequence three, pronunciation and spelling rubric with the table of sounds and stress. In relation to the textbooks’ syllabus, /h/ is called aspirated “h” and non-aspirated “h”, as in home /həʊm/ and honest /ɒnɪst/. As far as final “ed” is concerned, the three sounds /t/, /d/ , /ɪd/ are represented through different examples still written in letters and not phonetic symbols, mostly, ending with a variety of voiced and voiceless sounds. However, no phonetic rule is given to facilitate detecting the appropriate sounds, such as, after /t/ and /d/ final “ed” is pronounced /ɪd/ except for introducing a table of the appropriate sounds for each of the three categories.

1- Listen and repeat: hotel, him, house, hour, honour, honest.....

2- Identify: hotel, hour, him, history, honour, him.....

3- Compare: hotel, honour, hour, home, him, honest.....

Sounds	Stress
hotel	a dan ce
him	a smell
honour	an or der
house	an hour
hospital	

Table (13): Examples of aspirated and non-aspirated /h/ sound.

Analysis

Aspirated and non-aspirated “h” can be a challenge for first year pupils, but getting used to the pronunciations is not impossible. The teacher is ought to explain that spelling is different in pronunciation in most of English vocabulary, because there are letters that are written but are not pronounced in other words, such as, “hour”, “honour”, and “honest”. Nevertheless, “h” can be pronounced in other words, for example, him, home, history, etc. for easy and quick comprehension, it is better to practise words containing letter “h” both aspirated and silent regularly in order to be familiar with the oral and written forms (letters and phonetic transcription).

1- Listen and repeat: stopped, washed, watched, liked, cooked.....

played, stayed, arrived, enjoyed, employed.....

ended, started, detected, invited, visited.....

2- Identify: washed, invited, arrived, started, liked, stayed,

3- Compare: stopped, detected, started, cooked, visited, employed

sounds	stress
faxed	stop ped
stopped	lived
liked	vi sited
checked	trav elled
practised	in ited
completed	

Table (14): Examples of final “ed”, /d/, /t/ and /ɪd/.

Analysis

Besides final “s”, final “ed” is an issue that should be dealt with carefully. By the end of file five and the beginning of file six, first year pupils are aware of the fact that in English there are regular and irregular verbs. Regular verbs take the form of final “ed” when conjugated in the past simple and past participle form, while irregular verbs change completely. However, there is a difference in pronunciation of the final “ed” which could be /t/ as in liked /laɪkt/, /d/ as in phoned /fəʊnd/, or /ɪd/ like in started /stɑ:tɪd/, etc. In order to properly receive and grasp these different sounds, the teacher’s aim is to introduce the appropriate rules starting with a list of voiced and voiceless sounds coordinated with /t/, /d/ and /ɪd/. First year pupils should know that verbs with final “ed” preceded by voiceless sounds, such as, /k/ in “to ask- asked”, /p/ in “to help-helped”, /tʃ/ in “to hatch- hatched”, are always pronounced /t/ except for /t/ sound which is pronounced /ɪd/ as in “to hate- hated”, “to delete- deleted”. Verbs with final “ed” but preceded by voiced sounds, such as, /g/ in “to beg- begged”, /v/ in “to love- loved”, /ʃ/ in “to hush- hushed”, are always pronounced /d/, except for the sound /d/ because they are pronounced /ɪd/, for example, “to add- added” and “to found- founded”.

/t/ with voiceless sounds	/k /	/p /	/θ/	/f/	/s/	/tʃ/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
/d/ with voiced sounds	/g /	/ʃ/	/b /	/ð /	/v/	/l/	/m/	/n/	/ŋ/	/r/	/w/	/j/	/dʒ /	/z/	/
/ɪd/	/t/ /	/d /	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Table (15): Lists of voiced and voiceless sounds for final “ed”.

File Seven

In this file particularly, pronunciation practice activities revolve around the word ending with the suffix “tion” consequently, the sound /ʃn/ is produced. Likewise, pupils listen to the words uttered by the teacher and they repeat after him. After that, they identify the sound in many similar words, except that when they compare, they have words ending with “ed” so their pronunciation becomes different. As regards, stress, the stressed syllable falls before the suffix “tion” just like hinted on the table in red and bold. In comparison, once again, first year pupils learn how to produce this sound without being introduced to its phonetic form.

1- Listen and repeat: pollution, protection, education.....

2- Identify: selection, section, invention, detection, pollution, consumption.....

3- Compare: pollution, polluted, selection, selected, protection, protected....

sounds	stress
protection	
production	
pollution	po ll ution
selection	pro te ction
consumption	
education	
detection	se le ction
declaration	decla ra tion

Table (16): Examples of the sound / ʃn/.

Analysis

In regard with the findings of the matters discussed above, it is concluded that first year textbook “Spotlight on English”, hopefully, preserves pronunciation practice activities’ share. Each of the seven files contains at least three pronunciation activities. A table of sounds is enclosed with examples of words containing the targeted sounds, in addition to stressed syllables highlighted in red and bold fonts. Pupils are required to listen and repeat, identify, then compare sounds in a series of words. These activities involve all the four skills, listening to sounds then speaking them out loud, reading them in the process, then writing them down.

Nevertheless, sounds introduced to the learners are not transcribed and lack their phonetic and physical realizations. Even in the syllabus, they seem wrongly represented by letters instead of phonetic symbols. It is of great importance to introduce English sounds, vowels and consonants, to young learners so they can grasp their pronunciation’s written form gradually with intensive revision of the previously dealt-with sounds on a regular basis. Principally, when they get to the second year, they would be exposed to new sounds taught by another teacher probably who might approach pronunciation differently, but she/he will be obliged to fall behind schedule by delaying the new programme and start teaching them what they could have missed in the last year.

In both cases, these pupils would be late and this reason might affect their motivation to learn English and lose interest in its pronunciation. As regards their classroom copybooks, after a thorough scrutiny of the lessons taught to first year pupils in Belhamri Mohammed

middle school, not a single pronunciation activity is practised, except the lesson of English alphabet letters introduced with poor phonological awareness. Hence, we deduce that, pronunciation activities are being neglected, despite its implementation into teaching curriculum and textbook syllabus, by teachers who favour teaching grammar and vocabulary to practicing sounds' articulation. It is viewed as an attainable skill afterwards; however, this is a false perception that can jeopardize pronunciation teaching in our EFL contexts. Furthermore, the implementation of phonetic transcription as a teaching method meets no support or recognition and does not exceed English alphabet letters' wrong representation.

II.7.2. Fourth Year Textbook's and Pupils Copybooks' Comparison Analysis

Introduction

“On the Move³³” is the name depicted for the textbook of the fourth year pupils and according to the syllabus designed for this level in middle schools, there are six main files and each file is divided into two main parts, first part is called language learning and it covers functions, grammar, vocabulary and sound system. The second part of the files has a relation with skills building, in terms of primary skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, in addition to social skills, such as, competencies in making final projects at the end of each file. As far as sound system is concerned, in all the files a set of sounds is introduced in exercises through phonetic transcription.

File One

For the first file, words and sounds rubric contains a group of sound segments put forward through exercises demonstrated in tables as follows,

The first exercise is concerned with final “ed” pronunciation, which is a lesson they are supposed to have studied in their first year according to SOE syllabus. The table contains a column for verbs (already written), adjectives (example is given) and phonetic transcription. They are asked to add the suffix “ed” to the verbs to form either adjectives or past participles. Afterwards, they are to transcribe each of the adjectives with the three realizations of final “ed”, /t/ /d/ and /ɪd/. In order for fourth year learners to answer the

³³ Henceforth OTM

exercise they must be acquainted with the phonetic rule for final “ed”, that is to mean, “ed” is pronounced / id / when the word ends with /t/ like in “delete” “deleted” or /d/ in “ended”.

As regards the part of phonetic transcription, fourth year pupils, by this level, should already be familiar with the majority of English sounds and their corresponding symbols in order to transcribe them correctly. In the second exercise, a pair work is required for the sake of building a dialogue by taking roles in asking questions and answering back. When involved with communication, they are required to pay attention to their pronunciation with the help of the previous table; they must utter the right sound when final “ed” is involved. This exercise is entertaining and beneficial as it consolidates the pupils’ self-confidence with interaction and tag questions.

Example:

You: Jamel/Jamila prefers eating **raw food**, doesn’t he/she?

Partner: no, she/he doesn’t. She prefers **cooked food**.

Verbs	Adjectives	Phonetic Transcription
to cook (food)	cooked food	/ kʊk__/
to boil (eggs)	/ bɔɪ l__/
to fry (potatoes)	/fraɪ__/
to steam (rice)	/sti :m__/
to roast (peanuts)	/rəʊst__/
to grill (lamb)	/grɪl__/

Table (17): Final “ed” pronunciation practice activity.

The third exercise is related to silent letters, i.e. the letter is written but not pronounced. The pupils are asked to read the words allowed and then cross out the silent letters. Opposite to each word, its transcription is written which helps pupils identify which letters become silent, especially, in the case of long vowels and words ending with /ə/. Subsequently, the teacher pronounces the word and pupils check their answers to correct their mistakes. However, it is preferable that teacher remains neutral when exercise correction takes place i.e. he/she asks only about the pronunciation of a word, if the learner mispronounces it, he gives him a chance to correct himself, if he fails in that then peer-correction is be useful, if they fail, too, the teacher interferes and provides them with the correct pronunciation.

You see/write	You pronounce	You see/write	You pronounce
cooker	/ˈkʊkə/	yolk	/jɒk/
fruit	/fru:t/	salmon	/ˈsæmən/
parsley	/ˈpɑ:slɪ/	salt	/sɔ:lt/
fork	/fɔ:k/	stomach	/ˈstʌmək/
knife	/naɪf/	lamb	/læm/
turnip	/ˈtɜ:nɪp/	doughnut	/ˈdəʊnʌt/
hamburger	/ˈhæmbɜ:gə/	wheat	/wi:t/
yoghurt	/ˈjɒgət/	light	/laɪt/
spaghetti	/spəˈgeti/	calf	/kɑ:f/
		autumn	/ˈɔ:təm/

Table (18) : Silent letters' pronunciation practice activity.

In the following exercise, fourth year pupils are asked to complete another table with the sound /ɪ/ as in bit /bɪt/ and /i:/ as in cheese /tʃi:z/, and filling the gaps with the right symbols. Consequently, this type of exercise helps the pupils discriminate easily between two vowels and clear the vagueness when the difference is in terms of length. Minimal pairs' practice could be very helpful, too.

You see/write	You say/read aloud	You see/write	You say/read aloud
sweets	/sw.ts/	apricots	/eɪpr.kɒts/
kiwis	/k.w./	berries	/ber.z/
beans	/b.nz/	peaches	/p.tʃ.z/
bitter	/b.tə/	juicy	/dʒu:s./
figs	/f.gz/	lettuce	/let.s/
protein	/prəʊt.n/		

Table (19): Vowel sounds /ɪ /, /e/ and /i:/ practice activity.

Correction of the exercises is required in order to identify the pupils' mistakes, and gather the adequate feedback to reflect on the previous exercises and learners' performances. The following exercise helps vocabulary building and communication reinforcement. It takes the form of a dialogue for the sake of learning spelling as if in a spelling-bee competition, only sound /e/ is added.

A- Can you tell me a word with the sound /i:/ as in cheese?

B- Yes, I can. Leek/ Let me think, leel.

A- Sorry, I don't understand.

B- Leek, that's L-E-E-K

A- Ah! Leek, that's right

Through this exercise, pupils also learn intonation (yes-no questions) and also involve their cognitive abilities. They go to look for their stock of information in their heads, associate it with the required sound and suggest it. The teacher in this case works as a judge. The following table is concerned with placing the correct sound instead of dots. This exercise carries the same objectives as the fifth one.

You see/write	You say/read aloud	You see/write	You say/read aloud
lettuce	/l.t.s/	bread	/br.d/
lipid	/l.p.d/	breakfast	/br.kf.st/
liquid	/l.kw.d/	eggs	/.gz/
lemon	/l.mən/	coffee	/kɒf./

Table (20): Vowel sounds /ɪ /, /e/, /i:/ first revision.

Before the file is finished, a short revision of short vowel sounds is demonstrated below for the learners to try and recover previous sounds and their transcription. It is beneficial for sound memorization and discrimination.

Spelling	Transcription	Spelling	Transcription
kitchen		peas	
lettuce		beef	

Table (21): Vowel sounds /ɪ /, /e/ and /i:/ second revision.

As compared to their classroom copybooks, the lesson of final “ed” is found in an organized file one, followed by another exercise already corrected. In addition, another activity of silent letters is practised with reference to the other activity of crossing out silent letters.

File Two

In the following file, words and sounds rubric cover one exercise where the pupils are required to copy the table on their copybooks and tick in the appropriate box of the suitable prefix. After they obtain all the opposites of the former words, they are to rewrite them in phonetic script, at the same time, indicating stressed syllables and following the example: immoral /ɪ'mɒrəl/.

Il-	Im-	In-	Ir-	Un-	Dis-	Words	Transcription
						regular	/ˈregjələ/
						capable	/ˈkeɪpəbl/
						possible	/ˈpɒsəbl/
						responsible	/rɪˈspɒnsəbl/
						legal	/ˈli:gl/
						justice	/ˈdʒʌstɪs/
						probable	/ˈprɒbəbl/
						definite	/ˈdefɪnɪt/
						polite	/pəˈlaɪt/
						obey	/əʊˈbeɪ/
						agree	/əˈɡri:/

Table (22): The use of prefixes for making opposites.

Regarding strong and weak forms of “can”, “do”, “was/were” and “have/has”, learners are provided with the table of the words’ weak forms in connected speech transcribed into the following script,

Have		Can		Do	
Strong form	Weak form	Strong form	Weak form	Strong form	Weak form
/hæv/	/həv/	/kæn/	/kən/	/du:/	/də/

Table (23): Weak and strong forms of have, can and do.

In brief, all these exercises will eventually deem to failure if the pupils are not familiar with sounds and phonetic symbols and stress rules. Both phonetic and phonological competencies must be available as to build the input of the target language. Sounds, thus, should be carefully grasped and retained (successful reception) before produced and written (successful articulation). An observation is worth mentioning which is that pupils should be aware of the difference between words in isolation and in connected speech. Pronunciation of syllables changes according to the stress shift. Strong forms of words are found generally when words are pronounced in isolation and weak forms are, conversely, found in connected speech.

File Three

According to OTM textbook syllabus, the pupils are exposed to three long and short vowels /ɒ/, /ɔ:/, /æ/, /u:/, /ʊ/, /ɑ:/. All these sounds are classified on a table with two columns. In column A, there are eight vowel sounds and opposite to them in column B, there is a group of words. The pupils listen to the teacher’s articulation of sounds and then they start crossing out the word which does not have a corresponding sounds, i.e. the odd one.

This exercise helps to enhance their listening ability when it comes to sounds' retention and discrimination.

Column A: Vowel sounds	Column B: Words			
/ɒ/	sock	lot	port	pot
/ɔ:/	court	cot	caught	bought
/ɜ:/	bird	serve	but	curl
/ɑ:/	car	large	half	cat
/u:/	pool	boots	good	two
/ʊ/	book	suit	pull	foot
/æ/	glass	bat	cat	cap

Table (24): Short and long vowels' pronunciation practice activity.

The next exercise is concerned with consonant clusters. The teacher explains that a consonant cluster is a series or a combination of consonant sounds without any vowels interference. In this table, they are provided with all possible consonant clusters of English, underline them when detected and then indicate the position in which they occur, be it in initial position, middle position, or final one.

In comparison to the pupils' copybooks, the exercise of the short and long vowels is found in five copybooks out of nine. Whereas, the other remaining pupils are careless and most of their copybooks are corrected by the teacher who points out several mistakes to monitor their progress. As regards consonant clusters, both lesson and exercise are written and practised respectively.

Consonant clusters	Words starting with a consonant cluster
A. Consonant+r: br,cr,fr,gr,pr,tr.....	Example: Brain, Brad
B. Consosnant+l: bl;cl;fl;gl.....	
C. s+ consonant: sc,sl;sk,sm,sn,st....	
D. s+consonant+ consonant:spr,str	

Table (25): Consonant clusters' practice activity.

File Four

In fourth year textbook syllabus, the fourth file is concerned with diphthongs. In the first exercise, the teacher writes the word diphthong and requests the pupils to look for its definition or meaning in dictionaries, he/she explains it to their classmates and provides them with examples. After that, they are presented with a drawing of a human-like face (see below) with vowel pairs or diphthongs. The pupils are asked to look for words containing diphthongs from the same human head, such as, /eə/ in hair, /aɪ/ in eyes and /əʊ/ in nose. Next, they are given two separate tables for words and sounds and they must classify each

word inside the appropriate column of sounds, example of /əʊ/ in nose is provided. The idea of the human head and combining its organs with the suitable diphthong to pronounce them correctly is a clever technique to stimulate the pupils' minds to learn them in a witty visual way. As well as, allowing them some free time to find knowledge in funny ways. It is necessary to inform the pupils that the difference between letters and sounds lies in the slashes or square brackets, otherwise bewilderment might take place.

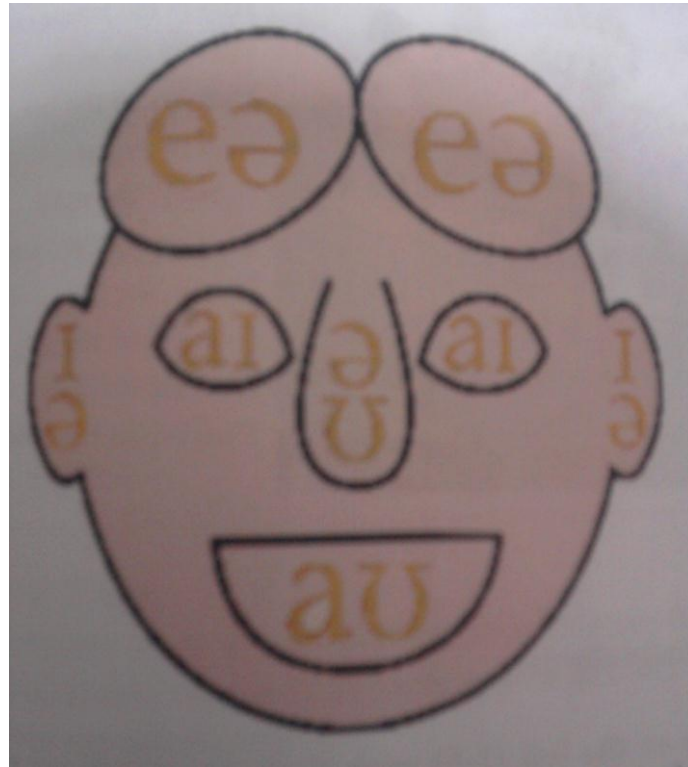


Figure (03): Human face for diphthongs

stone - air - no - now - buy - bay - boat - house - know - here - there - oil - spear - sure - chair - bear - tour - pure - hear - town - five

Table (26): Diphthongs' pronunciation practice activity.

əʊ	aʊ	aɪ	eɪ	ɪe	eə	ɔɪ	ʊə
nose							

Table (27): Diphthongs' phonetic transcription activity.

File five

According to the programme of the textbook, no sounds are dealt with in this file. Nevertheless, there is an exercise regarding stress shift in words like increase /^ɪ**mkri:s**/ (noun) and increase /**m**^ɪ**kri:z**/ (verb). Hence, in order to indicate stress, words like the latter are written phonetically which is the correct way to indicate stress instead of capital letters. Along the way, the teacher introduces the way to discern between homographs that are written the same, but are pronounced differently and have different meanings because of the stress shift.

File Six

In the last file, phonetic transcription pronunciation teaching rubrics are concluded with an exercise about sound, /æ/, /e/ and /ʌ/ (short vowel sounds). The pupils have two separate tables, mainly, the first is for monosyllabic words and the second one is designed for sounds. They are asked to carefully arrange words in the first table according to the pronunciation of the letters in bold type. They are provided with examples of words and their transcription including all the phonetic sounds mentioned earlier. At the end of the exercise, the teacher utters the words and pupils check their answers. The teacher's control and supervision are required for the success of the exercise.

bat	rat	but	said	sad	met	cat	come	bad
fat	bet	head	next	mat	but	cut	bed	
bud								

Table (28): Short vowel sounds' pronunciation practice activity.

Vowel sound /æ/	Vowel sound /e/	Vowel sound /ʌ/
bat → /bæt/	met → /met/	but → /bʌt/

Table (29): Short vowel sounds' guide activity.

For contrastive analysis and sound discrimination, this activity is useful and practical. The pupils will understand that many letters of English are written in a way but pronounced in another one, thus, contrastive analysis with the use of minimal pairs consolidates the pupils' comprehension skill and empowers them to discern between sounds, precisely, vowels that can be their first challenge.

Analysis

Seemingly, fourth year textbook “OTM” is fully rich with pronunciation instruction and different phonetic transcription and sound comprehension practice activities, however, “SOE”, despite the integration of pronunciation characteristics (sounds and stress), still does not incorporate phonetic transcription as a teaching method and somehow seems to lack a firm phonetic and phonological formation. As far as the present study’s objectives are concerned, the textbook is used only as a guidebook to compare the exercises of pronunciation and sounds’ rubric programmed in this school book with the lessons and exercises practised in their pupils’ copybooks. There is no intention to criticize the textbook’s programme or rubrics’ structure; it is conducted only for the sake of exposing the teachers’ perseverance and compatibility with the textbooks’ syllabuses, besides shedding some light on the status of pronunciation teaching and phonetic transcription implementation in EFL teaching materials and contexts.

As regards the results of the comparison, we conclude that only the minority of teachers in Belhamri middle school, such as, fourth year teacher, strive to put pronunciation into practical use, as well as, phonetic transcription despite the fact that no supplementary or improvised exercises, apart from their syllabus, are practised. Fourth year EFL teacher seems to maintain pronunciation practice activities and follow the syllabus closely. Compared to the fourth year pupils’ copybooks, the teacher is perseverant enough to write their lessons and activities practised afterwards. It indicates and shows their readiness and willingness to give pronunciation of English a chance to move forward and alter from its low status. Besides, integrating phonetic transcription as a teaching method is apparent in both copybooks and textbooks and hopefully is successful enough according to the results of the quantitative data analysis to be dealt with in the next chapter.

Conclusion

On the one hand, for first year pupils' case, it is of paramount importance for the teacher to introduce the alphabet of English letters to his/her pupils enclosed with each letter's phonetic transcription and letter-sound articulation. The pupils are oblivious of how to pronounce the sounds of a new foreign language for the first time and teaching them the appropriate articulation of the letters' sounds through their phonemic transcription is essential to avoid any serious letter -sound relationship complexities and difficulties afterwards.

As regards fourth year pupils' case, on the other hand, they are supposed to possess higher understanding and good grasp of English sounds in particular, and pronunciation in general after three years of constant practice and everyday training compared to the first year middle schoolers, generally, because the lessons and exercises are more complex. Afterwards, all the data collected from the pupils' copybooks regarding phonetic and phonological lessons and activities are methodically compared to the textbooks' activities, and the aim behind this comparison is to disclose the same aims mentioned above, as well as, validate or invalidate the study's proposed hypotheses.

Chapter IV

Data Collection and Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis

Chapter IV

Data Collection and Analysis

Quantitative Data Analyses

Introduction

The fourth chapter of the present study covers the results and analysis of questionnaires submitted to first year and fourth year teachers and pupils, after a brief comparison made between the textbooks' exercises and the copybooks' practised activities together with discussions and analyses afterwards. Each questionnaire is analyzed separately and so are the textbooks' and copybooks' activities concerning phonetic transcription and pronunciation practice, as far as sounds are concerned. The questionnaires aim at finding the reasons behind the small emphasis placed on English pronunciation teaching and the less frequent use of phonetic transcription by Algerian middle school teachers, thus, the pupils' constant failure in learning pronunciation and production of sounds.

