



**Sudan University of Technology and Science**

**College of Graduate Studies**

**College of Languages**



**Investigating the Difficulties Encountered by  
Sudanese Basic Government Schools' Pupils in  
Articulating some English Consonant Sounds**

**تقصي الصعوبات التي تواجه تلاميذ مدارس الأساس الحكومية  
السودانية في نطق بعض الاصوت الصامتة للغة الانجليزية**

**A (Case Study of the Sixth Class of Al Izba Basic School  
for Girls – Al-Amlak – Khartoum North)**

A Thesis Submitted in a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
M.A Degree in English Language (Linguistics)

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## Qur'anic Verse

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قال تعالى :

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ يَدْرِكُ لآيَاتِ لِلْعَالَمِينَ (٢٢)﴾  
صدق الله العظيم

سورة الروم الاية (22)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE

**Allah Says:**

And of His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the differences of your tongues and colors. Surely in that are indeed 5ayah for knowledgeable men.

**SURAT AR RUM (22)**

**(The Romans)**

# **DEDICATION**

To my deceased parents (may Allah rest their souls in peace), to my dear wife and lovely children (sons and daughter), and also my brothers and sisters

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

All praise is due to Allah the Almighty for empowering me to conduct this study. Gratitude and appreciation are reserved to my supervisor Dr. Abbas Mukhtar Mohamed for his terse guidance throughout the period of conducting this thesis.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aims at investigating the difficulties encountered by Sudanese EFL basic government schools' pupils in articulating some consonant sounds. The participants of the study are forty pupils of the 6<sup>th</sup> level at Al Izba Basic School for Girls-Al-Amlak-Khartoum North, and twenty teachers of English language from the same school and others in same area. The study pursues descriptive analytical method. A pronunciation diagnostic test and questionnaire are used as tools to obtain data from pupils and teachers. The results show that the majority of Sudanese EFL basic school pupils mispronounce the consonant sounds which do not exist in Sudanese spoken Arabic. Based on the findings, the study revealed that some factors have negative impact on pronunciation, such as the sound systems differences between English and Arabic, inadequacy training in phonetics and phonology, in addition to irrelevancy of the syllabus to the Sudanese pupils'needs. Accordingly, the study concludes with suggested recommendations that can contribute in rectifying such a situation. The study is ended with some suggestions for further studies.

## ABSTRACT (ARABIC VERSION)

تهدف هذه الدراسة الي تقصي الصعوبات التي تواجه تلاميذ مدارس الأساس الحكومية في نطق بعض الأصوات الصامتة للغة الانجليزية. شارك من مجتمع البحث اربعون من تلميذات الصف السادس بمدرسة العزبة الاساسية الحكومية بنات بحي الاملاك - الخرطوم بحري وعشرون معلماً من معلمي اللغة الانجليزية: منهم أبعة معلمين يذات المدرسة و ستة عشرة آخرون من أربع مدارس مجاورة أخرى بالمنطقة. استخدمت الدراسة أسلوب الوصف التحليلي منهجاً للبحث. أجرياً لأختبار التشخيصيل لنطق لجمع المعلومات من التلميذات كما وُزع الاستبيان للحصول علي البيانات من المعلمين. أظهرت نتائج البحث أن معظم التلميذات السودانيات اللاتي يدرسن الانجليزية لغة اجنبية يجدن صعوبة في نطق الأصوات الصامتة التي ليس لها نظير في اللغة العربية الدارجة التي يتحدث ها السودانيون. استنادا للنتائج، كشفت الدراسة عن بعض العوامل التي تؤثر سلبا علي عملية النطق مثل الاختلافات في الأنظمة الصوتية بين العربية و الانجليزية، و عدم كفاية التدريب علي مادة علم الصوتيات وعلم علاقة الأصوات ببعضها، بالإضافة إلى عدم ترابط المنهج الدراسي. بناء علي ذلك ، خلصت الدراسة بمقترح للتوصيات يمكن بمقتضاها المساهمة في تغيير مثل هذا الوضع إلى الأفضل. واختتمت الدراسة ببعض المقترحات للمزيد من الدراسات المستقبلية .

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The word/s	The Abbreviations
AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
ASR	Automatic Speech Recognition
ASTP	The Army Specialized Training Program
CALDER	The National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research
CALL	Computer-Assisted Language learning
CAPT	Computer Assisted Pronunciation Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
GA	General American
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
L1	First language
L2	Second Language
LFC	Lingua Franca Core
NLP	Neurolinguistics Programming
NNSs	Non-native speakers
OVes	Older varieties of English
RP	Received Pronunciation
SCA	Sudanese Colloquial Arabic
SEITI	Sudan English Language Training Institute
SPINE	Sudan Practical Integrated National English
SUNACEL	Sudan National Center for Languages
SUST	Sudan University of Science and Technology

**CHAPTER ONE**  
**INTRODUCTION**

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Broadly speaking, articulation or pronunciation is a key term to any language acquisition. This linguistic term, which refers to pronunciation and talking is the ability to physically move the tongue, lips, teeth and jaw to produce sequences of speech sounds, which make up words and sentences. There are also different sounds to be pronounced.

Pronunciation is the way in which language spoken; the way in which a word is pronounced; the way a person speaks the words of language (Hornby, 1987). Gilakjani (2012:119) assumes that pronunciation is a set of habits of producing sounds. Speaking is an important factor in learning and using English appropriately (Gussenhoven & Jacobs, 1998). Burns and Claire (1994:5) emphasize pronunciation refers to the phonology of the language –or the meaningful perception and production of the sounds of that language and how they impact on the listener. While pronunciation refers to the manner in which we make speech sounds, Articulation refers to the usage of speech organs such as tongue, jaws, lips, etc. According to vocabulary .com. Articulation is the act of expressing something in a coherent verbal form, or an aspect of pronunciation involving the articulatory organs. The pronunciation of English involves the ability to pronounce both vowels and consonants. In our case, Bussmann (2006) defined consonants as “phonetically, a speech sound that is not an approximant, and therefore, is either a stop or fricative.”

The way we speak immediately conveys something about ourselves to the people around us. Learners with good pronunciation in English are more likely to be understood even if they make errors in other areas, whereas learners whose



pronunciation is difficult to understand will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect ( AMEP Resource Center at [rescentr@nceltr.edu.au](mailto:rescentr@nceltr.edu.au)).

## **1.2 Statement Of The Study Problem**

A close observation of Sudanese EFL pupils at 6<sup>th</sup> level Basic Government Schools disclosed that many learners are encountered by difficulties in articulating some English consonants, hence mispronouncing some words with /p/ sounds as /b/, others use /b/ for /v/ and (face/faith), (very/berry) as well as mother –tongue interference (Arabic language) which hardens the pronunciation of some English consonant sounds. Thus, the current study tries to investigate difficulties encountered by Sudanese EFL pupils in the pronunciation of some English consonants.

## **1.3 Questions of the Study**

This Study attempts to answer the following:

1. To what extent are Sudanese Basic School Pupils encounter difficulties in Pronouncing English consonant sounds?
2. What are the most Consonants Sounds that constitute difficulties to Basic School Pupils?
3. To what extent basic school teachers are trained in phonetics and phonology?

## **1.4 Hypotheses of the Study**

This study has the following hypotheses:

1. Sudanese Basic Schools Pupils encounter difficulties in pronouncing some English Consonant Sounds.
2. There are Consonant Sounds that constitute the hardest in Pronunciation.
3. Basic school teachers are not well trained in phonetics and phonology.

## **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to achieve the following:

1. Identify Difficulties encounter Sudanese Basic Schools Pupils in pronouncing some English Consonant Sounds.
2. Explore the most Consonant Sounds that constitute Difficulties to Sudanese Basic School pupils in pronunciation.
3. Identify the impact of mother- tongue interference on Sudanese basic schools pupils in pronouncing English consonant Sounds.
4. Explore to what extent basic school teachers are trained in phonetics and phonology.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study will be of significant value for EFL teachers and pupils at the Basic Level since pronunciation is a problematic aspect of language, thus worthy of investigation. The findings of this study are expected to help bring change in EFL teaching methods and training in phonetics and phonology to help pupils achieve better pronunciation.

## **1.7 Methodology**

This study investigates the difficulties encountered by Sudanese Basic government schools 'pupils in pronouncing some consonant sounds. It targets pupils of the 6th level at Al Izba Basic School for Girls, Al-Amlak – Khartoum North. The researcher uses the descriptive –analytical method. A designed practical pronunciation recording test will be given to the pupils as a source of collecting data as well as teachers' questionnaire to support the data obtained from the diagnostic test to assess the pupils' pronunciation on certain consonant sounds, as well as to explore to what extent Basic School teachers are well trained in phonetics and phonology.

## **1.8 Limits of the Study**

This study is limited to Investigating the difficulties encountered by the 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils at Al Izba Basic School for Girls in pronouncing some English consonant sounds, targeting a selected group of (40) pupils and (20)basic school teachers regarding their training in phonetics and phonology.

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS**  
**STUDIES**

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter is composed of two parts. Part one reviews the literature relates to the research topic ,such as a historical brief of English and Arabic languages in the Sudan, Basic education and the English language in Sudan ,definition of pronunciation and English consonants . Part two deals with the previous studies on the difficulties of pronunciation of some English consonants.

### **2.1 English Pronunciation**

#### **2.1.1 Introduction**

English pronunciation is one of the most difficult skills to acquire and learners should spend lots of time to improve their pronunciation (Aliaga Garcia, 2007; Martinez-Flor et al. 2006; PourhoseinGilakjani, 2016). Understandable pronunciation is one of the basic requirements of learners' competence and it is also one of the most important features of language instruction. Good pronunciation leads to learning while bad pronunciation promotes to great difficulties in language learning. (PourhoseinGilakjani, 2012)

#### **2.1.2 Definitions of Pronunciation**

The term pronunciation is defined by Richards & Schmidt (2010 ) as “ the way a certain sounds are produced ... and often relates the spoken word to its written form “ Oxford World Power (2006) pronunciation is seemed to be “ the way in which a language or a word is pronounced or a person's way of speaking a language .”

Cook (1996 as cited in PourhoseinGilakjani, 2016) defined pronunciation as the production of English sounds. Pronunciation is learnt by repeating sounds and correcting them when produced in accurately. When learners start learning pronunciation they make new habits and overcome the difficulties resulting from the first language. According to Yates (2002 as cited in PourhoseinGilakjani m2016) , pronunciation is the production of sounds that is used for making meaning

### **2.1.3 Why is Pronunciation Important?**

Pronunciation is important because it does not matter how good a learner's vocabulary or grammar is, if no one can understand them when they speak! And to be understood, a learner needs a practical mastery of the sounds, rhythms and cadences of English and how they fit together in connected speech. Learners with good pronunciation will be understood even if they make errors in other areas, while those with unintelligible pronunciation will remain unintelligible, even if they have expressed themselves using an extensive vocabulary and perfect grammar. As Morley states, "intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence "(Morley, 1991: 513). Helen Fraser claimed that pronunciation "includes all those aspects of speech which make for an easily intelligible flow of speech, including segmental articulation, rhythm, intonation and phrasing, and more peripherally even gesture, body language and eye contact. Pronunciation is an essential ingredient of oral communication, which also includes grammar, vocabulary choice, cultural considerations and so on" (Fraser, 2001:1).

### **2.1.4 Pronunciation Intelligibility**

Pronunciation intelligibility is of great importance for successful oral communication to take place since a reasonably intelligible pronunciation is an

essential component of communicative competence (Celle –Murcia et al., 1996; Morley, 1991). To put it succinctly, pronunciation intelligibility is to achieve a level of pronunciation which does not hinder the learners' ability to communicate (Morley, 1991).

### **A- Vowels**

According to Collins and Mees (2003), a vowel is a sound made by a stricture of open approximation, by narrowing part of the vocal tract above the larynx. All vowels are formed by a free airflow from the lungs to the lips without clear air obstruction. They are distinguished by the lips' shape and the tongue position, (Thornbury, 2006).

### **B- Consonants**

English consonants are classified according to the place and manner of their articulation. Contrary to vowels in which air flows out freely from the lungs through the mouth, consonants are produced by forcing the airstream out, and can be voiced or devoiced, (Cruttenden, 2008).

## **2.2 Differences between Consonant Sound Systems in Sudanese Colloquial Arabic and English**

Arabic Language is a mother tongue or first language for the majority of Sudanese EFL learners. In this study, the mother tongue is Sudanese Colloquial Arabic (SCA).

Arabic and English phonological systems vary extensively, not only in the range of sounds used, but also in the relative importance of vowels and consonants in expressing meaning. While English has 22 vowels and diphthongs to 24 consonants, Arabic has only eight vowels and diphthongs to 32 consonants.

There are a number of differences between the sounds of Arabic and English. English has some sounds which are not available in Arabic. One of these differences is in the production of some consonants.

### **2.3 English Language in Sudan**

According to Nur (2014), British and Egyptian armies invaded Sudan in 1898 and established what came to be known as Condominium Rule in Sudan or the Anglo- Egyptian rule. The British drew all the educational policies since they were the policy makers at the time. Primary and intermediate schools were opened in 1902 and Gordon Memorial College was established as the first of its kind in the country. The teaching of English language became the major objective of the British educational policy in Sudan, a land dominated by Arabic and Islam.

As indicated by Liz Sandell(1982), the use of English was limited to a small section of the educated elite which fulfilled one of the educational objectives of teaching English at the time. Besides, Nur added that the British intention was also to create a small administrative class of Sudanese to fill minor posts in the civil service.

Since then, the status of the English language in the Sudan has passed through several stages. According to World Data on Education (2010/11),the educational ladder of 1970, 6+3+3, years, has replaced the ladder of 4+4+4 years which was established since the independence of Sudan in 1956. In 1992, the educational ladder was changed again to become 8+3 years, 8 for Basic level. Since the independence of Sudan, the status of English language has changed from being a second language to its current status as a foreign one. English language in Sudan has not been consistent due to the changing educational policies. The 1990s witnessed the last developments in in the status of English in Sudan. “Arabic has replaced gradually English as a medium of instructions in tertiary education.



