Analyzing the Difficulties encountered by Sudanese Arabic Native Speakers in Pronouncing English Assimilation: A Case Study of English Teaching Staff at some Sudanese Universities

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Abstract:
The aim of this study is to investigate the difficulty of pronouncing assimilation in English language among Sudanese universities teaching staff of English at some universities who are Sudanese native speakers of Arabic (SNSA). The researchers assumed that there are difficulties of pronouncing assimilation in English among SNSA learners of English as foreign language. The study employed descriptive analytical method in order to elaborate and analyze the cause of the problem via statistical analysis of the gathered data. To obtain the necessary data for the study, the researchers designed a diagnostic test that confined to the research questions and hypotheses to be audio-recorded. Accordingly after the necessary data were collected then it was a statistically calculated and computed by means of percentage. Based on the analysis and the results obtained, the study reveals that there are difficulties among SNSA, learners of English as foreign language in pronouncing English assimilation.
Key words: *Assimilation, Pronunciation, Teaching Staff, Sudanese Native Speakers of Arabic, Comparison.*

مستخلص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى تقصى صعوبات نطق الأحرف المدغمة في اللغة الإنجليزية لدى السودانيين الناطقين باللغة العربية لغة أولى، افترض الباحثان أن هنالك مشاكل الأحرف المدغمة فىالإنجليزية كلغةً أجنبيةً لدى عينة البحث، واتبعت في ذلك المنهج الوصفي التحليلي لتوضيح المشكلة وتحليلها، وتكونت عينتها من بعض أساتذة الجامعات الذين يقومون بتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية لغةً أجنبية في بعض الجامعات السودانية بولاية الخرطوم ، وقد تم اختيار العينة عشوائيا للحصول على البيانات اللازمة باستخدم الاختبار التشخيصي وسلية للدراسة، حيث أعد الباحثان اختبار تشخيصي يحتوي على جمل قصيرة تتوافق مع أسئلة و فرضيات البحث ، و هي أن تتم قراءتها بصوت يسمح بتسجيلها بواسطة جهاز التسجيل الصوتى ، و بناءً على ذلك جُمعت البيانات المطلوبة، ومن ثم تحليلها و إحصاؤها عن طريق النسبة المئوية ، استنادا على التحليل و النتائج أظهرت الدراسة أن هنالك صعوبات لدى الأساتذة الناطقين باللغة العربية لغة أولى ، عند نطق الحروف المدغمة فى الإنجليزية.

1. Introduction

Arabic and English languages are entirely two distinct in their linguistic systems. Both languages have differences in common, such as in phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. The phonological system of English is accordingly different from that of Arabic language. Once we have two different phonological systems between two languages this might lead us to difficulty in pronunciation. That is why pronunciation of a foreign language

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is affected by different factors which make it difficult to master. All around the world learners of English as ESL or EFL want to have a good command of English pronunciation because English language pronunciation is a prominent element of language learning so, it's essential for all learners of English language to have good pronunciation. Accordingly SNSA learners of English are expected to have difficult in English pronunciation. Thus the subject of the study is that SNSA learners of English generally have difficulty in pronunciation and especially English consonant clusters, due to differences between the two sound systems of English and Sudanese Arabic (SA). English and Arabic/SA have differences in consonant clusters and as well as syllable structure.

2. Problem of the study

Due to the differences between the two languages i.e.; English and Arabic/SA, SNSA are expected to have some difficulty in difficulty in pronouncing English Clusters. The study intends to investigate the difficulties of English consonant clusters pronunciation that faces universities teaching staff who are native speakers of Arabic. Pronouncing English clusters is considered one of the most challenging tasks that SNSA experienced.

The researcher assumed that SNSA encountered difficulty in pronouncing English assimilation in their speech.

3. Literature review

Assimilation is a common connected speech wherein one sound becomes more like a neighboring sound. This can occur either within a word or between boundaries of words. It's more likely to be found in rapid, casual speech. Henffner (1975), asserts that "when two sounds become contiguous in speech measure, one or both of them may in the fusion of configuration, undergo changes

which tend to make each more like its neighbor". Roach (2009), affirms that, "when the word was pronounced in isolation, we find a phoneme is realized differently as a result of being near some other phoneme belonging to a neighboring word we call this an instance of assimilation". He adds that assimilation is something which varies in extent according to speaking rate and style; it's more likely to be found in rapid, casual speech and less likely in slow, careful speech.