II.8. First and Fourth Years Teachers Questionnaires' Analysis (see Appendix n°3/4)

The first table contains fourteen close-ended questions for first year teachers and fifteen close-ended questions for fourth year teachers. They vary in number in terms of questions about pronunciation practice and activities, using phonetic transcription of sounds and words to teach accurate pronunciation, and the teachers' tendencies and behaviours inside the classroom. The second part of the questionnaires contains thirteen open-ended questions (opinion questions) for first year teachers and fourteen questions for fourth year teachers. These series of direct and explicit questions intend to explore the teachers' experience in middle school teaching, their familiarity with their pupils' problems, their preferences and priorities when teaching pronunciation is involved, as well as, other language skills, and monitoring their own efficiency and usefulness when it comes to the exposure to native speakers.

Section 1: Close-ended Questions

Q01: Do you practise pronunciation activities in class?

The aim behind this question is to know whether middle school teachers continuously maintain practicing and performing pronunciation activities inside the classroom or not as much as the other skills.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	05	71.42 %
No	00	00 %
No answer	02	28.57%
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (30): Suggestions of pronunciation activities practice in class.

The table shows that all five teachers of first year middle schools from Mostaganem persevere in teaching pronunciation activities inside the classroom for its vitality and importance in improving their learners' communicative and oral competences. Varasarin advances,

The most important part of learning a second language rests on pronunciation (Pennington, 1996); thus speaking is so important in acquiring and using a language (Dan, 2006). Dan claims that language competence covers many aspects. Phonetics both in theory and practice constitute the basis of speaking above all other aspects of language and pronunciation is the foundation of speaking. Good pronunciation may make the communication easier, more relaxed and more useful. (2007: 32)

With regular practice of English pronunciation, teachers help improve those learners with poor production of the FL gradually, make them feel secured and intelligible and ensure the continuity of the flow of communication in a teacher-learner interaction.

Q02: Do you practise pronunciation activities in accordance with the textbook?

This question aims at inquiring about the teachers' diligence in following the pronunciation activities in the textbook's programme, or the fact that they tend to overlook them for the sake of grammar rules and vocabulary enrichment.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	05	71.42 %
No	00	00 %
No answer	02	28.57%
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (31): Suggestions of faithful follow-up to the textbook's exercises.

Table two shows that all of the teachers concerned with the survey are faithful to the textbook's activities and, seemingly, they practise pronunciation activities regularly. In a normal course, first year textbook "Spotlight on English" is divided into seven files, each file contains three sequences and pronunciation exercises are found every time in a sequence, but mainly programmed in sequence one (as explained in chapter three) as an introductory phase.

Q03: Do you improvise in creating activities to help your pupils improve their production of sounds?

The question aims at finding out if the teachers, besides their faithfulness to the textbook, do improvise and create other additional instructive and effective activities, as far as pronunciation is concerned, to help their pupils improve their articulation of segments and be aware of the correct production of each sound.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	03	42.85 %
No	02	28.57 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (32): Suggestions of the issue of improvisation in pronunciation teaching.

Table three, clearly, shows some kind of a conflict in opinion. Three teachers answer "yes" which indicates their readiness and intention to help their pupils improve their production of sounds and attempt to improvise other activities beside those provided by the

textbooks', such as, implementing useful teaching methods for listening to recorded native speakers and imitate them, or they could record their own articulation of sounds then listen to them and learn from their feedback. The other two respondents simply follow the programme proposed by the ministry of education without any personal interference but not rejecting instructional innovation. Varasarin adds emphasizing the issue of teaching methods,

Pronunciation teaching methods should more fully address the issues of motivation and exposure by creating awareness of the importance of pronunciation and providing more exposure to input from native speakers (Jones, 2002). (Ibid.33)

Q04: Do you think that phonetic transcription can be a remedial solution for the pupils' poor pronunciation?

This question indicates the possibility that integrating phonetic transcription in pronunciation activities can enhance the pupils' poor pronunciation if taught constantly, and also intends to identify the teachers' personal point of view about it.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	03	42.85 %
No	02	28.57 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (33): Suggestions of the possibility that phonetic transcription can be a remedy.

The statistics in table four shows that the majority of teachers agree that teaching phonetic transcription and phonetic symbols can help improve their pupils' pronunciation and the teachers who refuse this idea might think the phonetic symbols are hard for the pupils to learn and be familiar with their weird and cumbersome shapes. Varasarin (2007) encourages teaching phonetic symbols and says,

Phonetic symbols are not difficult to learn and teach, but before learners can do so language teachers must learn how to use them effectively to correct learners' accented pronunciation and intonation. It does require a lot of practice before a strong command of the symbols is possible. Phonetic symbols should be introduced to learners as early in their education as possible because pronunciation and intonation are the foundations of verbal language. Once learners have some facility in reading words, they no longer need instruction in this skill unless there is a special need (Anderson et al.,1985). (Ibid. 211-212)

As a result, phonetic transcription and instruction remain helpful and essential to acquire correct pronunciation. Teachers should be acquainted with phonetic symbols themselves or at least possess certain command over transcription before introducing it to their learners. Once they are exposed to it, they become familiar with the symbols and using it when consulting dictionaries for words' pronunciation and definitions.

Q05: Are your pupils aware of what phonetic symbols mean?

This question's goal is to find out if the teachers are diligent enough in explaining what phonetic symbols mean to their oblivious pupils. Even though researches attest that phonetic symbols are very important when learning any given foreign language, they are apparently neglected in both classrooms and textbooks and are not given the required amount of attention.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	05	71.42 %
No	00	00 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (34): Suggestions of the pupils' awareness of phonetic symbols.

The fifth table, evidently, shows that the teachers in Algerian middle schools have at least introduced some of the phonetic symbols to their pupils, because of their immense contribution in learning the spoken sounds of English letters and words at an early age, commonly, to avoid the confusing letter-sound relationship. Particularly, the influence of the mother tongue, in this respect, learners whose native language is closer to English, in terms

of orthography, find it easier to comprehend English spelling and face no difficulty in acquiring it, unlike Arabic which is completely different from English.

However, in the case of Arabic that is totally different from English. So, the first obstacle FL teachers might face when teaching pronunciation is when their pupils encounter sound-spelling correspondence difficulties. Consequently, it affects not only communication, but their listening, reading and writing skills as well.

Q06: Do you explain how the word is pronounced through phonetic symbols?

The sixth question aims at knowing if mispronounced sounds or words are explained through phonetic transcription, a technique which is supposedly taught throughout all the levels to facilitate the process of sounds' and symbols' retention, both auditorily and visually.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	04	57.14 %
No	01	14.28 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (35): Suggestions of the likability of using phonetic transcription in mispronunciations.

The table's statistics shows that four teachers out of five indeed use the phonetic transcription as a teaching method regarding correction of mispronounced words. The data also proves that it is an effective and useful teaching method to enhance the pupils' poor pronunciation and remedy their mispronunciations. In this connection, Mompean states,

The use of phonetic symbols in foreign language teaching and learning is potentially very advantageous. Provided that the values of phonetic symbols are known and that the foreign language learner can produce and discriminate the sounds symbols stand for, these advantages include, among other things, increased awareness of L2 sound features, "visualisation" of such intangible entities as sounds, increased learner autonomy when checking pronunciation in dictionaries
(2005: 01)

Consequently, teaching the symbols has always been beneficial and rewarding for both teachers who gain the time wasted on explanations of coincidentally found sounds, and for learners who gain awareness of the foreign language segmentals, as well as self –sufficiency at an early age.

Q07: Do you explain how the word is pronounced through phonetic transcription on a daily basis (everyday)?

This question has the same aim as the previous one. Besides discovering if the teachers are implementing such a teaching method in everyday practice activities or at least whenever the chance comes, for example, when introducing new words everyday. Phonetic symbols facilitate pronunciation and this kind of practice can make the pupils become more acquainted and more familiar with segments and symbols.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	01	14.28 %
No	04	57.14 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100%
Original number	07	

Table (36): Suggestions of the likeability of practicing phonetic symbols everyday.

The results of this table demonstrate that the majority of the teachers' answers (57.14%) do not support the use of phonetic transcription to pronounce new vocabulary regularly which means they either prefer introducing the word verbally for their learners, who could pick it up or just ignore it, and would suffice them or they could overlook it and not bother indicate the correct articulation. Juan Boyadji also supports the teaching of IPA symbols and says,

I believe phonetic symbols should be introduced gradually but systematically from the very beginning. There is no reason why we should be afraid of introducing phonetic symbols to students [...], transcription should be made available whenever students encounter a word which is new to them, especially if they are likely to mispronounce it
(p. 03)

Therefore, every FL teacher should feel obliged to care for his/her learners' inability to pronounce certain words which are pronounced in a different way their spelling does not indicate. In the case of first year pupils, introducing IPA English sounds today has become compulsory, even though the symbols are daunting and many find them hard to grasp, they are not impossible to be memorized by everyday practice.

Q08: Do you give your pupils easy sounds and words to transcribe from time to time?

The question also intends to highlight the benefits and advantages of using phonetic transcription as a teaching method that can be as useful as any other method. As it, similarly, intends to identify the position phonetic transcription occupies in classroom activities as compared to the other skills.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	03	42.85 %
No	02	28.57 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100%
Original number	07	

Table (37): Suggestions of using phonetic transcription regularly.

The table shows that three teachers from four Algerian middle schools (42.85%) approve the use of phonetic transcription in class. If those teachers do not really appreciate phonetic transcription as a useful teaching method, all the “No” answers will overshadow the other possibility and confirm the teachers' lack of innovation and variation inside their classrooms. Likewise, Andisheh Saniei affirms that,

To be able to self-monitor and self-evaluate, however, students must be aware of the phonological features and how they are applied in the production of different words (phonemic transcription). As Wong (1987) notes, whatever learning program language teachers designate, they should remember that effective pronunciation work must enable learners to gradually acquire a set of tools that assist them in perceiving the sounds of the target language and in improving and evaluating their own production.

This means that each instructor is to design the appropriate programme that suits his/her learners' needs, particularly, their speaking and oral competencies. At the same time, he integrates a set of tools that assist the learners in comprehending and grasping the new language's sounds gradually but effectively.

Q09: Are the pronunciation drills in classroom performed through phonetic transcription?

This question may seem redundant to the previous ones, however, it indicates, not only performing pronunciation activities in terms of sounds and words in isolation but drills encompass word and sentence stress and intonation, such as, practicing dialogues, conversations, or phrases. Intonation is depicted in the IPA transcription (narrow transcription), as well as stress which has its own diacritic features, such as, the apostrophe. Consequently it has a relation with broad transcription (usually found in dictionaries).

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	01	14.28 %
No	04	57.14 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100%
Original number	07	

Table (38): Suggestions of performing pronunciation drills through phonetic transcription.

This table shows that teachers (80%) scarcely integrate any phonetic transcription aid in pronunciation activities, and they seemingly attempt to neither use them to improve their pupils' pronunciation nor practise them as programmed in their textbooks. Mainly because phonetic symbols are difficult to retain and teachers prefer to practise grammar and vocabulary exercises to enrich their written language and empower their cognitive capacities. Nevertheless, teaching segmentals through drills has been said to be profitable because learning sounds of English is basically followed by words' building and division into syllables. In this respect, Varasarin supports,

Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996), Gilbert (1990), and Morley (1991) describe segmentals as the basic inventory of distinctive sounds and show the way that they combine to form a spoken language [...]. Pronunciation instruction has often concentrated on the mastery of segmentals through discrimination and production of target sounds via drills consisting of minimal pairs. (2007: 43)

It is well known that minimal pairs can work as a useful tool for sounds' and speech segments' discrimination. Consequently, sounds cannot be retained and grasped in their letter form, which necessitates the teacher to introduce sounds through phonetic transcription and explain the difference between them, be it in tone, in quality, or in length.

Q10: Do you correct your pupils' mispronunciation of words orally?

This question aims to find out if the teachers are conducting the appropriate professional behaviour in the middle of a social and educational engagement i.e. in the middle of pupil-teacher interaction where the teacher is supposed to monitor his/her pupils' mispronunciation and correct them whenever he/she gets the chance, for two reasons, first, to avoid the fossilization of misperceived sounds, and second, to get the right feedback necessary for the teacher to conduct a certain method or approach and modernize the worsened situation.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	05	71.42 %
No	00	00%
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (39): Suggestions of the teacher's conduct inside the classroom concerning correcting mispronunciations

This table shows the dominant reply (71.42%) any teacher would have whenever asked this type of question, because it is fundamentally important for the practitioners in EFL classrooms to monitor and observe their learners' mistakes and correct them for the same reasons mentioned above. It is a necessity to complete one's duty and feel competent in his/her field of expertise. Regarding this issue, Leah Gilner states that, "*fossilization is*

viewed in this framework as preventable, arising from lack of instruction rather than any kind of biological, affective, or psychological constraints.” She believes that all difficulties that could possibly impair the learners from learning correct pronunciation, such as, age, motivation, attitude and so on. fossilization of misheard and misperceived sounds is the most serious obstacle. Every single teacher should be aware of such hindrances and devise the suitable tools to fight it back, among which immediate correction and phonetic transcription are recommended.

Q11: Do you write down the correct pronunciation of a new word in phonetic symbols on the blackboard?

This question intends to explore the teacher’s contribution in any activity performed inside the classroom, be they activities programmed in their textbooks or improvised ones. Not to mention that, everyday several new words and vocabularies are introduced in each lesson and each word requires specific pronunciation different from its spelling, as well as, its phonetically written form.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	02	28.57 %
No	03	42.85 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (40): Suggestions of the use of phonetic transcription in pronunciation correction.

This table shows some kind of juxtaposition between the two suggestions, but the majority of the teachers (42.85%) do not make use of the phonetic transcription when it comes to correction of mispronounced words for unknown reasons until now. Except that it is hard for the pupils to grasp and it takes too much time to teach. In this respect, Jose A. Mompean suggests,

One important and preliminary aspect in trying to make appropriate use of phonetic notation in the classroom is deciding when to use phonetic symbols. An important question is what can be done to use phonetic notation without neglecting any essential language skill and/or component of the language syllabus? A good strategy is undoubtedly to integrate work on pronunciation features (and phonetic symbols to represent them) into lessons that focus on other

language learning activities. This is known as “integrated pronunciation teaching” (henceforth IPT), increasingly popular among many language teachers. IPT has several advantages over “non-IPT”. First, it does not treat pronunciation as a separate phenomenon from the process of communication (Kenworthy 1987: 113-122; McMullan 1988: 10) since it does not restrict pronunciation work to particular lessons or slots; second, pronunciation work (phonetic notation included) can be carried out on a regular basis, which is probably more effective than intensive work on sporadic occasions; finally, IPT implies that pronunciation work can be carried out in tasks aimed at developing at least three of the four basic language skills, namely reading, listening, and speaking (the usefulness of phonetic notation for developing writing skills is, in principle, less evident). (2005: 01)

Accordingly, using phonetic notation in EFL classrooms is not restricted to only one skill, it has a strong relation with listening/speaking to retain then produce words properly, reading/writing, to possess the ability to identify letter-sound relationship in newly introduced terms. Accordingly, teachers ought to be clever to select the suitable timing for sounds practice activities, at the same time, keeping an eye on the balance between the other skills.

Q12: Do you rely on peer-correction rather than your own?

This question aims at finding out if the instructor varies between his implemented techniques or methods to guarantee fruitful and satisfying results especially when it comes to classroom and pronunciation instruction. Peer-correction is considered as one of the most effective techniques that benefit the learners from each other’s mistakes and knowledge, encourage competition and boost self-esteem.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	02	28.57 %
No	03	42.85 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100%
Original number	07	

Table (41): Suggestions of using peer-correction in class.

This table shows that three teachers out of five (42.85%) do not rely on peer-correction, but rather their own correction. Whenever a learner makes a mistake, the teacher unintentionally jumps in to correct his/her mistakes, most likely orally, without making use of his peers and classmates or phonetic symbols, because checking the others' answers may take time or may delay other upcoming exercises or would lead them to unnecessary discussions. Varasarin states,

Morley states the need for the integration of pronunciation with oral communication, with more emphasis from segmentals to supra-segmentals, more emphasis on individual learner needs, and meaningful task-based practice and introducing peer correction and group interaction (Castillo, 1990). (2007: 42)

Through peer-correction, pupils get accustomed to communication by the means of their target language; interact among themselves to share and exchange information, and their pronunciation improves gradually. At the same time, the teacher keeps neutral and interferes only when they fail to get the correct answer or pronunciation. Furthermore, self-correction should take place before peer-correction.

Q13: Many pronunciation courses are available online, have you tried to take a look at them and benefit from them in your classes?

This question seeks to find out if EFL teachers are aware of the usefulness of new technologies regarding education. For example, taking advantage of online courses is necessary to remain updated on new teaching methods and techniques, styles and classroom activities management, pronunciation courses. Instructional and educational websites and newsletters are very common nowadays which grant the teachers the opportunity to go through a variety of exercises and forum opinions.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	05	71.42 %
No	00	00 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (42): Suggestions of being updated to new technologies and online websites.

Statistics of the table shows that the Algerian teachers (71.42%) are keeping up with scholarly evolution. Millions, if not billions, of online websites are dedicated to assist the teachers in every specialty or field or level, and provide them with necessary answers to certain problems, supply them with solutions to solve teaching predicaments to maintain classroom management and to design proper activities for their learners. In this connection, Chen Dan speaks about her experience in teaching non-native speakers and advances,

This is my first Action Research Report, and I am now beginning to realize that my position is not only one of a teacher but also a researcher (Stenhouse, 1983). At the beginning, I thought it was an easy job to teach and there would be a lot of free time for me to do other things. But standing on the platform, faced with many eyes, I developed a sense of responsibility, and my responsibility is to hold myself responsible to the students and help them develop their thinking and learning.
(2006: 12)

When involved in the real field of teaching, one's responsibility becomes even greater because they say "teaching is a profession that teaches all professions", thus, teaching entails commitment and conscience. Plus, a teacher is a researcher and while doing his job, he/she faces obstacles but with modern technologies everything becomes possible, one single click and the world of knowledge is wide-open.

Q14: Do you agree that the ministry of Education should put more emphasis on using phonetic transcription in middle schools?

This question's main aim is to discover the teachers' personal points of view, more importantly; their approval or disapproval as regards phonetic transcription status in foreign language teaching. As very little room is given to it despite its great importance in enhancing the beginners' pronunciation, if not, granting them a native-like pronunciation before they reach the point of no-return and lose the chance to obtain an intelligible accent.

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	04	57.14 %
No	01	14.28 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100%
Original number	07	

Table (43): Suggestions of the teachers' approval or disapproval about ministry's curriculum design improvement.

This table shows that four teachers out of five (57.14 %) display their complete consent with making decisive changes concerning middle school foreign language teaching curriculum, in terms of pronunciation, giving phonetic transcription a chance to prove itself as a useful teaching method. The teachers' opinions should be given more consideration especially when it comes to the learners' well-being and sake. The teacher is the most credible and considerable judge in such situations.

By contrast to the teachers' answers of this questionnaire, another research work was carried out by Ammar Benabed (2010) concerning the implementation of CBA³⁴ in Algerian classrooms. In his questionnaires submitted to three hundred teachers, he asked what rubric in OTM³⁵ they find useful. Statistics showed that teachers chose "Listen and Consider", "Reading and Writing" rubrics and "Listening and Speaking" came in third place; "pronunciation and spelling, words and sounds" were granted the lowest rank. Benabed associated the rejection of such rubrics to misinterpretation and/or ignorance of the underlying objectives of each rubric (Ibid. 223). Subsequently, pronunciation teaching is still neglected by Algerian practitioners who suffer greatly the lack of phonological awareness and follow the steps of previous instructors who could not maintain pronunciation's part.

Q15: Do you use dictionaries inside the classroom?

The last question is meant for fourth year teachers, because only fourth year pupils can use dictionaries and know how to consult them unlike first year pupils who are still beginners dealing with English Alphabet letters and simple sounds, as well as, GTM. It aims at knowing if the instructors are aware of the dictionaries-based activities importance from time to time. Using monolingual or bilingual dictionaries grants the pupils a break to learn vocabulary, enrich their stock of knowledge and correct pronunciation of newly obtained words.

³⁴ Competency-based Approach

³⁵ Fourth year middle school book is called « On The Move »

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	02	28.57 %
No	01	14.28 %
Empty	02	28.57 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100%
Original number	07	

Table (44): Suggestions of the possibility of using dictionaries in class.

The last table of the close-ended questions displays two yes answers (28.57%) for using dictionaries in class, one of them does not while the other two provide no answer. It is not obligatory to have dictionary-based activities in classroom, but they are mainly used to learn meaning and pronunciation, to familiarize the learners with the research spirit and curiosity, to satisfy one self's conscience and feel content as a teacher for helping out his/her learners. Furthermore, many specialists in the field, such as, Al-Sadig Yahya agrees on the use of dictionaries and puts forth,

The dictionary is a reliable resource for all types of lexical information that learners may look up. However, research findings indicate that the dictionary has most frequently been used for one piece of linguistic information, i.e. lexical meaning. For instance, Burhart (1964: 458) reports that teachers in the USA “were asked to rate six types of information commonly given in terms of their importance to first year students”. The results revealed that “the students used the dictionary most frequently for meaning, [...]. Third, since language is open-ended phenomenon, both EFL teachers and learners need to fall back on the dictionary as the only reliable resource for correct pronunciation. It seems that bilingual dictionaries are not in vogue in the writings of dictionary researchers. Support for this claim comes from Tickoo (1989). He contends that “learners’ dictionary can be said to have three main attributes: it is derivative (based on established principles or practice), it is in most cases monolingual and it is principally a pedagogic resource. (2009: 04-05)

The Algerian teacher should reconsider the case of using dictionaries in classrooms, at least for the reasons mentioned above and try not to think of it as a useless means to waste time. On the contrary, it is basically beneficial for mind food, for practicing pronunciation of new words, and enriching one's vocabulary stock.

Section Two: Open-ended Questions

The second part of the teachers' questionnaires takes the form of open-ended questions (opinion questions) inside the classrooms in order to get deeper into the teachers' personal views, preferences and habitual behaviours. The list has fourteen similar questions but the fourth year teachers had to answer one additional question regarding the controversial case of accuracy vs. fluency.

Q01: How many years have you been teaching English in first/fourth year middle school?

This question attempts to find out the time-span of the instructors' teaching experience in middle school setting. Considerably, the more the number of years increases the more experienced they get, and the wiser they become in this though career. The teacher employs practical methods and strategies to improve his/her performance, avoid spoon-feeding his/her learners as if they are depositories and teaches them to be critical and assesses him/herself. Thanks to the learners' feedback and methods' results in classroom, the instructors can reformulate their strategies or create new effective ones, Similarly, Varasarin declares,

During preliminary stages of strategy instruction, teachers will probably take a controlled and teacher-centred approach to instruction. As teachers become experienced in strategies instruction, they should adjust the content and intensify each step to establish a closer match between their instructional approach and their particular teaching context. The time required for each step is variable, depending on the difficulty of the activity and the group of learners.
(2007: 190)

Experience acquired in the field of teaching helps teachers to learn new strategies and boots their teaching and professional competencies and identities. As long as they learn from their own mistakes and avoid sticking to old-fashioned tactics and approaches, always seeking development and progress as far as theory and practice are concerned.