Consequently, has now rightfully regained its ground as a medium of instruction in the entire system of education “Abdalla(2003:80). As a result, this change seemed to have contributed to the deterioration in the standard of English in Sudan such as mastering pronunciation skill.

## **2.4 Arabic in Sudan**

According to Nur (2014), Arabic came to Sudan in the seventh century with the Arabs and eventually became the national language of the country. Sudanese Arabic is the most widely spoken language in the country. It is the variety of Arabic spoken throughout northern Sudan. It has much borrowed vocabulary from the local languages (El Rotana). This has resulted in a variety of Arabic that is unique to Sudan, reflecting the way in which the country has been influenced by both African and Arab cultures .Arabic as the national language is spoken by around 54% of the population (Lodhi, 1993) and as a native language is known almost by 80%of the population as L1 or L2 or L3 (Abu –Manga, 2007).

## **2.5 Basic Education (Primary Education) in Sudan**

Children are admitted to basic education school at the age of 6. Basic education lasts eight years (grades 1 to 8) and is compulsory since 1998. In 1992, the former 6-3-3 system (adopted in the 1970s ) with admission to school at age 7, was replaced by eight years of basic education followed by three years of secondary education , lowering the school entry age to 6 years . Basic education is divided into three stages: grades 1-3, grades 4-6, and grades 7-8. At the end of grade 8 pupils sit the final exams and if successful receive the basic education certificate. The government is the largest provider of basic education. The Arabic language is the main medium of instruction. The use of local languages, if needed, is allowed.

In Sudan, English is introduced as a compulsory subject in class 5. To provide high quality reading materials to pupils, national curriculum development Centre, Federal Ministry of General Education, has brought out the Sudan Practical Integrated National English (SPINE) series with the support of British Council Khartoum. SPINE 1 is taught in class 5 and 6, SPINE 2 and 3 are meant for class 7 and 8 respectively and SPINE 4-6 is taught at the secondary stage. The books aim at development of language skills through communicative approach. (Arora 2003: 16-17).

## **2.6 Pronunciation Theories**

### **2.6.1 Historical Background**

Pronunciation emerged as a field of systematic study towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when International Phonetic Association was established in 1886. Since then, the emphasis allotted to pronunciation teaching in ESL/EFL classrooms has been subject to fluctuations. While traditional methods such as Grammar-Translation and Reading-Based Approach neglected pronunciation teaching completely and considered it irrelevant to language teaching, in subsequent methods such as Oral Approach and Audiolingualism, it had a more central role. Likewise, from 1940's to 1960's, pronunciation teaching was of primary importance in the English Language Teaching Curriculum. Although each method was at a different end of the continuum in terms of the techniques used, they were similar in the way that they focused on the segmental. Today, contemporary methods value pronunciation. They operate around the assumption that “ ...there is a threshold level of pronunciation for nonnative speakers of English ; if they fall behind this threshold level , they will have oral communication problems no matter how excellent and extensive their control of English grammar and vocabulary might be” ( Celce –Murcia & et.al.2010:8).

Pronunciation has a long and distinguished history in second language teaching. As is pointed out by Seidlhofer (2001:56), it “stood at the very beginning of language teaching methodology as a principled , theoretically -founded discipline, originating with the late- nineteenth-century Reform Movement”. Phoneticians interested in the teaching of pronunciation from a number of European countries were brought together by the Reform Movement , and this resulted in the establishment of pronunciation as a major concern of second language instruction lasting well into the second half of the twentieth century , even in the teaching of English (see Collins and Meese 1999; Howatt 2004). Their collaboration also led to the founding of the International Phonetic Association and the development of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), capable of representing the full inventory of sounds of all known languages. In the twenty-first century, the IPA is still the universally acknowledged system of phonetic transcription.

## **2.6.2 English Accent Models**

When English pronunciation teaching takes place in institutions all over the world, the models adopted are generally derived from what are sometimes referred to as older varieties of English (OVes), these being for the most part British and American English. The accents usually selected as models, Received Pronunciation (RP) in the case of British English and General American (GA) in the case of American English, are comprehensively described in pronouncing dictionaries (see Roach et al., 2006; Upton et al., 2001; Wells, 2000) and books on English phonetics and phonology (see, e.g. Roach 2000; Kreidler 2004; and for an exhaustive account Crittenden 2001). It has become unfashionable to assert that OVes like RP or GenAm should be used as a pronunciation model in this era of global English. There are many reasons for this, not least that the imposition of any variety is akin to linguistic imperialism. Setter (2008: 449).

## **2.7 The Grammar-Translation Method and Reading-Based Approaches**

Originally called the Classical Method because of its use in teaching Latin and Greek. Its purpose was to help students read and understand foreign language literature (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). It was first used in the teaching of the classical languages, Latin and Greek (Chastain 1988). The Grammar – Translation Method and The Direct Method have viewed pronunciation as irrelevant.

### **2.7.1 The Direct Method**

Also known as Reform Method / Natural Method / Phonetical Method / Anti-grammatical Method. This approach, also known as the **oral** or **natural** method, originated around the 1900s as an alternative to the traditional grammatical translation method. The basic purpose of this method is concerned with the meaning of word, expression gestures and language achievement which directly related the picture something in your mind you think of it and have such a clear memory or idea of it that you seem to be able to see it (Larson-Freeman,1986).” Students learn to understand a language by listening to a great deal of it and that they learn to speak it by speaking it –associating speech with appropriate action “(Rivers, 1968, s.18). The method laid great stress on correct pronunciation and target language from outset. The focus is on good pronunciation, with spontaneous use of the language, no translation, and little grammar analysis. IN the direct method, pronunciation is very important; however, the methodology is primitive. The teacher is ideally a native or near-native speaker of the target language presenting pronunciation inductively and correcting through modeling.

## 2.7.2 The Audio-Lingual Approach

Is "... a technique of foreign-language instruction that emphasizes audio-lingual skills over reading and writing and is characterized by extensive use of pattern practice" (dictionary .com).

In the period of World War II United States required linguists to set up **special training program** which would be emphasized on **fast** and **easyforeign language acquisition**. The Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) was established in 1942. The ASTP, the so called Army method, had significant impact on linguistics and the way foreign languages were taught. It was based on Leonard Bloomfield's technique (informant method) of memorization and repetition in simple foreign languages patterns.

It was Nelson Brooks of Yale University who suggested the term "Audio-lingual" for Aural –Oral approach, which was invented by Charles Fries. This method is called (Structural Approach) in Britain.

As with the direct method, in the Audio-lingual Approach, pronunciation is likewise very important and there is a great emphasis on the traditional notions of pronunciation, minimal pairs, drills and short conversations (Celce and Murcia and Goodwin 1991:136). Situational language teaching developed in Britain between 1940and 1960, also reflected the audio-lingual view of the pronunciation class (Richards and Rodgers 1986). Morley (1991:484) states, "The pronunciation class...was one that gave primary attention to phonemes and their meaningful contrasts, environmental allophonic variations, and combinatory phono tactic rules, along with .... Attention to stress, rhythm, and intonation."

### **2.7.3 The Cognitive-Code Approach**

Since the conventional wisdom of the late 1960s and early 1970s held that native-like pronunciation could not be totally taught anyway, the cognitive code approach de-emphasized pronunciation in favor of grammar and vocabulary. It was during these years that questions were asked about the role of pronunciation in the ESL/EFL curriculum, whether the focus of the programs and the instructional methods were effective or not. Pronunciation programs until then were “viewed as meaningless non-communicative drill-and- exercise gambits” (Morley 1991:485-6). In any language programs, the teaching of pronunciation was eliminated because many studies concluded “that little relationship exists between teaching pronunciation in the classroom and attained proficiency in pronunciation; the strongest factors found to affect pronunciation (i.e. Native language and motivation) seem to have little to do with classroom activities” (Suter 1976:233-53, Purcell and Suter 1980:271-87). However, with the emergence of the communicative approach to foreign language teaching, pronunciation has been regarded within the framework of real communication.

### **2.7.4 The Communicative Approach**

The Communicative Approach, which persists today with criticism from some quarters, sprung into prominence in the 1980s. This approach holds that oral communication is the primary use of language and therefore should be central to the mode of instruction. Though pronunciation is not an explicit feature in this mode of instruction, the prominence of pronunciation has been stressed by it. (Carey 2002:3).

### **2.7.5 Psychology**

The impact of the discipline of psychology can be seen in current trends in pronunciation teaching. Since pronunciation is very sensitive to emotional

factors (Brown, 1995) and that its nature is strongly related to students' ego, identity and the level of self-confidence, new trends in teaching pronunciation put a strong emphasis on the effective domain of learning to counterbalance the traditional focus placed exclusively on intellectual learning. An ideal receptive learning state come into being when a student is physically relaxed, emotionally calm and mentally alert. Research finding shows show that relaxed frame of mind and a degree of confidence pave the way for a correct production of target language sounds. Hence, establishing a non-threatening student-friendly environment is amongst main concerns of modern pronunciation instruction. Efficient ways of reducing stress related with pronunciation practice and dealing more efficiently with learners' emotions are based on the use of drama techniques. A commonly used strategy involves assuming an English or American identity and putting on a strong native accent, as if becoming a different dramatic persona (Wrembel 2001:3).

### **2.7.6 Neurolinguistics Programming (NLP)**

Neurolinguistics Programming is another perspective frequently advocated by innovative pronunciation teachers since it deals efficiently with affective factors concerning learning pronunciation and facilitates an accurate production of target language sounds. NLP is a collection of patterns and strategies based on a series of underlying understandings of how the mind works and how people act and react. NLP contributes to use language more efficiently so that through sending positive messages and suggestions of success we can generate intended responses (Wrembel 2001:3).

### **2.7.7 Computer Assisted Pronunciation Teaching (CAPT)**

Computer –Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Computer Assisted Pronunciation Teaching (CAPT) provide students with a private, stress-free

environment within which they can access virtually unlimited input, practice at their own pace and receive instantaneous feedback through the integration of Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR).

### **2.7.8 The Lingua Franca Core: Recent Theory**

A theory which has had a great impact on teachers of English pronunciation recently is Jennifer Jenkins' Lingua Franca Core. Using conversations in English between non-native speakers (NNSs) as data, Jenkins (2000) found that the chief issue for intelligibility in international contexts was pronunciation. Looking more closely, she identified key areas which need to be addressed if information was to be exchanged effectively. LFC in short:

- a. Most consonant sounds + one vowel (/3 :/)
- b. Preservation of most consonant clusters
- c. Vowel length (especially before voiced/unvoiced consonants)
- d. Appropriate word grouping and placement of nuclear stress

### **2.8 Definitions of Consonants**

The term Consonant is defined by Richard & Schmidt (2010) as:

A speech sound where the airstream from the lungs is either completely blocked (stop), partially blocked (lateral) or where the opening is so narrow that the air escapes with some consonants (Nasal) the airstream is blocked in the mouth but allowed to escape through the nose.

Similarly, Crystal (2008) defined it as:

In term of Phonetic and phonology, they are sounds made by a closure or narrowing in the vocal tract so that the air flow is either completely blocked, or so restricted that audible friction is produced. From a phonological point of view, consonants are those units which function at the margins of syllables, either singly or in clusters.



Fromkin et al. (2011, p. 560) stated, “Consonant is speech sound produced with some constriction of the air stream”.

### **2.8.1 Differences between Consonants Sound Systems in Modern Standard Arabic and English**

The difference between first language and second language is a source of problems in learning pronunciation. Accordingly, Bell (1955:15) claims that “it is one of the obstacles to achieve acceptable level of English pronunciation for most EFL learners is to know the differences between the sound structure of English and Arabic.” Lado(1957:2) claimed that “ ....those elements which are similar to( the learner’s) native language will be simple for him/her , and those elements that are different will be difficult. “

Arabic sound system comprises a total of thirty-two consonants, while that of English has only twenty-four. There are quite a number of common consonant sounds in both the languages. However, there is also a considerable set of consonants restricted to each language.

Another major difference is that Arabic does not differentiate between a lot of voiceless and voiced sound pairs. For example, /p/, /b/, /g/, /k/ (plosives or stops) and /f/, /v/ (fricatives). Unlike English, they are not distinct phonemes but allophones in Arabic.

Arabic is a (consonant-heavy) language in compare to English, even though, the latter use many more constant clusters to form words (Majeed, 1999:20-24). This indicates that learners face some difficulties due to the influence of LI sounds, thus make it problematic for them to master their L2.

Some English consonants do not exist in the Arabic sound system like /p/ and /v/ and even these consonants, which seem similar to some Arabic consonants like

/t/ or /k/, are not identical but different in the manner and even in the place of articulation (Majeed, 1999:85).

English consonant sounds are twenty-four in number, they are:

/p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /z/, /s/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /l/, /r/, /j/, /w/.

Some English consonants are not phonemic in Arabic, so Sudanese pupils may indiscriminate or mispronounce these phonemes. For example, the sound /p/ is not known in Arabic or Sudanese colloquial, it is pronounced as /b/, the word pen comes out as ben, and cup is pronounced as cub. Although the pupils are familiar with the sound /g/, they are sometimes getting confused and keep substituting it for /dʒ/ as in (margin).

The sound /tʃ/ does not have similar sound in the Arabic consonantal system, so the pupils are often replaced it by the sound /d/ (sheep/cheap).

The consonant sounds such as /s/ and /ð/, /z/ and /ð/, /f/ and /v/ are confusing to pronounce for many EFL pupils, since they have no counterparts in the phonetic system of Arabic language.

### **2.8.2 Mother- Tongue Interference**

It is observed that making some pronunciation errors in the second language can be explained by the notion of “transfer”, which is defined by Oldin (1989:25), cited in Fawzi (2010) as “the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired.

