



A Survey Study of the Factors Influencing Iraqi EFL Learners' English Pronunciation

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Abstract

Pronunciation is a part of English instruction. It plays a fundamental role in the communication process, since pronouncing words correctly is crucial to prevent misunderstandings and increasing confidence when speaking in front of an audience. In this vein, this study is undertaken to investigate factors affecting the English Pronunciation of Iraqi EFL learners. There are two categories of factors that have been measured: External and Internal factors. It pursues to clarify what is meant by pronunciation, hint at its significance, explain the role that teachers play in helping students learn it, and reveal the factors that influence the pronunciation of English among Iraqi EFL learners. In doing so, forty-four stage EFL students from Kufa University's, Department of English, willingly have participated in the work. The researchers utilize a related questionnaire to collect data, using a quantitative method in analyzing data statistically through Microsoft Excel program. Findings revealed that the goals, motivation, pronunciation instructions and teacher's role and experience are among the main factors influencing learners in learning pronunciation. Some recommendations and suggestions have been suggested at the end of this research in an attempt to help English language learners.

Keywords: English pronunciation, EFL learners, factors, goals, motivation, teacher's role.

دراسة مسحية للعوامل المؤثرة على نطق اللغة الإنجليزية لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في العراق

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المستخلص

النطق هو جزء من تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية، إذ يلعب دورًا أساسيًا في عملية التواصل، حيث أن نطق الكلمات بشكل صحيح أمر بالغ الأهمية لمنع سوء الفهم وزيادة الثقة عند التحدث أمام الجمهور. في هذا السياق، أجريت هذه الدراسة للتحقيق في العوامل التي تؤثر على نطق اللغة الإنجليزية لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للطلبة العراقيين. هناك فئتان من العوامل التي تم التحري عنها: العوامل الخارجية والعوامل الداخلية. إذ تسعى هذه الدراسة الى توضيح مفهوم النطق، والتلميح إلى أهميته، وشرح الدور الذي يلعبه المعلمون في مساعدة الطلاب على تعلمه، والكشف عن العوامل التي تؤثر على نطق اللغة الإنجليزية بين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للطلبة العراقيين. للقيام بذلك، شاركت أربعون طالبةً من طلبات المرحلة الرابعة من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية – كلية التربية للبنات بجامعة الكوفة لإجراء الدراسة. استخدم الباحثين استبيانًا ذا صلة لجمع البيانات، باستخدام طريقة كمية في تحليل البيانات إحصائيًا من خلال برنامج المايكروسفت أكسل. إذ كشفت النتائج أن الأهداف والدوافع وتعليمات النطق ودور المعلم وخبرته هي من بين العوامل الرئيسية المؤثرة على المتعلمين في تعلم النطق. وفي نهاية هذا البحث تم تقديم بعض التوصيات والمقترحات في محاولة لمساعدة متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: نطق اللغة الإنجليزية، متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، العوامل، الأهداف، الدافع، دور المعلم.

1.1 Introduction

Pronouncing words correctly in English is one of the most significant skills to acquire, thus learners should invest a lot of time in this process. Yates and Zielinski (2009) state that English pronunciation is receiving a lot of attention suggesting that pronunciation is important for learning the language. To help learners acquire English pronunciation quickly and efficiently, EFL teachers should look for methods of practicing, marking, and providing feedback on pronunciation. Among the learning language skills, pronunciation is essential since it makes the communication process effective by using their vocabulary and grammatical rules effectively. The majority of EFL learners claim that the main problem they face in learning is how to pronounce perfectly since it is the reason behind their communication problems (Lardhi et al., 2017). However, these learners face many factors in learning this sub-skill. Moreover, pronunciation is still disregarded by some specialists in pedagogy, which makes the teachers give more importance to other fields at the expense of this sub-fielding of speaking; thus, learners keep suffering from lousy pronunciation despite the several years they spent in learning English.



1.2 The Problem

Pronunciation, grammar, semantics, and other language-related issues are among the challenges faced by many English language learners (Bian, 2013). Pronunciation is the cornerstone of all these linguistic features, even though they are all significant. Thus, pronouncing words correctly is essential to effective communication. Moreover, a plenty of factors contribute to bad pronunciation of English, such as learners' personal disregard for pronunciation study and practice as well as their previous pronunciation instruction, which was influenced by non-native English speakers. It is also an essential component in learning a second language, and it is widely recognized that there are a number of reasons that make it hard for learners to learn pronunciation and this makes communication ineffective. The communication suitability in a debate when talking English is closely linked to the accuracy of one's pronunciation; hence, this paper tries to pursue the following research questions:

1. What are the major factors affecting English pronunciation for Iraqi EFL learners?
2. What are the most influential factors on learners' pronunciation, internal or external?
3. To what extent do the qualified and experienced teachers with their teaching style influence learners towards pronunciation?
4. What are the possible solutions suggested to overcome those factors?

1.3 Aims

1. Shedding light on the key factors that influence how well the learners pronounce the English language.
2. Determining the factors that have the greatest influence affecting learners' pronunciation rather than others.
3. Exploring how teachers function and how much their style of instruction affects learners' pronunciation of the English language.
4. Carving out the possible solutions that can be adopted by learners to surmount the factors affecting pronunciation.

1.4 Hypotheses

1. The major factors could be due to the lack of motivation, prior pronunciation instruction, and enough practice leading learners to develop negative attitudes towards learning pronunciation.
2. The internal factors may have more influence on learners' pronunciation rather than the external ones.