Answer 01

The years of teaching are estimated to vary from one year to four years no more. They may vary between novice teachers' level and less-experienced ones, and their experience could be approximately limited. However; short experience in the field of teaching does not mean that the teachers did not encounter serious problems in classroom management, difficulties in explaining the lessons and conveying the ideas properly, and many obstacles with their learners, regarding mentalities and teaching strategies.

Teachers are encountered with the most difficult problem which is teaching over than two hundred learners inside crowded classrooms, in which they find different kinds of personalities and mentalities. Therefore, the teacher should tend to all their problems and resort to reasonable solutions, basically, because he/she chose this profession; it is tiring but most rewarding. Real success manifests itself when the teacher is satisfied with his own level before his pupils.

Q02: Why have you chosen teaching English and precisely in a middle school?

This question investigates the teachers' personal goals they wish to achieve in this tough career and the reasons behind picking teaching English in a middle school rather than in a high school. Teachers' own success in this field is only bound to their own choices and efforts, as well as, complete devotion and conscience.

Answer 02

There are many justifications stated by the five teachers to answer this question appropriately. The first one says that teaching, without any doubt, is the most important and noblest profession; and since English is the most widespread language that is spoken by billions of people around the world, he chooses teaching in middle school, precisely, because it is the basis of English teaching where young learners are exposed to a new foreign language for the first time, with their clean minds teaching them English is much easier and smoother.

The second participant states that she chose English and teaching profession, because she likes them and nothing is more valuable than sharing the knowledge they learn with their learners and employ it carefully in their teaching programme. However, she did not choose teaching in middle school willingly but she sat for a competence exam in 2005 and it was for middle school teaching, she added, "*destiny drove me here*".

The other three teachers agree, approximately, on the same ideas. Their main answer is that they have chosen teaching English in the middle school, in particular, because young pupils are facing a new foreign language for the first time which is different from Arabic and French. Because, the pupils' minds are like blank white sheets, that can store any new pieces of information as long as his/her knowledge is correctly inputted in their curious embryonic minds, especially introducing segmentals in the form of phonetic transcription and supra-segmentals in the form of dialogues, drills and playing roles on pairs, if not entertaining songs and plays.

Q03: what are the problems that your pupils encounter when teaching pronunciation?

Many factors effect learning the pronunciation of a foreign language and they can, unexpectedly, turn from mere problems to surprising dilemmas. This question deals with the problems and obstacles preventing the learners from acquiring a good pronunciation and then searching for the appropriate answers to fix those issues before they reach the last phase "DILLEMAS" the point of no return. Teachers would be condemned to dealing with and tolerating irritating cases inside the classroom with shy, impulsive, introvert or extrovert learners. Without careful contact with the exact problem, other problems may spring out.

Answer 03

Mainly two answers stand out among all possible problems in pronunciation teaching in Algerian middle schools. Three teachers state that the most important factor and problem preventing their pupils from learning correct pronunciation is the low emphasis put on teaching the accent "RP" (Received Pronunciation) in terms of authentic materials' shortage, such as, native speakers recordings or visual-aids, along with the supra-segmental features like word stress and intonation. On the other hand, the other two participants supported the teaching of segmental features, for instance, vowel and consonant sounds favouring the use of phonetic transcription as an efficient method for pronunciation enhancement.

Neither the curriculum nor the syllabus design gives any conspicuous importance to such basic features, especially first year textbook. As shown in chapter three, no rules for teaching sound or rhythm take place and not a single sound is accompanied with its accurate phonetic transcription. Molholt (1992) discusses that the lack of awareness of the differences between languages is one of the reasons for fossilization. And fossilized pronunciations are great obstacles for accurate speech. Hence, phonological, contrastive analysis is necessary

when involved in FL teaching because it clears the confusion between L1/L2 sounds and simplify pronunciation problems. (As cited in³⁶)

Q04: Are you for or against teaching phonetic transcription to fourth/first year pupils?

The fourth question evidently intends to know the instructors' personal viewpoints about teaching phonetic transcription to both levels mentioned above. The teacher is the only reference, besides the textbooks, the pupils might rely on concerning pronunciation instruction and, more importantly, modelling sounds. After thoroughly going through the first textbook "SOE", apparently, neither phonetic symbols nor phonetic transcription of words are inscribed in any of their programmed pronunciation activities.

Answer 04

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes for	03	42.85 %
No against	02	28.57 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (45): The choice of teaching phonetic transcription to middle schoolers.

The scale of this confrontation between phonetic transcription teaching advocates and opponents seems to tilt more to the supporters' side. Three teachers consent to teaching the phonetic symbols and they justify their answer by stating that segmentals and their phonetic transcription should be taught to the learners by the beginning of the year with intensive instruction and practice to guarantee satisfying results. Moreover, phonetic symbols are necessary in order to produce exact sounds and answer correctly during examinations, as regards, final "s", final "ed" and silent letters. Daily and regular practice makes perfect as stated. However, the other remaining participants are against it and prefer to put more focus on teaching stress and intonation, grammar and vocabulary. Benabed focuses on this point and forwards,

³⁶ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>, 2012: 31)

The phonetic dimension, especially for the English language and its specificity, is essential for both the teacher and the learner, because it facilitates access to the meaning of the oral messages and written documents. A good pronunciation of the English sounds is of much importance. This implies a good articulation of vowels and consonants. The phonological dimension is built in parallel with the mastery of rhythm, word stress as well as sentence stress. Intonation is also a medium to convey meaning. [.....].The teachers, who perceived this rubric as being significant, have understood that the communicative competence is heavily dependent on the recognition of the speech sounds, in general, and that it is acquired gradually and in communication.
(2010: 224)

Consequently, teachers who tend to avoid teaching segmentals through phonetic transcription deliberately, suffer from a shortage in their phonological and phonetic awareness. Additionally, the teachers' negative attitudes towards teaching pronunciation could influence their enthusiastic learners who eventually lose interest in English and start to learn it superficially and then grow to hate it because of the low emphasis on certain aspects and overextended focus on others, such as, grammatical rules and language building in general.

Q05: What are the main vowels and consonants which your pupils find difficult or confusing to produce?

The aim behind this question is to find out the specific vowel and consonant sounds that create obstacles or hinder their pupils' pronunciation learning. Hence, if teachers are fully aware of their learners' problems, this might create a challenge for them to put more efforts to learn them and become motivated to explore English phonetics even further. However, if the teachers pay no attention or concern about such difficulties in FLT, especially pronunciations impairment, his/her pupils will simply neglect the lessons and keep making the same mistakes in their next years and grow to hate the subject taught as a whole.

Answer 05

The participants' replies are very interesting as they mention a couple of sounds that hinder their learners' pronunciation learning, primarily, because of the phoneme-grapheme or letter-sound relationship which is why appending each sound with its phonetic symbol and drilling it every time would help them grasp sounds' production easily whenever they recognize the symbol. Two instructors claim that, out of their experience and classroom

observation, their pupils have no problem learning and producing consonants, however; they usually face problematic issues regarding the articulation of diphthongs and triphthongs (as far as fourth year pupils are concerned).

The other three teachers mentioned some hard to produce consonant sounds, such as, post-alveolar, post-vocalic affricates and dental fricatives /tʃ/ and /ʃ/, /ʒ/and /dʒ/, /ð/, /θ/ respectively. As regards vowel sounds, producing the “o” letter and its different sound realizations, for instance, in book, took, not and come, in addition to double and triple-vowel sounds. J. Mompean speaks of different principles to be respected and followed when using phonetic symbols and states that,

The first principle is that of being selective about the sounds/symbols that are going to be studied. According to Kelly (2000: 8) teachers should not introduce their students to all of the phonetic symbols at once. Instead, it makes far more sense to work first on those sounds which cause difficulty, and introduce other sounds (and their symbols) as appropriate. [...]. The second principle is that of exploiting learners' familiarity with the symbol shapes and/or the sounds to be studied. Some authors (e.g. Bowen & Marks 1992: 27; Lu 2002: 39; Willis 1993) consider that teachers should introduce first symbols identical or similar to the equivalent letters of the alphabet used in the student's native language, [...]. The third principle is that of making phonetic symbols visually attractive. Since students' attitudes and motivation influence the rate and success of their learning, [...]. For instance, variations in the size and colour of phonetic symbols (word-processing facilitates the task substantially). The fourth principle is that of making students perceive the utility of phonetic notation for the study of pronunciation. For instance, students could be shown the benefits of learning phonetic notation for checking pronunciation in dictionaries autonomously, for distinguishing minimal pairs, for representing the pronunciation of words so that it can be studied and practiced later. The fifth principle is that of avoiding anxiety in the learner, which may be caused by an excessive learning load, speed of teaching, etc. Thus, it has been claimed that familiarization with phonetic notation should be carried out at a pace that suits students (Bowen & Marks 1992: 6), introducing sounds individually or in very small groups over a series of lessons rather than in a single lesson (Bowen & Marks 1992; Kelly 2000; Willis 1993), and focusing first on the recognition of phonetic symbols since producing them seems more difficult for the average learner. (2005: 02)

In this regard, various factors interfere with teaching/learning English sounds of which the teacher should be aware. If he/she bears in mind that every learner has a mind of his own and requires certain needs when learning sounds articulation, he/she will begin with gathering feedback, inventing intensive exercises to diminish their mispronunciations, and

creating the right atmosphere to facilitate learning by avoiding ignoring replies and inhibiting them.

Q06: Have you tried using phonetic transcription as a way to improve their pronunciation? Why?

Probably this question, in particular, may not please those who oppose the idea of teaching phonetic transcription, because of many reasons among which they think phonetic notation is very difficult to teach or explain to young pupils. But numerous researchers oppose claims of this kind by putting forward “the critical age theory” which warns from reaching puberty age without being exposed to FL sounds. Hence, it becomes ten times tougher to teach them segmentals when they turn adults. This question attempts to inquire if the teachers are quite self-governed and can decide what benefits or hinders their pupils’ progress especially by implementing self-improvised techniques and methods, such as, introducing a simplified version of the IPA notation.

Answer 06

The results are highly positive and using phonetic transcription as a teaching method is approved by four teachers who state that they all use this method when teaching sounds in isolation for first year pupils and words for fourth year pupils, because it has already been proved to be a useful tool for correcting pronunciation errors and facilitating learning new sounds apart from their written forms, although, the symbols can be hard to learn at first glance, with more perseverance and patience many things can be achieved. By contrast, only one first year teacher opposes teaching phonetic symbols because the pupils do not need more transcription instruction in their level as middle schoolers.

Q07: What do you use as means to teach your pupils the right pronunciation?

This question investigates what the teacher utilizes as means or tools to assist his/her pupils to easily but quickly learn and grasp the correct pronunciation, be they programmed means on the textbooks or improvised tools by the teacher him/herself and the aim remains only to improve, enhance and consolidate their pronunciation in training and communicative capacities.

Answer 07

According to the participants' different answers and multiple choices in their ways of teaching and using educational means and tools. They display a medley of teaching pronunciation tools, for example, audiovisual and multimedia aids, like CDs for watching videos and listening to audio-cassettes. Thus, creating a straight and solid liaison with native speakers of the target language and ensure authentic input. They also choose to use the textbooks' designed activities, such as, dialogues, role plays, songs and drill activities to both focus on their both listening and speaking skills. Another teacher suggests using phonetically transcribed words on the blackboard as a personal preference. Authentic materials like native speakers' recordings are plausible for good pronunciation instruction, Varasarin (2007) proposes in this regard,

Good pronunciation takes time to build up, as there are many factors involved. Learners need to hear a lot of English before they can develop a feel for the sounds of English. The learners become more confident and motivated in learning the language because of the teaching aids and materials such as tape recordings of native speakers, pictures of mouth and articulations used in the class along with the provision positive reinforcement (Phinit-Akson, 2002; Quilter, 2002; Estrada & Streiff, 2002; Wu, 2002; and Jay, 1966)

(p.35)

In this respect, learners should be exposed to correct and authentic input in order to be able to produce adequate output, all what is necessary for this process to succeed is perseverant and adventurous teachers who tend to fight routine and old-fashionedness with curiosity to experiment new findings in the field of pronunciation teaching, as long as researches and materials are available.

Q08: What do you do when your pupils mispronounce a word or a sound?

In a normal course, learners of a foreign language fall under the pressure of several factors that affect their pronunciation, so they unintentionally deviate from the correct production of sounds and they even mispronounce easy sounds, merely because of psycholinguistic factors. That is why; the instructor is obliged to be careful at times when the learners make spoken errors every time without bothering to correct them which lead promptly to fossilization process and it becomes almost impossible to change the prior pronunciation. In this respect, teachers sometimes can be careless and ignore those mistakes

and sometimes can be creative and helpful simply because of the mood, context and circumstances. This question refers implicitly to the paramount importance of self/peer-correction.

Answer 08

These teachers from the fourth year classes admit that they only correct their pupils' mispronunciations and make the whole class repeat them together many times to memorize them. While the two teachers of the first year classes state that they correct mistakes with the help of their classmates if possible, giving the chance to peer-correction rather than their own in order to teach their pupils how to rely on their prior knowledge and instinct and also to get rid of shyness and hesitation. They are likely to transcribe those mispronounced words on the blackboard then collectively practise them. These vigilant teachers appreciate the usefulness of phonetic transcription, they are aware of theoretical concepts so they put them into practice as far as letter-sound relationship is concerned. Correspondingly, Varasarin points out the issue of self/peer-correction as follows,

teachers should pay attention to the development of self-correction techniques and self-monitoring strategies. Self-correction is the ability to correct oneself when a pronunciation error has been pointed out by teachers or peers. It is critical that the teacher help to develop strategies which will allow the learner to self-correct and self-monitor by focusing on motivation (learners should understand why accuracy of oral production is important), explanations (description and demonstration appropriate to proficiency levels), practice (adequate opportunities to practise) and feedback (receive supportive and accurate feedback from teachers and learners in class).
(Ibid. 39-40)

Accuracy in pronunciation is necessary to keep away from making mispronunciations that could cause misunderstandings when interacting. Learners must be aware of the fact that if one single sound is replaced with another one, the meaning is altered (e.g. back/bag), that is why implementing contrastive analysis of sounds through minimal pairs practice in these cases is most plausible. Not to mention, teaching pupils how to self-monitor and correct his/her own pronunciation is part of the teachers' instructive duty.

Q09: Do you give feedback to your pupils when they produce sounds in a wrong way?

This question, unlike the previous one, explicitly intends to know the teachers' decisive and honest answer about providing their learners with feedback when necessary, especially when sounds' articulation and words' pronunciation drills are concerned. One of the participants states that with the lack of authentic materials and listening laboratories, the teacher's voice remains the sole reference for the learner. Hence, no authenticity exists in our Algerian teaching contexts, and textbook activities represent the only materials through which English pronunciation is introduced to learners. Yet, this cannot be applied to all EFL teachers; some prefer devising new tools and techniques to convey correct English pronunciation better.

Answer 09

Suggestions	Number	%
Yes	05	71.42 %
No	00	00 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (46): The teachers' consent concerning providing feedback to their pupils.

The table shows that all five participants (71.42 %) provide their learners' with the needed feedback to correct their mispronunciations and wrong utterances, particularly, to avoid making the same errors before they fossilize. As teachers in middle schools, they are supposed to act as guides, instructors, and judges and separate what is wrong or right. The least he/she can do is to instruct the pupils and not to show off superiority by sticking to Teacher-Centred Approach and monopolize the platform. Likewise, Varasarin, again, speaks of the importance of feedback,

With the teacher acting as a speech coach rather than a checker of pronunciation, the feedback given to the student can encourage learners to improve their pronunciation. It is of importance to concern ourselves with the fostering of learner motivation, as it is considered to be the most effective and proactive power relationship lead to positive learning atmosphere (Thanasoulas, 2002).

(Ibid. 213)

In this connection, granting the pupils an overview of their mistakes and teaching them Language Learning Strategies³⁷ can boost their self-confidence, motivation and oral competencies. Henceforth, teacher-student partnership guarantees the continuity and stability of knowledge transmission.

Q10: Which one of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) does the English teaching programme focus on and why?

Middle school classes' textbooks have specific syllabuses to guide the instructors' course of EFL teaching and facilitate performing their various tasks. All of the four language skills share certain parts in these syllabuses, however, nobody can overlook the marginalization some skills are suffering and the teachers who are, undoubtedly, usual practitioners of such programmes can identify such issues of apparent bias. For this reason they are asked to give their personal and objective opinion concerning the main focus on or negligence of certain skills.

Answer 10

Suggestions	Number	%
Listening	00	00 %
Speaking	00	00 %
Reading	01	14.28 %
Writing	04	57.14 %
No answer	02	28.57 %
Total	07	100 %
Original number	07	

Table (47): The prevailing skill that English teaching programme emphasizes more often.

The table, clearly, indicates a visible bias towards writing skill (57.14 %) more than the other three skills which should, typically, be equally taught to the pupils. All the skills are interrelated and the focus generally is mutually divided between them so the pupils can acquire efficacy in different skills in English although, as the teachers state above, writing and reading skills gain the main focus because the pupils sit for written exams and not oral

³⁷ Henceforth LLS

ones. Furthermore, the other two skills which are fundamental in FLT keep deteriorating. In this sense, Richards & Rodgers (1986: 8) advocate that, "*conversional skills take primacy over reading and writing skills; the learner should hear the language first before seeing it in a written form (as cited by Benabed, 2010: 40)*". On the contrary, so little focus is put on teaching speaking/listening skills that are often put at the rear compared to reading/writing skills, as far as pronunciation and sounds' perception and production are concerned.

Q11: What would be your priority in classifying these skills?

The following question intends to figure out how Algerian teachers of middle schools classify the four skills according to their pupils' needs and demands when learning the target language, simultaneously, depending on a personal priority that certainly enfolds and benefits their pupils rather than weaken them if the English language teaching programme does not suit or meet those demands.

Answer 11

Suggestions (skills)	Rank
Listening	01
Speaking	02
Reading	04
Writing	03

Table(48): Priority in classifying the four skills in English teaching according to the teachers'.

The table displays noticeable appreciation of the listening skill, followed by the speaking skill and after that, as expected, writing followed the reading skill. Naturally, the correct rating of such fundamental skills in foreign language teaching is as follows, listening, speaking, reading and writing; however, the majority of English teachers prefers to focus on the writing and reading skills because these two skills are supervised and monitored more often as they are needed in the written exams. All of the five teachers have close answers and they appear as follows, (first and fourth years' teachers respectively),

- 1) Listening, reading, writing and speaking.
- 2) Listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- 3) Listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- 4) Listening, reading, writing and speaking.
- 5) Listening, speaking, writing and reading.

Q12: Do you test or check your own efficiency in phonetic transcription? How?

This question is designed to gather honest answers about the teachers' own efficiency and proficiency in phonetic/ phonemic transcription and phonological awareness. According to Peter Roach, the foreign language teacher ought to be a phonetician before submitting to anything else, besides having a prior knowledge about one's field of expertise is compulsory because it sharpens one's wits and comprehension.

Answer 12

The answers are expectedly positive and the participants affirm that they regularly check and monitor their knowledge level by pointing out that "*practice makes perfect*". One of the answers is similar to the idea Peter Roach deduced, the teacher being necessarily a specialist of phonetics and has at least a certain level in or command over English pronunciation. The majority of them resorts to internet and educational online websites and forum are unlimited; one click brings out hundreds of these intellectual and instructional sites to be always at the teacher's disposal anytime. In addition to being updated with the major developments in the arena of his expertise, he/she should perform a kinesthetic training, such as, practising phonetic transcription and sit for TOEFL³⁸ competitions for self-appraisal or attainment of scholarships.

Q13: Do you often listen to native speakers?

Admittedly, learning a foreign language without listening to its native speakers or actual practice of this language would always leave an apparent lack in the speaker's oral competence, be it a pupil or a teacher, both of them are obliged to be exposed to the target language, i.e. through authentic input on a regular basis to ensure accurate output afterwards.

³⁸ Test of English as a Foreign Language

Furthermore, this question may act as a wake-up call for the teachers to realize their own lacks in the beginning before they make grave mistakes that might lead his/her learners astray and minimize his credibility as a teacher.

Answer 13

The majority of the participants assure that they do listen to native speakers and try to remain on track to get used to the language and, specifically, the accent. Some of them state that listening to English TV programmes or shows, radio and watching movies help them keep updated and learn along new vocabulary and cultural knowledge of the target language population. They recommend listening to songs and read lyrics to be aware of speech varieties, like slang, and acquire intellect as far as metaphors and idioms are concerned. In an article retrieved from a website, *Hymes (1972) was advocating that language teaching also required “incorporation between communication and culture” (as cited in³⁹)*. As a result, culture is a vital part in FLT and without exposing fractions of the target language’s culture to the learners; they would eventually lack cultural competence.

Q14: Do you focus on accuracy (pronunciation) or fluency (communication) when giving your pupils the chance to speak?
- Why?

This question tackles the controversial issue of fluency vs. accuracy which remains the center of attention in foreign language teaching. Whether to teach a language on the basis of accuracy (correct articulation of sounds and mastery of grammar), or fluency (intelligibility) can be confusing and puzzling for the instructors. The change of teaching methods and approaches over the decades gives fluency the priority and superiority over accuracy by the emergence of communicative approach which is spread in all classrooms and still is maintaining its status and place. Our Algerian teachers are also concerned with these reforms and it is beneficial for the reliability of this study to unveil their true tendencies.

³⁹ <http://www.imarksworld.org/bk/audio+lingual+approach+and+approaches/>, 2012: 08)

Suggestions	Number	%
Accuracy	01	25 %
Fluency	02	50 %
No answer	01	25 %
Total	04	100 %
Original number	04	

Table (49): Priority in teaching English as a foreign language.

Answer 14

This question, in particular, is addressed to only fourth year teachers because they are supposed to guide their pupils, who reach the last step in middle school, to differentiate between accuracy and fluency. According to the statistics on the table, the majority of teachers concentrate on fluency because the goal of learning a foreign language is to communicate with native speakers outside the school context. However, communicating without being understood is not good enough to maintain this communication or prevent an unavoidable breakdown. They suggest teaching fluency and afterwards accuracy can be achieved by everyday practice or constant correction of mispronunciations. According to Varasarin (2007: 17), EFL teachers should not favour one skill over another, but rather combine both accuracy and fluency by using and conducting the appropriate strategies and tools in order to aid their learners achieve correct pronunciation. Eventually, without both skills' acquisition, learners remain inefficient when communicating.

Conclusion

The questionnaire submitted to first and fourth year middle school teachers is one of the three research tools used for the reliability of the study and to investigate certain objectives necessary for the continuation of the dissertation and to help either confirm or disconfirm the hypotheses proposed. In the beginning, seven teachers from three different middle schools in Mostaganem (fourth year teachers and three first year teachers) are kindly requested to contribute to this investigation with their honest answers.

Nonetheless, only five questionnaires are given back. After analyzing the teachers' questionnaires, we conclude that, the majority of EFL Algerian classrooms are aware of pronunciation's great importance in EFL learning and teaching, however, they think it can be attained afterwards. For young learners, it is of great necessity to focus on exposing them

to adequate amount of language structure and terminology. By the time pronunciation teaching gets highlighted in textbooks, teachers start to notice how much pronunciation activities improve their learners' oral and communicative abilities.

Moreover, authentic materials are of great usability to facilitate English sounds' retention and production, but if the teacher does not arrange and gather these materials on his own, his learners will suffer from the lack of authentic exposure to English input, hence, they will lose the chance to attain native like accent. Teachers state that the school textbook is the only resource available for them to transmit ideas and perceptions about English. Algerian teachers also attest that lack of authentic materials impairs them from fully and faithfully perform their job. Besides, middle school pupils should be learning stress and intonation (supra-segmentals) more often than phonetic symbols (segmental).

