
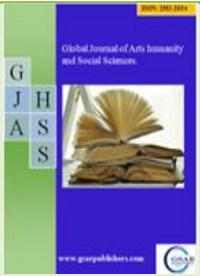


|  |  |           |  |                |   |                              |
|--|--|-----------|--|----------------|---|------------------------------|
|   | <b>Global Journal of Arts Humanity and Social Sciences</b> |           |  |                |  |                              |
|  | ISSN: 2583-2034  |           |  |                |   |                              |
|  | Abbreviated key title: Glob.J.Arts.Humanit.Soc.Sci         |           |  |                |   |                              |
|  | Frequency: Monthly   |           |  |                |   |                              |
|  | Published By GSAR Publishers                               |           |  |                |   |                              |
| Journal Homepage Link: <a href="https://gsarpublishers.com/journal-gjahss-home/">https://gsarpublishers.com/journal-gjahss-home/</a> |  |           |  |                |   |                              |
| Volume - 5   |  | Issue - 9 |  | September 2025 | Total pages 683-686   | DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.17048701 |

## Factors affecting the pronunciation of English Language at Secondary schools - El-Obeid Town

By

Abdel Rahim Omer Aldaw Ako<sup>1</sup>, Dr Suleiman Mater Dalboon<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Elzein Musa Jumaa Elimam<sup>3</sup>, Dr. Magzoub Alsiad Ahmed Mohammed<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>University of Kordofan Faculty of Education, Department of English Language.



### Article History

Received: 25- 08- 2025

Accepted: 01- 09- 2025

Published: 03- 09- 2025

Corresponding author  
**Abdel Rahim Omer  
Aldaw Ako**

### Abstract

This study investigated the factors influencing pronunciation among secondary school students in North Kordofan State, El-Obeid Town during the period (20119- 2020). The research aimed to identify the primary factors affecting students' pronunciation and propose suitable solutions to these challenges. A mixed-methods approach was employed, utilizing observation, recording, and questionnaires to collect data from students and teachers. The descriptive analytical approach was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that a significant proportion of students, 95%, experienced pronunciation problems, struggling to pronounce certain vowel and consonant sounds. Further analysis showed that mother tongue interference was a major contributing factor, affecting 50% of students. Additionally, the lack of trained teachers was found to be a significant issue, impacting 70% of students. The influence of spelling on pronunciation was also identified as a challenge, affecting 65% of students. Based on these findings, several recommendations were made. Firstly, specific pronunciation lessons should be incorporated into the curriculum to enable students to apply English sound rules effectively. Secondly, teachers should receive training and resources to address pronunciation challenges, particularly in areas where mother tongue interference is prevalent. Thirdly, phonetic symbols should be introduced to students at an early stage in their education to enhance their understanding and production of English sounds. Furthermore, listening skills should be emphasized in schools to improve students' pronunciation. Finally, teachers should be aware of the types of mistakes students make and address them accordingly to prevent fossilization of errors.

### Introduction

Pronunciation is considered an essential dimension in the oral communicative process. Pronunciation should be didactically treated since the beginning of the teaching- learning process of English, which responds to the didactic principle that language is primarily oral. Students need good pronunciation habits to comprehend what is spoken to them and to express oral messages. English teachers sometimes neglect pronunciation in the first stages of education as they tend to place stress on lexis and grammar and consider pronunciation a subsidiary matter. Therefore, when the students arrive at high education they still scope with pronunciation problems. Therefore, this research is going to identify the nature of pronunciation errors and the exact reason behind the student's poor pronunciation.

### Statement of the Problem

Pronunciation is a very noticeable aspect in oral communication. With improper pronunciation speakers lose a certain degree of understandability and thus often the purpose of the utterance is lost as well. Secondary school students in North Kordofan State, El-Obeid Town, face significant challenges in pronouncing English sounds, hindered by factors such as mother tongue interference, lack of trained teachers, and spelling influence, which impact their communication, academic performance, and future opportunities.

### Objectives of the Research

1. To investigate the factors influencing pronunciation among secondary school students in North Kordofan State, El-Obeid Town.
2. To identify the specific vowel and consonant sounds that



students struggle with in English.

- To examine the impact of arabic mother tongue interference and spelling on studen student's pronunciation
- To enhance the student's abilities to pronounce english words and phrases more accurately.