3. The teaching style of teachers may have a huge influence on the learners' English pronunciation.
4. The possible solutions may be related to the teachers' ability in the implementation of more developed teaching techniques that make EFL students keen to enhance their pronunciation and help them to change their attitudes toward it.

1.5 The Value of the Study

One of the hardest things about learning a new language is learning how to pronounce the language correctly. It's also one of the least communal topics for teachers to teach in the class (Darcy, 2018). This work is crucial for those learning English because it will increase their awareness and understanding of the factors that affect their pronunciation in various settings.

2.1 A Glimpse of Pronunciation

Pronunciation is integral to learning a foreign language since it reflects how proficient the learner is at communicating. In broad, pronunciation refers to how a language is spoken or produced. Many scholars have defined pronunciation from different perspectives. For Otlowski (1998), pronouncing a word in an accepted way is known as pronunciation. Pronunciation, according to Roach (2001), is "the process of producing the language's sounds" (p.86). On the other hand, some scholars agreed that pronunciation is not only to produce sounds, but also to convey meaning. To illustrate, Seidlhofer (2001) claimed that pronunciation is the ability to produce and perceive a language's important sounds to convey meaning in language use contexts (p.56). Meanwhile, Harmer (2001) asserted that the meaning of a sentence will be typically grasped from the way it is spoken. Furthermore, Yates (2017) confirmed that pronunciation is the process of making sounds to carry meaning. Although pronunciation is a substantial element in the learning of a language, it has been given a little attention in the sphere of education.

People's lives are impacted by pronunciation since it permits them to express their identity via their speech and also demonstrates their affiliation in specific communities (Seidlhofer, 2001). Therefore, it is worthy to say that this sub-skill needs to be taken into account as one of the key components that facilitate the drive of communication.

Pronunciation was defined by Cook (1996 as quoted in Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2016: 18) as the act of producing English sounds. Repeating sounds and making required corrections can help learners learn how to pronounce these sounds



correctly. Learners overcome the difficulties presented by their original language and form new habits when they begin studying pronunciation. Yates (2017), as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani (2016: 37), states that pronunciation is the act of producing sounds to transfer meaning. Paulston and Burder (1976: 23) defined pronunciation as the process of creating a sound system that does not intervene in communication from either the speakers' or the listeners' point of view.

2.2 The Aims of Teaching English Pronunciation

The idea of teaching pronunciation to second language (L2) teachers can be intimidating, as noted by a number of researchers and practitioners who have noted in recent years that pronunciation is often overlooked in L2 classrooms (Burgess and Spencer, 2000). However, research on pronunciation has been ongoing for a very long period.

James (2010) states that for some learners achieving a native-like accent, the goal of learning is the pronunciation. This may be the main goal, but teachers who want to help their learners pronounce words more correctly cannot make this the ultimate objective. The purpose of the current paper is to conduct the factors influencing Iraqi EFL learners' English pronunciation. Finding efficient learning strategies and solutions to these issues is significant.

In brief, articulation plays a more than simply a cognitive "knowing-that" role in teaching English. Additionally, it is a concrete "know-how", emphasizing the effectiveness of both the sufficient theoretical knowledge and the hands on phonetic instruction.

2.3 The Significance of Teaching Pronunciation

Undoubtedly, the aim beyond acquiring a language is typically to be able to converse; moreover, the effective communication depends on accurate pronunciation. The correct pronunciation makes learners more understandable by others, even if they made mistakes in another field. Nevertheless, many EFL learners and teachers frequently overlook this aspect of English instruction, and even worse, they underestimate it, convinced that it is not as important as other domains. Indeed, pronunciation has an eminent importance. In many cases, misunderstanding occurs because of mispronunciation of words. According to Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994), pronunciation is a component and parcel of the teaching-learning process. In addition, according to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), "pronunciation is the prominent feature of our language competence, probably more than any other part." (p. 279). In every instruction, it serves as the window



through which we are perceived. Therefore, pronunciation is fundamental for understandable speech and efficient communication.

Gilakjani (2016) stated that the instructors avoid teaching this sub-skill because of the lack of resources, appropriate pronunciation materials, training, time, and motivation. If the learners' pronunciation is difficult to grasp, they will not success to communicate even they have enough grammar and vocabulary. In this vein, teachers are asked to provide their students with the required tools to make them able to enhance their pronunciation which is responsible for the intelligibility between the speakers.

The above mentioned related studies show how important it is to pronounce the word correctly, which permits people to communicate successfully and helps them in obtaining success. Language learners are also encouraged to use the target language more regularly and confidently when it is pronounced correctly.

2.4 Factors Influencing Pronunciation

Research into the factors influencing learners' English pronunciation has been prompted by the observation that some students can pick up an acceptable level of English in few months, while others cannot achieve the same proficiency in years. These factors include the learners' first language (L1) interfering, age, attitude, prior pronunciation teaching, and insufficient proficiency with English phonetics and phonology, and others.

Shoebottom (2012) showed that while certain factors, like persistence and dedication in pronunciation training, can positively impact pronunciation acquisition, other factors are completely out of human control. In general, it can be difficult to offer a perfect list of all the factors influencing pronunciation when learning a second language. Thus, internal and external factors are the two basic categories into which linguists have separated them.

2.4.1 Internal Factors

2.4.1.1 Anxiety

Anxiety in learning the foreign language is a unique complex of emotions, habits, actions, and self-perceptions to language learning environments resulting from differences in the language acquisition process (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 125). When learners attempt to acquire the target language, these emotions could have negative sense and adverse impact on them.

According to Gregersen (2005: 388–400), anxious learners frequently avoid class altogether, pull out from activities that could develop their language skills,



and sit passively in class. One of the primary factors preventing learners from improving a proficiency of language is anxiety (Alrabai, 2014).