Several studies have been conducted on the influence of first language (L1) on learning English language. Mossa (1972:44) reported that “/p/ and /b/ sounds are two different phonemes and each one is distinguished by native speakers. “In Arabic, the situation is different; mainly there is only one phoneme /b/ for this; which is the reason why most of Sudanese EFL learners mispronounce words

with /p/ sounds. Learners are confused between /p/ and /b/ as in words like (park, bark), (pen, ben). Even if teachers ask learners to pronounce these words, seemingly, they pronounce /b/ instead of /p/ and sometimes /p/ is used in place of /b/ which rarely happens. Many other sounds are influenced by the mother-tongue of foreign learners.

## **2.9 Previous Studies**

### **2.9.1 The First Study**

The study is a research conducted by Mohammad Hossein Keshavarz, a professor of Applied Linguistics at Girne American University in North Cyprus and Mahmud Khamis Abubakar who holds a Master's degree in ELT and worked as an ESL instructor at MK College of Advanced and Remedial Studies in T/Wada, Kano State of Nigeria. The research was published in 2016 under the title "An Investigation into Pronunciation problems of Hausa- speaking learners of English ". The study investigated the pronunciation problems of Hausa speakers of English in Nigeria. The participants were 60 native speakers of Hausa studying at three universities in Northern Cyprus. The tool used in the research was a pronunciation test that consisted among other items a word list of English consonants and vowels with potential pronunciation difficulties for Hausa speakers of English. The collected data were then transcribed, analyzed, and percentages and frequencies of pronunciation errors were computed. The results revealed that native speakers of Hausa face problems in pronouncing certain English vowels and consonants, due to the notion of negative transfer as a result of mother tongue interference

### **2.9.2 The Second Study**

A research paper carried by Jalal Ahmad of the Department of English, Najran University, Saudi Arabia and published in 2011. The research was under the title

“Pronunciation Problems among Saudi Learners: A case Study at the Preparatory Year Program, Najran university Saudi Arabia. The study investigated the difficulties encountered by Saudi students in pronouncing certain English consonant sounds. All participants are adults who graduated from secondary schools and joined the Preparatory Year Program at Najran University. The tool used was a tape –recorded test for samples of 4 problematic consonant sounds. The author selected eight students randomly from different sections. The results show that the Arabic speakers in this study had difficulties in pronouncing certain English consonant sounds, such as: /p/, /d/, /v/. This study also provides an insight and assists ESL/EFL teachers with some helpful suggestions and teaching strategies that will reduce future problems regarding English consonants pronunciation among Arab learners.

### **2.9.3 The Third Study**

This study is done by Sawsan Mohamed Ali Mabyou, Sudan University of Science and Technology, College of Graduate Studies and published in 2017, under the title: Investigating Pronunciation Problems among 8<sup>th</sup> Level Basic Schools. The study investigated the problems of pronunciation for 8<sup>th</sup> level of basic schools’ students in Khartoum locality, Sahafa Basic Schools. The study employed test research method to investigate difficulties encountered by the experimental group in pronouncing some English vowels and consonants. The findings of the research support the hypothesis that mother tongue interference, spelling and sound system differences between LI and L2 affect pronunciation and lead the learners of other languages to mispronunciation.

### **2.9.4 The Fourth Study**

The title of this study: “Pronunciation Problems: A case Study of English Language Students at Sudan University of Science and technology”. This study

was conducted by Elkhair Muhammad Idris Hassan, English Language Department, Al-Farabi Private College, Riyadh, KSA and published in 2014. This study investigated the problems in English pronunciation experienced by learners whose first language is Sudanese Spoken Arabic. Samples comprise 50 students and 30 teachers from (SUST). The data was collected through observation, recordings and a questionnaire, and then analyzed both statistically and descriptively. The findings revealed that Sudanese Students of English whose language background is Sudanese Spoken Arabic, had problems with the pronunciation of some English vowels and consonants such as /z/, /s/, /b/ and /p/. The study concluded that factors such as interference, the differences in the sound systems between L1 and L2, inconsistency of English sounds and spelling are behind many pronunciation errors. The study recommended some helpful teaching strategies to reduce future pronunciation problems.

### **2.9.5 The Fifth Study**

Title: “Investigating the Causes behind Pronunciation Problems Facing Sudanese University Students Majoring in English: A case Study of Khartoum University Faculty of Arts, English Department “. Published 2015.

This study was conducted by Sumia Mohamed NourAbayazeed of Hail University, College of Preparatory English Department, KSA and Abdalla Yassin Abdalla of Sudan University of Science & Technology –College of Languages, English department –Sudan. The study investigated the probable reasons behind English pronunciation problems facing Sudanese university students majoring in English. The study pursued descriptive analytical method towards the gathered data. The first tool was a test presented to 50 students of the third year at Faculty of Arts, Khartoum University. The second tool was a questionnaire introduced to 20 teachers of the field at the same university. The analysis of the collected data revealed that the sound systems differences

between English and Arabic cause the problems, as well as the inadequacy of English syllabus concerning the number of the phonology courses.

### **2.10 Summary**

In this section, almost the five studies agreed that mother- tongue interference is the major problem that faces Sudanese students as well as the Arab learners at large, in addition to Hausa speakers in pronouncing English consonants. Other significant cause is the differences in the sound systems between L1 and L2. In this current study the researcher deviates from the previous ones whose majority participants are in university levels, thus the study covers female pupils from a government basic school.

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**METHODOLOGY**

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research methodology of this study. It introduces the design of the study, participants and characteristics of the samples, tools of data collection, validity and reliability of the test and questionnaire.

### **3.1 Method of the Study**

This study employs the quantitative research methodology with a use of a diagnostic test and questionnaire as instruments to collect data. The researcher also adopts the descriptive- analytic method for describing and analyzing data.

### **3.2 Participants**

The participants of this study involve two groups; the first group comprises 40 pupils of the 6<sup>th</sup> level at Al Izba Basic School for Girls – Al-Amlak, Khartoum North, and the second group includes 20 English teachers from the same school and the neighborhoods.

### **3.3 The Sample**

The first group of pupils is assumed to be representative of the population and homogenous, since they share the same age, school, and Sudanese cultural and linguistic background. English is taught through SPINE series. They were selected via systematic sampling technique. The second group of teacher participants was drawn from the same school and around.

### **3.4 Tools of Data Collection**

Two types of research instruments were used to collect data for this study which are diagnostic test and questionnaire.



### **3.4.1 Diagnostic Test**

The aim of conducting the audio recording test was to examine pronunciation difficulties on some consonant sounds which encountered by pupils of the 6<sup>th</sup> class at AL Izba Basic School. The well-known pronunciation technique (word list) was used for the test. Five words were selected for each problematic consonant sounds which are /p/ in “people”/θ/in “thank”/Ń/in “this” /v/ in “vast” and/tʃ/ in check. Each participant was asked to read these words aloud while being recorded. Pupils will be informed that their recordings are to be deleted at the end of the practice since it is just for the research purpose. This part tests the first hypothesis which assumes that: Sudanese Basic School Pupils encounter difficulties in pronouncing some English Consonant Sounds.

### **3.4.2 Teachers’ Questionnaire**

The purpose of this structured questionnaire for teachers is threefold: firstly, to obtain basic information from participant English teachers regarding their academic credentials and actual levels of phonological knowledge and training, secondly, to obtain data on English curriculum as with regard to pronunciation teaching and thirdly to support the data obtained from the diagnostic test. The questionnaire also explores the English teachers’ perception of the difficulties encountered by Sudanese Basic schools ‘pupils in pronouncing some consonant sounds. The questionnaire comprises three sections, A, B and C. Section A consists of four items inquiring the participant’s background information which are; gender, age, qualification and professional training in phonetics and phonology. They are structured questions with options for the participants to choose in collecting the essential information. There are five items in Section B inquiring the opinions and ideas of the teachers about the position of pronunciation in the school curriculum. Section C comprises five phrases with

pairs of some consonant sounds, the purpose of which is to explore the English teachers' opinions on which of the consonant sounds are the most mispronounced by the learners. /p/-/b/, /v/-/f/, /ʃ/-/j/, /θ/-/θ/, /z/-/z/, were chosen for this activity. In both sections, B and C, items 1 and 5 are a five-point Likert type scale ranging from 1=agree to 5=strongly disagree.

### **3.5 Research Procedures**

A smart phone is used for the diagnostic test. Each individual participant is asked to read aloud the already chosen words for the test. The pronunciations are recorded, the recorded sounds are transcribed and the mispronounced ones are analyzed. For the structured questionnaire, copies of same were distributed to 20 English teachers from AL Izba Basic School and the neighborhood. The teachers were informed in advance of the academic purpose of the research.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research Tools**

Both the test and questionnaire were validated first by three scholars of the field from Sudan University of Science and Technology, namely: Dr. Sami Balla, Dr. Naglaa Taha Bashary and Dr. Abdul-Rahman Awad-Allah. The reliability of the test and questionnaire is checked according to the criteria of judging and refereeing by the same panel of experts.

### **3.7 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter gives full description of the research methodology and its design of this study. It also exhibits the participants, their characteristics, tools of data collection and design of the test and questionnaire as well as their validity and reliability.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS**

# CHAPTER FOUR

## DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to analyze, evaluate, interpret and discuss the results of the data collected through a pronunciation recording test and a questionnaire. The diagnostic test was applied to collect data from the sample of (40) pupils from the 6<sup>th</sup> class of AL Izba Basic School for Girls – Al-Amlak, Khartoum North. A structured- questionnaire was used to collect the information from (20) teachers,(4) of them were of the same school and (16)from the neighborhood, namely Al Izba Basic School for Boys, Mamoun Alberier Basic school for Girls, Ammar Ibn Yassir Basic School for Boys, Musaab Ibn Omier for Boys, Al-shiemaab Bint Elharith for Girls and Maaz Ibn Gabal for Boys.

### 4.1 Procedures of Data Analysis

The diagnostic test was conducted first. Six consonant sounds from words of the same number were selected for the test which sounds were assumed to be the most mispronounced by the pupils. /p/ as in people, /θ/ as in Thank, /ð/ as in This, /v/ as in visit, /tʃ/ as in Check and /dʒ/ as in Just.

The Teacher Questionnaire aims to support the data obtained from the pupils' test and whether they are well trained in phonetics and phonology.

## 4.2 Analysis of the Pupils' Diagnostic Pronunciation Test

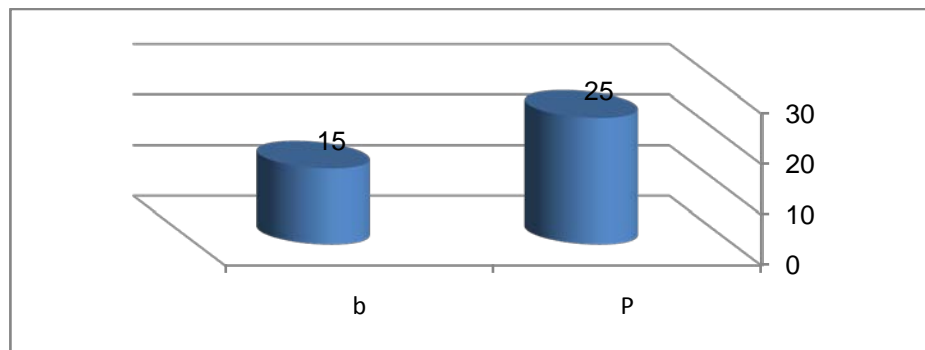
The collected data from the test is transcribed; recordings of the pronunciation were analyzed in order to identify the most mispronounced consonant sounds made by the participants which later were transformed into percentages.

**Hypothesis (1); Sudanese Basic School Pupils encounter difficulties in pronouncing some English Consonant sounds.**

Table No (4.1) Shows the Frequency Distribution for the Pupils' Production of the target sound /p/ as in **people**.

RESULT	Pupils' pronunciation		Frequency	Percentage
Correct	/P/		25	62.5%
Incorrect	/b/		15	37.5%
		Total	40	100

**Fig No (4.1)**

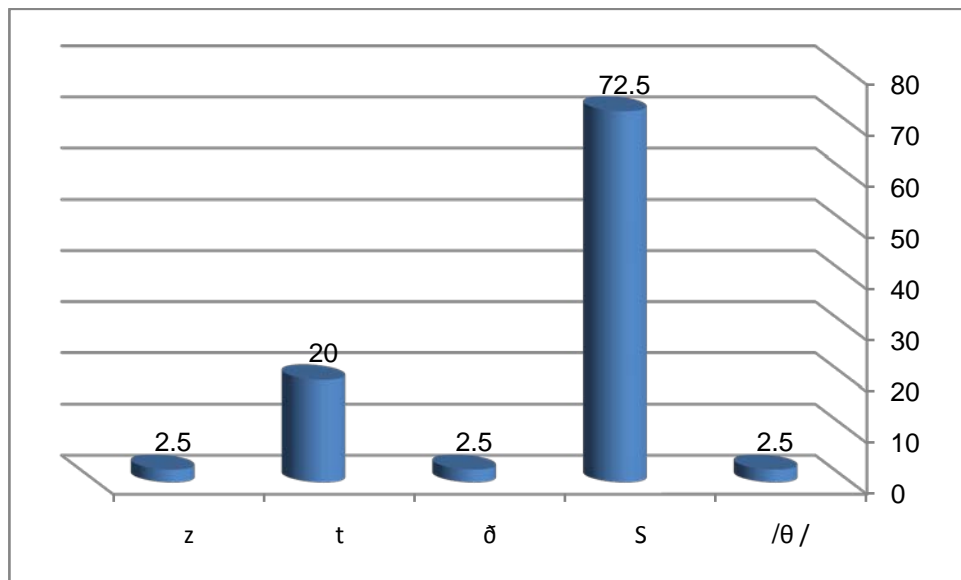


As seen from the table and figure above,( 25) of the pupils (62.5%) out of( 40) who participated in the pronunciation test, were consciously able to pronounce the /p/ consonant sound correctly, though the said sound does not exist in the Sudanese spoken Arabic. It is noticed that only (15) of the pupils (37.5%) had mispronounced it as /b/.The result differed completely with approximately all the similar previous studies which indicated that the participants were hardly able to pronounce the bilabial voiceless /p/ and substituted it with the voiced bilabial /b/ in its initial, middle and final position.