In assimilation, the influenced of one phoneme by another phoneme belonging to a neighboring one, is grounded on the change of the distinctive features of a phoneme, i.e.; place of articulation, manner of articulation and voicing. These changes constitute two types that regressive and progressive assimilation. When final consonant of a word becomes like initial consonant of a neighboring one in some way, this kind is called regressive assimilation. But when an initial consonant of a word becomes like final consonant of neighboring one in some way, this kind of assimilation is called progressive. In this matter Crystal (2009) defines that assimilation as may be partial or total. He argues that the /n/ sound in the phrase '*ten bikes*', [tem baiks], is partial in the normal form in colloquial speech, while in total assimilation, he introduces the phrase 'ten *mice*'/tem mais/, where the /n/ sound is now identical with the /m/ which influenced it.

Collins & Mees (2013), argue direction of influence by saying, ""Features of an articulation may *lead into* (i.e. anticipate) those of a following segment, e.g. English '*white pepper*' /waɪt 'pepə/ → [waɪp pepə]. We term this *leading assimilation*………Articulation features may be held over from a *preceding* segment, so that

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the articulators *lag* in their movements, e.g. English '*on the house*' /ɑn ðə 'haʊs/ → [ɑn nə 'haʊs]. This we term *lagging assimilation*……. In many cases there is a two-way exchange of articulation features, e.g. English *raise your glass* /'reɪz jɔ: 'glɑ:s/ → ['reɪʒ ʒɔ: 'glɑ:s]. This is termed *reciprocal assimilation*."

However, in rapid speech native speakers of English tend to pronounce '*ten bucks'* as though it were written *tembucks*, and in anticipation of the voiceless /*s*/ in '*son'* the final consonant of '*his'* in '*his son'* is not as fully voiced /z/, as the '*s'* in '*his daughter'*, where it clearly is /z/, Salzmann (2004). Another examples show assimilation in the Latin prefix 'in-' that means 'not', appears in in English as; *il-, im-*. and *ir-,* in the words, '*illegal'*, '*immoral'*, '*impossible'* and '*irresponsible'*, respectively.

Assimilation has a very precise meaning when it's related to the studies of language. In English language, Roach (2009) argues that assimilation of place is most clearly observable in some cases where a final consonant with alveolar place of articulation is followed by an initial consonant with a consonant not alveolar for example in the phrase, 'that *person*', /ðæt pɜ:sn̩/, in rapid, casual speech /t/ will become /p/ before a bilabial consonant, [ðæp pɜ:sn̩]. In English, assimilation of place is the most common of assimilation. It occurs across words boundaries, when the final sound of the first word changes it place of articulation according to the initial sound of the second word and also within words (change in place of articulation). The most obvious examples of assimilation of place are:

•Alveolars /t, d, n/ change to bilabial before /p, b, m/: "regressive"; in such examples:
- /t/ becomes /p/ as in ; '*meat pie*' [mi:p pɑɪ].
- /d/ becomes /b/ as in; '*good boy*' [gʊb bɔɪ].

- /n/ becomes /m/ as in; '*open book*' [əʊpm bʊk].
•Alveolars /t, d, n/ change to velar /k, g, ŋ/ as in the following examples.
- /t/ becomes /k/ as in; '*that case*' [ðæk keɪs], '*quite good*' [kwaɪk gʊd].
- /t/ becomes /g/ as in; '*that girl*' [ðæg gɜ:l].
- /d/becomes /g/ as in; '*good girl*' [gʊg gɜ:l].
- /n/ becomes /ŋ/ when followed by /k or g/ in across words boundaries and with words, such as in; '*in case*' [iŋ keɪs] (across words boundries), '*going*' [gəʊiŋ] (within words).
•Alveolar consonants change to dentals before dental consonant, as in; 'eighth', 'tenth', 'wealth' [eɪt̪θ], [ten̪θ], [wel̪θ], respectively. This statement applied to across word boundries as in; '*get through*' [get̪ θru:] , '*get those*'/get̪ ðəʊz/.
• Alveolar consonants /s, z/ change to /ʃ, ʒ/ before palatal consonants /ʃ, j/ (followed by a rounded vowel sound) fore examples:
- /s/ becomes /ʃ / as in '*this shoe*' [ðɪʃ ʃu:].
- /z/ becomes /ʒ/ as in '*those years*' [ðəʊʒ jɪəz].
• Dental consonant /θ/ becomes alveolar /s/ before /s/. For examples; the phrases '*fourth season*' and '*birth certificate*', in these examples, /θ/ in '*four**th**'* and '*bir**th**'*.