II.9. First Year Pupils' Questionnaire's Analysis (see Appendix n°01)

After middle school teachers receive their questionnaires, on the other hand, the distribution process of first year pupils' questionnaire' takes place in the same middle school, but distributed inside their classrooms to maintain order for the investigation's progress. It contains seven close-ended "yes/no" questions with the intention to identify the pupils' opinions about and passion towards English learning in general, and phonetic transcription teaching in particular, in addition to their teachers' teaching tendencies. The second part of the same questionnaire sheet was dedicated to a phonetic transcription exercise. It was a table containing Alphabet letters on which the pupils were supposed to transcribe their sounds, exactly imitating the first lesson from their copybooks.

First year pupils' questionnaire is designed and adjusted to fit their primary and preliminary level. That is to mean, the questions written in English are accompanied with their Arabic translation, because they are beginners and their level does not allow them to decipher English vocabulary as easy as fourth year pupils. These questionnaires are distributed among thirty two pupils from four classes in Belhamri Mohammed middle school, Mostaganem.

Q01: Do you like learning English?

Q02: Do you think that learning English is a headache?

These two questions carry similar objectives as they aim at discovering the pupils' personal opinions and attitudes about learning a new foreign language that is completely different from their mother language Arabic and their second language French. Whether it is hard to grasp it and if learning its grammar and vocabulary pain their heads or not.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	19	59.37 %
No	00	00 %
No answer	13	40.62 %
Total	32	100 %
Original number	32	

Table (50): Suggestions of the pupils' attitudes towards learning English

The table's statistics clearly shows that the majority of first year pupils (59.37 %) loves learning English and already has positive attitudes towards this foreign language which is used and spoken internationally. Moreover, one of the teachers states that first year pupils' have soft and fresh minds that receive and comprehend everything new, besides the fact that they are eager and curious to learn the secrets of a new language and of a new civilization. Gilakjani proceeds,

Sparks and Glachow's work (1991) on personality found similar results. They state that students with motivation to learn with positive attitudes towards the target language and its speakers were more successful than were students with less positive attitudes. (2012: 05)

Consequently, pupils who develop positive attitudes towards the target language culture and society, thus, motivated to learn it, tend to be more successful in EFL learning and have a better chance to produce a native-like pronunciation when communicating with native speakers.

Q03: Do you practise producing sounds with your teacher in class?

This question was intentionally put forth to find out if EFL teachers are performing their role faithfully and fully, concerning pronunciation activities either programmed or improvised ones. Consequently, perseverance on the teaching of pronunciation improves the learners' speaking and communication capacities, as well as, the instructors' positive attitudes and behaviours.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	16	50 %
No	03	09.37 %
No answer	13	40.62 %
Total	32	100%
Original number		32

Table (51): Suggestions of teachers' perseverance in teaching pronunciation.

This table displays (84,21%) of those pupils who assert that their teacher keeps on track when teaching pronunciation activities are concerned, regularly performing sound production drills in class to maintain stability and equality between listening/speaking skills and reading/writing. Correspondingly, Varasarin explains the involvement of all language skills in FLT,

Language is a cognitive skill, which includes productive skills of writing and speaking and receptive skills of reading and listening as well as language components, namely vocabulary, structure and phonology (Wongsothorn & Pongsurapipat, 1992). (2007: 27)

No certain skills should be privileged or marginalized because in EFL teaching these skills are strongly interrelated and if the learners exceed in three of them but fail in one, their competencies will be undeniably questioned by the others and cannot master a language that lacks efficiency when spoken or written.

Q04: Do you know how to pronounce the English alphabet letters?

The fourth question implicitly targets the issue of learning English sounds' pronunciation through phonetic symbols. Traditionally, first year pupils are exposed to English alphabet for the first time with each letter's individual pronunciation to assist them with a visual representation. Mainly, teachers tend to embark on using Grammar- Translation Method to facilitate target language learning process and sounds reception, that is to say, each letter is accompanied with a literal translation in Arabic. (e.g. "a" /ei/ - أ-إي)

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	18	56.25 %
No	01	03.12 %
No answer	13	40.62 %
Total	32	100%
Official number		32

Table (52): Suggestions of the pupils' efficiency in pronouncing English alphabet Letters.

The table shows that the majority of first year pupils (56.25 %) are aware of how to pronounce the 26 letters of English Alphabet which they are exposed to as the first lesson by the beginning of the year. Hence, learning these letters grant them the ability to write and construct meaningful sentences, besides the alphabetical order which facilitates the process of looking for words' definitions in the dictionary. In this connection Pourhossein Gilakjani adds,

Foreign language instruction generally focuses on four main areas of development: listening, speaking reading and writing. Foreign language curricula emphasize pronunciation in the first year of study as it introduces the target language's alphabet and sound system, but rarely continues this focus past the introductory level. Lack of emphasis on pronunciation development may be due to a general lack of fervour on the part of the second language acquisition researchers, second language teachers and students, that pronunciation of a second language is not very important (Elliot, 1995). Furthermore, Pennington (1994) maintains that pronunciation, which is typically viewed as a component of linguistic rather than conversational fluency, is often regarded with little importance in a communicatively oriented classroom (Elliot, 1995).

(2012: 05)

Indeed, pronunciation in Algerian middle schools is limited to only introducing English alphabet to first year pupils and then it is folded back inside the textbook pages and remains overshadowed by other skills and sub-skills waiting in the dark for a spotlight of new reforms and approaches that can possibly grant it its status back.

Q05: Do you want to learn the phonetic symbols?

The fifth question intends to explore first year pupils' personal estimations and views in terms of learning phonetic symbols and words/sounds transcription prior to their little acquaintance with basic sounds programmed in their first year textbook. Introducing phonetic notation to them gradually at a young age, using the appropriate Language Learning Strategies and effective techniques may help them fix their recurrent mispronunciations and enhance their oral skills.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	19	59.37 %
No	00	00 %
No answer	13	40.62 %
Total	32	100 %
Original number		32

Table (53): Suggestions of the pupils' agreement or disagreement about learning phonetic symbols.

The table demonstrates the prevailing part of “yes” answers. All respondents involved (100%) agree on and display their openness to phonetic transcription learning as a new method for sounds segments and pronunciation comprehension. For first year pupils, an introduction to English phonetic notation is of great necessity and principal importance, because they are young and eager to explore other dimensions of the target language, exposed to a new way of speaking and writing a different pronunciation from Arabic and French, so teaching phonetic symbols,

It might be difficult for non native speakers of English who are accustomed to a one-to-one correspondence between sound and letter because English has a highly variable spelling system. Learners need to learn how to make use of sound letter combinations and develop competence that enables them to pronounce the correct or approximately correct sounds when they encounter the written form of unfamiliar words and they also need plenty of practice.

(Varasarin, 2007: 187)

In teaching profession, instructors should bear in mind that nothing is achieved easily; obstacles strengthen one's will and motivation to carry on, while doing mistakes is inevitable because we learn from them to get experienced. Teachers in middle schools carry a great responsibility of teaching young generations the principles of a new foreign language

characterized by an intricate spelling system and distinct sound segments. They are required by their profession and morality to convey certain messages as regards culture, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, important but correct messages.

Q06: Does your teacher shout at your face when you mispronounce words?

This question targets the issue of pupils’ inhibition by the teacher inside the classroom, intentional or unintentional behaviour, when they make pronunciation errors. It is of great necessity that teachers are strict with their pupils, as far as pronunciation teaching is concerned, however, his/her social demeanour inside the classroom when confronted with pupils’ errors and mispronunciations. It, consequently, reflects his/her personality and the pupils might feel inhibited and embarrassed in front of their classmates.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	06	18.75 %
No	13	40.62 %
No answer	13	40.62 %
Total	32	100 %
Original number	32	

Table (54): Suggestions of the teacher’s aggressive demeanour inside the classroom.

The table’s results show the possibility that the majority of teachers (40.62 %) do not correct their pupils’ mispronunciations by shouting at them, because the learners abhor being yelled at as it drives them to cease participating benevolently and keep the answer for themselves just to avoid being inhibited or embarrassed in front of their classmates. The teacher is supposed to be a guide and not a God. First year pupils are beginners and their mistakes could be expected and remedied sooner if the instructor conducts the appropriate behaviour in his/her classes.

Q07: does your teacher interrupt you when speaking or reading to correct your mistakes of pronunciation?

This question in particular carries hidden intentions to unveil the teachers’ ready demeanour they conduct at class as regards their contribution and involvement in “a good teacher’s role”, certainly “learner-based approach”, where the pupil occupies the centre of attention with his attachment and interaction with teacher and classmates to share and exchange knowledge and learn from each others’ mistakes. The teacher’s vigilance and

regular monitor of the learners' level development should be present during the whole session to indicate and correct the pupils' mispronunciations and provide useful advice for them,

Others believe that teaching can play an important role in helping learners develop ways of improving their pronunciation and shaping their attitude toward the importance of pronunciation (Richards & Renandya, 2002). The usefulness of teaching pronunciation is also a widely debated subject in the language teaching context. Fraser (1999) concluded that most ESL teachers agree that explicit pronunciation teaching is an essential part of language courses and confidence with pronunciation allows learners to interact with native speakers, which are essential for all aspects of their linguistic development. (Ibid. 33-34)

Being faithful to one's profession is one of the teacher's most credible and trustworthy traits. As long as his/her learners benefit from their observations and guidance through scrutinizing their oral and communicative competencies growth, they guarantee success during the whole school year, in addition to self-satisfaction and the learners' gratitude and pride afterwards.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	10	31.25 %
No	09	28.12 %
No answer	13	40.62 %
Total	32	100%
Original number	32	

Table (55): Suggestions of the teachers' right conduct inside the classroom.

The last table of the close-ended questions, visibly, shows a (fluctuating equality) close percentage between the learners' yes (31.25 %) and no answers (28.12 %) that might mean probably one thing which is the teachers' professional honesty with his/her profession. Correcting pupils' mispronunciations makes them feel confident about one's self achievement. However, teachers differ from one another according to their personalities, behaviours and mood, mainly, because the majority of them cannot keep patient to correct around thirty to forty pupils every time, thus, they tend to skip this phase and make general observations and remarks at the end of the course. Nevertheless, teaching young learners requires patience, tolerance and faithfulness and being a non-phonetic language, English obliges EFL teachers to be constant reminders to their pupils.

The second part of the questionnaire takes the form of an exercise designed, specifically, for first year pupils. The aim of this exercise is to test the learners' efficiency and ability in pronouncing the English alphabet letters properly according to their phonetic transcription. After the pupils' analysis of the copybooks, their exercise is based on the first lesson "Learning English Alphabet Letters". Hence, the exercise required the learners to write the phonetic symbols of the English Alphabet letters, of course, following the same way their teacher used at the beginning of the year. Examples of the first three letters are provided to give them a hint about the objective of the exercise and refresh their memories, such as, A /ei/, B b /bi:/, Cc /si:/, etc.

Suggestions	N°	%
Empty questionnaires	01	03.12 %
Full questionnaires/wrong answers	04	12.50 %
Full questionnaires/correct answers	11	34.37 %
Full questionnaires/partially correct	03	09.37 %
No answer	13	40.62 %
Total	32	100 %
Original number	32	

Table (56): First year pupils' number of answers for English alphabet letters activity.

The table illustrated above demonstrates the pupils' attempts of answering the exercise of transcribing the English alphabet letters sound by sound. As the whole thirty two pupils receive individual questionnaires, only nineteen questionnaires are given back. One questionnaire is given back empty not a single alphabet letter sound is written. Also, four questionnaires out of nineteen are answered but full of wrong alphabetic sounds, not even one sound is correct. Three questionnaires have plenty of mistakes, as well as, only few letters are transcribed correctly, such as, D /di:/ and E /i:/. Finally, eleven questionnaires (34.37%) are returned with correct phonetic transcription. However, the majority of alphabet letters is transcribed with different sounds, almost identical in all the other questionnaires and the sounds are Hh /eit/, Oo /eoy/, Qq /kiu/, Rr /a/, Uu /you/ and Ww /dabelyou/. Basically, all the sounds listed and transcribed are phonetically false; because the sounds transcribed between two slashes are not supposed to be written like ordinary letters and do not take capital letters' format, and obviously separate with very small spaces.

Nonetheless, when the results of the English alphabet letters transcription are compared to the results of question number four from the same questionnaires, we deduce a paradox in the pupils' say and action. The results of the fourth question shows that eighteen pupils (56.25%) admitted their ability to pronounce the English alphabet letters, but only eleven of them (34.37%) managed to present correct transcription of those letters.

Conclusion

To put it briefly, only one questionnaire is given back empty, not the query part but the exercise of English alphabet letters' transcription part, although they are not fully correct but the pupils seem very cooperative and eager to answer questions and do the activity provided afterwards. Nonetheless, in accordance with the results of the collected data, the speaking skill, in particular, of first year pupils is deteriorating and only few of them possess half of what is needed to be prepared for the next year.

II.10. Fourth Year Pupils' Questionnaire Analysis (see Appendix n°02)

As regards fourth year pupils' questionnaire design, they have to reply on twelve close-ended questions almost as similar as the ones designed in the first year pupils' questionnaire, but a little bit prolonged with slightly different-formulated questions about syllables, consonant clusters, stress and also about using the dictionary as a useful learning tool in our EFL classrooms. The other part of the questionnaire sheet carries four short and simple activities regarding vowel and consonant sounds, word phonetic transcription, word stress and syllables division.

The first part of the questionnaire deals with the pupils' personal opinions about teaching, learning English as a foreign language, phonetic transcription as a teaching method, full or partial integration in pronunciation exercises and lessons, and the teachers professional demeanours conducted inside the classroom when confronted with numerous pupils and recurrent mistakes. All these objectives seek to know if pronunciation teaching is superficially stable and how EFL teachers manage to transmit correct utterances, either through phonetic notation or other tools.

Q01: Do you like studying the English language?

The first question intends to figure out the pupils' either positive or negative attitudes they bear towards learning English as a foreign language, especially after being exposed to it for about four years. However, growing fond of learning English depends as well on the learner's attitude towards the teacher's personality, behaviour in class and pupils' treatment.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	20	66.66 %
No	01	03.33 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100 %
Original number	30	

Table (57): Suggestions of the pupils' liking or disliking of English.

The first table clearly demonstrates the pupils' positive attitudes towards learning English which proves fourth year pupils' openness to learning English carrying positive feelings and passion towards it. Attitude is necessary for improving one's pronunciation, besides, constant instruction and follow-up of learners' levels, perseverance in teaching principles of EFL learning influence the pupil's performance, i.e. correct and accurate pronunciation and adequate aptitude in grammar and vocabulary. Varasarin states that,

Pronunciation practice is also important for the students who plan to study abroad or are currently living abroad. Increasing their pronunciation skills beforehand can build confidence and make them feel less reluctant to venture out to speak English. Students' personal attitude and self-esteem are major factors in improving English pronunciation. It is not merely exposure that matters, but how the students respond to the opportunities of listening to English spoken by a native speaker or of speaking themselves (Kenworthy, 1987).

(Ibid. 30-31)

Thus, Varasarin points out the issue of learners' motivation to further their studies in the field for many reason, such travelling to English-speaking countries or living abroad, however, it requires a good command over English pronunciation to succeed in communication. For this reason, EFL teachers should expose their pupils to sufficient and authentic input like native speakers' recordings and videos in order to ensure satisfying results at the end of the year.

Q02: Do you find the English language difficult?

This question aims at finding out the pupils' opinions to determine their actual standpoint about English after four years of constant exposure to the four skills besides the other sub-skills. It is worth noting that even if learners like to learn English they may also find it difficult to obtain, not necessarily all the aspects, but mainly pronunciation, especially, if the teachers put very low emphasis on this skill.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	01	03.33 %
No	20	66.66 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100 %
Original number		30

Table (58): Suggestions of the pupils' opinion about English's difficulty.

The table's statistics demonstrates a high percentage (66.66%) of the pupils who assert that learning English is not difficult which may mean that, at least, they have a certain level in all the four skills of foreign language learning. However, in our Algerian EFL contexts, certain skills are always regarded as more important than others instead of dedicating equal importance to all of them. For instance, teaching pronunciation was disregarded and marginalized decades ago, just recently, educational syllabuses' designers incorporated pronunciation practice activities into middle school textbooks. This fact proves English pronunciation's vitality as an integral part in FL contexts, so it deserves to be equally treated and taught like the other skills.

Q03: Do you think that learning English is a headache?

This question, although brings forth the same aim as the previous one, it implicitly entails the fact that despite the fact that English is not too difficult to learn as many Algerians perceive it, but learning can be a headache, from time to time, if the learners turn to abhor learning grammar and written expression or they are in good terms with the teacher's teaching methods and demeanour because they do not suit or meet their individual needs and learning styles.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	06	20 %
No	15	50 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100%
Original number		30

Table (59): Suggestions of the pupils' agreement or disagreement on English as a headache

The third table demonstrates different results from the previous one. Basically, because (20%) of the learners who describe English learning as a headache, do not hate it but might get fed up with learning certain aspects of English that can be poorly instructed, for instance, language structure and knowledge of vocabulary, or they might be facing certain problems with their teachers' method implemented in teaching English. Not to mention that teachers tend to prioritize certain skills over others and overlook time-consuming activities, Fraser (2000) explains that,

being able to speak English includes a number of sub-skills, of which pronunciation is "by far the most important" (other sub-skills of speaking include vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics). [...] with good pronunciation, a speaker is intelligible despite other errors; with poor pronunciation, a speaker can be very difficult to understand, despite accuracy in other areas.

(As cited by Nair et al. 02)

Foreign language teachers should be systematic and objective when embarking on the mission of applying certain programmes and plans, thus, should avoid favouring teaching certain skills over others, because learning a foreign language requires a degree of efficiency in, most importantly, the art of communication "pronunciation". As pointed out by Fraser (2000), being intelligible and comprehensible when communicating is a key element in to maintaining oral contact. Grammar and vocabulary can be learnt at any time and any age, however, acquiring intelligible pronunciation becomes impossible when the learner gets over puberty age with misperceived and fossilized pronunciations.

Q04: Do you practice pronunciation activities in class with your teacher?

The fourth question targets the issue of equality in teaching the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Although, speaking skill is supposed to be given more attention and importance in pronunciation practice activities. EFL instructors seem to lack the appropriate background knowledge of their field of expertise. Not only that they tend to skip these activities, they also stick to old-fashioned techniques and the textbook's only few exercises.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	17	56.66 %
No	04	13.33 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100 %
Original number		30

Table (60): Suggestions of the regular practice of pronunciation activities

As already shown on the table, seventeen pupils out of thirty (56.66%) answer “yes” they do practice pronunciation activities inside the classroom which means they probably possess an acceptable level in English pronunciation, because they are exposed to English on a regular basis and put everything they learn into practice. Varasarin supports that,

Teaching can play an important role in helping learners develop ways of improving their pronunciation and shaping their attitude toward the importance of pronunciation (Richards & Renandya, 2002). It is important for teachers to instruct learners about pronunciation strategies and tactics to achieve their goal of intelligibility and accurate English speaking. Students' achievement and confidence including personal attitude and self-esteem is a major factor in improving English pronunciation (Kenworthy, 1987).

(2007:185)

As long as the teacher keeps monitoring and checking the learners' performances and improving their current level by providing them with the appropriate feedback, he/she is unintentionally strengthening the learners' self-confidence and building up their motivation to interact in conversations, participate and share knowledge. As well as helping him/her to

adapt to the classroom's atmosphere and adopt self-improvised learning strategies and techniques to support his/her learning styles.

Q05: Do you know what phonetic transcription is?

This question, in particular, intends to uncover the issue of the fourth year pupils' familiarity with phonetic transcription or phonetic symbols which they are supposed to be exposed to during all four years in middle schools' textbooks. At the very least, they can identify some of them when found. Phonetic notation has been said to act as a facilitator in matters of critical need to pronounce accurately.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	17	56.66 %
No	04	13.33 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100 %
Original number		30

Table (61): Suggestions of the pupils' acquaintance with phonetic transcription (phonetic symbols)

The fifth table demonstrates a large percentage (56.66%) of those who state they are familiar with phonetic transcription, certainly, in terms of phonetic system of symbols. As a result, the pupils' answers would be proved right or wrong when it comes to the second part of the questionnaire that deals with phonetic transcription and sounds' exercises, accordingly, Varasarin adds,

Teaching phonetic symbols might be difficult for non native speakers of English who are accustomed to a one-to-one correspondence between sound and letter because English has a highly variable spelling system. Learners need to learn how to make use of sound letter combinations and develop competence that enables them to pronounce the correct or approximately correct sounds when they encounter the written form of unfamiliar words and they also need plenty of practice.
(Ibid. 187)

Consequently, Arabic script has a one-to-one correspondence between letters and sounds, so when pupils are exposed to English for the first time, they feel reluctant to learn it and speak it because it seems difficult and absolutely strange from Arabic. Consequently, the teacher introduces phonetic symbols, preferably, through the phonemic chart and

practises them. They carry on with this procedure each time until they are acquainted with all sounds and their symbols.

Q06: Do you know how to pronounce English sounds through phonetic symbols?

The question targets the pupils' aptitude in pronouncing the majority of English vowel and consonant sounds which they are exposed to during the period of four years. Not to mention that the early exposure to English sounds to middle schoolers facilitates the English sounds retention and production process. Throughout the years, they learn new complicated sounds, such as, diphthongs and triphthongs that require a higher degree of intelligence and focus to comprehend them, intensive practice to accurately produce them, and correct pronunciation to achieve successful communication.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	12	40 %
No	09	30 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100 %
Original number	30	

Table (62): Suggestions of the pupils' ability or inability to pronounce English sound.

The table above demonstrates a small opposition between the pupils' answers; the domineering part (40%) determines the pupils' efficiency in pronouncing English sounds when they are asked to practise oral exercises in terms of English sounds and be recorded then analysed and discussed. The other side admits its inefficiency or failure in pronouncing sounds. Yet, this is regretful and worth pointing out, fourth year pupils who cannot pronounce sounds cannot utter correct words and would be cut off from communication. In another sense, they could be introvert pupils who feel shy and hesitant whenever speaking is involved. This type of learners should always be monitored and encouraged to step out of their cocoon of shyness and achieve goals. For instance, these pupils would eventually fail in their final project if it is taken orally.

Q07: Do you know how to divide words into syllables?

Normally, syllables' division takes place when the word is transcribed into vowel sounds and consonants to facilitate the process. They take the form of CV, CVC, CVCC, V, etc. Consequently, pupils should be familiar with words' transcription so they can comprehend words' syllables.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	14	46.66 %
No	07	23.33 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100 %
Original number	30	

Table (63): Suggestions of the pupils' ability in word syllable division.

(46.66%) of fourth year pupils claim to know how to divide a word into syllables, hence, they already bear in mind that word syllables' division requires phonetic transcription of vowels and consonants to make the process less confusing. Words with one syllable are called "monosyllabic" and they always carry primary stress, however, it is not indicated by any notation. There are two- and three-syllabic words and more which have stress and it shifts with affixes and types. It is essential to learn some techniques different from phonetic transcription that seems to be unpleasant to people, such as, tapping on a desk at the same time counting, clapping with both hands, hand-beneath-jaw and so on. In this technique, the pupils put the back of their hands beneath their chins and pronounce a word. They count how many times their lower jaws move and that would be the number of syllables in word. It is enjoyable and very practical.

Q08: Do you know what a consonant cluster is?

The question entails the same objectives as the previous one, because consonant clusters are part of dividing words into syllables and they require the pupils to transcribe the word in order to locate the consonant cluster quickly. The fact that phonetic transcription is used as a tool to facilitate syllables clusters, despite the fact that consonants are not hard to learn, because most of them remain the way they are written as letters, so learning vowels is consistent, too.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	15	50 %
No	05	16.66 %
Empty	01	03.33 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100 %
Original number	30	

Table (64): Suggestions of the pupils' familiarity with consonant clusters.