Table No (4.2) Shows the Frequency Distribution for the pupils' production of the target sound /θ/ as in **Thank**.

RESULT	Pupils' pronunciation	Frequency	Percentage
Correct	/θ/	1	2.5%
incorrect	/s/	29	72.5%
	/ð/	1	2.5%
	/t/	8	20%
	/z/	1	2.5%
	Total	40	100

**Fig No (4.2)**

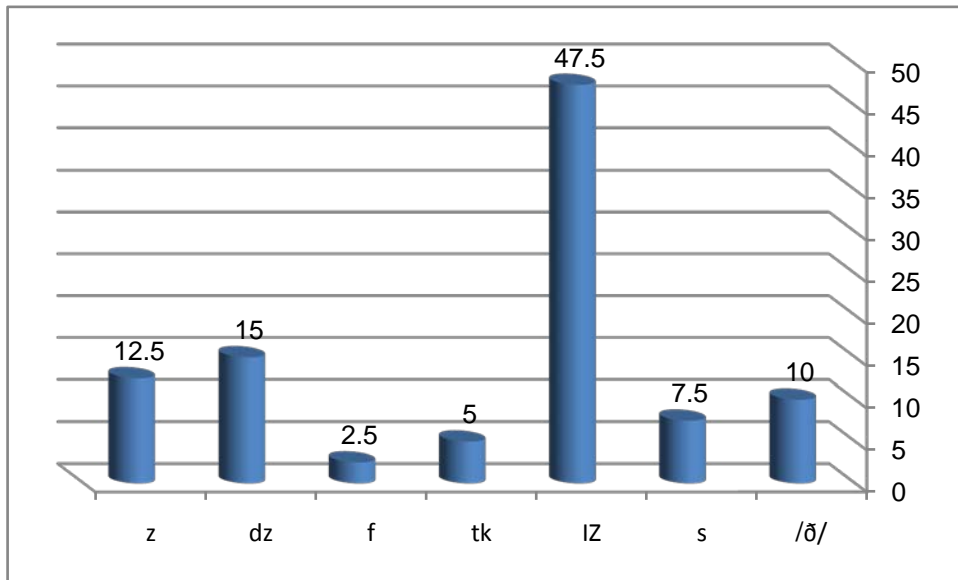


It is noticed from the above table and figure, there is only one pupil (2.5%) was able to pronounce the target sound /θ/ correctly in the word (Thank). The majority of the pupils (72.5%) mispronounced the dental fricative /θ/ and replaced it with the alveolar fricative /s/.

Table No (4.3) Shows the Frequency Distribution for the Pupils 'production of the target Sound /ð/ as in **This**

RESULT	Pupils' pronunciation	Frequency	Percentage
Correct	/ð/	4	10%
incorrect	/s/	3	7.5%
	/iz/	19	47.5%
	/tk/	2	5%
	/f/	1	2.5%
	/dz/	6	15%
	/z/	5	12.5%
	Total	40	100

**Fig No (4.3)**

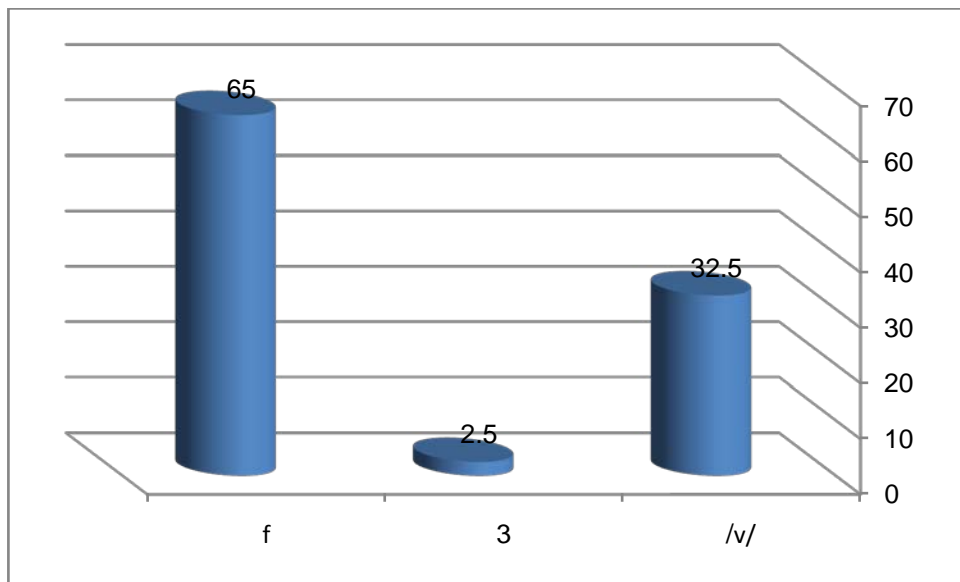


Consonant English sound /ð/ was mispronounced by most of the pupils (47.5 %), who pronounced /iz/, /dz/ and /z/ instead of /ð/

Table No (4.4) Shows the Frequency Distribution for the pupils' Pronunciation of the Consonant Sound /v/ as in **Visit**.

RESULT	Pupils' pronunciation		Frequency	Percentage
Correct	/v/		13	32.5%
	/z/		1	2.5%
incorrect	/f/		26	65% <sup>3</sup>
		Total	40	100.0

**Fig No (4.4)**



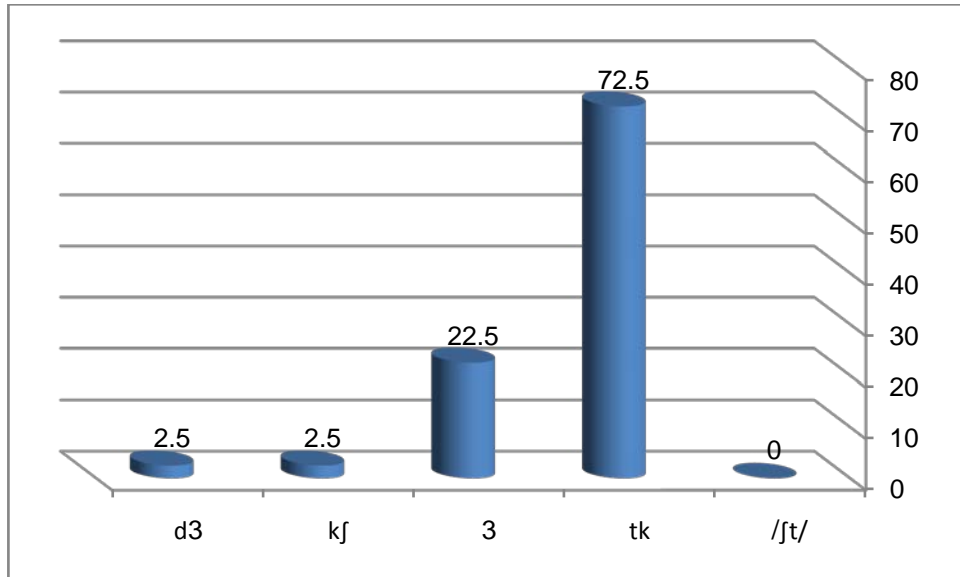
For /v/ sound, 65% of the participants mispronounced it and replaced it with /f/.



Table No (4.5) Shows the Frequency Distribution for the Pupils' production of the sound /tʃ/ as in **Check**.

RESULT	Pupils' pronunciation	Frequency	Percentage
Correct	/tʃ/	0	0%
incorrect	/tk/	29	72.5%
	/ʒ/	9	22.5%
	ʃk	1	2.5%
	/dʒ/	1	2.5%
	Total	40	100.0

**Fig No (4.5)**

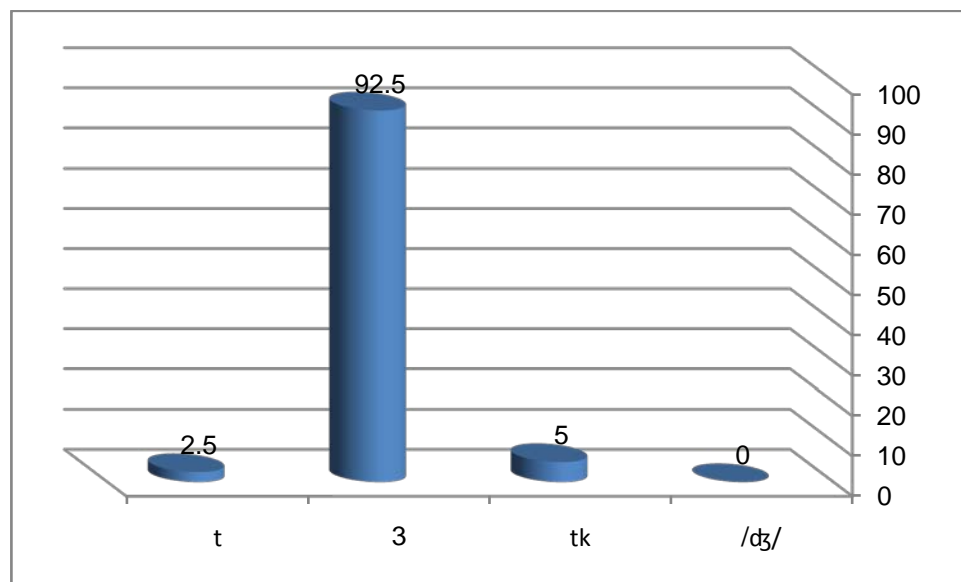


None of the pupils (0%) were able to pronounce the target consonant sound /tʃ/ correctly. 29 pupils mispronounced it as /tk/ amounting to 72.5%.

Table No (4.6) Shows the Frequency Distribution for the Pupils' Pronunciation of the Sound /dʒ/ as in **Just**.

RESULT	Pupils' pronunciation		Frequency	Percentage
Correct	/dʒ/		0	0%
incorrect	/tk/		2	5%
	/ʒ/		37	92.5%
	/t/		1	2.5%
		Total	40	100.0

**Figure No (4.6)**



It is noticed that the Consonant Sound /dʒ/ is more problematic for the pupils (0%) whose they confused it with the sound /ʒ/which counted for 92.5% of the participants.

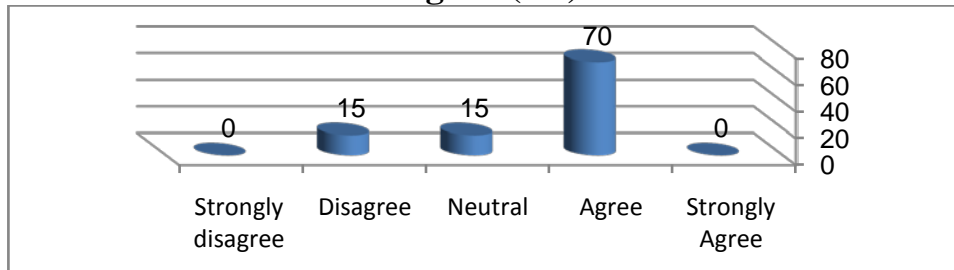
### 4.3 Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire Hypothesis (2)

**Hypothesis No. (2): Some Consonant Sounds constitute the most difficulties in Pronunciation for Sudanese Basic school Pupils, such as /p/, /v/, /tʃ/, / ð/, / θ/, /dʒ/.**

Table No (4.7) shows the Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers related to the sound /p/ as in **pick**.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	14	70%
Neutral	3	15%
Disagree	3	15%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.7)**

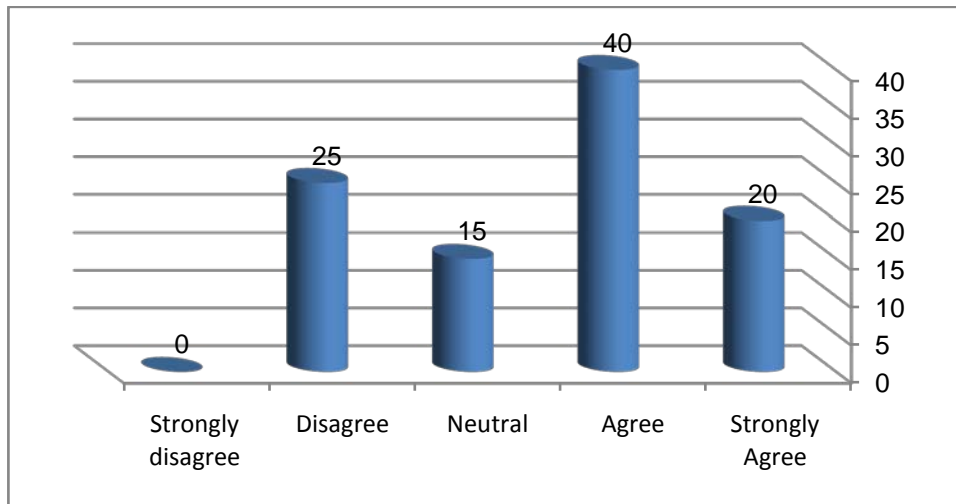


The above table and figure show 70% of the participants agreed that the sound /p/ as in the word (pick), constitutes one of the most difficulties encountered by Sudanese Basic school pupils, 15% disagreed, while 15% were not sure. The result supports the data obtained from the diagnostic test which targeted some consonants, including /p/ sound in this case, which assumed to be problematic when being pronounced by Sudanese basic school pupils. Those sounds are absent in the Sudanese colloquial Arabic. Most errors in pronunciation were of substitution nature. Pupils substitute /b/ for the target sound /p/ as in the word (pick) is replaced by /bik/. This can also be applied to English consonant sounds particularly /v/ and /f/, /tʃ and /ʃ/, /ð/ and /z/, /θ/ and /s , /dʒ/ and /g/ as in the words (every),(change), (this),(worthy) and (judge) respectively. The subsequent tables and figures are clearly reflecting such an argument.