Assimilation of manner, in English, is much less noticeable and is only found in rapid, casual speech, generally speaking. Fore examples; the /n/ and /t/, in the phrases '*in the'* /in ðə /, and '*get them*' /get ðəm/, become /iṉ ṉə / and /get̪ t̪əm/ dentals, respectively Roach (2009). He says, in this particular case, "when a word-initial /ð/ follows a plosive or nasal at the end of a preceding word: it is very common to find that the consonant becomes identical in manner to the consonant but with dental place of articulation".

Unlike assimilation of place and like assimilation of manner, assimilation of voicing

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is found only in a limited way. It is found in across word boundaries i.e. regressive, as seen in the phrase '*black dog*' the velar voiceless /k/ of '*like*' becomes velar voiced /g/ , [blæg dɒg]. Another kind of voicing assimilation is found in word-boundary that is by adding inflectional morphemes to the root-word, i.e. the suffixes '-s' and '-d or -ed'. The suffix '-s' is added to a plural or possessive noun and when a verb carries a third person singular. The suffix '-s' will be pronounced as [s] if the preceding consonant is voiceless, and as [z] if the preceding consonant is voiced. While the suffix '-d, or -ed' is added when a regular verb in the past tense, therefore, '-d, or -ed' will be pronounced as [t] if the preceding consonant is voiceless, and as [t] if the preceding consonant is voiced (ibid). For examples:

- The suffix '-s' will be pronounced as [s] where a final consonant is voiceless, as in plural nouns, such as; '*cats*' [kæts] and verbs with third person singular such as '*he helps.....*' [helps].

- The suffix '-s' will be pronounced as [z] where a final consonant is voiced, as in plural nouns such as in '*dogs*' /dɒgz/and verbs with third person singular such as in '*he moves.....*' [mu:vz].

The suffix '-d' ,which add to verbs in past tense, will be pronounced [t] where a final consonant is voiceless as in the verb '*parks*' /pɑ:ks/ and where a final consonant is voiced, as in the verb '*moved*' [mu:vd].

Assimilation in SA.

Crystal (1997) defines assimilation as; "the influence exercised by one sound segment upon the articulation of another, so that the sounds become more alike or identical in terms of one or more of its phonetic characteristics".

Sibawayh, a classical Arab linguist lived in the eighth century, defines assimilation in his book *al-kitaab* and he uses the term '*idhgaam*'as; "the fusion of two adjacent segments by complete assimilation of the first one by the second to produce a geminate" see al-Nassir (1993). Ibn Jinni, another medieval Arab linguist, differentiates between total and partial assimilation, and coins the term '*al-idhgaam al-akbar*' (major assimilation) and '*al-idhgaam al-asaqar*' (minor assimilation) see Al-fozan (1989). Almarsafy " المرصفي " (1982), defines assimilation as; a phonological process by which two sounds overlapped forming only one sound. The first one is quiescent (ساكن) while the second one is movable (متحرك) it is difficult to pronounce the two sounds together, and to make their pronunciation easier.

Major or great assimilation occurs when two quiescent neighboring segments are separated by a movable sound that what is so called diacritics such as ' al-dhamah, al-fatħah, al-kasarah'. Minor assimilation takes place when two quiescent neighboring segments are not separated by a movable sound. Assimilation happens due to neighborhood of two sounds within a word or between word boundaries.

In Arabic there are types of assimilations, partial assimilation and complete assimilation which they are the two types of'*al-idhgaam al-asaqar*' (minor assimilation). These two types are wide spread in languages. Partial assimilation occurs when the quiescent '*nuun*' or '*nuun al-tanween*' ends a word and followed by a word begins with the following sounds; /m, n, w, j/ as in the following examples: (من بعد) /min baʕd/ becomes / mim baʕd/. This type is so called assimilation with nasal. Other examples by (ابن الجزرى (2008)) of this type as follows:

- quiescent /n/ + /j/: /wa ʔin jaruu/ (و إن يروا) becomes /wa ʔij jaruu/.