2.4.1.2 Personality

The learners have their own personality and disposition, and they all come from varied backgrounds. These personality differences result in distinct learning styles which clearly affect learning English as a second language. Consequently, the learners are split into couple of groups based on their characteristics:

1- Extrovert learner. It is a general assertion that an extrovert learner has a precise understanding of his obligations; therefore, he pronounces the target language correctly. Furthermore, he is friendly, courageous, and garrulous, enjoys making new friends and creating groups, expresses himself freely, and participates passionately in all activities. As a result, he has more possibilities to enhance learner's pronunciation in the second language (L2). For example, a sociable learner who seeks to participate in as many discussions as possible and interacts with native speakers has no fear of making mistakes and is confident in doing so (Avery and Ehrlich, 1992).

2- Introvert learner. This is unlike an extrovert learner. This learner's type is often introverted, calm, prefers to be alone, and introspective. Furthermore, somebody is usually hesitant of expressing themselves orally and prefers to write instead. A learner that is introverted feels uneasy about himself and is afraid of making mistakes. Therefore, he willfully avoids any opportunities to speak up (Avery and Ehrlich, 1992). As a result, the learner with this personality type rarely has the chance to speak and practice the target language's pronunciation.

2.4.1.3 Aptitude

In ESL classes, it has been noted that certain learners appear to advance more quickly than others in learning pronunciation. After an extensive investigation by researchers and language educators, it became clear that these learners have a particular set of qualities that helped them learn how to pronounce words correctly in English (Zhang, 2009). McDonough (1981) defined aptitude as "A tendency to be able to do something effectively" (p. 17). It implies that each person has a skill that enables him to carry out any work, including learning the proper pronunciation of a second language. Aptitude is the term for this innate skill (Harmer, 2001:41). Some people may have a "talent" for pronunciation, and the people who are more adaptable may have more success in pronunciation.



2.4.1.4 Goals

Learners may have several goals in mind as they acquire the English language. Variations in learner goals correspond with variations in purpose. Gaining native-like pronunciation is the aim of some learners while improving understandable speaking abilities is the aim of others. Learners who want to sound as natural as possible typically aim for American or British pronunciation. As a result, it is crucial to let the learners know that accurate American or British pronunciation is not the same as good pronunciation. It refers to a pronounced sound that makes sense. When mastering pronunciation, a learner needs to establish realistic goals which should develop good communication skills rather than perfect pronunciation. So, pronunciation is generally associated with acceptability and comprehensibility. The learners should consider the idea of intelligibility while formulating goals for their ESL classes (Levis, 2005).

2.4.1.5 Cognition

The process of obtaining knowledge and comprehension via experience, thought, and the senses is known as cognition. According to Cambridge Cognition (2016), it is defined as the mental processes associated with knowledge intake, storage, retrieval, and application to behaviour guidance.

Model voices are primarily employed for words and phrases when practising imitation pronunciation (Kan, 2017). The pronunciation improvement of words and phrases is associated with modification to these parts since any word or phrase is made up of many components, including phonemes, tones, phonetic notations, characters, and meaning. A learner can accurately produce the sounds in English if they have a detailed understanding of pronunciation. One of the human senses is ear perception, for instance. Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) assert that some learners are not as adept at learning languages as others who have a superior listening capacity. Thus, those who have a high capacity can discriminate between sounds with greater accuracy; they are able to mimic many sounds and easily form pronunciations that are close to those of native speakers.

2.4.2 External Factors

2.4.2.1 Motivation

The determination of whether a learner will acquire pronunciation similar to the native speaker is based on his desire within the language. Learners that have enough motivation can achieve high levels of proficiency. Dörnyei (1998) demonstrates that motivation can have good effects when used favourably. Shaaban



(2002) states that the effectiveness of learning a foreign or second language is affected by this aspect.

A learner's orientation toward their aim of acquiring a second language is referred to as motivation (Norris, 2020:213). It was classified into two categories by Gardner and MacIntyre (1991): integrated motivation and instrumental motivation. In the classroom, these two motivational styles can support effective language acquisition. Therefore, it has been shown that learners who receive continuous support from their family or teachers to improve their language abilities succeed more (Gardner and MacIntosh, 1991).

2.4.2.2 Prior Pronunciation Instruction

Hismanoglu (2006) confirms that the instruction of pronunciation is crucial for oral communication. It contributes significantly to communicative competence as well. A very major pronunciation challenge resulted from the students' basic knowledge of English pronunciation. While Vairojanavong (2000) and Winaitham and Suppasetsee (2012) state that English learning background for learners about pronunciation has a significant role in their capacity to pronounce words correctly. Thus, it is an important issue that needs to be taken into consideration. When students prepare well and participate in a wide range of speaking, listening, and pronunciation exercises, they can successfully pronounce words in pronunciation classes (Winaitham and Suppasetsee, 2012). In order to help EFL learners become more proficient speakers of the language and acquire accurate, intelligible, and acceptable pronunciation, EFL teachers' pronunciation, teaching materials, and methods are crucial.

2.4.2.3 Teachers Error Corrections

The correction of error is the method of conducting errors messages that have been transmitted and of reconstructing the original error-free data. It guarantees that the receiver obtains communications that have been rectified (Rouse, 2011). Learners benefit from error correction because it helps them comprehend the purposes and constrains the lexical and syntactical forms of the target language (Kennedy, 1973). For adult learners of second or foreign languages, in particular, error corrections are beneficial because it teaches them the precise context by which they employ rules. According to Kennedy (1973), feedback is essential to learning a second or foreign language successfully. For feedback to be most helpful, it should be optimal rather than excessive.