Table No (4.8) Shows the Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers related to the sound /v/ as in **every**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	20%
Agree	8	40%
Neutral	3	15%
Disagree	5	25%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.8)**

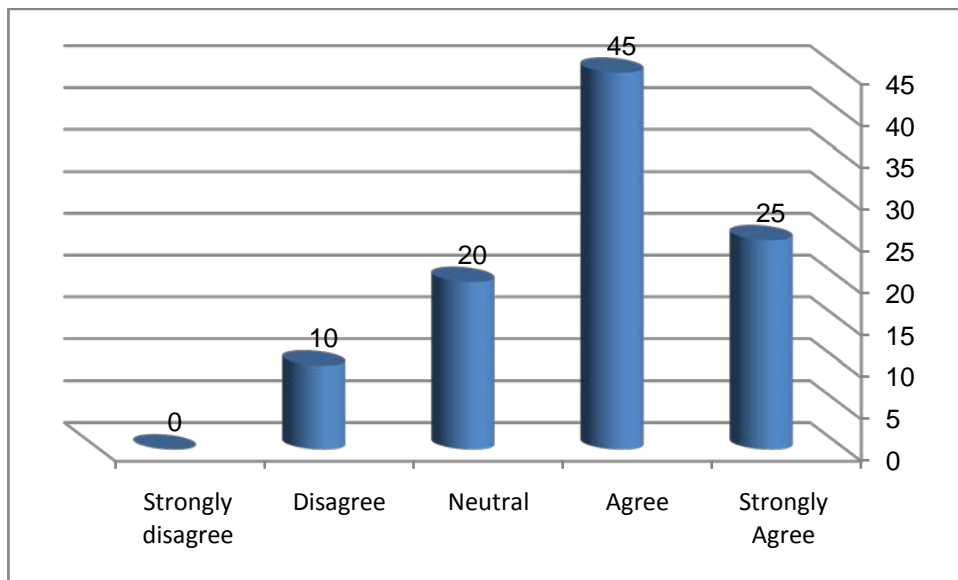


For /v/ sound, as in the word (every), the table and figure above show the participants responses to the statement that some consonant sounds constitute the most difficulties when being pronounced by pupils. The results indicate that 20% had strongly agreed, 40% agreed, 15% were undecided and 25% disagreed.

Table No (4.9) shows the Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers related to the sound /tʃ/ - as in **Change**.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	5	25%
Agree	9	45%
Neutral	4	20%
Disagree	2	10%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.9)**

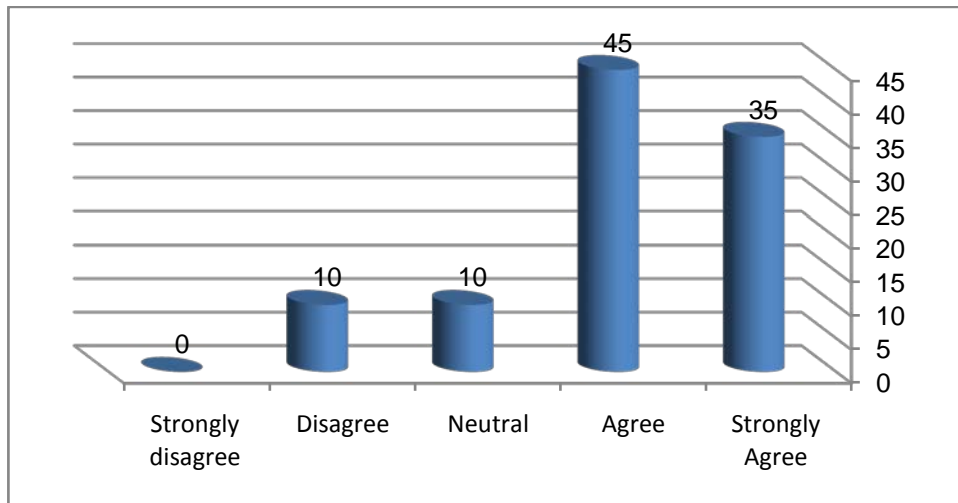


The table and figure above show 25% of the participant teachers had strongly agreed with the statement that the sound /tʃ/ as in the word (change) constitutes one of the most problematic consonants when being pronounced by pupils. 45% had agreed, 20% were not sure and 10% had disagreed.

Table No (4.10) shows the Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers related to the sound / ð/ - as in **this**.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	35%
Agree	9	45%
Neutral	2	10%
Disagree	2	10%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.10)**

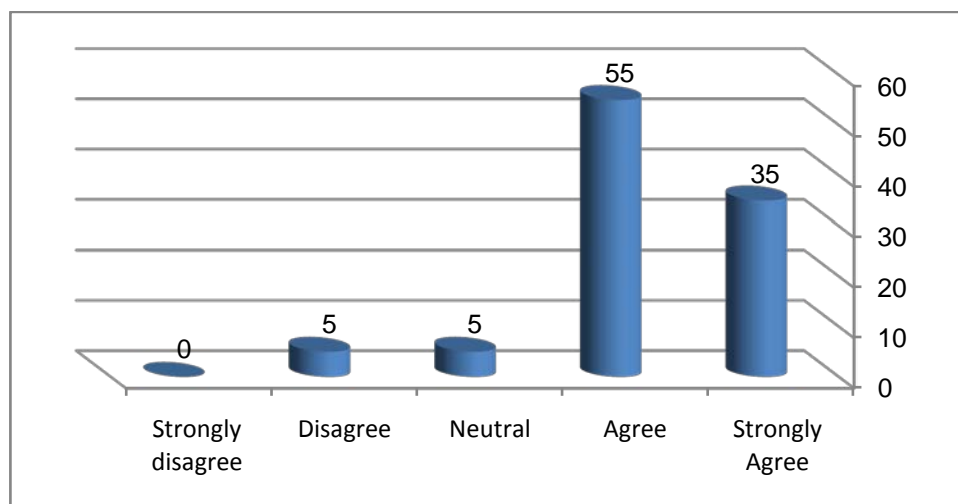


For / ð/ sound as in (this), the above table and figure reveal the responses of the participants on the statement that the said consonant constitutes one of the most difficulties when being pronounced by basic school pupils. The results show 35% had strongly agreed, 45% agreed, 10% were not sure and 10% disagreed with the assumption.

Table No (4.11) shows the Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers related to the sound / θ/ - as in **worthy**.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	35%
Agree	11	55%
Neutral	1	5%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.11)**

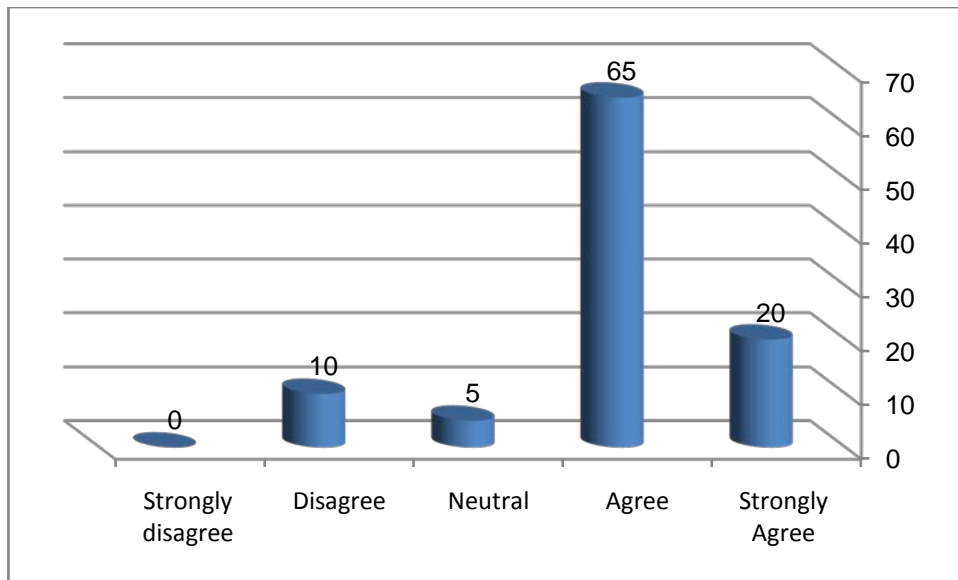


The sound / θ/ as in (worthy) is considered one of the most consonants which being problematic to pupils as far as pronunciation is concerned. The table and figure above show the reaction of the participants with 35% who strongly agreed, 55% had agreed, 5% were undecided and 5% disagreed with the statement.

Table No (4.12) shows the Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers related to the sound /dʒ/- as in **Judge**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	20%
Agree	13	65%
Neutral	1	5%
Disagree	2	10%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.12)**



The table and figure above show the teachers responses to the statement: /dʒ/ sound as in (judge) constitute one of the most difficult in pronunciation for basic school pupils. The results reveal 70% had agreed, 15% were not sure and 15% were disagreed.



Based on the analysis and discussions of the results of the data collected via the pupils' test and the teachers' questionnaire as shown in all the above-mentioned tables, it could be concluded that 65.5% of the total percentage of all EFL pupils faces difficulty when pronouncing the sound /p/. The pupils substitute the voiceless bilabial /p/ with the voiced bilabial /b/ as in the word (people). The dental fricative /θ/ caused problems for the participants, with which 72.5% of the total of the pupils replace it with the alveolar fricative /s/, such as in the word (thank). The consonant sound /ð/, was correctly pronounced by only 10% of the total of the participants, in the identified word (this), where pupils replaced /ð/ mainly with /iz/ and /dz/. For the sound /v/, more than 65% of the total of the pupils experienced problems, where they pronounce /f/ instead of /v/ in the word (visit), which percentage of mispronunciation is rather low, in comparison with 32.5% of the participants who pronounced it correctly. The consonant sound /tʃ/ was mispronounced by all of the pupils (100%) as in the word (check) which was the higher mispronunciation, the same as with the sound /dʒ/ that was problematic for (100%) of all participants, e.g. in the word (just), when compared with the other four consonants which were previously mentioned.

A structured questionnaire for teachers, whom 60% of participants were males, was also adopted in order to support the results derived from diagnostic test. For teaching experience, more than 90% of the total of the participants had 10 and over 15 years of experience and 10% had experience between one to five years of experience.

English graduates constitute 95% of the total of the participants, while the 5% are from other disciplines. As for the level of education, 75% of all participants had possessed an educational level, ranging from Higher Diploma to PhD degrees, 10% of Sudan Certificate and 10% in possession of

SUNACEL/SELTI Diploma. Intentionally or otherwise, only one participant had declined to reveal possession of either of the prescribed level of qualification.

Regarding the professional training/ courses in phonetics and phonology, the result was in the affirmative. 70% of the participants had obtained in- service training or courses inside Sudan and the 30% abroad. Thus, and on the face of it, all of the teachers (100%) were trained in this field. Despite of this, and in a subsequent result, states that 30% of the teachers strongly agreed and 45% agreed. Thus, 75% of the participants agreed that they did not have opportunity for enough training in phonetics and phonology. Nevertheless, the result is not absolute since 25% of the teachers disagree that they did not have opportunity for enough training in phonetics and phonology.

On the statement that: "lack of English –speaking environment leads to mispronunciation of some English consonants." 35% of the participants strongly agreed and 55% agreed, while 10% of them disagreed that live exposure to English pronunciation would improve competence of EFL learners. It is worthy to notice that, probably most of the pupils have never been to any of the English speaking countries, hence, they do not have any kind of exposure to a native English environment.

Teachers' opinions were requested on the statement that: "pupils pay less attention to pronunciation in the classroom." The results reveal that 50% of all of the participants equally vary between strongly agreed and agreed 10% were not sure, 35% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed. The differences in opinions can be attributed to the negative attitude towards English language which is common amongst some Sudanese pupils, who perceive the language as difficult and is not important as other subjects. In addition, some Sudanese EFL learners do not show interest or motivation to learn English, except for exam purposes. Accordingly, English pronunciation is often neglected by learners who pay more

attention to grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension, and even lack of confidence in their pronunciation. Another factor can be referred to teachers who may be in a position of self-defense or for the reputation of their institution and the profession.

Pronunciation teaching is of primary importance in the English language teaching curriculum. Participants were asked their opinions on the attitudes towards pronunciation teaching, according to the statement that: "curriculum design neglected teaching of pronunciation". The results reveal that respectively 30% and 45% strongly agreed and agreed with the assumption, 5% were undecided, while 20% disagreed, in respect of the total of all those who participated in the activity. Pronunciation teaching in EFL classroom has been subject to fluctuations, from traditional methods such as Grammar-Translation and Reading-Based Approach, which neglected pronunciation teaching completely and considered it irrelevant to language teaching, to Oral Approach and Audio-lingual method which emphasizes the teaching of listening and speaking before reading and writing, to current contemporary methods which appreciate pronunciation. Such result also suggests that the English language syllabus is not adequate regarding pronunciation teaching, thus, its design is still focusing on the written component at the expense of the spoken one.

"English consonants and consonant clusters which do not exist in the Arabic sound system seem to be problematic when being pronounced by Arabic speakers learning Arabic – Sudanese spoken Arabic inclusive- like /p/ as in pile, /v/ as in save, /ʒ/ as in vision, /tʃ/ as in child, /dʒ/ as in judge, /sp/ as in speak, /spl/ as in split, /str/ as in star, /spr/ as in spring, /skr/ as in scratch. " participants were requested to give their opinion on the afore-mentioned statement, which appeared in the teacher questionnaire in support of the data obtained from the pupils 'test. The result shows that 5% of teachers strongly agreed and 85%

agreed with the statement, which indicates 90% of the teachers believe that their pupils have problems in pronouncing English consonants as well as consonant clusters 'sounds which have no equivalence in the Arabic phonemic system. Learners are confused with such sounds, besides having the tendency to replace each of them with other sounds that are found in their first language. The results of this study reveal that consonant sounds which do not have similar sounds in the Arabic consonantal system such as /p/, /v/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/ and /z/ are confusing when being pronounced by many Sudanese EFL learners. Pupils tend to substitute /b/ for /p/ (ben/pen), /f/ for /v/ (fife/five) and /j/ for /tʃ/ (sheep/cheap). For consonant clusters, which refer to phoneme groupings, not alphabet letters, Arabic has far fewer consonant clusters in contrast to English. Certain English clusters contain sounds that are not in the Arabic consonant inventory or have different pronunciations; such as /spl/, /str/ and /skr/. These clusters are being problematic for Sudanese EFL learners. To avoid this situation, learners often insert a short vowel sound to break up consonant clusters when speaking English, as in ( nexist) for (next), instead.