- quiescent /n/ + /n/: /wa ʔin naħnu/ (إن نحن) becomes / wa ʔinaħnu /.

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- quiescent /n/ + /m/: /min maa/ (من ماء) becomes / mim maa /.
- quiescent /n/ + /w/: / man waalah / (من وآلاه) becomes / miw waalah /.

Complete or total assimilation is also called *assimilation without nasal* by which two sounds become one, and it is called so because when the assimilation happens, so no nasal comes from the nasal cavity. The process takes place when quiescent *nuun* or *nuun* is at the end of a word meets /l, r/ at the beginning of the following one, becomes stressed (مشددة) /r/ as in (من ربهم - مربهم) /min rabihm/ becomes /mirrabihm/. Stressed /l/ as in (من لدنه), /min ladunhi/ becomes /mil ladunhi/ , (2006) قمحاوي . In other words the nasal does not associate /l/ and /r/ because the two sounds do not allow the process of the nasal pass through them, that is the /n/ or '*nuun*' disappears completely (القارئ (2009)).

In Arabic, the most common assimilation occurs with the definite article '*alif*' and '*laam*' which is resemble to English definite article '*the*'. /l/ gets assimilated when the following sound begins with the so called 'sun letters'; / t, t$^?$, d, d$^?$, θ, ð, ð$^?$, s, s$^?$, z, ʃ, dʒ, l, r, n/ as in; /ʔalʃams/ (الشمس) becomes /ʔaʃ ʃams/, /ʔalt$^?$aalib/ (الطالب) becomes /ʔat$^?$t$^?$aalib/.

Assimilation in SA follows the same principles of assimilation in MSA, especially great or major assimilation '*al-idhgaam al-akbar*'. This type of assimilation is wide spread in SA, as well as some Quranic readings أبوبكر (2008) . The features of this type of assimilation tend to delete a diacritic (vowel sound) that separates two quiescent sounds so the assimilation happens on the following sound. The SA speakers tend to delete diacritics at the ends of words.

Assimilation in SA occurs in the following cases;

- /d/ becomes /dʒ/ as in; /wad dʒamiil/ 'handsome boy or Jameel's son' becomes /wadʒ dʒamiil/, also in /baʕad dʒa/ 'after he came' becomes /baʕadʒ dʒa/.
- /d/ becomes /s/ as in; /wad saalim/ (ود سالم) becomes /was saalim/, /rad sariiʕ/ ' a quick replay' becomes /ras sariiʕ/.
- /d/ becomes /z/as in; /wad zeinab/ (ود زينب) becomes / waz zeinab/.
- /d/ becomes /s$^?$/ as in /wad s$^?$aliħ/ (ود صباح) becomes /was$^?$ s$^?$aliħ/.
- /d/ become /ʃ/ as in /wad ʃallʕii/ (ود شلعي) becomes /waʃ ʃallʕii/, /baʕad ʃinu/, (بعد شنو) becomes /baʕaʃ ʃinu/.
- /t/ becomes /t$^?$ /, as in; /mintaz$^?$rak/ ' I'm / he is waiting' becomes /mint$^?$ z$^?$rak/, /lam ʔastat$^?$iiʕ/ (لم استطيع) becomes /lam ʔast$^?$at$^?$iiʕ/ , /ma tat$^?$iir/ becomes /mat$^?$at$^?$iir/, 'go away'.
- /n/ becomes /j/ as in /wa in jakun/ 'so what', becomes / wa ij jakun/, /man jaraa/ (من يرى) becomes /maj jaraa/.
- /n/ becomes /l/ as in; /min ladonk raħmah/ (من لدنك رحمه) becomes /mil ladonk raħmah/, /wein lama fihu/ (وين لم فيهو) becomes /weil lama fihu/
- /l/ becomes /r/ as in /katil ragaba/ (قاتل رقبة) becomes / katir ragaba/.