Kennedy (1973) reinforces that if important mistakes are consistently overlooked or not corrected, this could lead to learners' persistence and eventual fossilization, which would make them harder to change in the future. Additionally, as noted by Hendrickson (1978: 387), who draws the conclusion that error



correction might be used as a foundation for creating educational materials for specific learners. He confirms that students who get encouraging feedback regularly are able to learn better from their mistakes (p. 388).

2.4.2.4 Pronunciation Learning Strategies (PLS)

Many learners view learning English pronunciation as a challenging skill, so they require the assistance of teachers to practice pronunciation in L2 classes utilizing a variety of techniques. The greatest findings are formed by language teaching pedagogies, according to theoretical theories, empirical research, and the history of language instruction. The correct use of these pedagogies in the classroom can aid learners in improving their pronunciation. Understanding and comprehending these pedagogies is crucial to choosing an effective method of teaching English pronunciation for learners. Pronouncing words correctly in English can be made easier with the proper use of these approaches in the right classroom setting (Fang, 2012).

2.4.2.5 The Teachers' Role in English Pronunciation and Experiences

Pronouncing words correctly requires practice and instruction, as pronunciation is a highly complex aspect of language learning. Susmitha (2014: 59) asserts that a teacher of second languages must possess adequate knowledge and information about the phonetics and phonology of the language to effectively instruct learners. According to Morley (1991), teachers serve as instructor for pronunciation, helping learners learn how to pronounce words correctly in addition to imparting knowledge. Consequently, the teacher has the greatest impact on learners' learning in a classroom.

Experienced teachers differ from novice teachers, according to Tsui (2005: 118), because the former has a teaching experience that does not exist in the latter. This allows experienced teachers to assess the various learning processes and provide guidance to learners based on their performance and level. Scott (2005: 19) states that teachers with expertise can draw learners' attention and exert more effective control over the classroom environment. This could positively affect learners' performance and reinforce their learning strategies.

2.5 Previous Empirical Studies

There are some empirical studies that have been discussed about almost the same topic to reveal the problems or the factors that EFL learners face in their



learning this sub-field and try to find suitable solutions to them. In Algeria, Dr. Ghounane (2018) who works at Saida University as an English language and literature professor conducted a study on the subject matter under the title of 'Difficulties Encountered in Teaching Pronunciation of English to EFL Learners'. The ultimate goal of the latter was to carve out possible solutions that would help the students to surmount the pronunciation lacuna as well as to set up remedial teaching learning strategies to assist them to improve their oral skills. To accomplish the work, quantitative and qualitative methods were incorporated, in which, a questionnaire and a recording test were adopted with 150 first-year students at Saida University. Findings showed that the lack of stimulation, the scarcity of materials as well as the absence of teaching strategies are the main causes beyond the EFL learners' poor pronunciation.

The other study is a research project conducted by Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani, Ehsan Namaziandost, and Meisam Ziafar (2020) on factors influencing Iranian EFL Learners' English pronunciation learning. The purpose of this project was to investigate the factors influencing Iranian EFL learners' English pronunciation learning. The study used a quantitative approach and employed a survey questionnaire as the tool of the study. The frequencies and the percentages were used to assess the data that were gathered. from fifty Iranian EFL students freely participated in this work.

The research's findings proved that the most significant factors having great impacts on Iranian learners' pronunciation improvement were the instruction of pronunciation, attitude, motivation, and error correction respectively. It was also determined that to effectively teach and acquire English pronunciation, EFL teachers and students should have access to these factors, since they can significantly raise their proficiency in this area.

3.1 Method of Analysis

The researchers collected data quantitatively by using a questionnaire distributed to the students during first semester in academic year 2023-2024. Instead of being presented in the form of a question, it is stated. In essence, this was due to questionnaires may offer standardised responses (Denscombe, 2007:169), making the statement pattern more beneficial and simpler to obtain the participants' response. The participants were given enough time to answer questionnaires. Furthermore, the study guarantees the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants' names and personal information, potentially enhancing the study's validity.



3.2. Results and Data Analysis

The researchers used a structured questionnaire to explore the factors affecting the learners' pronunciation and to collect information from a subset of the learners. Ten statements have been organized in a way that encourages participants to express and share their opinions in a relaxed and simple manner. Each item/statement in the questionnaire required the learners to select one suitable option out of five ones (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree). To analyze, the researchers followed the analytical and statistic methods have been used to check the hypotheses of the study, converting the responses statistically, after analysing them by using Microsoft Excel program, into mathematical figures. The results of learners' answers are illustrated below in table (1) and (2).

Table (1): The actual number of responses given to each statement.

NO. of stat.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	TOTA
1	5	11	12	12	0	40
2	7	10	5	10	8	40
3	2	1	7	15	15	40
4	3	0	2	10	25	40
5	0	0	7	19	14	40
6	0	0	7	11	22	40
7	2	0	5	21	12	40
8	0	2	10	11	17	40
9	4	2	13	10	11	40
10	0	2	4	4	30	40

Table (2): The average number of responses after transforming into percentage.