Hypothesis No (2) deals with the statement ' some consonant sounds constitute the most difficulties in pronunciation for Sudanese basic school pupils such as /p/, /v/, tʃ/, / ð/, / θ/ and /dʒ/.' To sum up, and as shown previously, most of the teachers reacted to the statement in the affirmative in different degrees. For the sound /p/, 70% of the total of the participants had agreed and the remaining 30% was equally divided between those who were undecided and who disagreed. As with the consonant /v/, the result indicates that 20% had strongly agreed, 40% agreed, 25% disagreed and 15% were not sure. Regarding the sound /tʃ/, 25% were strongly agreed, 45% agreed that sound is problematic, 20% were undecided and 10% disagreed. The sound /ð/ was also selected for the teachers, based on the previous assumption. The result shows that only 10% of

the total participants were disagreed, equally as with those who were not sure (10%), 35% strongly agreed and 45% agreed. On the difficulty of the sound / θ/, 35% of the teachers were strongly agreed, 55% agreed and the remaining 10% was equally divided between those who were undecided and who were disagreed. For the sound /dʒ/, 20% had strongly agreed that the sound is problematic, 65% had agreed, 5% were uncertain and 10% disagreed.

In summary, the final analysis and results in this study indicate that, on average, 23% of the teachers who participated in this activity had strongly agreed, 53% agreed and 24% is equally divided between who were undecided and who disagreed that the sounds : /p/, /v/, /f/, /ð/, / θ/ and / dʒ/ constitute the most difficulties in pronunciation for basic school pupils. It is evident that none of the participants (0%) had strongly disagreed on the difficulty of such phonemes. Ranking the degree of difficulty for these consonant sounds, came first was the sound /θ/ with 90%, /dʒ/ was the second sound with 85%, the sound /ð/ was ranked the third with 80% and the sounds /p/ and /f/ scored the fourth position, both at 70% and consonant /v/ was the least of the previous sounds with 60%. In part, the results show that 12% of the total of the participants were opted to be in the middle by not either agree or disagree that the selected English consonant sounds were the most problematic, confusing and challenging when being pronounced by their pupils. In the researcher's viewpoint, this segment of teachers might think that the pronunciation of such sounds is not always consistent altogether, but differs separately from one sound to another. This means that not all of them are equally the most problematic sounds. Another reason may be the measure used was not applicable or irrelevant to certain prestigious schools in the area where the research was conducted, Al- Amlak and its neighborhoods in Khartoum-north. At worst, it can be an easy way for these respondents to skip an answer which can lead them

to reveal or conceal their true opinion. In addition, the results reveal that, also 12% of the participants had strongly disagreed with the previous statement. In the opinion of the researcher, such an answers could be attributed to the fact that, part of teachers are always tend to defend both of their pupils, schools reputation, own profession or other interests, though they had already been informed that their responses will be treated as highly confidential and for scientific purposes only.

It is generally known that certain consonant sounds do not exist in Sudanese spoken Arabic like /p/, /t/ and /v/ which causes problems in pronunciation for Sudanese pupils who learn English. The sound /p/, /t/ and /v/ are often replaced by the sound /b/, /f/ and /f/ respectively, as in the words: (pen-ben), (cheap-sheep) and (five-fife). The sound /θ/ does not usually occur in Sudanese spoken Arabic but it occurs in Standard Arabic. Sudanese EFL learners replace the /θ/ sound with /s/ e.g. (thank-sank). The consonant English sound /ð/ is mispronounced by most of the pupils, where they pronounce /z/ instead of /ð/ as in (this-zis). The sound /θ/ and /ð/ is not in Sudanese colloquial Arabic, but exists in some forms of Arabic dialect, e.g. (Iraqi, Omani, Saudi Arabian, Yemeni, etc.). In addition, the speaker of Sudanese Spoken Arabic is not used to pronounce /θ/ and /ð/ sounds, because these sounds do not exist in his native language as a result from the differences in the sound system of English and the native language. In such a case, this could lead the learner to use the nearest sounds /s/ and /z/ respectively, because his organs of speech are not trained or accustomed to produce such sound systems which are unfamiliar to him. The last in the list was the sound /dʒ/, which is also absent in the Sudanese spoken Arabic, thus becomes problematic for the pupils. Although Sudanese EFL learners are familiar with the sound /g/, they are sometimes getting confused and pronouncing /g/ instead of /dʒ/, as in the word (margin). Since the English sound

/dʒ/ is not known in Arabic or Sudanese colloquial, the same as /z/, this to some extent causes difficulty in the production of the English /z/ which is sometimes replaced by /dʒ/. As the sound /dʒ/ contains two different sounds /d/ and /z/, learners usually drop the former so the sound comes as /z/, such as in the word adjust /əʒʌst/ and /ədʒʌst/. By doing so, the learners manage to use /z/ in the place of /dʒ/, although the former is not phonemic in Arabic. In other words, since the contrast between /dʒ/ and /z/ in Arabic is not phonemic, thus does not affect meaning, either one or the other is used by EFL learners in pronouncing English words which having these two sounds.

Based on the analysis, results and interpretation of the data collected from the pupils' diagnostic test and teachers' responses to the questionnaire, the 3 hypotheses of the present study can be tested accordingly.

The Pupils' Diagnostic Test was administered first and deals with the first hypothesis which assumes that Sudanese Basic School pupils encounter difficulties in pronouncing some English consonant sounds which have been identified in the test as /p/, /θ/ð/, /v/, /f/ and / dʒ/. According to the results demonstrated in the previous pages, there is a significant percentage of mispronunciation of all selected consonants except the sound/p/, where more than 62.5% of the participants had correct pronunciation and 37.5% of them mispronounced it as /b/. For /θ/ sound, only 2.5% of the participants had managed to pronounce it correctly, with a big percentage allotted to those who substituted with /s/ at 72.5%. For /ð/ sound, percentage of mispronunciation was at 90%. The /v/ sound was mispronounced as /f/ with 65% of the participants, which is rather low, if compared with 32.5% which represents the correct pronunciation and also in comparison with the rest of the consonants which were identified for the test. For /f/ sound with 100% mispronunciation, same percentage as /dʒ/ sound, of which the latter was pronounced as /z/ with 92% of

the total participants. Based on these results, the main hypothesis is seen as being fulfilled.

The Teacher Questionnaire was developed for teachers in order to support the data derived from the diagnostic test. The questionnaire contains three sections, (A), (B),(C) and was designed to accommodate hypothesis (2) and hypothesis (3).

Hypothesis No (2) under section(c) assumes that some consonant sounds constitute the most difficulties in pronunciation for Sudanese Basic school Pupils, such as /p/,/v/, /t/ ,/ð/,/θ/ and /dʒ/ which were selected for the activity.

The result indicates that, the majority of the teachers believed that the constants identified are the most difficult in pronunciation for Sudanese basic school pupils with 22.5% strongly agreed and 53.3% agreed. Only 12.5% of the teachers thought that the Sudanese pupils had no problems in pronouncing the said sounds, besides 11.6% who were not sure. In terms of combined percentages of strongly agree and agree, ranking the sounds on the degree of difficulty, the result places /θ/ at 90% , /dʒ/ with 85%, /ð/ at 80%, /p/ and /t/ at 70% and /v/ at 60% as the least in terms of difficulty. None of the participants was strongly disagreed. A detailed discussion and explanation had already been covered in the previous pages, regarding teachers who were disagreed and undecided.

It is worthy to notice the contradictory situation of /p/ sound, which based on the results obtained from the pupils' test and the teachers' questionnaire.

According to the result of the pupils' test, 62.5% of the total of the participants had correct pronunciation of /p/ sound and 37.5% had substituted /p/ with /b/. This result agrees in part with findings retrieved from some previous studies which indicated that /p/ sound is problematic, but not for many Sudanese EFL learners as in the present study, and in the case of /p/ being replaced by /b/,



which does not always happen as shown in this study.

The teacher questionnaire shows that 70% of the total teachers had agreed with the statement which assumes the /p/ sound is one of the most difficult consonant in pronunciation for Sudanese Basic School Pupils. In this case, those teachers might think that the target sound is problematic and become hard for the pupils to get rid of this difficulty on the one hand, and very difficult to master it, on the other, thus the error becomes fossilized and cannot be eradicated at all, since sound /p/ does not exist in Sudanese colloquial Arabic, all that is contrary to the result from the oral test of which more than 62% of all pupils had managed to pronounce the /p/ sound correctly, also supported by the other teachers, 15% of whom had disagreed that /p/ sound is not one of the most difficult consonants, and even perhaps the 15% of who were undecided.

This discrepancy in the results concerning the pronunciation of /p/ sound in particular, suggests that other factors can affect a teacher response towards his pupil's performance, such as tender age, where it is easier to memorize and overcome phonological difficulties. Other factors include social status, background knowledge, among others.

According to the abovementioned argument and results, hypothesis No (2) is seen to be accepted, notwithstanding the exceptional case of /p/ sound.

Hypothesis No (3) under section (A) assumes that Teachers of Basic schools are not well trained in phonetics and phonology.

Section A of the Background Information, consists of five items seeking the participants' gender identity, teaching experience, qualifications, level of education and professional training in phonetics and phonology.

The teacher participants comprised twelve male and eight female teachers. They all have been teaching English in Basic schools. 10% had the least experience of teaching English between one to five years, 55% had six to

fifteen years while 35% have been teaching for more than fifteen years.

Nineteen teachers were English graduate while only one was of other disciplines. Fifteen teachers had obtained their degree of education ranging from Higher Diploma to PhD. Two held SUNACEL/SELTI Diploma, two with Sudan Certificate while only one teacher declined to reveal his true level of education.

Regarding professional training in phonetics and phonology, fourteen teachers had in-service training inside Sudan while six had attained either training or courses abroad. Despite this sort of training, 75% of the respondents had agreed that the opportunity they got was not enough to have adequate training in phonetics and phonology.

According to the results, hypothesis no (3) is therefore fulfilled.

Section B which was designed to obtain opinions and ideas of teachers about the situation of pronunciation in government Basic schools and also to reflect on all hypotheses. The section contains five items which were arranged in a five-point Likert type scale ranging from 1= strongly agree to 5= strongly disagree. Each item contains different statement about the current situation of pronunciation. They revolve around the respondents' sufficiency of training in phonetics and phonology, exposure to English - speaking environment, pupils' attitudes, curriculum design and the differences in the sound systems between English and Arabic in general and Sudanese spoken Arabic in particular.

According to data analysis, results and discussion that has been mentioned before, only 25% of the participants thought that the opportunity they got was satisfactory to have enough training in phonetics and phonology, 75% were not in agreement with their counterparts. In fact, all respondents had some sort of training in the subject either in-service or outside Sudan.

On English learning environment, only 10% of the teachers were in disagreement with the statement that non exposure to English-speaking

situations lead learners to mispronouncing of some English consonant sounds, while 35% and 55% had strongly agreed and agreed respectively.

Regarding the pupils' interest in pronunciation, 50% of the teachers had agreed that pupils pay less attention to the matter in the classroom, 45% disagreed and 10% were undecided.

On curriculum design, 75% of the participants had agreed that the curriculum neglected teaching of pronunciation, 20% had disagreed and 5% were not sure.

The last item in this part of the questionnaire assumes that: English consonants and consonant clusters which are not available in Arabic sound system seem to be problematic when being pronounced by EFL learners. As mentioned in previous pages, the outcome confirms this assumption.

**Hypothesis No (3): Teachers of Basic schools are not well trained in phonetics and phonology.**

**4.4 Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire Hypothesis (3)**

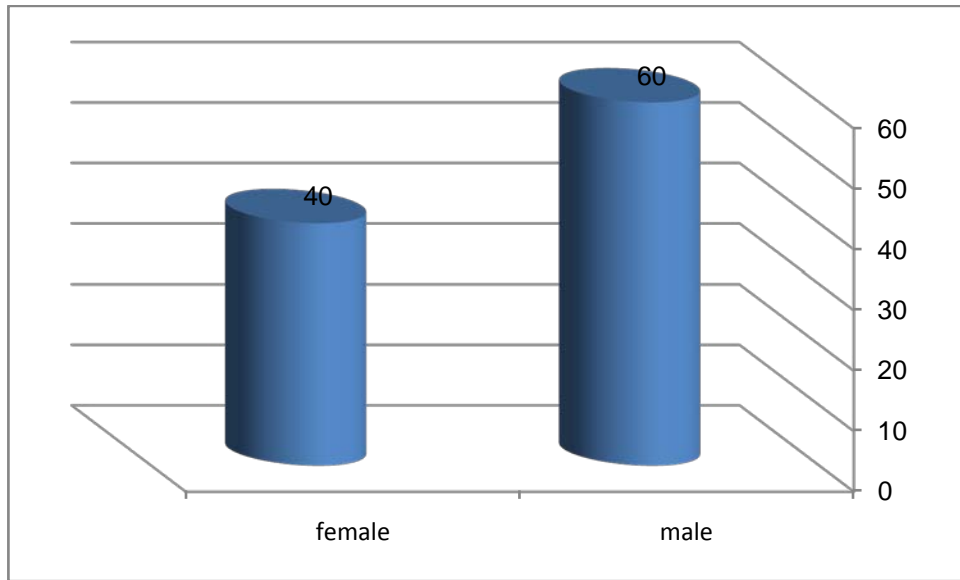
**Section (A): Background information**

**1- Gender Identity**

Table No (4.13): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents ‘Answers

Category	Frequency	Percent
male	12	60%
female	8	40%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.13)**



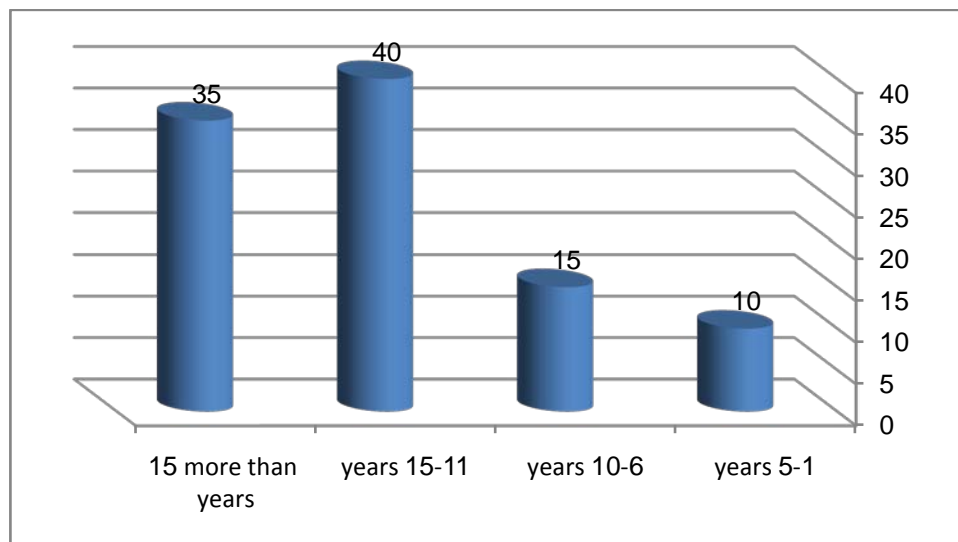
From the above table and figure, male teachers constituted 60% of the participants and 40% were female. Male dominance may be attributed to the Sudanese culture and tradition, as well as the fact that men are regarded as the main breadwinner for most of the Sudanese families.