Assimilation in Comparison

English and SA, intensively use assimilation of place more than assimilations of manner and voicing. Both languages have total and partial assimilations, as in regressive assimilation. Assimilation in SA, is differ as that in English language which is defined as the fusion of two adjacent segments by complete assimilation of the first one by the second to produce geminate. In SA language assimilation takes place between two sounds one is quiescent (has no *al-fathah, al-kassrah and al-dhamah)* and the other is moveable.

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In English language assimilation occurs in such cases below;

-Alveolars /t, d, n/ become bilabials before /p, b, m/ as in; 'meat pie' /mi:p pai/, 'good boy' /gub bɔɪ/

- Aveolars /t, d, n/ become velar before /k,g, ŋ/

-alveolars become dental before / θ, ð/

-alveolars /s, z/ become palatal before / ʃ , j/

-Dentals / θ/ become alveolar before /s/

On the other hand assimilation in SA follows the same process as in MSA language, the most common assimilation in Arabic occurs with the definite article /ʔal/ '*alif* and *laam*', thus, /l/ gets assimilated to the sound at initial position of the attached word and begins with one of the so called '*the sun* letters' /t, tˀ, d, dˀ, θ, ð, ðˀ, s, sˀ, z, ʃ, ŋ, l, r, n/. In addition to this, the examples below display the occurrence of assimilation in SA;

-Alveolar stop /d/ is palatalized if a word starts with /dʒ/ or /ʃ/ as in /baʕad dʒa/ 'after he came' becomes /baʕadʒ dʒa/, and becomes fricative if it preceded by / s, z, sˀ/ in; / wad saalim/ 'Saalim's son', / baʕad zaman/ becomes / baʕaz zaman/ 'after long time', / baʕad sˀalla/ becomes / baʕa sˀ sˀalla/ 'after he prayed', / baʕad ʃinu/ becomes / baʕaʃ ʃinu/ 'after what'.

-/t/ becomes emphatic if preceded by emphatics, as in /mintˀazˀrak/ 'I'm waiting for you'.

-alveolar nasal/n/ becomes palatalized before /j/ and lateralized before /l/ as in; /man jaraa/ becomes /maj jaraa/ 'who sees', /laa jaχaaf/ becomes /mil laa jaχaaf/ 'who does not afraid' (من لا يخاف) respectively.

-alveolar nasal /n/ becomes palatal nasal /ɲ/ and velarized /ŋ/ as in; /sindʒa/ becomes /siɲdʒa/ (سنجه) 'A Sudanese twon', /manga/ becomes /maŋga/ 'mango'.

-/l/ becomes trill /r/ before /l/ as in /katil ragaba/ becomes / katir ragaba/ 'he is a killer'.

4. Method of the Study

The researcher will use two major methods in this study: descriptive and analytical. A descriptive method is used to describe what exists at the present. The main characteristic of this method is that the researcher has no any control over the variables. He is only concerned about reporting what has happened or what is happening. On the other hand, analytical method attempts to describe and explain why certain situation exist, by using facts or information already available, and analyzing these to make a critical evaluation of the material gathered.

Data collection

The research method requires gathering relevant data from different available sources by two means of data collection, i.e.; primary data and secondary data. By mean of primary data, the researcher tends to collect data from different sources such as books, journals, theses, etc. which are relevant to the study. The other mean of data collection is secondary data that can be gathered from, test, questionnaire, interview, recording and so on. This study in addition to primary data, audio-recoding will be used to collect the relevant data that related to the case-study in order to reach a complete understanding about the problem.

Tools of Data collection

The researcher will use a diagnostic test consists of 45 phrases, relating to the hypotheses of the study, to read aloud by the participants. In this sense the researcher will use Sony audio-recording to in order to help the researcher to clarify the difficulties face SLs of English in pronunciation of English. Audio-recording is one of the techniques of collecting data, so it's useful in linguistics, where the speech itself is the subject of analysis.

Sample of the Study

The sample of the study consists of 30 teaching staff ,as a case study, both including both sexes, and have been chosen randomly from five universities that is Sudan University of Science & Technology, University of Bahri, Omdurman Islamic University, University of Khartoum and Al-ahfad University for Women. All the samples of this study have been engaged in teaching English language at their universities. The sample of the study's qualifications, 13 Ph.D and 17 MA holders with average of experience between 3 to 20 years of teaching English at tertiary level. The researcher asked the 30 participants to read the 45 phrases/ sentences aloud and before involve in reading he asked them to have a look to the phrases / sentences to prepare themselves.