## Materials and Methods

This study investigated the factors affecting the pronunciation of English language at secondary schools. A descriptive analytical approach was employed to collect data, utilizing a tape recording and a constructed questionnaire as data collection tools. The tape recording consisted of 15 words, each designed to assess specific English sounds, and was administered to 50 third-class students from Al Rebat secondary school. Additionally, a questionnaire comprising 15 items was distributed to 40 English teachers to gather their opinions on the reasons behind students' mispronunciation of English sounds. The questionnaire used a scale with options: Agree, Disagree, and Not sure, and included close-type items related to the topic. The respondents were first asked about their qualifications and experiences, followed by the 15 items designed to cover the area of study. All 40 copies of the questionnaire were collected and subjected to statistical and descriptive analysis to reach a conclusive result. This methodology allowed for a comprehensive examination of the factors affecting pronunciation among secondary school students.

## Results and Discussion

### The recorded Test:

The aim of this test is to identify the pronunciation errors among the secondary level students when they are reading English. So a number of words were chosen randomly, but each word contains a sound, which is expected to be pronounced incorrectly by the students. The test contains some vowel sounds and consonant sounds. The words were put into minimal pair of vowels and consonants; each pairs contains specific sound: each student was asked to read all the words aloud, while his voice was recorded. At the end of this process, the errors were written on a paper and then tabulated and analyzed statistically and descriptively.

| Words  | TS   | NS | NSC | %<br>percentage | NSI | %percentage |
|--------|------|----|-----|-----------------|-----|-------------|
| Beat   | /i/  | 50 | 11  | 22%             | 39  | 78%         |
| Caught | /ɔ:/ | 50 | 16  | 32%             | 34  | 68%         |
| Coat   | /əʊ/ | 50 | 4   | 8%              | 46  | 92%         |
| Guess  | /e/  | 50 | 10  | 20%             | 40  | 80%         |
| Luke   | /u:/ | 50 | 0   | 0%              | 50  | 100%        |
| Bud    | /ʌ/  | 50 | 15  | 30%             | 35  | 70%         |
| Lock   | /b/  | 50 | 5   | 10%             | 45  | 90%         |
| Mate   | /ei/ | 50 | 14  | 28%             | 36  | 72%         |

|       |      |    |    |     |    |     |
|-------|------|----|----|-----|----|-----|
| Ties  | /ai/ | 50 | 10 | 20% | 40 | 80% |
| Shirt | /ɜ:/ | 50 | 10 | 20% | 40 | 80% |

(Table.1) The pronunciation of some English vowels by secondary level students:

As shown on the above table, only (11) (22%) of the students were able to give the correct pronunciation of the target sound in the word beat. For the word caught, only (16) (32%) of the students among the-sample (50students) were able to pronounce the / ɔ:/ sound correctly. In the word coat only 4 (8%) this show most students fail to pronounce the sound /əʊ/ correctly. Whereas the word guess, only 10 students were able to pronounce the sound correctly. For the word Luke, the target sound was /u:/; all students fail to pronounce the sound correctly, so most of the students tend to pronounce it as short sound /u/ instead of long. In the word bud only 15 (30%) students were able to pronounce the sound /ʌ/ correctly, while the word lock only 5 (10%) out of 50 students were able to produce the sound /b/ /correctly. For the word mate the students who were able to pronounce the sound /ei/ truly were 14(28%) whereas in the word ties only 10 (20%) of the students capable to pronounce the sound /ai/ and the same is true for the words shirt in the target sound /ɜ:/ . According to the results above, almost secondary level students finding difficulties in pronouncing vowel sounds.

| Words    | TS     | NS | NSC | %<br>percentage | NSI | %percentage |
|----------|--------|----|-----|-----------------|-----|-------------|
| Special  | / ʃ /  | 50 | 14  | 28%             | 36  | 72%         |
| Month    | / θ /  | 50 | 4   | 8%              | 46  | 92%         |
| Together | / ð /  | 50 | 6   | 12%             | 44  | 88%         |
| College  | / dʒ / | 50 | 8   | 16%             | 42  | 84%         |
| Cheap    | / tʃ / | 50 | 19  | 38%             | 31  | 62%         |