The eighth table displays (50%) of those who claim they know what a consonant cluster is and by all means they probably do possess certain knowledge about phonetic transcription of isolated words. According to their textbook "OTM" syllabus, the pupils learn differently-uttered sounds, besides different consonant clusters' structures are being introduced in one of the textbook's units.

Q09: Do you know when and where you put the stress in a word?

This question intends to find out if the pupils of fourth year middle school can identify stress, especially, primary stress that requires certain capacity in words' transcription. In broad transcription, on the other hand, the stress is shown with an apostrophe sign

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	15	50 %
No	03	10 %
Empty	03	10 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100%
Original number	30	

Table (65): Suggestions of the pupils' ability in indicating stress.

The table above also shows that half of fourth year pupils (50%) can identify word stress, because they are already familiar with it since first year. Furthermore, putting stress on syllables drives pupils to transcribe the word and divide it into syllables so they can get the correct location of stress. These results are equally compared to the findings of the second part of their questionnaire sheet, where they are asked to provide a series of words with their phonetic transcription and indicate word stress when necessary. Also, the objective behind

this exercise is to prove if they possess certain phonological awareness regarding stress rules.

Q10: does your teacher correct your mistakes of pronunciation?

This question aims at finding out a multiple of reasons that have a relation with the teachers' performances, if they conduct a professional behaviour inside the classroom, if they act patiently or aggressively when correcting their pupils' recurrent mistakes and mispronunciations whether they likely take no notice of the pupils' oral and communicative errors instead of having a professional attitude and fight back mispronunciation with useful methods and techniques, or not inhibiting them in the process.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	18	60 %
No	02	06.66 %
Empty	01	03.33 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100%
Original number		30

Table (66): Suggestions of the teachers' professional conduct inside the classroom

The table's statistics indicates a very high percentage (60%) of the pupils who point to the fact that their teacher mainly interferes when their mispronunciations occur in order to avoid possible fossilization of misheard and misconceived sounds that could probably affect their pronunciation and cause communication strain. Moreover, the teacher is, also, required to check and evaluate his own pronunciation through the constant exposure to the target language, preferably, native speakers' tapes and consult monolingual dictionaries for exact pronunciation.

Q11: Does your teacher scream or shout at you when you make mistakes?

This question apparently has similar objectives as the previous one because it targets the same issue of teacher's professional conduct and negative attitudes inside the classroom that would, consequently, effect the pupils' desire to learn, as well as, lessen their motivation towards learning English as a foreign language.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	05	16.66 %
No	15	50 %
Empty	01	03.33 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100%
Original number	30	

Table (67): Suggestions of the teachers' professional attitude inside the classroom.

The table clearly demonstrates that half of the respondents (50%) do not get yelled at or inhibited by the instructor when they mispronounce words. Furthermore, it is of great importance in TEFL⁴⁰ classes that the teacher corrects mispronunciations and keeps the learners on the right track. However, it is preferable that he avoids shouting at them, because he/she is unintentionally feeding their inhibition and reluctance. Moreover, once a pupil gets embarrassed in front of his/her classmates, he/she would undeniably cease participating or being interested in the subject taught so not to get humiliated again even if he/she knows the answer. Afterwards, these reasons may effect their motivation and their positive attitude they have towards the subject being taught, would gradually diminish, they would reluctantly attend classes unmotivated and absent-minded, and their language competencies decrease.

Q12: Does your teacher show you how to pronounce words in phonetic transcription?

The last question aims at finding out if the teacher integrates or does not integrate phonetic transcription as a teaching method, if it is regularly used and practised in classroom pronunciation practice activities, mainly, for oral and communicative abilities' enhancement inside the classroom.

Suggestions	N	%
Yes	19	63.33 %
No	02	06.66 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100 %
Original number	30	

⁴⁰ Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Table (68): Suggestions of the teachers' possible usage of phonetic transcription as a teaching method.

Statistics demonstrates that the majority of fourth year pupils (63.33%) perform phonetic transcription with their teacher as a useful and practical method for indicating the exact pronunciation of new terms. The major emphasis should be placed on applying the knowledge of phonetic symbols in actual pronunciation. Introducing the spoken sound orally accompanied with its visual and physical realization can be efficient to help the pupils memorize the sounds and their symbols, Varasarin advocates that,

Phonetic symbols should be introduced to learners as early in their education as possible because pronunciation and intonation are the foundations of verbal language. Once learners have some facility in reading words, they no longer need instruction in this skill unless there is a special need (Anderson, 1985). If bad habits are formed, it will require double the effort later to correct them. Learning phonetic symbols may not be worth doing for its own sake. It is invaluable as a tool for decoding and pronouncing words correctly. (Ibid. 212)

Hence, it is fundamental to teach middle schoolers phonetic symbols and implement them into each teaching strategy and daily practice of pronunciation activities, because continuous exposure to sounds and their written forms facilitates sounds reception-to-production process. Drilling of sounds has been the most frequently used and prevailing technique in our EFL classrooms.

Moreover, there are two opposing views on the teaching of pronunciation in the ESL classroom (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). One view holds that the purpose of teaching pronunciation is to eradicate all traces of a foreign accent through pronunciation drills. The other view holds that the teaching of pronunciation is futile after a certain age due to a decreasing ability among learners to develop native-like pronunciation in a second language. (Ibid.38). it is also very common in our Algerian educational settings where our learners strive to get an accurately intelligible pronunciation of English to maintain the flow of communication, but fail because of fossilized mispronunciations and “critical age” factor.

The second part of fourth year pupils' questionnaire is dedicated to the practical part of the previous table of questions. That is to mean, several questions have a relation to the exercises which are designed specifically to prove and demonstrate if the pupils' answers are reliable or paradoxical.

The first exercise restricts the pupils to identify a group of sounds by stating if they are long or short vowels and nine sounds are presented to them in a clear way. However, a trap is placed among the sounds, which takes the form of two sounds which are not vowels but consonants and one is a diphthong. The aim behind this trap question is to know if the pupils can distinguish between vowel and consonant sounds. (eg. /i:/, /z/, /æ/, /v/, /a:/, /ai/, etc).

Suggestions	N°	%
Empty exercise	06	20 %
Full exercise/wrong answers	00	00 %
Full exercise/correct answers	09	30 %
Full exercise/partially correct	06	20 %
Trick questions	00	00%
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100%
Original number		30

Table (69): Fourth year pupils' answers of the first exercise (vowel sounds' type identification)

The table shows that (20%) pupils did not answer the exercise which, consequently, demonstrates their inability to identify sounds. (20%) of the pupils partially answered the exercise but identified the following sounds: /æ/, /ə/ and /ʊ/ as long vowels. They also could not recognize the trick in this activity, alongside with those nine pupils (30%) out of thirty (100%) who answered the exercise correctly except that not a single pupil, neither of those who identified long and short vowel sounds nor who partially did, could discover the consonant and diphthong sounds trick. They all fell for the trap question and identified the following sounds, /t/, /v/, /ai/, as short and long vowel sounds respectively.

As a result, the table demonstrates the pupils' failure in distinguishing long vowel sounds from short ones, from consonants and diphthongs. Despite the fact that all the sounds given in the exercise are attainable, mainly because they are programmed in their textbook and in relation to their copybooks' analysis, they have already dealt with them illustrated

through examples. They fail to differentiate vowels from consonants and short vowels from long ones. This phonetic deficiency may effect their oral capacities as far as pronunciation is concerned. Originally, however, Algerian pupils sit for written exams, for this reason, they are supposed to pay attention to written script than oral one; transcription exercise can optionally take part in these exams in the form of final “ed” and “s” activities.

The second exercise contains twenty nine isolated words and the pupils are required to transcribe these words in isolation and pointing each word’s stress. The pupils are provided with two examples in phonetic transcription and initial stress, too, such as, hit /hɪt/ and doctor /ˈdɒktə/. This question was specifically and intentionally coordinated with the fifth close-ended question because the results, presumably, should be related to this type of exercise in order to prove the pupils’ answers. The results of coordination are compared afterwards.

Suggestions	N°	%
Full exercise/wrong answers	05	16.66 %
Full exercise/correct answers	01	03.33 %
Full exercise/partially correct	03	10 %
Empty exercise	12	40 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100%
Original number	30	

Table (70): Fourth year pupils’ answers of the second exercise (isolated words for phonetic transcription and stress).

The results show that the majority of fourth year pupils (40%) did not answer the second exercise which proves their inability to transcribe simple monosyllabic words they are familiar with since their first year, such as, fat, fit, but, last, red, etc. Then, (16.66%) out of 100% filled the second exercise and scribbled random sounds, particularly, vowels and all of the transcribed words are wrong. The minority of pupils could not transcribe the whole words and they did almost similar mistakes, for example, ears, hear, hair. Furthermore, they could not indicate word stress. Out of twenty-one of the remaining questionnaires, only one fourth year pupil managed to transcribe the words perfectly; however, he/she could not indicate the stress clearly and also put initial stress in monosyllabic words.

In the whole exercise, there are only two two-syllabic words (mother-father) and since this exercise is coordinated with the fifth close-ended question from the first part of the questionnaire, in the first place, results should be compared. Hence, back to the fifth question results, (56.66%) pupils out of (100%) claim their familiarity with and knowledge about phonetic transcription; nonetheless, only one pupil succeeded to transcribe the words correctly and three pupils could transcribe just a few of them. As regards stress indication, (50%) pupils admit their ability to indicate word stress (primary stress), additionally, the pupils who did the phonetic transcription could not identify the primary stress in the words, “mother” and “father” and also could not know that monosyllabic words’ stress cannot be indicated, it is phonologically incorrect.

The third exercise is connected to the issue of investigation which is using phonetic transcription as a teaching method, but demonstrated through dividing isolated words into syllables. Fourth year pupils are already familiar with word syllables’ division and in order to divide the words correctly, its phonetic transcription is required to facilitate the process using CV, VC, CVC, CCV, etc. Twelve isolated words are presented to the pupils for word division. This exercise goes hand in hand with the seventh close-ended question of the same questionnaire to compare results and prove their honesty.

Suggestions	N°	%
Empty exercise	03	10 %
Full exercise/wrong answers	00	00 %
Full exercise/correct answers	02	6.66 %
Full exercise/partially correct	16	53.33%
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100%
Original number	30	

Table (71): Fourth year pupils’ answer of the third exercise (word’s number of syllables).

The table’s statistics illustrates that the majority of fourth year pupils cannot divide words in isolation neither with phonetic transcription nor without it. Along with three empty exercises’ questionnaires, 16 pupils (53.33%) partially answered it. They mentioned the number of syllables without transcription or division of words into CV- VC- CVC- CCVC and so on. Consequently, it is obvious that fourth year pupils are not familiar with transcription or word syllables’ division techniques, such as, tapping or counting the lower

jaw movement. They mentioned the words; obstacle, school, balcony and lemonade as two-syllabic words.

As a matter of fact, they assume the number of syllables given without transcribing the words, generally, because teachers familiarize their pupils with words' syllables only by dividing the words in capital letters and not sounds in relation to the textbook (OTM), too. By contrast, when the pupils are asked if they know how to divide words into syllables, (46.66%) of them answer yes; however, they could not neither transcribe monosyllabic words, nor divide them into correct organized syllables. Besides, stress courses and exercises are included in their textbooks' programme since their first year.

The fourth exercise looks to some extent is similar to the second one, but it contains different words with different word syllables to test their capacity in transcribing words, however, with different syllables and stress positions. The aim of this exercise is to demonstrate if they can transcribe isolated words as they claim they can or not, especially, that fourth year pupils are familiar with sounds, symbols, transcription and stress since first year in middle school and they are rather efficient in phonetic transcription for beginners in English.

Suggestions	N°	%
Empty exercise	13	43.33 %
Full exercise/wrong answers	02	06.66 %
Full exercise/correct answers	02	06.66 %
Full exercise/partially correct	04	13.33 %
No answer	09	30 %
Total	30	100%
Original number		30

Table (72): Fourth year pupils' answers of the fourth exercise (phonetic transcription with indicating stress position)

As illustrated on the table, (43.33%) of fourth year pupils do not understand the word "transcribe" although they are asked if they are familiar with phonetic transcription or not and the majority (56.66%) answers yes they are. Nevertheless, in practice they cannot transcribe monosyllabic words. Only two pupils out of thirty manage to answer with correct transcription which directly indicates their perseverance and diligence to learn English and transcription in particular. Other two pupils' answers are totally out of the point of the

exercise when they scribble random and incorrect symbols just in order to fill in the questionnaire. The last four pupils have lucky attempts to transcribe the words, but their answers are partially correct. They also have common mistakes in the following words, happy, balcony, obstacle, death, presumably, because they are composed of two and three syllables.

Not to mention that some of them transcribe the words in capital letters, perhaps, because they are not aware of the fact that sounds cannot be capitalized and they are always written between slashes for broad transcription and square brackets for narrow transcription. Furthermore, no stress is indicated despite that the example in the fourth exercise is clear (e.g. hope /həʊp/ and hatred /'heɪtrɪd/), monosyllabic words are not stress-noted and two-syllabic words require primary stress, and to indicate it correctly, it depends on the rules they have learned as programmed in their textbooks. Back to the twelve closed question, pupils are asked if their teacher instructs them about how to pronounce words in phonetic transcription and nineteen (63.33%) out of thirty answered “yes”. As a matter of fact, the results of the exercise show no credibility in their claims and contrast their answers. They are either too much careless to practise the drills and exercises with their teacher or no pronunciation/phonetic transcription activities are possibly being practised inside the classroom as necessary.

Conclusion

First year pupils questionnaire is specifically designed to meet their primal level, therefore, questions in English are translated into Arabic. By contrast, fourth year pupils' questionnaire is in English only, but both of them have a practical part that takes the form of a set of exercises to check their competences in phonetic transcription and stress. They have close-ended questions investigating their opinions about and attitudes towards learning English for the first time. The statistics shows that they do have positive attitudes for learning English and eager to explore it. The questionnaire also investigates their teacher's demeanour conducted inside the classroom in terms of perseverance in practicing pronunciation activities regularly, encouraging or inhibiting the pupils when they mispronounce sounds, constant monitor of the pupils' level and performances, as well as, compatibility with the textbooks' programmes.

As a result, according to fourth year pupils, the teachers seem to perform their roles fully and faithfully, and they are consciously aware of the importance of introducing segmental and supra-segmental features and how phonetic transcription contributes in improving one's articulation of sounds. As regards the exercises, only (34.37%) of first year pupils manage to transcribe English alphabet letters correctly, whereas, the rest either did not give their questionnaires back or left them empty. Fourth year pupils, also, suffer a severe lack in their phonetic efficiency as only (6.66%) to (13.33%) manage to transcribe some words. Their answers and their actions are paradoxical. It is concluded that, too little space is given to phonetic transcription in pronunciation practice activities and the implementation of this method seems unreal.

II.11. Recordings' Analysis

For the reliability of this investigation, another survey research is carried out, besides questionnaires, to make sure the previous results of the questionnaires are compatible with the recordings'. The subjects of the study are chosen from the same middle school "Belhamri Mohamed" in Mostaganem, and the same levels take the test as the questionnaires. First and fourth year pupils are given three oral exercises to be recorded respectively. The aim behind these recordings is to check and evaluate the level of our middle schoolers' pronunciation and if they are familiar with phonetic symbols and sounds as they claim in the questionnaire.

In accordance with the textbook's programme of first year middle school "SOE", the English alphabet letters are introduced as the first lesson, hence, our respondents are required for the recitation of English alphabet letters in the first exercise to test their pronunciation proficiency and memorization of English letters. In the second exercise, they are asked to pronounce a group of words. These words are divided into three categories, monosyllabic words, two-syllabic words and three-syllabic ones. Monosyllabic words, such as, sit – school - boy - girl - book – food, etc. and two-syllabic words like today, father, mother, angry, hungry, copybook, etc. The aim behind it is to know if the learners can discriminate between sounds, for example, long and short vowels and diphthongs. As well as, the discrimination between fricative dental, alveolar sounds and post-alveolar sounds.

The third exercise deals with isolated transcribed sounds and is, intentionally, taken from the first year's textbook, for instance, /i:/ - /ɪ / -/e/ - /aɪ/ -/θ/ -/ð/, etc. and the participants are required to pronounce each sound separately and if it is correct, they can provide an example, such as, /ɪ / in sit – hit – bit in order to illustrate the sounds'

pronunciations in words. On the Other hand, fourth year pupils have the same array of exercises except the first exercise that deals with English alphabet letters, instead they have a list of seven words which have one thing in common, the letter “a” exists in all of the seven words. The subjects are asked to provide pronunciation of each word and the aim behind this exercise is to see if they are aware of the different physical realizations of the letter “a” in bag – date – again – ball – car – watch – area. Afterwards, they are presented with words’ phonetic transcription to test their ability in identifying the seven realizations of the letter “a”, as well as, testing their proficiency in reading phonetic symbols, noting that they are familiar to the pupils.

II.11.1. First Year Pupils’ Recordings’ Analysis

First year pupils have three different exercises, the first one deals with the alphabet letters’ recitation, the second one requires them to pronounce a group of words with different syllables, and the third one demands them to provide correct pronunciation of some transcribed sounds and produce compatible examples.

II.11.1.1. First Exercise

In this activity, first years pupils must recite the English alphabet letters in order to check their proficiency and command over the basics of English as a foreign/third language. Accordingly, they already have done the English alphabet lesson as the first step in learning English, in coordination with their textbook’s syllabus.

Suggestions	N°	%
Successful pupils	08	38.09
Unsuccessful pupils	03	14.29
Partially successful pupils	10	47.62
Total	21	100%

Table (73): First year pupils’ degree of success or failure in reciting EAL⁴¹.

⁴¹ Hence English Alphabet Letters

Analysis

The table's statistics shows that only (38.09%) are successful and manage to recite the English alphabet letters correctly, i.e. all the letters' sounds are pronounced properly. In addition, three out of five respondents recite the alphabet as if singing a song. They are asked if their teacher taught them the hymn but the answer is negative claiming that they learnt it on their own at home through watching English programmes aired on Arabic channels like MBC3 or J. The least percentage covers the unsuccessful pupils who cannot recite the EAL and some of them refuse taking the exercise claiming that they never deal with the alphabet. However, their claims are paradoxical compared to their classmates' who manage to recite them easily, but not flawlessly.

The prevailing category (47.62%) of first year pupils is of those respondents who cannot perform complete recitation of the alphabet, hence, they succeed to pronounce some and fail in pronouncing the rest. They also have similar mispronunciations, for example, some of them mispronounce letter "A" /eɪ/ as /aɪ/, "G" /dʒi:/ as /ʒi:/ and "P" /pi:/ as /pə/. It is worth noting that the majority of the respondents clearly confuses French letters' pronunciation with English ones, for instance, the letters "H", "I", "J", "K", "L", "M", "N", "O", "P", "Q", "X" and "Y". These letters' sounds are pronounced exactly like in French. It could be because of the influence of early exposure to French language in primary school before English. It could also be due to the force of habit of drilling French alphabet letters for a long period both at home and at school, or it could be because their teacher does not instruct them about the correct pronunciation of English letters; thus, "fossilization phase" of wrong pronunciation occurs.

Through the analysis of first year pupils' collected copybooks, it is shown that they already have been introduced to English alphabet letters and each isolated letter's pronunciation. Nevertheless, the teacher may wrongly represent the sounds by letters which is phonetically wrong. The pupils' failure or inability to recite English alphabet letters correctly could fall on the reasons mentioned earlier, namely, the fossilization of French alphabet pronunciation or lack of intensive and correct practice of sounds inside the classroom.

II.11.1.2. Second Exercise

In this activity, first year pupils are given two lists of words from two categories, monosyllabic words, two-syllabic words and three-syllabic ones. Then they are asked to pronounce each word separately to help with reliable results, especially, when analyzing their ability to discriminate between sounds, be they vowels or consonants, mainly, plosive and alveolar sounds /t/ and /d/, dental fricative sounds /θ/ and / ð /, fricative post-alveolar sound /ʃ/, affricate post-alveolar sound /tʃ/, as well as, diphthongs.

The table presented next is divided into three main columns for the main categories of words' syllables. Subsequently, they include sub-columns of successful pupils⁴², unsuccessful pupils⁴³ and no answers⁴⁴, in addition to their results in the form of percentages.

⁴² Henceforth SPs

⁴³ Henceforth UPs

⁴⁴ Henceforth NA

Monosyllabic words	SP		UP		NA		2-syllabic words	SP		UP		NA		3-syllabic words	SP		UP		NA		T	Or /N
	n	%	n	%	N	%		n	%	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	n	%		
sit	11	52.39	05	23.80	05	23.80	today	10	47.16	02	09.53	09	42.86	copybook	00	00	13	61.90	09	42.86	16	21
school	16	76.19	00	00	05	23.80	window	06	28.57	07	33.34	08	38.10	balcony	02	09.53	02	09.53	17	80.96		
boy	16	76.19	00	00	05	23.80	country	00	00	14	66.66	06	28.57	pollution	02	09.53	06	28.57	13	61.90		
girl	07	33.34	04	19.04	10	47.16	teacher	10	47.16	01	04.76	10	47.16	lemonade	00	00	12	57.15	09	42.86		
book	13	61.90	03	14.29	05	23.80	color	00	00	15	71.43	06	28.57	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
food	01	04.76	15	71.42	05	23.80	father	06	28.57	08	38.10	07	33.34	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
mouth	09	42.86	05	23.80	07	33.34	mother	11	52.39	01	04.76	09	42.86	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
nose	08	38.10	05	23.80	03	14.29	human	04	19.04	10	47.16	07	33.34	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
noise	03	14.29	09	42.86	09	42.86	angry	12	57.15	00	00	09	42.86	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
home	13	61.90	02	09.53	06	28.57	hungry	00	00	14	66.66	07	33.34	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
young	00	00	08	38.10	13	61.90	other	00	00	10	47.16	11	52.39	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
friend	11	52.39	01	04.76	09	42.86	dialogue	01	04.76	09	42.86	11	52.39	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
dead	02	09.53	07	33.34	12	57.15	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
meat	14	66.66	00	00	07	33.34	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
feet	12	57.15	00	00	09	42.86	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
should	03	14.29	05	23.80	13	61.90	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
wash	08	38.10	07	33.34	06	28.57	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
watch	08	38.10	07	33.34	06	28.57	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		

Table (74): First year pupils' degree of success/failure in pronouncing mono-syllabic and two/three -syllabic words.

Analysis

According to the table's results displayed above, out of twenty one participants, only sixteen of them agree to be recorded and answer the exercises, the other five participants claim that they hate English and show no sense of cooperation. The only words which all participants pronounce correctly are "school" (76.19%) and "boy" (76.19%). Basically, these two words are the most frequently used ones from the beginning of the year that is why they quickly identify them and manage to articulate them easily. The other words that the majority of pupils manages to pronounce are "meat" (66.66%), "book" and "home" (61.90%), "feet" and "angry" (57.15%), "sit", "friend" and "mother" (52.39%), "today" and "teacher" (47.16%) and "mouth" (42.86%).

The reason why the majority of pupils recorded succeeds to pronounce these words is that they are used to habitually, if not daily, inside the classroom because teachers of English introduce easy-to-attain vocabulary to be used regularly by the pupils through examples and sentences. The words which the majority of first year pupils fails to pronounce are "color", "food" and "copybook" (00%), "country" and "hungry" (00%), "human" and "other" (00%). What certainly prevents them from producing these words correctly is their familiarity with mispronunciations of their teachers and inability to identify short vowel sound /ʌ/ and mispronounce them with /ɒ/. Whereas, the word "human" is produced with a non-aspirated /h/ sound, although they should be familiar with this sound, primarily, because it is already programmed in their textbook in relation to first year syllabus.