Procedures

The study test took place after all the necessary preparation were done, each of the participants read the whole 45 phrases/ sentences aloud, while at the same time of recording the researcher was holding the recording device few centimeter from the participant's mouth. Before the researcher started to listen to the recordings, he had already prepared necessary drafts needed to see the correct and incorrect pronunciations of the study test. The researcher first, made transcription to all the 45 phrases / sentences from the site https://tophonetics.com/ , this site lack to other features of transcription such as connected speech (assimilation, weak forms and elision). To fulfill these missing features the researcher applied these features according to the phonological rules of English language. Second, the researcher prepared a table consisted of two axes one was for the numbers of the participants, vertically arranged as; p1, p2, ……p30, and second one for the values of correct and incorrect pronunciations of the target sounds, horizontally. After all this was done, then the researcher started to listen carefully by repeating the target sounds several times using the of feature of backward, this feature helped the researcher to recognize whether the target sound is correctly or incorrectly pronounced. In addition to this and to make the study authentic the researcher put the draft of the 45 phrases/sentences transcription in front of him while listening to the recordings. After he completed the task of listening and reported the data and the information needed for the analysis, then he calculated the figures using the percentage; that means the figures were calculated and computed to see the percentage of correct and incorrect of the target sounds. The collected data and information were analyzed descriptively and statistically.

Reliability and Validity of the Test

In order to check the apparent reliability and validation of the test according to the formulation and explanation, the researcher showed the test to five of Ph.D. holders as referees who are specialized in the same area of the study and work in different universities. In this matter some of the referees made some valuable suggestions and others agreed were agreed that the test is suitable to the study. The researcher took seriously the suggestions and corrections of the referees and has applied to the test.

The test and were validated first by 5 of Ph.d holders of the field to insure that the test were formulated correctly for the study purpose. Pre-samples were presented to 10 of the study test to check validity and reliability of the test. The researcher calculated the validity statistically using the following equation:

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\text{Re liability}}$$

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The reliability coefficient for the measurement was calculated using (split-half) method. Reliability coefficient was calculated according to Spearman-Brown Equation as the following:

$$\text{Reliability Coefficient} = \frac{2 \times r}{1 + r}$$

r = Pearson correlation coefficient

Table (1): the statistical reliability and validity of the pre-test sample is about 10 of the study test.

	Reliability	Validity
correct	0.80	0.89
In correct	0.87	0.93
Overall	0.92	0.96

Source: The researcher from applied study (2018)

We note from the results in the table above, that the overall Reliability and Validity coefficients for the questionnaire are greater than (50%), and some of them are nearest to one. This indicates to the high validity and reliability of the answers, so, the study test is valid and reliable.
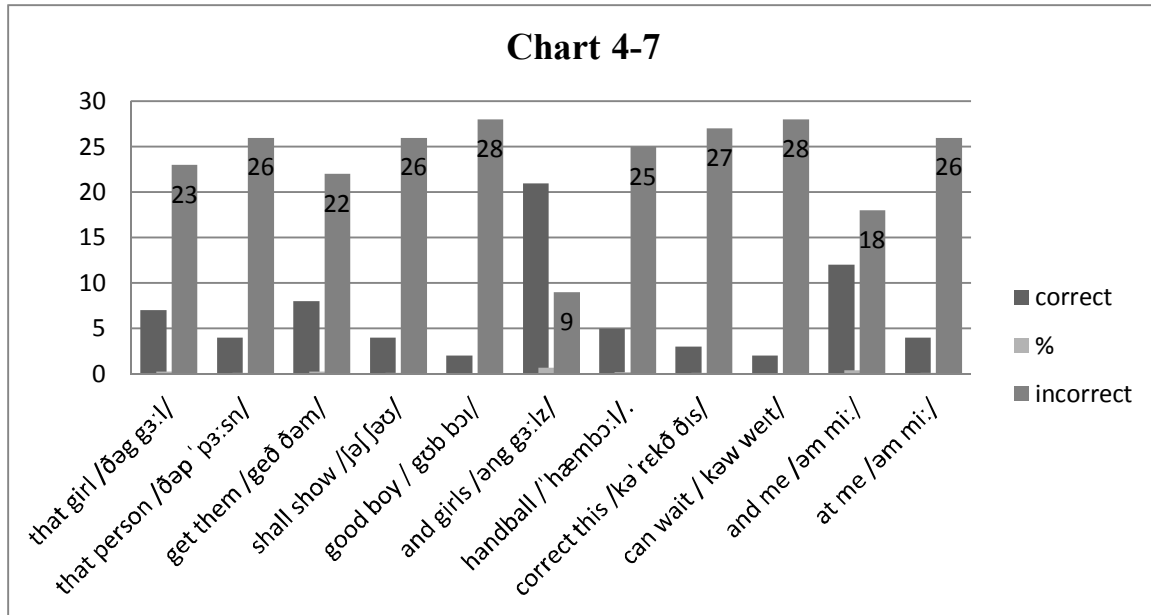
5. Statistical Analysis of the Data