## 2- Teaching experience

Table No (4.14): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers

Years	Frequency	Percent
1-5 years	2	10%
6-10 years	3	15%
11-15 years	8	40%
more than 15 years	7	35%
Total	20	100

Fig No (4.14)



This study showed that 10 percent of Basic school teachers had 1 to 5 years of teaching experience, 15 percent had 6 to 10 years of experience, 40 percent had 11 to 15 years of experience, and 35 percent had more than 15 years of experience. In education, teacher experience matters, but more is not always

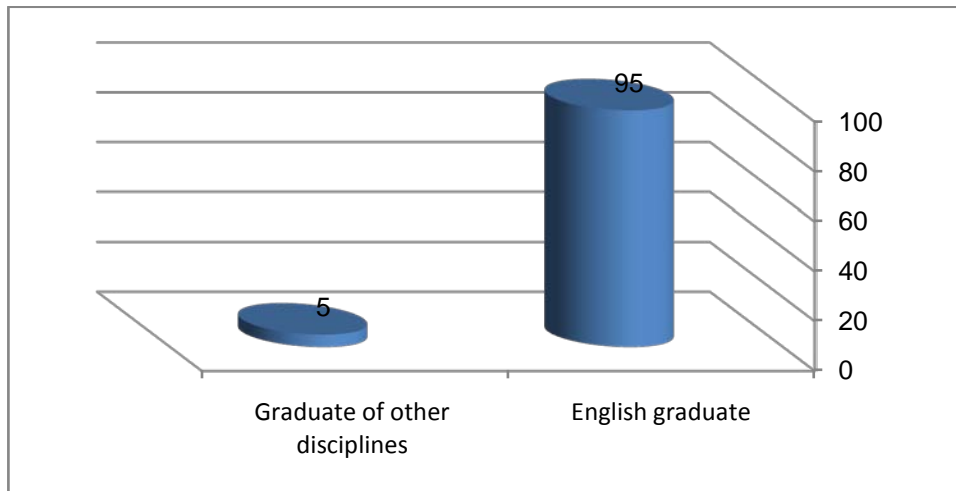
better as the simple assumption suggests: that experience promotes effectiveness and whether pupils attain higher levels of achievement when taught by more experienced teachers. A number of CALDER studies reveal that the impact of experience is strongest during the first few years of teaching, after that marginal return diminish. On average, brand new teachers are less effective than those with some experience under their belts, according to Glotfelter et al. Teachers show the greatest productivity gains during their first few years on the job, after which their performance tends to level off. According to (Ladd2008) : on average, teachers with more than 20years of experience are more effective than teachers with no experience, but are not much more effective than those with 5 years of experience. Of course, teachers with one or two years of experience are more effective, on average, than teachers with no experience at all. Years of experience produce different types of teachers having traditional or contemporary methods for teaching English. In case of the Sudan, the more experienced/ regular teachers constitute the educational personnel who have no active teaching duties (e.g. headmasters, headmistresses or principals who do not teach) and persons who work occasionally, volunteers, national service or in a part-time capacity in educational institutions.

### 3- Qualifications

Table No (4.15): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers related to Qualifications.

Category	Frequency	Percent
(4.2.1.3)-a English graduate	19	95%
(4.2.1.3)-b Graduate of other disciplines	1	5%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.15)**



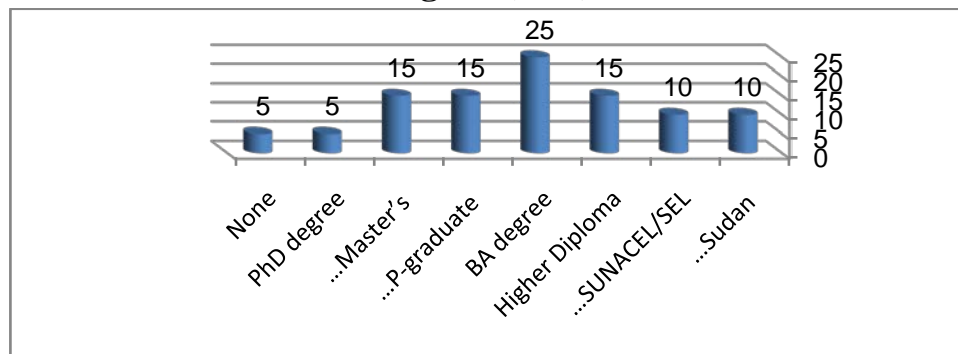
From the above table and figure, 95% of the respondents are English graduate, while only one is a graduate of other disciplines which constitutes the remaining 5 percent.

#### 4- English Graduate's degree or level of Education

Table No (4.16): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents 'Answers

Degree/ Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Sudan Certificate	2	10%
SUNACEL/SELTI) Diploma	2	10%
Higher Diploma	3	15%
BA degree	5	25%
P-graduate Diploma	3	15%
Master's degree	3	15%
PhD degree	1	5%
None	1	5%
Total	20	100

Fig No (4.16)



The above table and figure show that 10% of the teachers had Sudan Certificate, 10% had Diploma from SUNACEL/SELTI, 15% had Higher Diploma and 25% with BA degree. P-graduate Diploma 15%, Master's degree 15%, only one teacher had PhD degree with 5% and 5% of only one who had none. In Sudan, teaching staff were directly recruited from secondary after 11 years of education; and who were allowed to teach at the basic school age (5-13). The other group came directly from university as an English graduate with BA or B.Sc. degree in any academic discipline from geography to chemistry. They immediately got into classroom with no teaching background in the profession. It is worthy to observe that one respondent by either omission or perhaps commission, opted not to mention his degree or level of education.

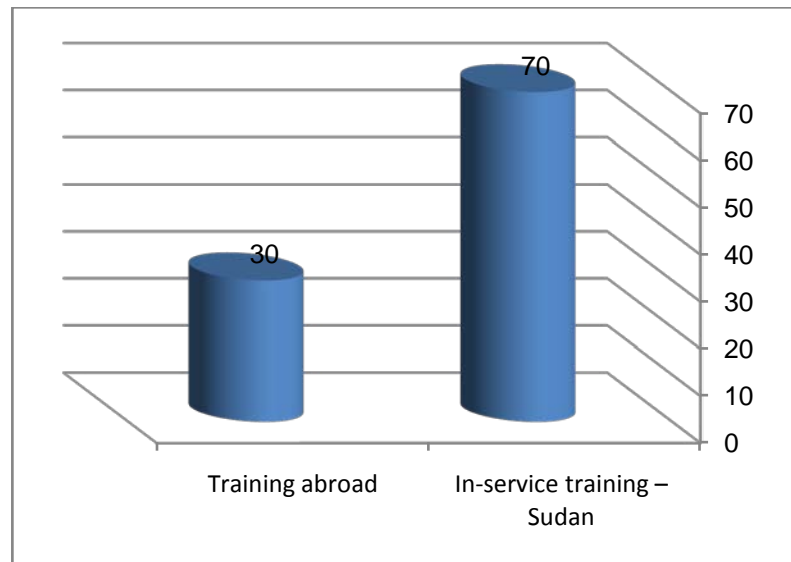


## 5- Professional Training/courses in phonetics and phonology

Table No (4.17): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents ‘Answers

Type of Training	Frequency	Percent
In-service training – Sudan	14	70%
Training abroad	6	30%
Total	20	100

Fig No (4.17)



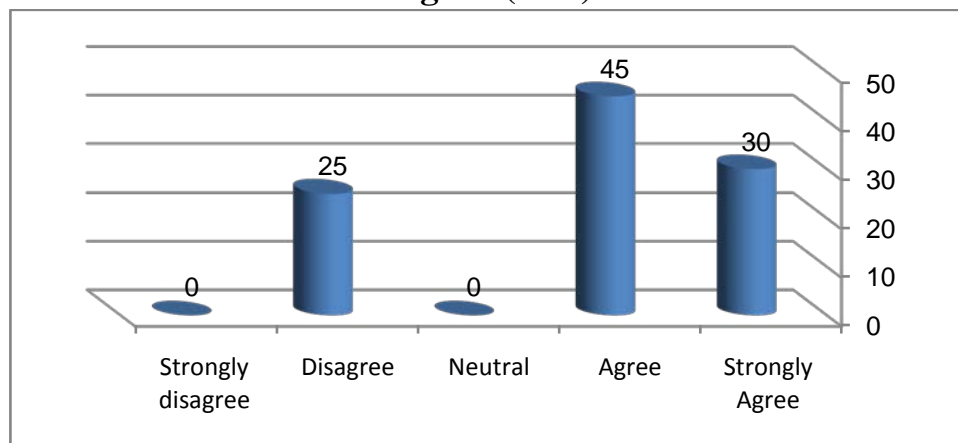
As far as professional training or courses in phonetics and phonology are concerned, the results above show that 70% of the participants had got in-service-training in the required field inside Sudan, while 30 per cent of them had enjoyed it abroad. The outcome shows that all participants had obtained the chance to get some sort of training in phonetics and phonology.

**Section (B): The situation of pronunciation in government Basic school. Teachers do not have opportunity for enough training in phonetics and phonology.**

Table No (4.18): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents ‘Answers

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	6	30%
Agree	9	45%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	5	25%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.18)**



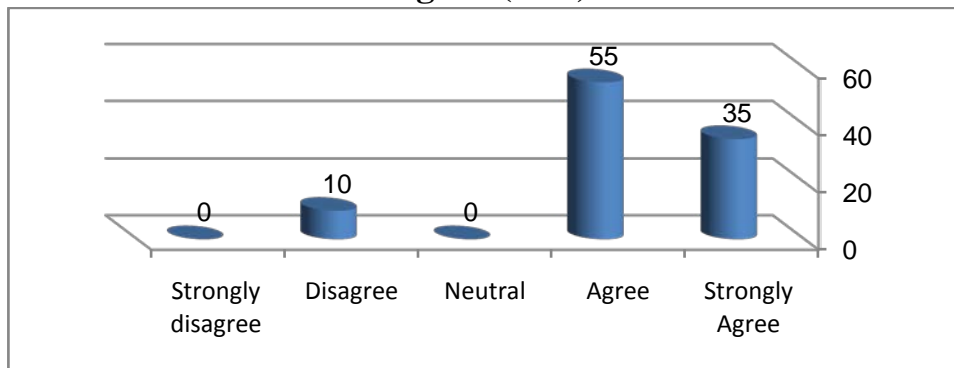
The above table and figure show that the results obtained from the participants with regards to their responses to the assumption that they did not get an opportunity to have enough training in phonetics and phonology. 30% strongly agreed, 45% agreed and 25% disagreed. It is noticed from the previous results that although teachers have had training in phonetics and phonology, but it was not sufficient enough as illustrated in this current result. Normally the teacher education curriculum include academic courses, professional training in educational and developmental psychology, teaching methods and lesson planning, and practical training among others.

**Lack of exposure to an English-speaking environment leads to mispronunciation of some English consonant sounds**

Table No (4.19): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents ‘Answers

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	35%
Agree	11	55%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	2	10%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.19)**



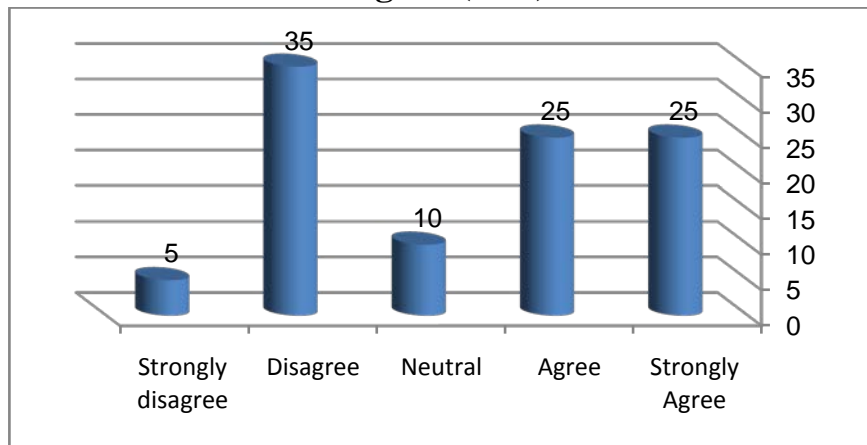
The table and figure above show that 35% of the participants had strongly agreed that " lack of exposure to an English-speaking environment leads to mispronunciation of some English consonant sounds", 55% agreed and 10% disagreed with the statement. The results reflect that since the pupils are learning English in a country that Arabic language is their mother tongue or first language for the majority of Sudanese people, then their learning is restricted to the books, texts and other classroom activities. In addition. Pupils are not given the suitable exposure or opportunity to practice the language with their teachers outside the classroom; accordingly, most of them also prefer to use Arabic after the English period. Various technologies such as audio devices are non-existent outside the class room, and if any, physical and social environment is poor and dull. There is no room even for non-verbal activities outside their class room.