NO. of stat.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	TOTA
1	13%	28%	30%	30%	0%	100%
2	18%	25%	13%	25%	20%	100%
3	5%	3%	18%	38%	38%	100%
4	8%	0%	5%	25%	63%	100%
5	0%	0%	18%	48%	35%	100%
6	0%	0%	18%	28%	55%	100%
7	5%	0%	13%	53%	30%	100%

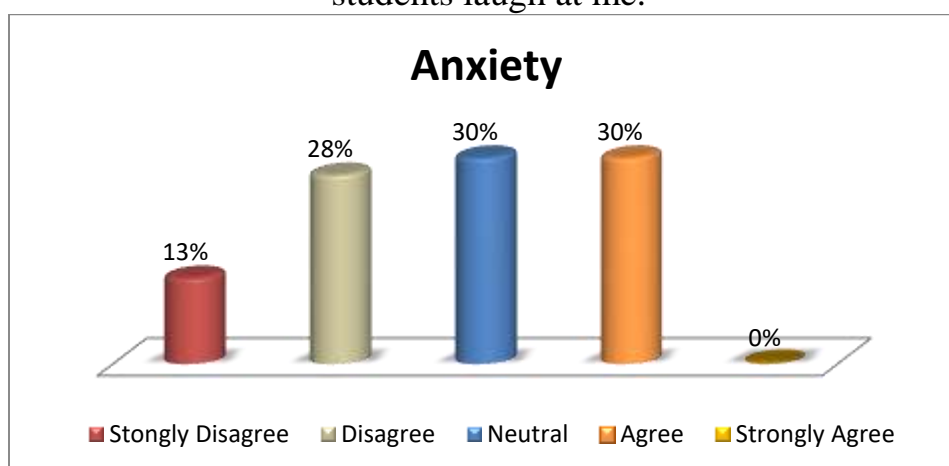


8	0%	5%	25%	28%	43%	100%
9	10%	5%	33%	25%	28%	100%
10	0%	5%	10%	10%	75%	100%

1: Internal Factors

A: Anxiety

Figure 1: I feel embarrassed when I wrongly pronounce words because other students laugh at me.



This figure displays that there were no learners strongly agreed with this statement, 12 (30%) learners just agreed usually, and 12 (30%) learners expressed neutral responses, while 11 (28%) learners disagreed, and only 5 (13%) learners strongly disagreed. Thus, it seems that the large number of learners is between agreed and neutral to the idea that their anxiety can impact on their pronunciation because of the fear that may other learners laugh at them.

B: Personality

Figure 2: I think the individual's personality affects the correct pronunciation.

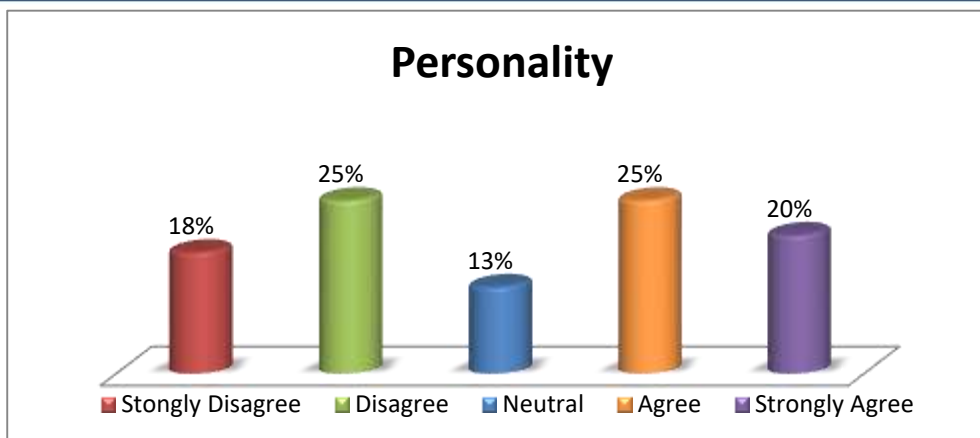
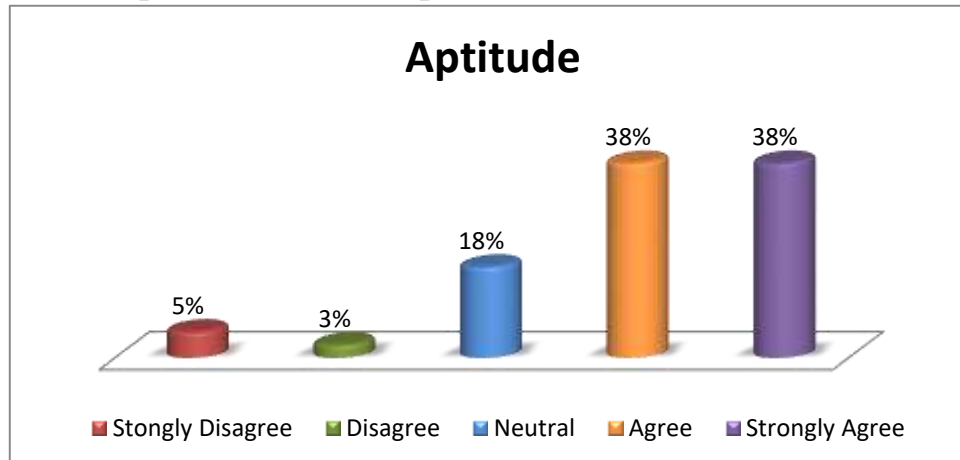


Figure (2) clarifies that there were 8 (20%) learners agreed strongly, 10 (25%) students normally agreed, 5 (13%) learners were neutral, 10 (25%) learners did not agree, and 7 (18%) learners disagreed strongly. Therefore, it can be said that the same number of learners shared in the same value between agree and disagree thinking that students' personality may affect or not in their correct pronunciation.