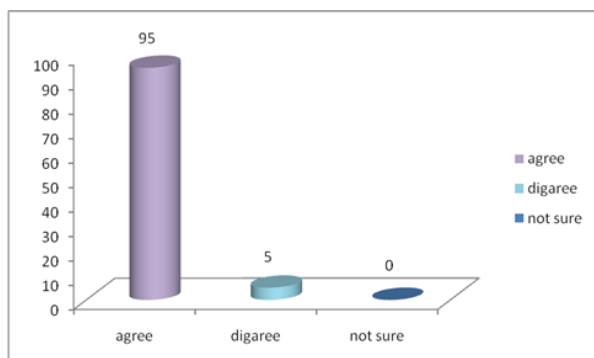
(Table.2) The pronunciation of some English consonants by secondary level students:

As shown on the table above, only (14) (28%) of the students were able to pronounce the sound /ʃ/ correctly in the word special. In the second word month the target sound was /θ/ only 4(8%) of the students among the whole sample (50 students) were able to pronounce the sound correctly. Also in the word together only 6 (8%) of the students pronounced the target sound /ð/ correctly, while in the word college, only 8 (16%) of the students were able to pronounce the sound /dʒ/ correctly. Also in cheap, only 19 (38%) of the students among the whole sample were able to

pronounce the target sound /tʃ/ correctly. According to the results above, the majority of the secondary levels mispronounce the English consonants that do not exist in Arabic language and other consonants, which are inconsistent.

**Table (4.1) student who learn English as second language have problem in pronunciation.**

| Option   | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Agree    | 38        | 95.0%      |
| Disagree | 2         | 5.0%       |
| Total    | 40        | 100.0%     |

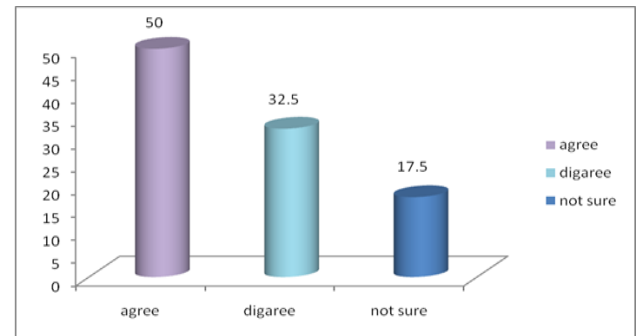


**Figure (4.1) students who learn English as second language have problem in pronunciation.**

Table and Figure (4.1), Explain the item, students who learn English as second language have problem in pronunciation, the majority of the respondents 95% agreed while the minority 5% disagreed and no one was not sure. This means that students who learn English as second language have problem in pronunciation.

**Table (4.2) Mother tongue interference affects EFL learning pronunciation negatively.**

| Option   | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Agree    | 20        | 50.0%      |
| disagree | 13        | 32.5%      |
| not sure | 7         | 17.5%      |
| Total    | 40        | 100.0%     |



**Figure (4.2) Mother tongue interference affects EFL learning pronunciation negatively.**

Table and Figure (4.2), Explain the item the mother tongue interference affects EFL learning pronunciation negatively, the majority of the respondents 50% agreed while the minority 32.5% disagreed and the least minority 17.5% were not sure. This means the mother tongue interference affects EFL learning pronunciation negatively.

**Table (4.3) The influence of spelling causes a problem in English pronunciation.**

| Option   | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Agree    | 26        | 65.0%      |
| Disagree | 5         | 12.5%      |
| not sure | 9         | 22.5%      |
| Total    | 40        | 100.0%     |

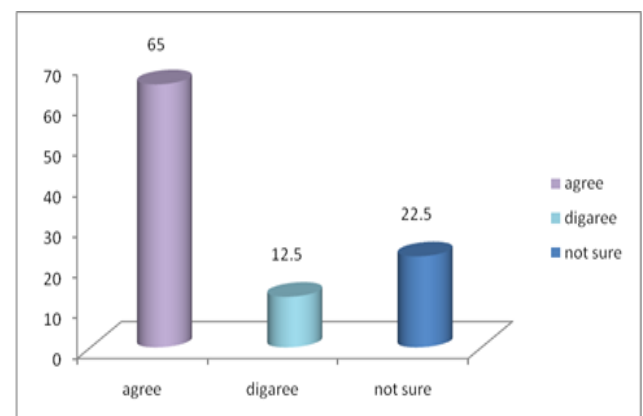
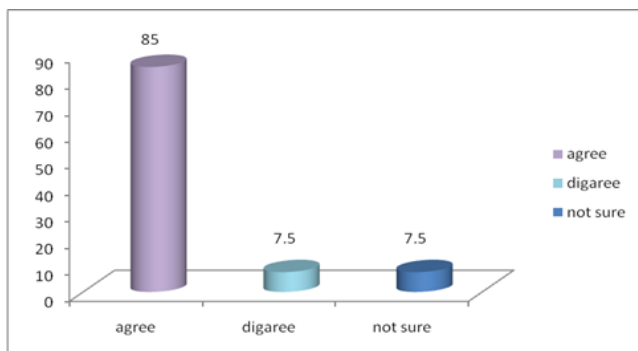