The test targets the English assimilation that is different from Arabic assimilation. The results have been statistically analyzed and computed by means of percentage. The followings tables and figures show the results. The findings are explained and discussed accordingly.

Table (2): The frequency distributions of assimilation pronunciation

Sentence No.	target word/sound	correct	%	incorrect	%
31.	that girl /ðəg gɜːl/	07	23%	23	77%
32.	that person /ðəp ˈpɜːsn/	04	13%	26	87%
33	get them /geð ðəm/	08	27%	22	73%
34.	shall show /ʃəʃ ʃəʊ/	04	13%	26	87%
35.	good boy / gʊb bɔɪ/	02	07%	28	93%
36.	and girls /əng gɜːlz/	21	70%	09	30%
37.	handball /ˈhæmbɔːl/.	05	17%	25	83%
39.	correct this /kəˈrɛkð ðɪs/	03	10%	27	90%
40.	can wait / kəw weɪt/	02	07%	28	93%
42.	and me /əm miː/	12	40%	18	60%
44.	at me /əm miː/	04	13%	26	87%

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Chart 4-7

The table and the chart (4-7) display the frequencies of accuracy and error of 30 participants in accordance of English assimilation pronounced by the participants. The table shows that the two phrases 'good boy' and '… can wait' have the highest frequency of participants' errors is, 27 (93%) and the lowest frequency is 09 (30) to the phrase '… and girls'. The phrases that have high frequencies of errors are; 'correct this', 27 (90%); 'that person', 'shall show' and 'at me', 26 (87%); 'handball', 25 (83%); 'that girl', 23 (77%); and 'and me', 18 (60%).

The reason behind the participants' difficulty pronouncing English assimilation is that English and Arabic differ in their way of assimilating sounds, in English the assimilated sounds are changed to another sound differs from them, whereas in Arabic are overlapped with each other to have one sound similar to the second.

The overall calculated value of the median for participants' accuracy of English assimilation is 04 (13%) while it is 26 (87%) for participants' incorrect pronunciation.

6. Result and Discussions:
The table and the chart (2) above display the participants' accuracy and error in pronouncing English assimilation. As seen from the table and the chart above that the percentages of the participants' accuracy in assimilation is (13%), while the percentages of the participants' error are; (87%). This is a considerable number which indicates that the participants have much difficulty in pronouncing English assimilation.

7. Conclusion
In conclusion we can say that SNSA (teaching staff) have difficulty in English pronunciation due to mother tongue interference. Referring to the results above, we find that the results support the hypothesis of the study in accordance with the results of the study test, showed that SNSA (teaching staff as case study) experience difficulty in pronouncing English assimilation. The results were confined with the theories of previous works on second language learning, such as; Avery & Ehrlich (1992), Swan & Smith (1987), Weinreich (1953), Whitman (1970), Fries (1945). Yule (2010) and Lado (1957).

8. Recommendations

Based on the result and the findings of this study the researchers come out with the following recommendations:

1. Teaching staff should pay more attention of their pronunciation by trying to produce English speech sounds correctly in class rooms and try to avoid mother tongue interference.

2. Teaching staffs are advised to listen to English native speakers via listening to news, watching movies and so on, to improve their intelligibility for practicing pronunciation.

3. Teaching staff are advised to apply the phonological rules of English while speaking and do practice on it.

4. Future researchers should pay more attention to the difficulty of English pronunciation, especially the aspects of connected speech.

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