As regards the word "hungry", no participant succeeds in pronouncing /ʌ/ and they tend to associate its pronunciation to the word "angry" /æ/. If their teachers introduce phonetic symbols that can be found frequently in mono-syllabic words, besides constant and regular practice, maybe they can succeed. Half of the number of participants manage to identify and pronounce the following words correctly, "nose", "wash" and "watch" (38.10%). First year pupils, even though a small number of respondents, can produce exactly correct sounds /ʃ/ and /tʃ/ in the minimal pair "wash/watch" which means they are able to discriminate between the two sounds in their spelling form "sh" and "ch".

However, the majority of respondents cannot produce "girl" (33.34%), window and father (28.57%). Only few participants pronounce certain words accurately, such as, "dead" (09.53%), "noise" and "should" (14.29%), "balcony" and "pollution" (09.53%). Apparently, first year pupils still cannot distinguish /e/ in "dead" and /i:/ in "meat", because they do not go through pronunciation and sounds lesson in their textbooks as shown in their selected copybooks. They, consequently, have no basic background or knowledge about sounds or

phonetic symbols and forcibly rely on sounds and words poorly modelled by their teachers orally. The main words that the pupils cannot produce are “young”, “hungry”, “country” and “other” among others. These words’ pronunciations may be difficult because they are not uttered the way they are written. The participants make mispronunciations of the words, too, because they tend to pick them up from their teacher or from examples used inside the classroom by chance.

The other participants either fail to pronounce the words, especially two/three-syllabic words, or refuse to. They claim that they never heard of such words, that their teacher does not finish the syllabus and, in brief, they do not like English now. Not to mention that after thorough listening to the recordings, all the participants, with no exception, do not pronounce dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ and deliberately convert them to alveolar plosives /t/ and /d/ respectively. As a matter of fact, these mispronunciations are produced vastly in Mostaganem, urban places to be more precise, because of the great impact on the speakers by their colloquial Arabic.

II.11.1.3. Third Exercise

The last activity is concerned with transcribed sounds and the pupils are given a short list of frequently used and familiar sounds in coordination with those sounds programmed in their textbook. The exercise course follows one condition, if first year pupils guess the sound right he/she ought to give an example of a word with the same sound to illustrate.

Sounds	SP		UP		Total
	n°	%	N°	%	
/i:/	05	31.25	11	68.75	16
/h/	02	12.50	14	87.50	
/e/	00	00	16	100	
/g/	05	31.25	11	68.75	
/dʒ/	00	00	16	100	
/s/	14	87.50	02	12.50	
/ʃ/	00	00	16	100	

Table (75): First year pupils’ ability to identify isolated transcribed sounds.

Analysis

Concerning the last exercise, the participants are asked to identify and pronounce these sounds and provide examples. Nonetheless, the majority of them cannot utter all of the sounds because they do not study them. Among sixteen participants, only five of them manage to recognize /i:/ vowel sound (31.25%) and produce examples like “cheese”, “speak”, “sheep” and “sleep”. Also five of the participants (31.25%) can identify sound /g/ providing examples like “game”, “good”, “bag” and “give”. While only two pupils recognize /h/ sound as in “home” and “her/him”. Fourteen out of sixteen participants identify fricative sound /s/ with examples like “sky”, “see”, “speak” and “sit”. The sounds which all our participants fail to identify are /e/, /dʒ/ and /ʃ/, and the only explanation for their failure is that they are not familiar with these phonetic symbols. They succeed to identify consonant sounds like /h/, /g/ and /s/ because they do not change form; however, all of the sounds mentioned on the table are originally taken from their textbook. A few participants add that their teachers never teach them these sounds, but they learn them by attending private associations’ and small mosque communities for English lessons.

II.11.2. Fourth Year Pupils’ Recordings’ Analysis

Fourth year pupils are asked to answer also some exercises, but instead of the recitation of English alphabet letters, they have to pronounce all the seven words that have the same letter, but different realization or pronunciation of the sound. The second one requires the respondents to provide the articulation of a group of words with different syllables. The third activity is similar to the one given to first year pupils as well, in which they are asked to pronounce transcribed sounds and provide compatible and suitable examples.

II.11.2.1. First Exercise

For the category of fourth year pupils, the phase of sounds’ articulation and their phonetic transcription is taken care of throughout the previous years. By their last year in middle school, they are supposed to possess certain knowledge about English phonetics (segmental and supra-segmental features). Thus, in this activity, fourth year pupils are asked to loudly and clearly pronounce seven different listed words. Implicitly, the pupils are given hints about a common letter between the words. The aim behind this exercise is to discover if fourth year pupils are aware of the different realizations of the letter “a”, in the sense that, if they can discriminate between the words “bag”, “watch”, “date”, and so on.

Words	Sounds	SP		UP		Total %
		n°	%	n°	%	
bag	/æ/	06	28.57%	15	71.42%	21
date	/eɪ/	21	100%	00	00%	
watch	/ɒ/	17	80.95%	04	19.04%	
ball	/ɔ:/	21	100%	00	00%	
car	/ɑ:/	21	100%	00	00%	
area	/eə /	15	71.42%	06	28.57%	
again	/ə /	21	100%	00	00%	

Table (76): The identification of the seven physical realizations of letter “a”

Analysis

Since fourth year participants are asked to contemplate into a list of words and reflect on it, as far as spelling is concerned, and the majority of them discovers that the common letter is “a”, however, it is pronounced differently as shown on the table. Statistics of the table shows that /ɑ:/, /eɪ/, /ɔ:/ and /ə / sounds out of seven realizations or utterances of the letter “a” are easy for the learners to pronounce (100%) due to familiarity with the words or their frequent usage inside the classroom. Central diphthong /eə / is recognized by fifteen participant (71.42%) in the word “area”. As regards short vowel /ɒ/ in “watch”, it is generally, confused with /æ/ and /ʌ/ but only (19.04%) fail to produce it. It is worth noting that short vowel /æ/ in “bag” is the most difficult sound to be articulated by fourth year pupils (28.57%), because it requires a faint smile with the tongue in a central position but pupils care less about mouth or tongue positions at this level.

II.11.2.2. Second Exercise

Similar to first year pupils, the second exercise contains two categories of words, mono-syllabic words, two-syllabic ones and more and they are similar to the previous list of words to avoid any vagueness or complexity when they are asked to pronounce each word separately. For the sake of thorough analysis, especially, the aim of this activity is examining their ability to carefully discriminate between long and short vowels, diphthongs, fricatives, affricates and also certain plosives. For instance, dental fricative / ð / and post-alveolar affricate /tʃ/, etc. Through this exercise, we can determine if fourth year pupils are aware of the tricky relationship between English spelling (orthography) and pronunciation.

Monosyllabic words	SP		UP		2-syllabic words	SP		UP		3-syllabic words	SP		UP		T	Or N
	n°	%	n°	%		n°	%	n°	%		n°	%	n°	%		
sit	21	100	00	00	today	21	100	00	00	copybook	10	47.62	11	52.38	21	21
school	21	100	00	00	window	21	100	00	00	balcony	05	23.81	16	74.19		
buy	21	100	00	00	country	00	00	21	100	lemonade	20	95.24	01	4.46		
girl	18	85.72	03	14.28	teacher	21	100	00	00	pollution	15	71.43	06	28.57		
book	19	90.48	02	9.52	color	00	00	21	100	/	/	/	/	/		
food	10	47.62	11	52.38	father	21	100	00	00	/	/	/	/	/		
mouth	21	100	00	00	mother	21	100	00	00	/	/	/	/	/		
nose	21	100	00	00	human	17	80.95	04	19.05	/	/	/	/	/		
noise	14	66.66	06	33.34	angry	21	100	00	00	/	/	/	/	/		
home	21	100	00	00	hungry	00	00	21	100	/	/	/	/	/		
young	00	00	21	100	other	03	14.28	18	85.72	/	/	/	/	/		
friend	21	100	00	00	dialogue	14	66.66	06	33.34	/	/	/	/	/		
dead	09	23.81	10	76.19	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
meat	21	100	00	00	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
feet	21	100	04	00	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
should	17	80.95	04	19.05	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
wash	10	47.6	11	52.38	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
watch	12	57.15	09	42.85	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		

Table (77): Fourth year pupils' degree of success/failure in pronouncing different words syllables.

Analysis

The table's statistics displays a huge percentage of successful learners of fourth year. All the participants agree to be recorded and they also conduct and express positive attitudes towards performing the oral exercises. So, according to the table, the majority of mono-syllabic words selected for the test are attainable for the pupils and they are listed as follows, "sit", "school", "boy", "mouth", "nose", "home", "friend", "meat", "feet", "today", "window", "teacher", "father", "mother" and "angry" (100%). The majority of these words are used frequently inside and outside the classroom. For the participants, they are attainable words and easy to pronounce, because they have prior acquaintance with long and short vowels during their school year.

Regarding words containing diphthongs, they state that their teacher has already introduced five diphthongs through the human head exercise illustrated in their textbook "OTM" (see figure 02), that is why they face no articulation problems with the words "nose" and "mouth" (100%). Proportions ranging from (80.95%) till (95.24%) of fourth year pupils who manage to pronounce words that their spelling may be tricky, for instance, "girl", "book", "should" and "pollution" which means they are, somehow, aware of the letter-sound relationship in English, and they are exposed to these words more frequently. Hence, repeating and drilling them help memorize the different pronunciations, besides, the correct articulation of the majority of these words proves that their teacher possesses a certain command over English pronunciation and background knowledge about the field of Phonetics teaching, enough command to convey right articulation of English sounds.

With regard to three-syllabic words, the respondents read them with confusion, (47.62%) of them succeed to produce the word "copybook" correctly, while the rest (52.38%) replace vowel sound /ʌ/ in /kʌpɪbʊk/ with /ɒ/, primarily, because of the influence of similar words in French. On the one hand, (76.19%) of the respondents fail to pronounce the word "balcony" because it is less frequent and unfamiliar. On the other hand, (95.24%) of the participants succeed to utter the word "pollution" with the right stressed syllable /pə'lu:ʃən/. This fact demonstrates that they are already familiar with suffix "tion" and the stress shift.

Nevertheless, the words that fourth year pupils fail to produce properly are "young" /jʌŋ/, "country" /kʌntri/, "color" /kʌlə/ and "hungry" /hʌŋgri/. It is worth noting that they are not aware of the different physical realizations of letter "o". In addition, the word "hungry" is wrongly conceived and badly retained by Algerians who tend to pronounce it /hæŋgri/ as

in /æŋgri/. This misconceived sound is pronounced this way openly by the majority of Algerian learners and teachers.

II.11.2.3. Third Exercise

This activity carries the same objectives as the previous one for first year pupils. The only difference is in the sounds to which they are asked to give and provide the correct and clear pronunciation. Since fourth year pupils have a more thorough and overloaded syllabus unlike first year pupils, it is a strength point for them to possess a better level of English pronunciation and better command over segmental features. The choice of sounds' selection for this category of pupils is taken to a higher level, for instance, they are asked to pronounce sounds like /a:/, /dʒ/, /ʊə/, /ɔɪ/, /eə/ and /ɪə/, providing at the same time examples of words for illustration.

Sounds	SP		UP		Total
	n°	%	n°	%	
/a:/	20	95.24	01	04.76	21
/dʒ/	03	14.29	18	85.71	
/ʊə/	18	85.71	03	14.29	
/ɔɪ/	15	71.42	06	28.58	
/eə/	14	66.66	07	33.34	
/ɪə/	17	80.95	04	19.05	

Table (78): Fourth year pupils' ability to identify isolated transcribed sounds.

Analysis

Likewise, fourth year participants are given a list of isolated transcribed sounds to pronounce. In line with the table's statistics, the majority of participants can identify / a:/ as a long vowel found in examples they know, such as, "car", "far", "father" and "shark". For the record, a few pupils mention that their teacher instruct them to pronounce sounds with the diacritic colon-like sign (:) a bit longer with a prolonged utterance to show the difference between short and long vowels (a matter of length). Furthermore, /dʒ/ sound is extremely difficult to identify for them, because only (14.29%) succeed to recognize it.

Apparently, even fourth year pupils are not familiar with consonants that change form when written phonetically, for example, / dʒ/, / ʒ/, / ʃ/, /t ʃ/, / θ/ and /ð/. Concerning diphthongs, statistics clearly demonstrates high percentage of successful pupils in identifying double-vowel sounds /ʊə/ (85.71%) in “sure”, “pure” and “cure”, /ɪə/ (80.95%) as in “ear”, “here” and “dear”. In addition to /ɔɪ/ (71.42%) like in “boy”, “toy”, “oil”. Finally, the sound /eə/ (66.66%) as in “hair”, “air” and “there”. Basically, teaching and learning can be tiring, boring and time-consuming, however, with constant practice, useful guidance and the use of practical methods, young learners would grasp them smoothly.

Conclusion

First year pupils tend to have fresh and flexible minds that can retain a huge amount of input of foreign target language piecemeal; however, first year textbook’s syllabus seems to be a little bit heavy and overloaded with grammar and vocabulary lessons and activities, and the part dedicated to pronunciation and spelling is so small and bear some hitches. So, it is better to program something more attainable and reliable for this level, for example, introducing a medley of basic sounds like starting with a group of consonant sounds which do not change form as letters/ transcribed sounds. Afterwards, they can move to learning more elaborate symbols.

As regards fourth year pupils, their final level in English must be evidence for their teacher’s efforts and perseverance for four years in middle school which can be definitely reflected upon their learners’ performances, to be ready for even more difficult and challenging issues in high school. It is worth noting that the results we resorted to at the end of this investigation cannot be applied to all Algerian middle schools or teachers. It is quite wrong to generalize the defects of this case study’s school on others, because teaching English differs from one teacher to another as they differ in styles, perspectives, attitudes, methods and techniques. And some of them are conscious and respectful while others, if I may say, are being, to some extent, careless and inattentive.

Chapter V

Beneficial Teaching Anecdotes and Recommended Activities

Chapter V

Recommendations

Beneficial Teaching Anecdotes and Suggested Activities

Introduction

Basically, most of EFL classrooms in Algeria depend entirely on the communicative approach, hence, they give more importance to fluency rather than accuracy, but being eclectic and combining several principles from different approaches could break that strictly-followed routine of our EFL classrooms, bring forth changes and allow innovation. Inside the classroom, each teacher is an independent reformer; he/she is not obliged to blindly stick to textbooks' or handbooks' syllabuses, or programmes sent by the ministry of education. The teacher should not neglect or overlook practicing certain FL skills and aspects either, even though he/she could be bound by certain imposed laws, it does not mean he cannot break them for the sake of his learners' success. So, from the previously findings it can be said that EFL teachers should set the goal of helping their pupils develop their pronunciation as "top priority".

Rules of grammar and vocabulary can be acquired through time; however, pronunciation learning can be limited and restricted to a period of time, because of the interference of many obstacles, such as, the factors of age, mother tongue and motivation that impair learners from learning the spoken language correctly. For this reason, an array of recommendable and efficient methods and techniques is suggested in this part of the present dissertation bearing no intention to be implemented forcibly, neither to judge the textbooks' designers nor belittle their professional competencies; they are mere suggestions for the betterment and development of pronunciation teaching in Algeria.

III.12. Suggestions for Teaching Pronunciation

Ramesh Nair et al. (2006:34) suggest a list of five principles in EFL teaching that should be highlighted and put into action to guarantee continuous and productive progress of pronunciation lessons in EFL classes.

III.12.1. Curriculum design:

Therefore, according to Morely (1998), English language teaching programmes should start, first, by “establishing long-ranged oral communication goals and objectives” that, consequently, help recognize pronunciation needs, as well as, speech functions and the contexts where they might take place. Similarly, Florez (1998) advocates that such objectives must be realistic, aiming for functional intelligibility (ability to make oneself relatively easily understood), functional communicability (the ability to meet the communication’ needs one might face) and enhanced confidence in use. All these aspects and conditions should be the result of a careful analysis and description of the learners’ needs (Ibid. 35).

III.12.2. Focus on Supra-Segmentals

As stated by Bray (1995), back in the late 1970s, many teachers and theorists suggested that if communicative competence was the goal of FL teaching/learning, it must possess a substantial component which is intelligible pronunciation. Thus, for teachers who implement the communicative approach and value fluency rather than accuracy, it is obligatory to teach speech from the perspective of supra-segmentals, because languages’ building changes from one language to another, in terms of sounds, intonation, stress, rhythm, and others. Thus, explicit phonological instruction is strongly founded in communicative approached-classrooms (Ibid. 36).

III.12.3. Academic Research and Classroom Experiments

Fraser (2000) notes that, currently, we are facing a shortage of reliable research-based information in pronunciation teaching. So, she strongly urges all researchers to increase the amount of academic research on such topics, and addresses instructors and teachers who are realistically involved in classrooms and possess a wider range of experience on pronunciation field. She mentions the low attention put on the area of assessing ESL/EFL pronunciation without reliable assessment and diagnosis tools; for this reason it is very hard to measure the effectiveness of methods and improvisation of techniques in teaching.

She believes that methods already used and tested should be converted to research papers that can be shared with others. Moreover, Brey (1995) suggests the use of limericks in English to address problems of stressed and unstressed syllables and rhythm too. Chen (1996) proposes as well several tools and techniques, for instance, teaching word rhythm using visual effects and auditory techniques, for example, clapping to differentiate between

stressed and unstressed syllables; the use of rubber bands as a visual tool for length variation, sounds and syllables. Additionally, Makarova (1996) addresses the issue of teaching pronunciation to large groups of students when it actually requires close individual interaction between teacher and students, but it benefits teachers by getting adequate feedback and enhancing their motivation and enthusiasm through using less traditional techniques like phoneme cards, pronunciation based quizzes, sign language using tongue twisters and limericks. (Ibid. 35-36).

III.12.4. Methods and Materials Development

The lack of materials also impair the teachers from fully performing their job perfectly, hence, Fraser (2000) mentions the urgent need to provide instructors with the appropriate courses and materials to help improve their effectiveness in teaching pronunciation, such as, computer based materials with acoustic demonstration of native speakers. She also points out the issue of teacher training and professional development starting with intensive courses of psycholinguists, theory of speech and how to teach pronunciation to EFL learners. Lambacher (1999) notes that not only should supra-segmentals be focused on, but also should speech contrasts and differences in sounds' length and quality. As an effective tool for this matter, he suggests using computer-assisted Instruction which provides electronic visual feedback because "*Teachers need a greater appreciation of the second language learner*", (Ibid. 36-37).

III.12.5. Teacher Training

Fraser (2000) highlights the problem of lacking training of EFL teachers who, eventually, waste their time on learning irrelevant information to teaching pronunciation. Despite that the majority of EFL teachers has training about phonetics, IPA symbols, and articulation of sounds with basic intonation patterns, but what really must be attributed to such trainings is understanding the psycholinguistics of speech perception and production and factors affecting learning correct pronunciation, such as, native language, age, amount of exposure, and so on. On the one hand, researchers like Celce Murcia, Brinton and Goodium (1996) recommend numerous techniques for teaching English pronunciation, such as, 1- listen and imitate, 2- phonetic training, 3- minimal pair drills, 4- contextualized minimal pairs, 5- visual aids, 6- tongue twisters, 7- practice of vowel shifts and stress shifts. Certainly, all techniques have strength and weakness points and the only one who can decide which ones suit the learners' needs is the teacher, the guide of the classroom (Ibid .38).

On the other hand, Nursat Jahan (40-41), based on the findings of her research study, puts forth a short list of recommendations to be taken into consideration by all EFL teachers inside and outside the classroom; as a result, she lists eight suggestions,

1. During teaching a particular topic, teachers should spend a few minutes on teaching pronunciation of new and difficult vocabulary. Students should practice with the teacher and teacher will correct their pronunciation if necessary.

2. Teachers have to employ some funny methods during teaching pronunciation so that learners enjoy every moment while learning, thus will participate spontaneously in classroom activities.

3. Teachers should not feel shy to correct their students' pronunciation. At the same time, learners also should not feel shy to speak. They have to keep practicing until they pronounce correctly.

4. The teachers should have well equipped knowledge in recent technologies and apply them while teaching pronunciation. Applying audio-visual aids will certainly help the students to improve their pronunciation.

5. Teachers should focus on individual students, while group activities are performed in the class. Often students with bad pronunciation remain hidden in the group to avoid embarrassment.

6. Teachers should introduce IPA symbols accurately in language classroom so that students can learn how to pronounce new words without the teacher's help. Supra-segmental features also should be taught in the class.

7. If the students feel really troubled with particular sound, teachers should explain the way of articulation of that particular sound and let the students imitate again and again until they achieve success along with examples for demonstration.

8. Teachers should speak slowly and clearly in pronunciation class, and they have to make sure that their language is standard and understandable. Thus, students can improve their pronunciation only by listening to their teachers carefully.

III.13. Why You Should Study English Pronunciation

Tomasz. P. Szynalski shares with the readers his personal anecdote and his story with English pronunciation, and he encourages English learners to improve their pronunciation in order to avoid humiliation. He starts speaking about his experience and says: “Michael and I once went to a conversation class taught by Americans. Before class started the teacher said to us: “So do you speak good English?” I replied “we think so” and the guy said “It sure sounds like you do”. Szynalski uttered only three words and the teacher managed to tell if his English was good or bad. That is why he thinks that the biggest thing that people notice when they are speaking is pronunciation, not because he used difficult words and advanced grammar structures that he got understood, but through the way he pronounced English words.

Basically, when engaged in a conversation, people may not notice one’s limited vocabulary or grammar mistakes, but they will rather notice if his/her pronunciation is good or bad. They will probably think he/she is the guy/girl who speaks bad English and only then, grammar and vocabulary will be of no use.

Because pronunciation and communication correlate, it must be improved regularly and he thinks that the consequences of bad pronunciation are tragic. He mentions his friend’s story when he came back from a vacation in the USA and said,

“whenever I spoke to a person in America, they kept asking me “what? what?. I would repeat by sentence again and again. Finally they would say, Ah-ah! And then repeat my sentence, using exactly my words! It was very humiliating. I know my words and grammar were good but nobody would understand me just because of my pronunciation. I am very motivated to learn English now.”

Consequently, Szynalski continues that pronunciation should be the first step to learn in English, with the intention of being fluent and accurate is substantial, because neither grammar perfection nor vocabulary packages could compensate for this gap between language skills and competences.

Furthermore, he warns English learners from making the usual mistake and says “I do not need to study pronunciation. I first want to communicate in English”

This proves that the majority of them thinks that they can communicate in English just because they can communicate with their teacher and classmates. However, the author forbids relying on circumstances of the sort advocating that their teacher could be unpopular with urgent innovations of English pronunciation and could speak bad English. As regards their classmates, they get used to relying on learners who could make the same mistakes and cannot even identify them when they occur.

The true challenge is to go to America or any English speaking country and communicate with a clerk at a supermarket or a bus driver; if he/she gets understood by natives then he/she can speak good English. Just like the friend who went on a vacation to the United States of America and thought he could easily communicate with native speakers but failed, simply because he was the best student in his class and thought he could speak English. Szynalski challenges those students who claim they aim to communicate in English and requires them to answer two questions: Is my English easy to understand? Is my English pleasant to listen to? He also mentions those who can communicate in English fluently, but not accurately when they have a foreign accent the listener is required to listen carefully which takes effort and patience to put up with their unpleasant accents and avoid them if encountered again. For this reason, accurate pronunciation is more useful and dependable rather than the fluent one.