C: Aptitude

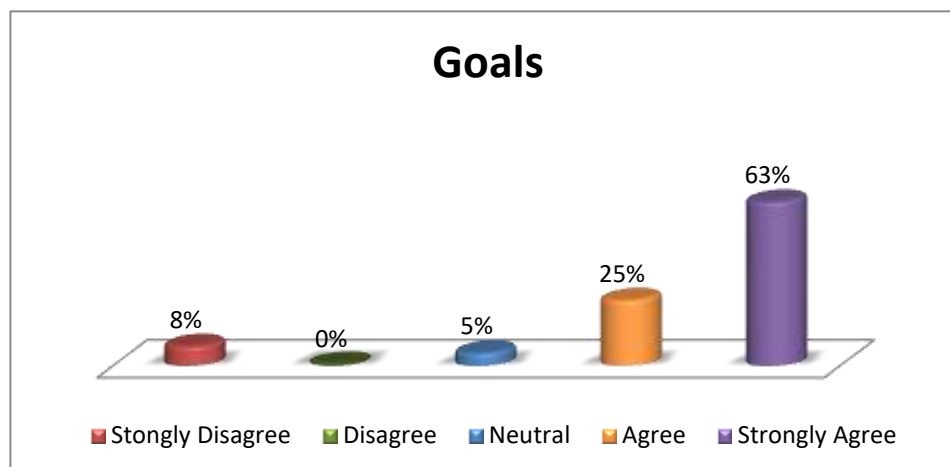
Figure 3: I believe that an aptitude learner is quicker in acquiring correct pronunciation compared to other learners.



The figure confirms that there were 15 (38%) learners between strongly and normally agreed, 7 (18%) learners were neutral, only 1 (3%) learner did not agree, and 2 (5%) learners disagreed strongly. So, it seems that the maximum average of learners agreed that aptitude learner is quicker in acquiring correct pronunciation.

D: Goals

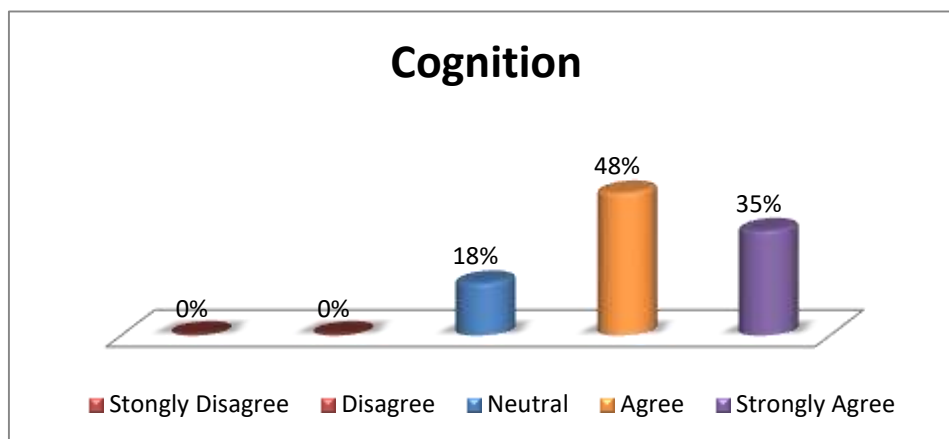
Figure 4: I will not stop trying to learn until I have reached the skill level that I seek.



This figure displays obviously that there were 25 (63%) learners strongly agreed, 10 (25%) learners agreed, 2 (5%) learners were neutral, and 3 (8%) learners strongly disagreed. Consequently, it can be seen that the largest proportion of learners agreed to the fact that the goal has a great importance and influence on them in which it encourages them to learn and obtain a certain level of skill they seek in pronunciation.

E: Cognition

Figure 5: I believe that my cognition is useful enough to perform a better pronunciation.



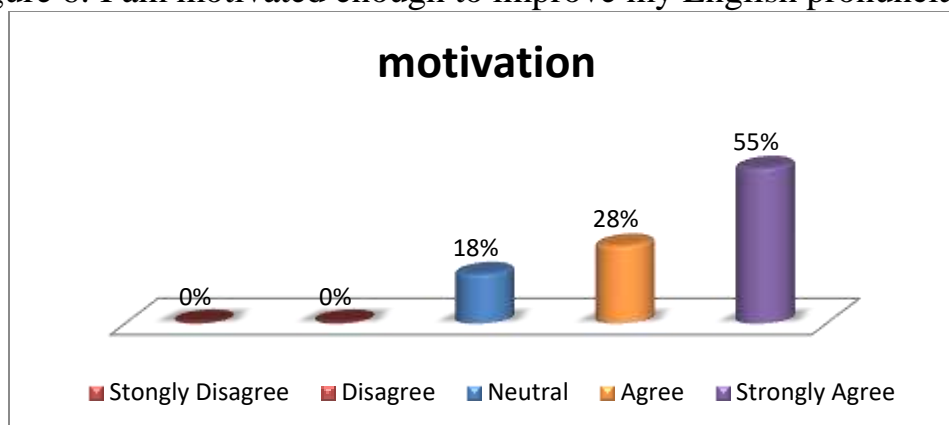
It can be seen that there were 14 (35%) learners strongly agreed, 19 (48%) learners agreed, and 7 (18%) learners were neutral. Therefore, here the maximum average of learners was "agreed". This means that cognition is useful enough to perform a better pronunciation.