## Pupils pay less attention to English Pronunciation in the classroom

Table No (4.20): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	5	25%
Agree	5	25%
Neutral	2	10%
Disagree	7	35%
Strongly disagree	1	5%
Total	20	100

Fig No (4.20)



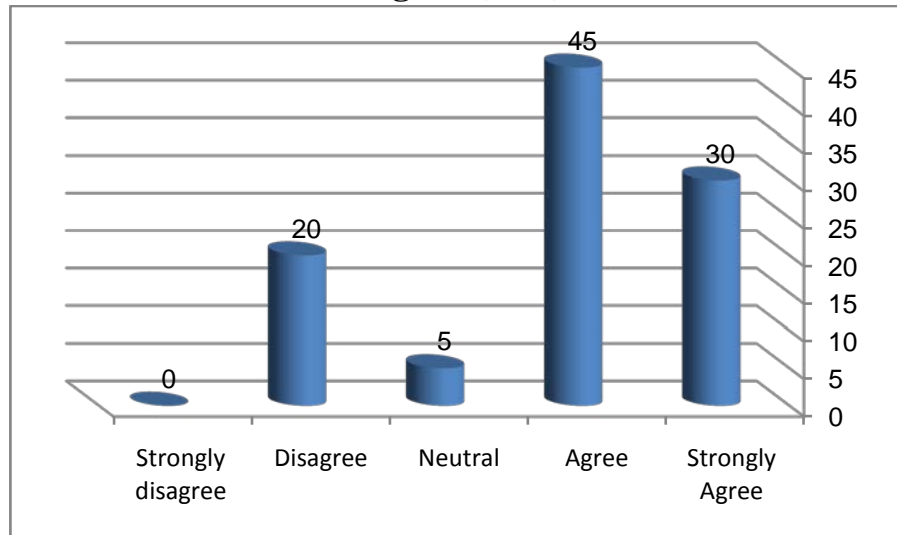
The table and figure above show the respondents' reaction to the statement; "pupils pay less attention to English pronunciation in the classroom". 25% of the teachers had strongly agreed, 25% agreed, 35% of them disagreed, 10% were undecided and only 5% strongly disagreed. According to these results, pronunciation has always been perceived as difficult area by both teachers and pupils. Like listening, pronunciation is sometimes neglected in favor of reading, grammar, vocabulary and writing.

### Curriculum design neglected teaching of Pronunciation.

Table No (4.21): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents 'Answers

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	6	30%
Agree	9	45%
Neutral	1	5%
Disagree	4	20%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	20	100

Fig No (4.21)



As with regards to the statement that : " curriculum design neglected teaching of pronunciation" , the above table and figure show that 30% of the teachers had strongly agreed, 45% had agreed, 55 were not sure and 20% disagreed. Historically, the English language syllabus has witnessed several developments from the Readers, Nile Course, up to Spine Series to date. Despite these developments, pronunciation is not yet to be accommodated in such textbooks like reading and writing.

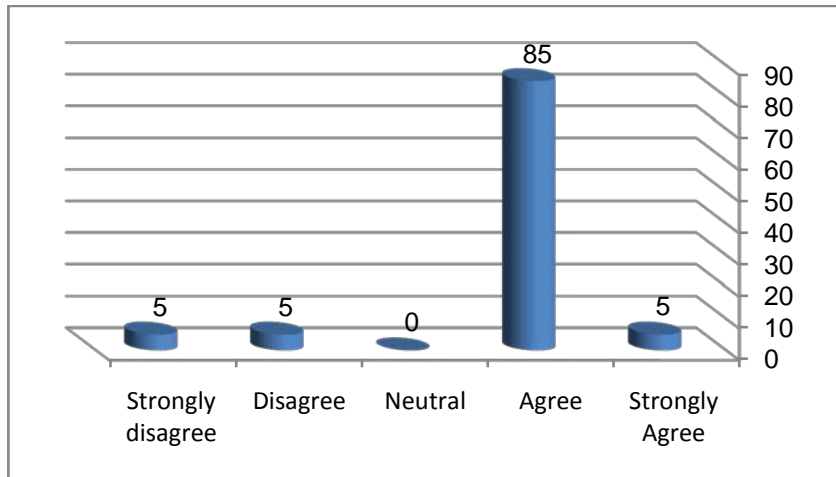
**English consonants which do not exist in the Arabic sound system seem to be problematic when being pronounced by Arabic speakers learning English like:**

/p/ as in pile, /v/ as in save, /ʒ/ as in vision, /tʃ/ as in child, /dʒ/ as in judge, /sp/ as in speak, /spl/ as in split, /str/ as in star, /spr/ as in spring, /skr/ as in scratch.

Table No (4.22): Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	1	5%
Agree	17	85%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly disagree	1	5%
Total	20	100

**Fig No (4.22)**



The table and figure above illustrate the participants' reaction to the statement that: "English consonants which have no equivalence in the Arabic sound system seem to be problematic when being pronounced by Arabic speakers".

The responses show that 5% had strongly agreed, 85% agreed, 5% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed. The results prove that the majority of Sudanese EFL

learners who speak Arabic, mispronounce the English consonants and consonant clusters that do not exist in their mother tongue such as: /p/, /v/ ,/z/ ,/tʃ/ ,/dʒ/, /sp/, /spl/, /str/ and /skr/. For instance, the sound /p/ of the English language do not have counterpart in the phonemic system of the Arabic language, so it is not easily recognized by the Sudanese pupils. This sound is always replaced by /b/, a sound which exists in the Arabic phonemic system. This can similarly be applied to the sounds /v/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /sp/ and /skr/, which do not have similar sounds in the Arabic consonantal system. For example, the sound /v/ as in the word (Five) is replaced by /faif/ , the sound /tʃ/ as in cheap is replaced by the sound /ʃ/ as in sheep, /g/ instead of / dʒ/ as in (geography). Consonant clusters with their different positions, are also problematic in pronunciation for Sudanese Arabic speakers. In initial position, they insert the vowel /i/ so as to break up the initial consonant clusters as in the words (spread) /ispred/ and (scratch) /iskratsh/. Arabic/Sudanese EFL learners have difficulty in pronouncing certain English language sounds especially these which are absent in standard or colloquial Arabic. Most Arabic/Sudanese EFL learners start learning English between the ages of seven and ten, after years of learning Arabic at home and at school. Accordingly, it is likely that pupils have some sort of mother-tongue interference due to the influence of L1 on English language pronunciation learning.

Hypothesis No (1) assumes that Sudanese Basic School Pupils encounter difficulties in pronouncing some English Consonants. According to the outcome of diagnostic test, this hypothesis is confirmed by the results obtained.

Hypothesis No (2) under section (C) of the teacher questionnaire assumes that some consonant sounds constitute the most difficulties in pronunciation for Sudanese Basic School Pupils. Based on the results mentioned before, this hypothesis is seen as being fulfilled.

Hypothesis No (3) under section (A) and (B) of the same questionnaire assumes that English teachers at Basic Schools are not well trained in phonetics and phonology. According to the results of this study, this hypothesis is fulfilled.



**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR**  
**FURTHER STUDIES**

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study. It includes a summary of the study, main findings, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

### **5.1 The Main Findings**

Based on the analysis and results of the EFL pupils' test and teachers' responses to the questionnaire, the main findings of this study reveal that:

1. The most common pronunciation difficulties encountered by Sudanese Basic School pupils which embodied in the consonant sounds of /θ/, /ð/, /ð/, /t/ and /v/, were usually replaced by /s/, /ʒ/, /z/, /ʃ/ and /f/ respectively.
2. The widespread substitution of the abovementioned consonant sounds among Arabic-speaking pupils is mainly attributed to the phonological differences between Arabic and English Language.
3. Interference of the mother tongue in the L2 learning process. These findings agree with some previous related studies such as Elkhair, M (2014).
4. Non- exposure to English-speaking environment.
5. Insufficient training for teachers in phonetics and phonology.
6. Lack of motivation among pupils and inflexibility of the curriculum.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Unfamiliar sounds or sounds which do not exist in the learners 'first language should be identified by teachers and systematically practiced in the classroom.
2. Teachers should recognize the pronunciation errors and correct them and expose pupils to basic knowledge of standard pronunciation.
3. Listen-and-imitate techniques should be adopted to improve pupils 'pronunciation.
4. Teachers can provide suitable activities outside the classroom to improve pronunciation skills.
5. Textbooks should include lessons and other activities relevant to pronunciation, same as with other skills such as reading and writing.
6. Teachers should be given the opportunity to obtain enough training in phonetics and phonology.
7. Pupils should be provided with a simplified version like (Michael West Dictionary).

## **5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Based on the findings of this research, the following suggestions may help teachers and pupils in reducing the latter difficulties in pronouncing problematic English sounds;

1. A similar study can be adopted to cover 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> level Basic schools.
2. A further study can also be extended to investigate difficulties in pronouncing consonant clusters.
3. A similar study can be conducted to investigate the possibility of

introducing language laboratory equipped with audio devices like sound dictionaries, computers and smart phones.

#### **5.4 Summary of the study**

This study investigates the difficulties encountered by Sudanese EFL basic school pupils in pronouncing some consonant sounds, as well as to identify the most mispronounced ones by the pupils. It also explores the impact of some factors which lead to pronunciation problems, such as: differences in the phonological systems between Arabic / Sudanese Spoken Arabic and English, teachers' insufficient training in phonetics and phonology, lack of exposure to the target language, pupils' attitude towards English and curriculum design. The descriptive and statistic method was used in this study in order to describe, classify and analyze the data collected. The instruments used for data collection were a pupil diagnostic test and teacher questionnaire.

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# **APPENDICES**

**Appendix (1)**  
**Sudan University of Science & Technology**  
**College of Graduate Studies**  
**College of Languages**

This test is part of a study entitled: “Investing the Difficulties Encountered by Sudanese Basic government schools in Articulating some Consonant Sounds “  
 (A case Study of the 6<sup>th</sup> Class of AL Izba Basic School for Girls – AL-Amlak – Khartoum North)

**Pupils ‘Diagnostic Test:**

This activity is being used confidentially and for scientific purpose only.

**This test corresponds to hypothesis No. 1** which assumes that:

Sudanese Basic Schools pupils encounter difficulties in pronouncing some English Consonant sounds, and in this particular test are: /p/, / θ/,ð/, /v/, /tʃ/. / dʒ/

Dear pupil,

**Please pronounce loudly the following words:**

NO	WORD	Pupil pronunciation	Phonetic Transcription	CORRECT (√)	INCORRECT (x)
1.	People		/p/		
2.	Thank		/ θ/		
3.	This		/ð/		
4.	Visit		/v/		
5.	Check		/tʃ/		
6.	Just		/dʒ/		

**Thanks for your co-operation**

**Sudan University of Science & Technology**  
**College of Graduate Studies**

**Appendix (2)**  
**College of Languages**

**A questionnaire for teacher of English language**

Dear Teacher,

This questionnaire is a part of a study entitled “Investigating the Difficulties Encountered by Sudanese Basic government schools in Articulating some Consonant Sounds”.

**This questionnaire corresponds to hypothesis No. 3 which deals with professional training and English curriculum in Basic schools**

Your answers to the following questions will be treated confidentially and used for scientific purpose only.

**Section: Background information**

**Please put a tick (√) where is appropriate**

1- Gender:

Male  female

2-Teaching experience:

1-5 years  6-10 years  11-15 years  more than 15 years

3-Qualifications:

3.a English graduate

(i) Sudan Certificate  (ii) (SUNACEL/SELTI) Diploma

(iii) Higher Diploma  (iv) BA degree

(v) P-graduate Diploma  (vi) Master's degree  (vii) PhD

3.b Graduate of other disciplines

4-Professional Training/courses in phonetics and phonology

(i) In-service training – Sudan

(ii) Training abroad

**Section: (B) The situation of pronunciation in government Basic school**  
**Please put a tick ( √ ) for one of the appropriate options**

No.	statement	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Teachers do not have opportunity for enough training in phonetics and phonology .					
2.	Lack of exposure to an English-speaking environment leads to mispronunciation of some English consonant sounds.					
3.	pupils pay less attention to English Pronunciation in the classroom.					
4.	curriculum design neglected teaching of Pronunciation.					
5.	<p>English consonants which do not exist in the Arabic sound system seem to be problematic when being pronounced by Arabic speakers learning English like:</p> <p>1-/p/ as in pile.</p> <p>2-/v/ as in save.</p> <p>3-/ʒ/ as in vision.</p> <p>4-/tʃ/ as in child.</p> <p>5-/dʒ/ as in judge.</p> <p>6-/sp/ as in speak.</p> <p>7-/spl/ as in split.</p>					

8-/str/ as in star.					
9-/spr/ as in spring					
10-/ skr/ as in scratch.					

**Section (C) This section deals with hypothesis No.2 which assumes that:**

Some Consonant Sounds constitute the most difficulties in pronunciation for Sudanese Basic School Pupils. /p/, /v/, /tʃ/, /ð/, /θ/ and /dʒ/. These six consonant sounds appear in the following illustration.

**Please put a tick(✓) for one of the appropriate options.**

NO	Illustration	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	/p/ - as in <b>pick</b>					
2.	/v/ - as in <b>Every</b>					
3.	/tʃ/ - as in <b>Change</b>					
4.	/ ð/ - as in <b>This</b>					
5.	/ θ/ - as in <b>Worthy</b>					
6.	/dʒ/- as in <b>Judge</b>					

**Thanks for your co-operation**