Table and Figure (4.3), Explain the item, the influence of spelling causes a problem in English pronunciation. The majority of the respondent 65.5% agreed while the minority 22.5% are not sure and the least minority 12.5% disagreed. This proves the idea that the influence of spelling causes a problem in English pronunciation.

**Table (4.4) Some student have problems in the pronunciation of some contrast sounds .**

| Option   | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| agree    | 34        | 85.0%      |
| disagree | 3         | 7.5%       |
| not sure | 3         | 7.5%       |
| Total    | 40        | 100.0%     |



**Figure (4.4) some students have problems in the pronunciation of some contrast sounds.**

Table and Figure (4.4), Explain the item, some students have problems in the pronunciation of some contrast sounds the majority of the respondents 85% agreed while 7.5% for each disagree and not sure this means that some students have problems in the pronunciation of some contrast sounds.

## Conclusion

This study investigated the factors affecting the pronunciation of English Language at Secondary schools, specifically with regards to certain consonant and vowel sounds. The observation of students revealed that they struggled with sounds such as /dʒ/, /tʃ/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /i:/, /ɔ:/, /əʊ/, /ɒ/, /ɜ:/, /e/, /ʊ/, /ei/, /ai/, and /ʌ/. The study attributed these mispronunciations to several factors, including the influence of the arabic mother tongue, differences in sound systems between L1 and L2 languages, the impact of spelling on pronunciation, inconsistency of English vowels, and motivation. The findings of the study, based on the recording test and questionnaire, confirmed that many secondary level students indeed experience difficulties in pronouncing certain English sounds. These results highlight the need for targeted interventions to address these pronunciation challenges.

## Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that

1. Specific pronunciation lessons be incorporated into the curriculum to enable students to apply English sound rules effectively.
2. Teachers should receive training and resources to address

pronunciation challenges, particularly in areas where mother tongue interference is prevalent.

3. Phonetic symbols should be introduced to students at an early stage in their education to enhance their understanding and production of English sounds.
4. Listening skills should be emphasized in schools to improve students' pronunciation, and teachers should be aware of the types of mistakes students make and address them accordingly to prevent fossilization of errors.
5. Teachers should be fully acquainted with the type of mistake the students are making and consequently, apply the method and technique that really remedy the situation.

## References

1. AMEP Research Centre (2000). What is Pronunciation? The AMEP Fact Sheets.
2. Alkhuli, M. A. (1983). English as a Foreign Language. Ph.D Dissertation, King Abdul Aziz Public Library.
3. Alvarenga, R. &, Dalia, B, & Artiga, V(2017) The influence of spoken language interaction with English native speakers in English pronunciation ,Salvador – Based Call-Centers.
4. Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (1992). Teaching American English pronunciation. New York: Oxford University press.
5. Brown, H. D. (2000). Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (4th ed.). Longman: Sanfrancisco State University.
6. Celce- Murcia, M., Brinton, D. & Goodwin, J. (2010) Teaching pronunciation: A course book and reference guide. New York: Cambridge University Press .
7. Crystal, D. (2003). A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics. Oxford: Blackwell.
8. Dr.Pauette, D .(2005).English pronunciation made simple, pearson Education, 10 Bank street, white plains,NY10606.
9. Elkhair M. I. H (2014)<sup>1</sup> Pronunciation Problems: A Case Study of English L language Students , Al-Farabi Private College Riyadh. at Sudan University of Science and Technology.
10. Joseph.H (2012). A Practical Course in British English pronunciation. London
11. Jones, D., Roach, P. J., & Hartman, J. (1997). Daniel Jones English Pronouncing Dictionary (15th ed).
12. Ladefoged, P. (2001). A Course in Phonetics, 4th ed., Heinle and Heinle. Los Angeles: University of California.
13. Moosa, M. H. (1979). Difficulties of Learning the Pronunciation and Structural Differences Between Arabic and English. MA Dissertation, Library of Saudi Arabia, Educational mission