2. External Factors

A: Motivation



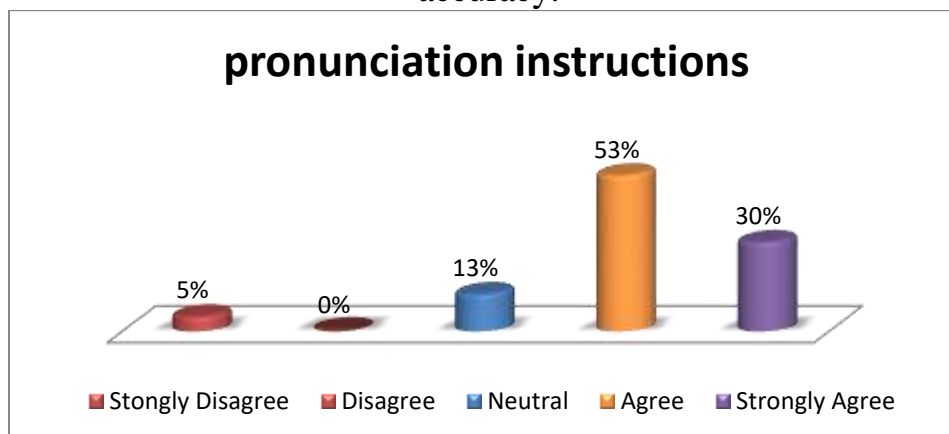
Figure 6: I am motivated enough to improve my English pronunciation.



It is clearly seen that there were 22 (55%) learners agreed strongly, 11 (28%) learners agreed, and 7 (18%) learners were neutral. Therefore, it appears that the high percent of learners is "agreed strongly". It hints that motivation encourages learners to improve their English pronunciation.

B: Pronunciation Instructions

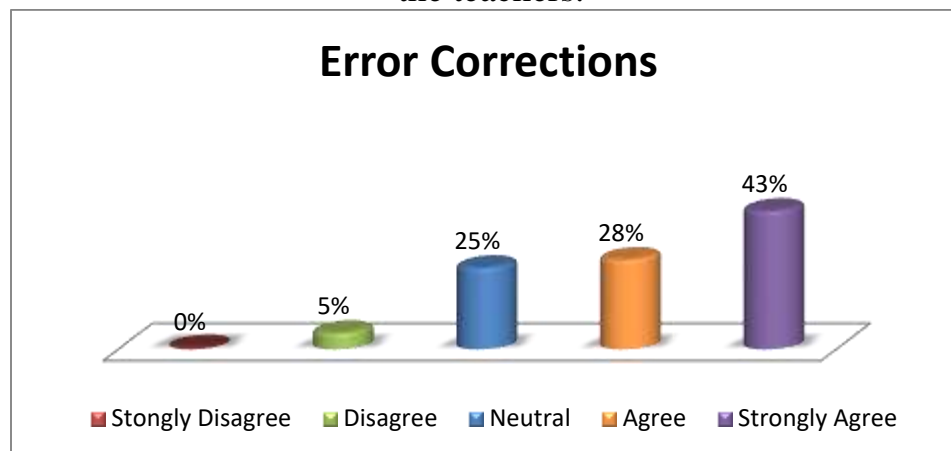
Figure 7: Providing sufficient instructions help in improving the pronunciation accuracy.



This figure indicates that there were 12 (30%) learners strongly agreed, 21 (53%) learners agreed, 5 (13%) learners were neutral, and just 2 (5%) learners disagreed strongly. Therefore, it seems that the maximum average of learners agreed that the sufficient instructions providing for them help in improving their pronunciation accuracy.

C: Error Corrections

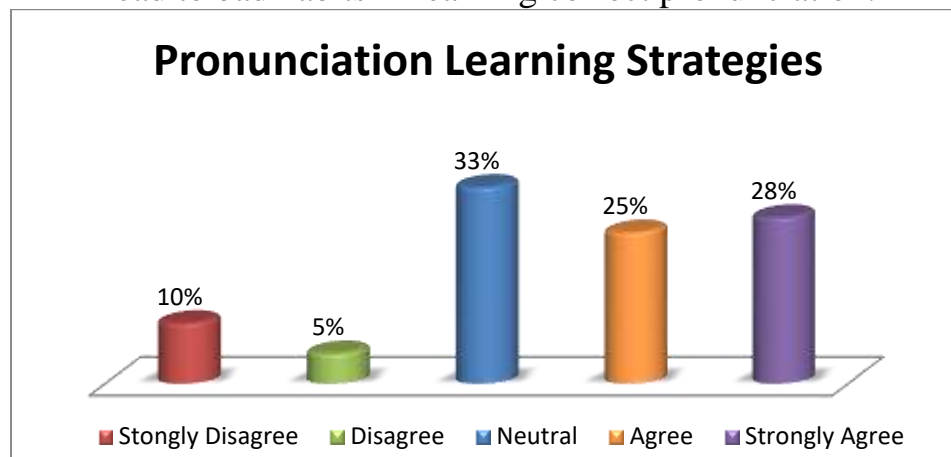
Figure 8: My English pronunciation has been developed by feedback corrections of the teachers.



It is clear that there were 17 (43%) learners agreed strongly, 11 (28%) learners agreed and 10 (25%) learners were neutral, while 2 (5%) learners disagreed. So, it seems the majority of learners strongly agreed to the fact that the teachers' feedback correction contribute in improving the learners' English pronunciation.