III.14. A.C. Gimson’s System

When we speak of Phonetics, phonetic instruction, transcription and phonemic chart, we come across Gimson’s phonetic system which is the most popular system of phonemic transcription. He is the editor of the 13th edition of the *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, published in 1967, and he created this system to facilitate teaching English sounds’ representations for adventurous and daring teachers who cannot be afraid of new challenging techniques to use in classroom, we suggest teaching the system of sounds advanced by A. C. Gimson.

Consequently, Gimson’s system uses symbols from the IPA to represent phonemes. Evidently, some phonemes can be pronounced in many ways and, therefore, could be written with many IPA symbols. For example, the “t” phoneme can be spoken like the regular /t/ sound or like the flap /t/ sound (IPA symbol t̬ or ɾ). In such cases, A. C. Gimson

simply chose one of the possible IPA symbols. Thus, the /t/ phoneme is represented by the t symbol. There are two problems with Gimson's phonemic system, however,

- It uses IPA symbols for *sounds* to represent phonemes, which can be confusing, because the symbol t can mean both the t phoneme and the t sound. To help solve this problem, we place IPA symbols between slashes/'laɪk 'ðɪs/ when we mean phonemes (very known as broad phonetic transcription) and between square brackets ['laɪk 'ðɪs] when we mean sounds (known as narrow phonetic transcription).
- Moreover, some of the phoneme symbols chosen by Gimson are problematic, for example, in Gimson's system, rule is transcribed as /ru:l/. But the IPA symbol r does not correspond to the American or British /r/ sound. It represents a different /r/ sound, mainly, in Spanish and Polish. The American/British r sound is actually represented by another IPA symbol: ɹ.

Although Gimson's system seems to have certain disadvantages and using it could be risky and confusing, it still continues to be used in EFL classrooms but not for beginners, only for advanced levels who are interested in English and thus furthering research in this field.

III.15. Rethinking the Teaching of Pronunciation in the ESL Classrooms

In a research work done to investigate teaching pronunciation in ESL/EFL classrooms, Ramish Nair et. al (2006:29) gather a group of experienced English language instructors to openly discuss current practices with regard to the teaching of pronunciation in a Malaysian school, and also situations of higher education. Twelve ESL instructors participate in a discussion that is held in about one and a half hour session. The instructors are acquaintances who share their different teaching experiences, academic qualifications and personal teaching philosophies. The most experienced one among those instructors is a secondary school teacher with over thirty years of teaching experience, while the least experienced one is a primary school teacher who has only three years of teaching experience. As regards qualifications, they range from college diploma holders to those with master degrees, who, consequently, serve as mediators during the discussion. This discussion results in great cooperated findings, conclusions and recommendations. The participants reflect on their experiences of teaching at schools and university.

Hence, they admit how poorly equipped they are for teaching pronunciation, which is the same hindrance that prevents our Algerian teacher from giving some time for practising

pronunciation drills and activities properly. They recall how they received training in Phonology where they used to learn phonetic transcription and transcribe sounds and isolated words, such lessons are meant to help become efficient and proficient would-be-teachers. After that, Ramish Nair et. al (2006: 29-30) emphasize how the participants turn to what Fraser (2002) describes as “false reasons for teachers not prioritizing teaching pronunciation” and feedback is given by the teachers about the list of false reasons that follows,

III.15.1. Pronunciation is a Talent and cannot be Taught

Apparently all the participants, with the exception of one, share the same opinion on this point. They argue about that while it is true that ESL learners would face specific problems with certain sounds in the English language, because of the absence of such sounds in their mother tongue, they are confident that pronunciation can be taught if great efforts are made. However, another participant, a young teacher from an urban primary school has a different view. She is confident that her students are learning pronunciation all the time by listening to her as she serves as the model for learning how words should be pronounced. Being students in an urban environment, she strongly believes that her students are also learning pronunciation from their environment including English programmes on television and radio. She feels that there is little need for a conscious effort to teach pronunciation.

III.15.2. Students Don't Like to Speak Out in Class

The participants agree that pronunciation can improve only if the learners use the language frequently. Nonetheless, they stress that practice with pronunciation needs to occur within a communicative context in which language use appears in a realistic spontaneous environment. This conclusion is drawn after a lengthy discussion on the usefulness of practices with pronunciation drills with which they feel students cannot connect. Therefore, they conclude that pronunciation had to form an integral part of speaking activities in the ESL classroom and it needs to be packaged in a way that offers constant encouragement and guidance (Ibid: 30).

III.15.3. Correcting is Intrusive

While the teachers from primary schools admit that correcting their students' pronunciation is an important part of teaching them English, it is interesting to note that teachers of students in upper secondary classes, and also at universities often choose not to draw attention to flaws in pronunciation. They feel that correcting pronunciation will only frustrate their students more. The discussion, then, continues to the debate on the need to follow standards (i.e. accents) with respect to pronunciation. Is there a need to follow standard pronunciation spelled out by native speakers of English? Some participants feel that making demands of ESL learners amounts to discrimination on the basis of accent.

Most importantly is that teachers ensure that their students are generally able to speak in a way that is easy for others to understand, although not necessarily like a native speaker (Fluency rather than accuracy). But one participant feels that teachers have to make an effort to correct the pronunciation of their students and cautions that it has to be done in a respectful and positive way (for instance, self-correction, peer-correction, or delayed correction). Ignoring problems with pronunciation is not the answer to boosting the confidence of students to speak in English which leads only to communication disruption and students' frustration.

III.15.4. There is not Enough Time

On this point, the participants collectively agree and they conclude that the curricula and assessment tools in primary, secondary and even at institutions of higher learning downplay pronunciation. One teacher who teaches in a national-type Chinese primary school in a small town acknowledges that pronunciation is indeed a problem for her students. However, completing what is in the syllabus is already a daunting task and introducing her young students to phonetics will only serve to make the learning of English more stressful for them. Therefore, the participants remain divided on the question of whether teaching pronunciation will necessarily be very time-consuming. Only three participants feel that pronunciation can be integrated into the current ESL syllabus without requiring much extra time thanks to time-management.

III.15.5. We Do Not Know How

The participants assert that they avoid teaching pronunciation, because they do not know how to teach pronunciation effectively. They are given the findings of a study in Australia by Macdonald (2002) which reveals that (20%) of teachers admit to not liking to teach pronunciation, (14%) consider themselves not good at teaching pronunciation, and nearly (40%) say that they do not teach it enough to meet the needs of their learners for various reasons. When asked to comment on this finding, the participants find it interesting that pronunciation is a problem even in a country where English is a native language, because ESL learners there should actually have access to a better environment for mastering this skill, such as, the appropriate environment for target language exposure.

It is concluded that the lesson learnt by ESL teachers in Malaysia is that there has to be a concentrated effort to teach pronunciation if they are genuine about their desire to help their ESL learners with mastering the target language. The researchers also study the curriculum specifications for the teaching of English in primary and secondary schools, and find that pronunciation is included under the topic of “Sound System” with specific sounds being highlighted for specific years. When this observation is made during the discussion with the teachers, they admit that this is largely ignored inside the classroom which the same case in Algerian educational contexts, particularly, middle schools.

The general assumption is that if a learner is fairly good in English, then he/she will most likely have little or no problems with pronunciation. In the case of weak learners, pronunciation is the least of the teachers’ concern, because they need to focus on the more important aspects of language, such as, grammar, reading and writing skills. We are not alone with respect to ignoring the teaching of pronunciation, although. Fraser (2000) hypothesizes that in the case of Australia, and many other countries, many ESL instructors lack the confidence to teach pronunciation and do not give it as much class time as it needs (ibid: 31-32). It is unfair to judge the learners’ inability to handle English pronunciation before even being exposed to it, only because the teachers are not confident enough to do it right.

Conclusion

Teaching a foreign language to young learners imposes certain codes which the teacher should unconsciously follow. Moreover, creativity in EFL teaching is a key element most of today's instructors lack in their EFL classrooms, especially, because of the huge number of pupils and little time as well. However, a good teacher is a teacher who ameliorates his/her teaching level by benefiting from their learners' feedback, by improving his/her level in Phonetics and reflect it into their teaching methods and techniques. Plenty of educational and effective activities can be found in books, e-books, or online websites. Dedicated teachers believe that teaching/learning a foreign language involves equal focus on and practice of all language skills (listening/speaking and reading/writing). The actual teacher believes that learning a foreign language always starts with "ear" and "sound". In brief, Phonetics and pronunciation are the essential pillars to mastering a foreign language. Teachers are supposed to be guides and not Gods; teachers guide, instruct, correct, invent and improvise new tools and techniques for the sake of their learners. Even if they are poorly equipped, a group of practical and useful activities practised from time to time can be effectual and fruitful. Teaching EFL pronunciation does not require the instructors to make miracles, but requires effort, patience and equality. This medley of recommended activities is just a shortcut to the real treasures and daily innovations of pronunciation teaching in order to give readers and future instructors a small glance into the vast ocean of new innovations in EFL pronunciation teaching.

III.16. Suggested Pronunciation Activities

Introduction

Language teaching has been a matter of questions and debates for decades and these questions give birth to new ways for pronunciation teaching, as well as, teaching of the remaining skills. Currently, disputes are going on about what to teach and how to teach in pronunciation classes (Richards and Rodgers 1992; Setter and Jenkins 2005, as cited by Fewzia Bougandoura, 2012). It is true that accurate pronunciation is really, for many people, a hard task to achieve, most probably; due to many biological, cultural and psychological factors. Another fact is that to create a unique method to overcome pronunciation problems sometimes seems meaningless since pronunciation errors change from one society to another and even among the learners themselves (Menzel 2001 as cited by Ibid. 01).

This chapter of the present research work is dedicated to some suggested activities for effective teaching of pronunciation in Algerian middle schools. The following activities are

selected from a group of official and academic instructional and intellectual websites created by either educational organizations, for example, British council or by ambitious teachers and educators who wish to guide, to benefit and to share their experiences with every novice and professional teacher who seeks knowledge and appropriate awareness as regards pronunciation teaching, Phonetics, Phonology or Didactics, in addition to other activities proposed by Algerian researchers and instructors.

III.16.1. Core Activities for Using the Chart to Integrate Pronunciation

On a webpage organized and created by Adrian Underhill, 2010 from the British Council, an eager researcher in the fields of pronunciation who attempts to introduce new easy-made and performed activities for English pronunciation practice in classrooms. Because the chart of phonetic sounds is an easy tool to be used in order to introduce English sounds to EFL pupils by the beginning of their learning, teachers do not know any basic method or technique for using it and it ends up as a wall chart. So Adrian Underhill suggests a basic method for using sounds' chart effectively, a core activity and other multiple sub-activities that can be divided in relation to their learners' needs. The teachers, beforehand, should introduce the chart and its sounds to their learners which may take an hour or more. Afterwards, the teachers must be committed to teaching sounds through the chart, but throughout the whole year as a functioning learning tool. Hence, the following activities will be applied for sounds, words and connected speech respectively.

III.16.1.1. Core Chart Activity for Sounds

After the learners become familiar with the sounds' chart, despite reluctantly memorizing them or even forgetting the majority just because they find it hard or boring, everything will change to the best when they get used to it each time they get to English class and begin with a brief revision. Here is a basic way to use the chart with learners, because this activity can be applied to all the sounds systematically and it goes like this,

1. You point at a sound on the chart silently.
2. The learners say that sound more or less (not necessarily 'correctly').
3. You then say "Ok lets listen to some differences" and invite a few students individually to say their version, while the others listen not just for what is correct, but to sensitize to the small differences between the several learners, and then let the class adjust their own sounds in light of what they heard. If one of them is close

enough, then you can invite the others to say it like that, and if anyone offers a quite different English sound, and then simply point at that new sound on the chart so the mistake is used for other learning. This step highly favours peer-correction.

4. Once a 'good enough' sound is circulated you can develop its quality a little more using a variety of possible resources, e.g.: a word they know containing that sound, the CD dialogue containing that word or sound, a mime to help them find the muscle posture for the sound, the use of other sounds that contain clues, other correction techniques and so on.

III.16.1.2. Core Chart Activity for Words

This activity can be used as a visual dictation where learners are obliged to produce words, but in a sequence of sounds then you string them together to make a words (somehow like bee spelling). It is highly recommendable to start with mono- and two-syllabic words. Through regular practice with learners, it becomes natural in class and an indispensable tool in EFL pronunciation teaching and it goes like this,

1. You write the word in normal alphabetic spelling on the board, and you say the word, then the learners say it, too.
2. Then you point at the first sound of the word on the chart silently.
3. Immediately the learners say that sound aloud and of course not necessarily correctly.
4. You do a little repair on the sound if needed.
5. Do steps 1 - 3 for the second sound, and so on for the rest. As they do this, they are holding the sequence of sounds in the mind's ear, just as you hold words in a normal dictation.
6. Then you ask the whole class to articulate each of the sounds in turn. And aloud. It is helpful to indicate the succession of sounds very visibly on your fingers. That way you can gesture them to repeat, or go back, or go forward without actually saying anything yourself. If they forget a sound they can listen to each other, or you can provide it.
7. When they have said the disconnected sounds more or less correctly in sequence you then say (jokingly) "OK, now in English....!" which just means connect the sounds into a single flow so it becomes a word. They laugh, and they know what the instruction means, and they do it and they can immediately hear the difference between a sequence of sounds and a word, and they realise what they did to make that happen. You may need to provide the stress placement as well.

III.16.1.3. Core Chart Activity for Connected Speech

Of course the chart deals with vowel and consonant sounds, but the formers make words adding stress when necessary, and gradually they become connected into phrases and sentences with specific flow and tone. As a result, the following activity will be useful for examining a sentence from sounds, to words, to connected speech. The learners' efficiency develops or they become more confident about sounds articulation in isolation joined in words and then brought together in sentences, because pronunciation is not only about production but retention and reception and it goes as follows,

1. Point out the first word on the chart. Learners say each sound aloud and hold them in their inner ear, and when the word is complete you ask them to say it "in English" i.e. join it up.
2. Then you do the same for the other words.
3. When you have pointed out all the words you can leave the chart and get the class to say each of the words in turn. This will not be connected speech; it will be a sequence of words.
4. So once again you say "Now make it English!" which simply means join it up into a flawless flow. Help them to do that, adding the stress and rhythm.

Adrian Underhill offers other more **tricks** with the chart recommending teachers to be innovative and improvise proper teacherly activities using the sounds' chart and enjoy pronunciation with her/his learners. In addition, he introduces some beneficial and helpful tips for classroom management, just like the following,

1. Always use a pointer at the chart; it is much more precise than using the fingers. It also has the great advantage that you can pass a pointer to another learner, so it is clear who is to do something at the chart and who is conducting.
2. The person who points is always silent. The rest of the class, except you, always say whatever sound is pointed at, NOT the sound they want to be pointed at.
3. The chart is not just your space. Have it always at the front of the class, on or immediately beside the board, and have learners come up all the time to point out sounds, words and phrases.
4. If your learners have dictionaries, then sometimes give them a few new words perhaps chosen from a text they are studying, ask them to look up the words and study the pronunciation, and invite different learners to come to the chart (leaving the

dictionary behind) and point out a word. If anyone gets stuck let another learner come to help. Remember the rule: the person who points is silent and the others say what is pointed at. When correct, you get them to join the sounds together make the connected up word.

5. And once again, the chart needs to be hanging on or right beside the board where it is visible and accessible to everyone. Using the chart is not the aim of the lesson, just like using the blackboard is not the aim of a lesson. But the blackboard is a kind of a worktable that brings everything to life and makes language tangible. The chart is the blackboard of pronunciation. And pronunciation is in all language and all activities. In all of this, lots of mistakes happen and the chart makes this visible, tangible, workable, productive and engaging.

III.17. Teaching Pronunciation with Phonemic Sounds

Phonemic symbols are the visual shapes for the sounds of English so using them regularly can be a valuable and fruitful tool to improving learners' pronunciation. Therefore, why use phonemic symbols? Simply because the English alphabet has twenty-six letters but English has forty-four sounds, thereby divided into twenty vowels and twenty-four consonants. English spelling is complex and variable because some letters have more than one sound (different realizations), sometimes letters are mute and cannot be pronounced at all, and one sound can be represented by many letters. Even if the teacher asks the learners how to pronounce "gh" in enough, through, ghost and drought, it could be impossible for them to guess the answer, because spelling can be tricky and English spelling is obviously complicated. Eventually, phoneticians created a system of notation, phonemic symbols to represent letters. Consequently, the writer lists five good reasons why learners should be familiar with phonemic sounds.

Admittedly, every profession requires background knowledge acquired by the specialist to prove his/her competence and command, and language teachers should be familiar with phonemic symbols, but in fact most of them do not in spite of being easy to learn, therefore, these incautious teachers may have some interested and inquisitive learners able to embarrass them, one day the teacher is confronted by them to write a word phonetically and transcribe it but fails, so it is best to be prepared for cases of this sort.

When it comes to difficulty or accessibility to acquire such symbols, everyone can notice that nineteen sounds of forty-four have the same pronunciation and shape as the letters of English alphabet, which means some words like red is written the same in

transcription. Hence, only twenty-five sounds to go are compared to hundred of different pieces of grammar and thousands of words in a textbook glossary or a dictionary. The learners' flexible capacity facilitates acquiring the symbols in no time with the appropriate investigation and enthusiasm.

Furthermore, the best way to learn phonetic/ phonemic symbols is to be exposed to them regularly and repeatedly through the adequate tools. Intelligent teachers never cease improvising and inventing methods and techniques to overcome their learners' passiveness and carelessness or laziness.

In this connection, it is best to begin teaching the easiest sounds and they could be the consonant sounds. Because seventeen out of twenty-four sounds do not change shape or pronunciation, they could work as a good introductory part compared to a small group of vowel sounds, such as, /i/ and /e/. It is compulsory to mention that some symbols like /j/ and /3/ can be confusing for young learners, so more emphasis and care should be provided to avoid confusion and indifference of the learners towards troublesome sounds. Initially, teaching phonemic symbols does not necessarily require command over English accents, but with the provision of the appropriate authentic tools, such as, tape recorders and CDs of native speakers and this problem is bound to vanish.

Learning phonemic symbols, unlike grammar and vocabulary, is limited, fruitful and physical. Furthermore, it involves certain learning styles and acquiring new things seems challenging at first, but it gets easier and clearer through time.

III.17.1. Developing Pronunciation through Songs

Teaching pronunciation using songs in class is highly recommended to ensure stable retention of English sounds and the learners' entertainment as well, they are enjoyable, funny and resourceful by the testimony of many teachers and researchers. However, songs should be carefully chosen to work on pronunciation, like songs that provide examples of authentic, memorable and rhythmic language. So, they are pleasant to hear occasionally and motivating for the learners. Besides, songs can be used to focus on sounds, on words, and connected speech. These activities offer a chance for EFL teachers to overcome teaching pronunciation fears and monitor their learners' progress.

III.17.1.1. Using Songs to Focus on Sounds

Since sounds are the smallest units to form words, they are easy to acquire for some learners and the majority hates vowels more than consonants, because they differ from their language sounds and some of them transform as symbols. Teachers should focus on teaching their learners to physically produce certain sounds correctly, because incorrectly pronounced sounds and absent sounds' discrimination alter meaning and strain communication. Basically, songs are authentic and easily accessible examples of spoken English and can offer learners relaxing tonic with rhythmic sounds and words that are enjoying and easily to repeat. In order to focus on particular sounds songs and rhymes based activities are created

Activity One

The teacher replaces some of the rhymes in the song with spaces and the learners listen then fill in the gaps, using the song to guide them. More analytically-minded learners can then categorize the words according to sounds (From the song 'An Englishman in New York,' by Sting).

ɔ:	eɪ	ʌ
talk New York walk	day say	one sun run

Alternatively, we highlight differences between sounds, using the lyrics to show how changing one sound can alter meaning (minimal pairs).

Activity Two

We choose six words from a song from which minimal pairs can be created,

Heaven - even

Hunger - anger

man-mad

(From the song 'Imagine' by John Lennon)

We write the pairs separately on cards and give out one set per group of four or five learners. They then match the pairs and afterwards they listen to the song and 'grab' the correct one. Choices are then checked against the lyrics.

III.17.1.2. Using Songs to Focus on Words

Sounds are combined to form words and from words meaning is established and words also can be divided into syllables, stressed and unstressed, too. Even though, few words can be similar from English to Arabic to French, they differ in syllables and stress, and cannot be identical as such differences lead to rules, generally and most of the time, seen by learners as boring and tiring. So, thanks to songs learners can learn words, their syllables and stressed or unstressed syllables with memorable rhythms, too. Through relaxed memorization of words, they can be exposed to correct pronunciation. In order to raise learners' awareness of weak-strong syllables and word stress the following activity is proposed,

Activity Three

The instructor gives out the lyrics of a song, with certain words chosen by him/her for learners to guess the number of syllables, leaving a space by each word to write the number in. Learners then listen at the same time checking their predictions. At advanced levels, he/she repeats the activity, with their learners underlining the stressed syllable while listening. Then, they drill these words and sing or chant the whole song through.

III.17.1.3. Using Songs to Focus on Connected Speech Spoken

Connected speech is how we naturally speak and communicate involving all language aspects, sounds, words, stress, intonation and rhythm. Linking words together and emphasizing some totally differs from words standing and uttered in isolation, because learners, as beginners, learn words separately pronounced in isolation. Furthermore, contractions that are in most cases, misconceived as long, frequently, exist in connected speech, for these above listed reasons, songs are used especially chorus that deals with whole sentences and music smoothly emphasizes the flow of the words, they are full of contractions, and learners feel eager to produce correct phrases that float with the melodies.

Activity Four

This activity can illustrate everything mentioned earlier, so the teacher rewrites the lyrics with the contractions in full form, e.g. 'I am wondering why' and 'I cannot see'. Learners listen at the same time identifying the contracted words. On a second listening, they rewrite the words with the contractions, e.g. 'I'm wondering why' and 'I can't see'. This works even with the lowest level classes. To help learners hear how words flow in phrases, teacher may choose catchy tunes to fit words to.

Activity Five

In this activity, teacher plays each line of the chorus, for learners to hum back until they get the rhythm. In groups, learners then order the lines of the song on strips of paper by remembering the tune. Other activities can focus on highlighting the strong words in phrases, and singing only these, replacing the rest with 'mmm'. Finally, learners can practise and present their singing, for example, a song contest.

Alternatively, more creative groups can write their own words to fit the tune. As regards certain standards for the songs to be used in class, the teacher is not restricted to use certain songs, only that the songs must be clear and of high quality recording, not too fast, easy to remember and appealing.

III.18. Techniques for Eliminating Pronunciation Problems of EFL Learners

Müfit Şenel (2006:118-124) refers to the EFL learners' inability to acquire accurate pronunciation which always has to do with the techniques adopted by linguists when making a phonological analysis. He emphasizes the problem of learners when they have to differentiate between long vowel /i:/ and short vowel /I/ as in the minimal pair (bit and beat), which is necessary to discriminate between the two sounds or they will be misunderstood. He states that,

“Teaching of the pronunciation should be an integral part of an English teaching program from the early stages, and it must not be a luxury to be left to the advanced level studies of the language. It must be borne in mind that during pronunciation teaching, some certain methods or techniques should be applied because teaching of pronunciation is not a simple task on the contrary it must be the essential part of language teaching program”. (2006:119).

Here is the series of methods and types of teaching pronunciation proposed by Şenel to determine its importance in EFL teaching process.