D: Pronunciation Learning Strategies

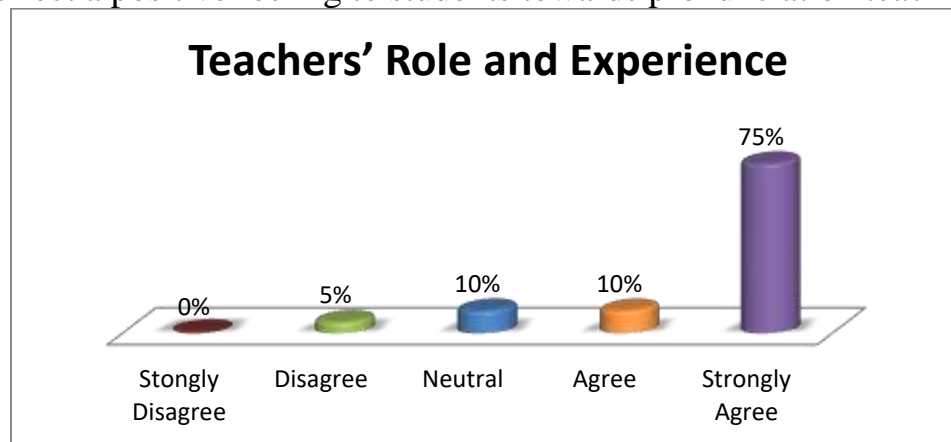
Figure 9: I believe that insufficient used of technological resources and training lead to bad habits in learning correct pronunciation.



There were 11 (28%) learners agreed strongly in this figure, 10 (25%) learners normally agreed, and 13 (33%) learners were neutral and only 2 (5%) learners normally disagreed while 4 (10%) learners responded to "strongly disagree". The maximum rate of learners is neutral answers to the statement that insufficient used of technological resources lead to bad habits in learning correct pronunciation.

E: Teachers' Role and Experience.

Figure 10: Highly qualified and long experience teachers with their teaching style reflect a positive feeling to students towards pronunciation teaching.



The figure demonstrates that there were 30 (75%) learners strongly agreed, 4 (10%) learners agreed, 4 (10%) learners were neutral and only 2 (5%) learners did not agree. Here, it sounds that the four learners agreed to this fact and other four learners expressed neutral answer to this statement at the same time. So, it can be said that the majority of learners strongly agreed to the fact that the teachers who have a high and long experience with their teaching style reflect a positive feeling to them towards pronunciation teaching.

4.1 Conclusions

Based on findings and discussions, the researchers conclude the following:

1. There were ten factors (internal and external) that influence learners' English pronunciation, they are: anxiety, goals and cognition, pronunciation instruction, language teaching pedagogy, teachers experience and their correction for learners. While aptitude, motivation and personality are the supporting factors that also affect the learners' English pronunciation.
2. According to results' analysis, the external factors have more influence than internal on Iraqi learners' English pronunciation which are: motivation, pronunciation instructions, and teacher's role and experience. The last is the most effective factor that has a strong influence on improving the learners' pronunciation since the majority of participants agreed strongly on it.
3. Additionally, learners are influenced by their teachers who are qualified and experienced with their teaching style towards pronunciation since teachers are the origin of the learners' input.



4. Pronunciation has an impact on second language understanding; hence, learning pronunciation is crucial. Learners cannot be able to communicate effectively if they are unable to pronounce words correctly. Pronunciation's instruction increases learners' capacity for clear and efficient communication as well as their comprehension of native speakers.

4.2 Recommendations

According to the findings, the following recommendations can be considered:

1. Firstly, native-speaking or semi-native teachers ought to take parts in the teaching of pronunciation since they have a better qualification and enough pronunciation skills. In order to make pronunciation interesting for the learners, teachers need also learn more useful teaching of pronunciation strategies.
2. The teachers of pronunciation should emphasize on both production and recognition; i.e., they should identify learners' pronunciation errors, correct them, and reach them how to pronounce the sounds correctly.
3. In English language courses, learners should be provided with adequate instruction or opportunity to acquire pronunciation.
4. EFL teachers should encourage learners to pronounce words correctly without embarrassment or fear of making mistakes. Moreover, they should be sufficiently motivated and interested to teach that.

4.3 Suggestions for Further Research

1. The outcome of this study can expand the knowledge about the other factors influencing learners' English Pronunciation enabling them to identify these factors and increase their desire to learn correct English pronunciation.
2. Research can be carried out to determine which factors have more influence on other skills such as reading, writing, speaking or listening.
3. To track changes in the factors that influence learners' pronunciation, more research can be done involving various colleges from various universities.



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APPENDIX 1: Observation Sheet

"A Survey Study of the Factors Influencing Iraqi EFL Learners' English Pronunciation"

To what extent do you agree with the following items? The following statements ask about your opinion toward the Factors Influencing Iraqi EFL Learners' English Pronunciation. Remember, there is no right or wrong answers; just answer as accurately and sincerely as possible. Please read the statements below carefully and fill this questionnaire by putting a tick (✓) for each one that most closely describes your overall opinion of each item in order to be a useful measurement.

Use the scale below to answer the questionnaire items.

SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N= Neutral, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree

No .	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	<i>I feel embarrassed when I wrongly pronounce words because other students will laugh at me.</i>					
2.	<i>I think the individual's personality affects the correct pronunciation.</i>					
3.	<i>I believe that an aptitude learner is quicker in acquiring correct pronunciation compared to other learners.</i>					
4.	<i>I will not stop trying to learn until I have reached the skill level that I seek.</i>					
5.	<i>I believe that my cognition is useful enough to perform a better pronunciation.</i>					
6.	<i>I am motivated enough to improve my English pronunciation.</i>					
7.	<i>Providing sufficient instructions by teachers help in improving the pronunciation accuracy.</i>					
8.	<i>My English pronunciation has been improved by the teachers' feedback correction.</i>					
9.	<i>I believe that insufficient used of technological resources and training lead to bad habits in learning correct pronunciation.</i>					
10.	<i>Highly qualified and long experience teachers with their teaching style reflect a positive feeling to students towards pronunciation teaching.</i>					