III.18.1. Remedial Teaching Technique

This is a systematic approach that deals with the problem of individual sounds (Hubbard, 1983) or could be considered as consisting of two approaches,

III.18.1.1. Instant Remedial and Planned Remedial

For Instant Remedial, the strategy will be divided into four parts,

1. Imitation
2. Demonstration
3. Association
4. Explanation.

For example, the teacher first of all draws attention to the target sound and pronounces it in isolation to be imitated by the learners. If this becomes inefficient, then the teacher shows the learners how the sound is formed by putting his tongue between his teeth to produce /θ/ or /ð/ by using demonstration part. However, certain sounds are not easily made visible, so the teacher may adopt the process of association. In this process, sounds must be isolated and attention must be drawn to the similarities between two sounds in terms of whether they are voiced, lateral, and dental, and so on.

Finally, explanation part may help as the teacher explains in the mother tongue, as the last resort, how the sound is formed and gives instruction to the learners to move their tongue forward, round their lips, etc. If, despite instant remedial works, the target sound still causes problems for the learners, then Planned Remedial work is needed. In this section, the teacher should not insist, but make a note of the problem and plan a short remedial drill for the lesson.

III.18.1.2. Drilling Technique

For the drilling technique, there are many useful drills for purifying and teaching the correct and accurate pronunciation of the utterances and words. Here we will handle some of the common ones as follows,

III.18.1.3. Word - Association Drill

This is one of the easiest ways to give the learners practice on specific problematic sounds, while the obvious purpose of the drill appears to be vocabulary study. Concentrating on the phonemes / æ / and / e /, the teacher may ask the learners for antonyms of the following words sick , sit , thin , more. The learners would respond with well, stand, fat, less. In this type of drill, it is useful to call the pupils' attention to the fact that the words they will select all contain / æ / or / e /, for example,

1. In which of the following words, do we have /æ/ sound?

- a. bed
- b. bad
- c. but
- d. bear
- e. beer

2. In which of the following words, do we have /e/ sound?

- a. bag
- b. mail
- c. get
- d. lake
- e. feet

3. In of the following words do we have two /æ/ sounds?

- a. handicap
- b. butterfly
- c. breakfast
- d. bankrupt
- e. walkman

III.18.1.4. Saturation Drill

This type of drill is suitable for all positions of the problematic sound, for example, let's take / s / sound as a problem sound. It can be drilled in its three positions by means of saturation drill.

Initial	Medial	Final
see	leasing	peace
sep	pistol	niece
seem	classic	purse
seed	faucet	curse
sip	paucity	less

Table (79): The different places of /s/.

III.18.1.5. Comparative Drill

In this type of drill, words are almost similar in every respect, except the one element to be drilled is placed in juxtaposition. Since learners tend to confuse sounds that are similar these drills help stimulate accuracy in hearing, performance, and judgment. For example, this drill may be effective if two sounds are confused, such as, /f-v/, /p-b/, /θ-ð/, /æ-e/, and so on.

1. A sample comparative drill for /f-v/ and /p-b/ sounds is: fee- bee, feat- peat, freeze-breeze, visa-Pisa, fig-pig, freed-breed, fly-ply, veer-beer, fled-bled, fact-pact and fester-pester.

2. A sample comparative drill for / æ - e/ sounds is: sat-set, band-bend, sand-send, bad-bed, and pan-pen. It will readily be seen that above drills have certain fringe benefits in that the words are arranged according to the vowel scale. Vowels that are commonly confused are best drilled in this type of drill. The learners' own participation in composing such drills is worth the time it takes, because they will drill more intelligently and, therefore, establish new patterns more firmly and quickly. At the same time, it will give him/her a technique to apply to other areas where drill may be needed (Rochmis and Doob, 1970).

III.18.1.7. Substitution Drill

As its name implies, this type of drilling may be applied by substituting any sound instead of the other one. For instance, /t/ instead of /θ/ or /d / in place of / ð /. Here are some examples for classroom application.

1. This is thin / tin.
2. Did you see her lunge / lunch?
3. Was it a brand / bland reporting?
4. He is our king / kin.
5. It is cheap / chipped.
6. Don't tape / tap.

III.18.1.8. Tongue twisters

Tongue twisters are short, memorable and confusing that are difficult to pronounce, especially rapidly, because of the occurrence of the same sound in connected words. Thereby, they are useful in pronunciation when concentrating on specific sounds or phonemes. The tongue twister focuses on all changes the mouth requires to move between those similar sounds.

Examples of tongue twisters

Celce-Murcia (1987) states that there is a little transfer from practice to natural communication. But, if it is needed and necessary, they can be used. Here are some sample tongue twisters taken from Dalton & Seidlhofer(1994:132-133).

1. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
2. Did peter Piper pick a peck of pickled peppers?
3. If Peter picked a peck of pickled peppers
4. Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

III.19. Activities Suggested by Farouk Bouhadiba

“On the basis that all pronunciation exercises should be simple, fun and enjoyable and always aiming at combining perception and production” (n.d. 06)

F. Bouhadiba recommends EFL teachers to exercise pronunciation of the target language through funny, intellectual and entertaining activities, on the condition that they devise activities in relation to perception and production of sounds, in fact, for the sake of successful pronunciation learning.

III.19.1. A- Recognition, Retention, Discrimination

In this activity, the teacher makes the learners aware of correspondences between numbers and letters of English alphabet, for example, 01 corresponds to A, 02 corresponds to B, 03 corresponds to C, etc. applying the same process with all the English alphabet letters. After the process is grasped by the learners, the teacher should give them numbers involving sound discrimination that is phonological, for instance, 2 (two), 1 (one), 4 (four) should give the word “bad”, but 2 (two), 5 (five) 4 (four) give “bed” . The numbers should be spelled out in isolation, so this type of exercise often leads the teacher to figure out what sounds cause recognition, discrimination or production problems to them. Besides, the teacher is responsible for the improvisation and invention of similar activities (Ibid. 06).

III.19.2. B- Listening and Producing

Here in this exercise the teacher asks the learners to utter and pronounce simple words like, much/match, put/pot, minimal pairs with one different sound and the learners are required to discriminate between these minimal pairs (to identify the difference). In case of difficulty in recognition, the teacher can give feedback and works on modelling the sound discrimination himself (Ibid. 06-07).

III.19.3. C- Recognition through Drawings

This type of exercise motivates the learners to interact orally and practise known words, for example, the teacher names the word “pin” and the learners draw a pin and if they draw a bin, then here the teacher faces the problem of sounds’ discrimination. The same activity can be applied for distinction between vowel sounds, long and short ones (tin/teen). If it is so advanced for the learners to practise it, then the teacher can use numbers to illustrate (fourteen/forty) (Ibid. 07). Bouhadiba concludes that,

“The types of activities presented in the textbook [.....] involve practice in reception then production in order to interact orally. They help the teacher locate the most obvious pronunciation difficulties of his learners”
(Ibid. 07).

Conclusion

Teaching experiences change from one teacher to another depending on one's circumstances and efforts done for the sake of his/her learners' oral and written abilities enhancement. Furthermore, phoneticians dedicate their professional lives to EFL teaching innovations and elevation to improve today's teaching approaches and methods, besides, it is beneficial to read and benefit oneself with pronunciation teaching universal achievements and not to treat it, as in most of the time, superficially with regards to the other skills. If an EFL teacher prioritizes some language skills over others, for example, if their learners' level is excellent in language structure and terminology but lacking in pronunciation, his/her message can never go through the listener, which is why accuracy and intelligibility complement each other. Learning a foreign language for the first time may cause various obstacles, hence, obstacles are likely to happen to hinder learners' progress. Nonetheless, perseverant and dedicated instructors never give up on their learners, even hopeless cases in EFL teaching can be changed with hard work, optimism, perseverance, renewal and innovations. Subsequently, this chapter is dedicated to displaying only a glimpse of some selected recommended activities for EFL teachers in order to improve their learners' capacities and revive their passive classrooms from the load of grammar and writing activities. Each teacher is free to exercise different tasks inside his/her classroom and being fair with his/her profession will prosper one's career.

General conclusion

In this research work, the main concern, certainly, is to find out why first and fourth years' teachers in Algerian middle schools continue to overlook teaching pronunciation through English phonetic transcription and put so little emphasis on the teaching of sound segments (segmental features) compared to language building and vocabulary. For this reason, two hypotheses are conceived to be confirmed or disconfirmed by the results of the qualitative and quantitative data analyses. Teachers keep skipping pronunciation practice activities for some logical reasons, but a teacher who avoids performing all the exercises of pronunciation and focuses on teaching grammar only will definitely effect the learners' attitudes and expectations towards the target language. The possibility of placing more attention on listening/speaking skills and teaching segmental features through phonetic transcription might enhance and improve the pupils' oral and communicative performances.

Through this research work, we take a small glance at the long and abundant achievements and history of pronunciation teaching, the usual shift from certain approaches, teachers prioritizing certain skills over others at the expense of the loss of their pupils' efficiency in speaking accurately rather than fluently only. The main factors that effect and hinder the process of pronunciation, its manner taught nowadays and the prevailing approach in foreign language classrooms. In addition to the main recommendations given by the reformists regarding pronunciation teaching principles and some experiments conducted in different countries in order to prove the use of phonetic transcription as a teaching method to be as efficient and useful as any other method.

As far as data collection is concerned, first and fourth years' pupils and teachers in one of Mostaganem's middle schools are taken as samples for the present investigation. The sole reason behind selecting first and fourth years' pupils over second and third years' is because the first level in middle school starts with teaching English as a new foreign language to beginners, hence, they begin with learning the basics of English, such as, the Alphabet letters, sounds (segmental) and rhythm (supra-segmental features), vocabulary, drills and conversations. Whereas, fourth year pupils are supposed to have learned and partially mastered English segmentals and supra-segmentals throughout the whole four years. Besides, testing their level of pronunciation is entirely reliable for this study to either validate or invalidate the hypothesis suggested earlier.

In this regard, *Belhamri Mohammed* middle school is selected to be under investigation, because it is the only middle school that gave back enough questionnaires to analyze. In order to collect as much data as possible, four different questionnaires are distributed among four types of informants. Two different types of questionnaires are submitted to thirty pupils from four classes of first year and thirty two pupils from three classes of fourth year. The questionnaires for first year pupils are translated to Arabic to suit their primal level of familiarity with English in *Belhamri* middle school. Moreover, a group of first and fourth years' teachers from three different middle schools in Mostaganem who are chosen to undergo the investigation as well, from *Belhamri Mohammed*, *Touahria Mohammed*, and *Benzerdjeb Benaouda* middle schools.

These questionnaires aim at tapping into the teachers' experiences and personal opinions, as well as, their routines and preferences in pronunciation teaching. As regards the pupils, their questionnaires were designed, specifically, to know their viewpoints about English pronunciation, phonetic transcription, and their teachers' styles and demeanours conducted inside classrooms. Moreover, each of the learners' questionnaires contains pronunciation and transcription activities in order to prove their earlier claims. In this regard, after analyzing the teachers' answers of the questionnaires, it is also concluded that they still view pronunciation activities too much tiring and time-consuming compared to grammar rules teaching. Thus, they place focus on language building functions, some supra-segmental exercises to be fluent and sit for exams, no regard is given to pronunciation as a whole.

As regards the exercises' analysis, only (34.37%) of first year pupils manage to transcribe English alphabet letters correctly, consequently, their oral ability in reciting the ABC is limited as well. Whereas, the rest either did not give their questionnaires back or left them empty. Fourth year pupils also suffer severe lack in their phonetic efficiency as only (6.66%) to (13.33%) manage to transcribe some monosyllabic words by the end of the data analyses. Their answers and their actions are paradoxical. It is also concluded that, too little space, time, and effort are still given to phonetic transcription in pronunciation activities and the implementation of such a method seems to never exceed the possible hopes it once had.

In addition to the questionnaires, twelve copybooks from first and fourth year classes are selected and selection of copybooks takes the order of good, intermediate, and low-levelled pupils in order to have a variety of information and evidence, then they are analyzed and compared to their textbooks' activities in terms of compatibility with the textbooks' programme and actual performances of the planned activities regarding pronunciation as well.

In accordance with our data analyzed earlier, it seems that pronunciation lessons almost do not take place, neither inside classrooms, nor in copybooks, especially for first year pupils, as well as phonetic instruction. Except for the introductory lesson of English alphabet letters; where their teacher introduces letters' sounds through letters which happens to be wrong phonetically. No further phonetic symbols or phonetic transcription exercises are practised. Therefore, neglecting pronunciation lessons and prioritizing other skills will only lead our learners to learn English as programmed robots, enhances passivity, and turns their minds into spoon-fed depositories that can write what they can memorize and not what they hear and perceive; hence, English as a non-phonetic language loses its appeal.

For further data and results, some pupils of both levels are put under test through an oral examination and they are recorded in the process to be used as a tool of research, too, to back up the findings and hypotheses. Subsequently, results of the recordings of four year pupils are, to some extent, satisfactory as they manage to show some command over English pronunciation, although marked with a touch of hesitation when pronouncing the words. They are aware of the importance of English pronunciation, but not phonetic transcription when they constantly fail to recognize phonetic sounds and symbols. Their cooperation and enthusiasm when being recorded confirm their willingness to go through steps of learning pronunciation and segmentals and improve their oral capacities.

By contrast, the majority of first year pupils falls short of correct pronunciation when encountering the sound-letter complex relationship. Their level in English is, seemingly, deteriorating as different elements enter the equation of pronunciation teaching in Algerian middle schools. Several factors are involved in learning English pronunciation through phonetic transcription at an early age, as well as, some hindrances. Nevertheless, no exact side is to be blamed, because shortages in syllabus design, lack of authentic materials, and so little awareness and consciousness among teachers, learners, and parents appear to overcome spots of hope remaining for seeing pronunciation flourish as it once had.

Therefore, the results of this investigation moderately confirm the hypotheses proposed earlier, however, this can never be applied to all middle schoolers and teachers, neither in Mostaganem, nor in Algeria as a whole. The final conclusion is relatively acceptable because it is based on sheer variables, and circumstances change from one middle school to another, as well as, teachers' conscience, aptitudes and commitment to EFL teaching. The present research work is a stepping stone to future achievements in the investigation of pronunciation, its betterment and development in our Algerian educational settings.

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Appendices

Appendix 01

EDOLAS Mostaganem
Doctral School
Bahraoui Sofia

Questionnaire submitted to first year middle school pupils

* Please read the following questions and tick the correct answer ().

الرجاء قراءة الأسئلة التالية والإشارة على الإجابة الصحيحة بنعم أو لا ()

Male ذكر

Female أنثى

السؤال /	Yes نعم / لا No /	Question
		1- هل تحب تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟ 1- Do you like learning English?
		2- هل تعتقد أن تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية وجع رأس؟ 2- Do you think learning English is a headache?
		3- هل تمارس تمارين نطق الأحرف الإنجليزية مع أستاذك في القسم؟ 3- Do you practise producing sounds with your teacher in class?
		4- هل تعرف كيف تنطق أحرف الأبجدية للغة الإنجليزية؟ 4- Do you know how to pronounce the English Alphabet Letters?
		5- هل تريد أن تتعلم كيفية كتابة رموز نطق أصوات الأحرف؟ 5- Do you want to learn the Phonetic symbols?
		6- هل تصرخ عليك أستاذك عندما تخطيء في نطق الكلمات أو الأحرف؟ 6- Does your teacher shout at your face when you mispronounce words or sounds?
		7- هل يقاطعك أستاذك أثناء القراءة والتحدث لتصحيح أخطاء نطقك؟ 7- Does your teacher interrupt you when speaking or reading to correct your mistakes of pronunciation?

* Please read the exercise carefully and give the correct answer.
* الرجاء قراءة التمرين بحذر والإجابة عليه.

1- write the Phonetic symbols of the English Alphabet letters:

1- قم بكتابة رموز نطق أصوات أحرف الأبجدية للغة الإنجليزية:

A a	B b	C c	D d	E e	F f
/ ei /	/ bi: /	/ si:/			
G g	H h	I i	J j	K k	L l
M m	N n	O o	P p	Q q	R r
S s	T t	U u	V v	W w	X x
Y y	Z z				

Appendix 02

EDOLAS Mostaganem
Doctral School
Bahraoui Sofia

Questionnaire submitted to Fourth year middle school pupils

Teaching and learning English as a foreign language has been prosperous and fruitful for the last couple decades, especially its pronunciation. That is why emphasizing the use of its Phonetic Transcription in classroom is much more helpful for the pupils to grasp the correct pronunciation.

*** Please read the following questions and tick the correct answer ().**

Male

Female

Questions	yes	no
1- Do you like studying the English language?		
2- Do you find the English language difficult?		
3- Do you think that learning English is a headache?		
4- Do you practise Pronunciation activities in class with your teacher?		
5- Do you know what Phonetic Transcription (Phonetic symbols) is?		
6- Do you know how to pronounce Phonetic symbols (sounds) of English letters?		
7- Do you know how to divide words into syllables?		
8- Do you know what a consonant cluster is?		
9- Do you know when and where you put the stress in a word?		
10- Does your teacher correct your mistakes of pronunciation?		

11- Does your teacher scream or shout at you when you make mistakes?		
12- Does your teacher show you how to pronounce words in Phonetic Transcription?		

*** Please read these exercises carefully and provide answers.**

1- Identify the following sounds by stating if they are long or short vowels:

- /i:/	-/ɪ /	-/æ/
- /v/	-/u:/	-/ə/
- /t/	-/ai/	-/a:/

2- Write the following words in their Phonetic Transcription and point the stress:

Eg: hit /hɪt/, doctor /'dɒktə/

-Cat /	/ -Bit /	/ -Put /	/ -But /	/ -
Eat /	/			

-Father /	/ -Mother /	/ -Boy /	/ -That /
/			

-Pay /	/ -Zoo /	/ -Shop /	/ -Those /	/ -
Red /	/			

-Know /	/ -Check /	/ -Hair /	/ -Yes /	/ -
Pick /	/			

-Would/	/ -Should /	/ -Bird /	/ -Door /	/ -
Good /	/			

-Hear /	/ -Nose /	/ -Mouth /	/ -Eye /	/ -
Ears /	/			

3- How many syllables do these words have?

Eg: Hope /həʊp / one syllable, Hatred /'hetrɪd/ two syllables

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| -Sit: | -Buy: | -School: |
| -Life: | -Death: | -Balcony: |
| -Happy: | -Obstacle: | -Daily: |
| -Football: | -Lemonade: | -Kiss: |

4- Can you transcribe them?(stress is necessary)

- | | | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------|---|-------------|
| -Sit: / | / | -Buy: / | / | -School: / |
| / | | | | |
| -Life: / | / | -Death: / | / | -Balcony: / |
| / | | | | |
| -Happy: / | / | -Obstacle: / | / | -Daily: / |
| / | | | | |
| -Football: / | / | -Lemonade: / | / | -Kiss: / |
| / | | | | |

Thank you

Appendix 03

EDOLAS Mostaganem
Doctral School
Bahraoui Sofia

Questionnaire submitted to first year middle school teachers

Pronunciation is the key element in teaching a foreign language and to make it easier for pupils to grasp it, introducing and teaching its Phonetic Transcriptions as the first step is a crucial and basic constituent. It should be implemented in everyday classes in order to make pupils accustomed to it and eager to explore it further.

*** Please read the following questions and tick the correct answers().**

Male

Female

Questions	yes	no
1- Do you practise Pronunciation activities in class?		
2- Do you practise Pronunciation activities according to the textbook?		
3- Do you improvise in creating activities to help your pupils improve their production of sounds?		
4- Do you think that Phonetic Transcription can be a remedial solution for pupils' poor pronunciation?		
5- Are your pupils aware of what Phonetic symbols mean?		
6- Do you explain how the word is pronounced through Phonetic symbols?		
7- Do you explain how the word is pronounced through Phonetic symbols on a daily basis (everyday)?		
8- Do you give your pupils easy sounds and words to transcribe from time to time?		
9- Are the Pronunciation drills in classroom performed through Phonetic Transcription?		

10- Do you correct your pupils' mispronunciation of words orally?		
11- Do you write down the correct Pronunciation of a word in Phonetic Symbols?		
12- Do you rely on peer-correction rather than your own?		
13- Many Pronunciation courses are available online, Have you tried to take a look at them and benefit from them in your classes?		
14-Do you agree that the Ministry of Education should put more emphasis on using Phonetic Transcription in middle schools?		

*** Please read the following questions and provide your answers.**

1- How many years have you been teaching the English language in 1st year middle school?

.....

2- Why have you chosen teaching English and precisely in a middle school?

.....

3- What are the problems that your pupils encounter when learning Pronunciation?

.....

4- Are you for or against teaching Phonetic transcription to 1st year pupils and why?

.....

5- What are the main vowels and consonants which your pupils find difficult or confusing to produce?

.....

6- Have you tried to use Phonetic Transcription as a way to improve their pronunciation and why?

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

7- What do you use as (a) means to teach your pupils the right pronunciation?

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

8- What do you do when your pupils mispronounce a word or a sound?

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

9- Do you give feedback to your pupils when they produce sounds in a wrong way?

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

10- Which one of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) does the English teaching programme focus on more and why?

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

11- What would be your priority in classifying these skills?

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

12- Do you test or check your own efficiency in Phonetic Transcription and how?

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

13- Do you often listen to native speakers?

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

Thank you

Appendix 04

EDOLAS Mostaganem
Doctral School
Bahraoui Sofia

Questionnaire submitted to fourth year middle school teachers

Pronunciation is the key element in teaching a foreign language and to make it easier for pupils to grasp it, introducing and teaching its Phonetic Transcriptions as the first step is a crucial and basic constituent. It should be implemented in everyday classes in order to make pupils accustomed to it and eager to explore it further.

*** Please read the following questions and tick the correct answers ().**

Male

Female

Questions	yes	no
1- Do you practise Pronunciation activities in class?		
2- Do you practise Pronunciation activities according to the textbook?		
3- Do you improvise in creating activities to help your pupils improve their production of sounds?		
4- Do you use dictionaries inside the classroom?		
5- Do you think that Phonetic Transcription can be a remedial solution for pupils' poor pronunciation?		
6- Are your pupils aware of what Phonetic symbols mean?		
7- Do you explain how the word is pronounced through Phonetic symbols?		
8- Do you explain how the word is pronounced through Phonetic symbols on a daily basis (everyday)?		
9- Do you give your pupils sounds and words to transcribe from time to time?		

10- Are the Pronunciation drills in classroom performed through Phonetic Transcription?		
11- Do you correct your pupils' mispronunciation of words orally?		
12- Do you write down the correct Pronunciation of a word in Phonetic Symbols?		
13- Do you rely on peer-correction rather than your own?		
14- Many Pronunciation courses are available online, Have you tried to take a look at them and benefit from them in your classes?		
15-Do you agree that the Ministry of Education should put more emphasis on using Phonetic Transcription in middle schools?		

*** Please read the following questions and provide your answers.**

1- How many years have you been teaching English in 4th year middle school?

2- Why have you chosen teaching English and precisely in a middle school?

3- What are the problems that your pupils encounter when learning Pronunciation?

4- Are you for or against teaching Phonetic transcription to 4th year pupils and why?

5- What are the main vowels and consonants which your pupils find difficult or confusing to produce?

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.....
.....

6- Have you tried to use Phonetic Transcription as a way to improve their pronunciation and why?

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7- What do you use as (a) means to teach your pupils the right pronunciation?

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.....

8- What do you do when your pupils mispronounce a word or a sound?

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9- Do you focus on accuracy (pronunciation) or fluency (communication) when giving your pupils the chance to speak and why?

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10- Do you give feedback to your pupils when they produce sounds in a wrong way?

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11- Which one of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) does the English teaching programme focus on more and why?

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12- What would be your priority in classifying these skills?

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13- Do you test or check your own efficiency in Phonetic Transcription and how?

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14- Do you often listen to native speakers?

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.....
.....

Thank you